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HUMAN RIGHTS IN A THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

George Grima

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights made no reference to God purposely to enable Governments, embracing different political ideologies and representing peoples with a different religious background, to reach a common understanding of the dignity and rights of man.[1] Reaffirmation of "faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal dignity of men and women and of nations large and small"[2] seemed to have required no metaphysical or religious anchorage. It could be expressed more or less as a self-evident truth for which no further motivation was needed than that respect for human rights was an essential condition "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind."[3]

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights proves that in spite of ideological and religious differences the nations of the world have been able to agree on the essential principles for the maintenance of peace on the national and international level. The Declaration provides the general theoretical framework within which individuals and groups, including churches, can make their own specific contribution for the defence and promotion of human right.[4]

One of the main tasks of theology is precisely to define as clearly as possible how faith in the God of Jesus Christ stands in relation to the

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1. Cf. Jacques Maritain, "On the Philosophy of Human Rights", Unesco Bulletin, vol. IV (1985), *Human Rights Teaching*, 5 – 7, p. 5; reprinted from *Human Rights Comments and Interpretations,* a symposium edited by Unesco (London, Allan Wingate, 1949).
2. United Nations Charter reproduced in part in Ian Brownlie, *Basic Documents on Human Rights* (2nd. ed., Oxford, 1981), 3 – 14, p. 3; also *Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.*
3. United Nations Charter, Ian Brownlie, *op.cit.,* p. 3.
4. This point is clearly stated in *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights:* "The General Assembly proclaims this Universal Declaration of human rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms. . ."

contemporary view of human rights. Theologians have rightly noted that mere repetition of what Scripture and Tradition say on the subject is not enough, for their view differs from ours in various ways, as one can see, for example, from their position on slavery and religious freedom.

Accordingly, the Bible and Tradition have to be used critically. The Old and New Testament have something indispensable to say on man and his rights but they do so in an indirect way.(5) In fact, the Biblical message was understood and applied, partly at least, in accordance with the concept of man and society current at the time. The interpretation which the Christian community has made of the Biblical message in the course of history is also somehow conditioned by man's changing view of himself and the world.(6) Both the Bible and Tradition, need re-interpretation to become relevant to the problem of human rights, as it is posed today.

The modern way of posing the problem of human rights is new in one very important respect. In pre-modern times it was the *nature of society*, conceived as a pre-given reality, which determined the respective rights and privileges of the individual. Subordination of the slave to the master, the female to the male, the subject to the prince was regarded by and large as an essential part of the unchanging structure of society. The inequalities, arising out of such subordination, had to be accepted and borne with patience as something necessary to ensure unity of the social organism. Today, man has become conscious of his freedom to change society in order to allow everyone, without discrimination, to participate in all spheres of social life. It is not the person that has to adapt himself to the social system, but the social system has to adapt itself to the person. Man is free to change the society in which he is living, because there is nothing sacred and un-

5. Cf. Barnabas Mary Ahern, O.P., "Biblical Doctrine on the Rights and Duties of Man", *Gregorianum*, (65/2 – 3 (1984), 301-317, pp. 301 – 2; Pierre Daubercies and Charles Lefèvre, *Le Respect et la Liberté: Droits de l'Homme, Raison et Foi* (Rome, 1985), pp. 31 – 59; Claus Westermann, "Das Alte Testament und die Menschenrechte", in *Zum Thema Menschenrechte: Theologische Versuche und Entwürfe* ed. by Jörg Baur (Stuttgart, 1977), 5 – 18; Ulrich Luck, "Neutestamentliche Perspektiven zu den Menschenrechten", in J. Baur, *op.cit.*, 19 – 38.

6. On human rights in the Christian tradition cf. Martin Brecht, "Die Menschenrechte in der Geschichte der Kirche" in J. Baur, *op.cit.*, 39 – 96; Paulus Engelhardt, "Was kann die Ethik des Thomas von Aquin zur kritischen Klärung und zur Begründung der Menschenrechte betragen?" in *Modernes Freiheitsethos und christlicher Glaube; Beiträge zur juristischen, philosophischen und theologischen Bestimmungen der Menschenrechte* ed. by Johannes Schwartländer (Munich, 1981), 138 – 164; Leo Moulin, "Christliche Quellen der Erklärung der Menschenrechte" in *Menschenrechte und Menschenwürde: Historische Voraussetzungen säkuläre Gestalt – christliches Verständnis* ed. by Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde and Robert Spaemann (Stuttgart, 1987), 16 – 30; Karl-Wilhelm Merks, "Zur theologischen Grundlegung der Menschenrechte in der Perspektive des Thomas von Aquin" in Schwartländer, *op.cit.*, 165 – 187.

touchable about the inequalities which have been coming down from one generation to another.[7]

Some Theologians have focused on the significance of the new awareness of human freedom, that is the freedom to change, where necessary, the social order, for the modern view of human rights and for an updated understanding of Scripture and Tradition.[8] Others have seen not only freedom but also equality and participation as the principal characteristic of the modern concept of human rights and have, therefore, proceeded to examine the bearing of the Christian faith on all of these three realities in their attempt to construct a theology of human rights.[9] The problem as to whether there is only one or more basic elements *(Sachmomente),* as Huber and Tödt call them, in all human rights is certainly interesting to discuss but it is not necessary to do so in this context.[10]

Theologians have also sought to contribute toward the study of human rights by showing what the Christian faith has to say regarding the foundation or justification of human rights.[11] Since the formulation of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, the problem about the basis of human rights has become especially important. As Jacques Maritian had already noted in his initial observations on the matter, the nations of the world succeeded in coming to an agreement on the need in practice to defend and promote the dignity and rights of man, even though they disagreed everytime the question "why human dignity and rights have to be recognized and protected was raised.[12] Neither philosphy nor theology, however, should dismiss the issue as unimportant, for it is a very significant theoretical problem with decisive implications on the concrete level. Again this question will not be discussed here, although it will come in as a secondary question in the course of the present observations.

The present theological reflection on human rights focuses on the pattern which may be discerned behind the historical evolution of human

7. On the evolution of the notion of human rights cf. Wilhelm Ernst, "Ursprung und Entwicklung der Meschenrechte in Geschichte und Gegenwart", *Gregorianum*, 65/2 – 3 (1984), 231 – 270.

8. Cf. Gerhard Luf, "Der Begriff der Freiheit als Grundlage der Menschenrechte in ihrem christlich-theologischen Verständnis" in Böckenförde and Spaemann, *op.cit.* 119 – 137; Walter Kasper, "Theologische Bestimmung der Menschenrechte im neuzeitlichen Bewußtsein von Freiheit und Geschichte" in Schwartländer, *op.cit.*, 285 – 302.

9. Cf. Wolfgang Huber and Heinz Eduard Tödt, *Menschenrechte: Perspektiven einer menschlichen Welt* (2nd ed., Stuttgart, 1978).

10. *ibid.*, 88 – 96.

11. For a critical review of this question see especially Huber and Tödt, *op.cit.*, pp. 64 – 73; Jürgen Moltmann, *On Human Dignity; Political Theology and Ethics* (London, 1984), pp. 3 – 35; Franz Böckle, "Theonomie Autonomie in der Begründung der Menschenrechte", in J. Schwartländer, *op.cit.*, 303 – 321.

12. See above n. 1.

rights. The pattern involves both affirmation and negation of human rights. These constitute the positive and negative side of the history of human rights. The Christian faith has certainly something valuable to say about these two aspects.[13] But history is a dynamic reality and so it moves as a process embracing both the positive and negative side. The history of human rights, therefore has to be seen and interpreted, philosophically and theologically, as a continuous tension between affirmation and violation.[14]

The point of departure for the present theological reflection may be called the "secular faith" in the dignity and rights of man. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* proceeds to articulate the various human rights on the basis of a confession of faith it makes in its preamble. It confesses faith in human dignity and worth. In other words, it affirms trust in the possibility of a meaningful history. Even though the history of mankind has been a history of violations of human rights, sometimes on a massive scale as was the case in the two world wars taking place in the first half of this century, there is still the chance of checking such violations as far as possible. This has been the faith which the countries signing the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* have professed. It is basically faith as trust in the meaning of history, in man's ability to make history different from what it has been in the past. It is true that even at the very time in which this act of faith was being made certain people were being deprived of their fundamental rights. The right of nations to govern themselves and determine their own future was clearly asserted while Germany was divided up and denied such a right and the Palestinians were made to leave the land they had been occupying for hundreds of years. The act of faith, made right after World War II, had the marks of everything which man does. It was imperfect, fragile and corruptible. Yet, it was a public gesture denoting that life was still worth living in spite of the suffering which man had caused to man.

In my opinion, theology should try, in the first place, to examine the basic features of the modern act of faith in human rights as it results from such documents as the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Of course, theology is based on faith in the God of Jesus Christ. But it assumes the secular faith in the meaningfulness of history, in man's possibility to acknowledge and promote the good of the human being on the individual and collective level. Between religious and secular faith there is a reciprocal relationship.[15] Faith in God can be said to shed further light on the secular

13. See below under sub-headings: "The Promotion of Human Rights" and "The Violation of Human Rights".

14. See below under sub-heading "The Realization of Human Rights".

15. Classical theology spoke of the relation between "reason" and "revelation", "nature" and "grace". Contemporary theology prefers to speak of "human experience" and "culture"

faith in man's dignity and rights. The trust which man places in a life for the promotion of human rights is strengthened and deepened when experienced as an essential part of that trust which man places in God, the Creator and Redeemer. Similarly, the loyalty which man shows to the human rights' cause receives a new dimension when exercised as the other side of his loyalty to God. The secular faith in the intrinsic dignity and worth of the human person, however, provides the Christian community with new possibilities of understanding and putting into practice the deeper implications of the Word of God, because it (i.e. secular faith) is a developing reality. The present emphasis on everyone's right to freedom, equality and participation, and on the international dimension of the human rights' question is not without significance from a theological point of view.

The relationship between the Christian and the secular faith will here be explained with the help of the notion of story.[16] The Christian faith is originally expressed in a narrative form. It is the story which the Christian community narrates, as a believing community, of its experience as part of the human race. The experience which is narrated is essentially the experience which man makes of himself, others and the world throughout history. Exodus and the Cross, to take the two major biblical events, refer to events taking part in secular history. They recall how faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and finally, faith in the God of Jesus Christ reinterpretes and narrates the story of a people struggling to liberate itself from the oppression of another and of a man in whom God revealed Himself fully, died for those who crucified Him.

The secular faith in man's dignity and worth has also its own story. It is the story of mankind passing through the painful experience of the negation and violation of legitimite rights to the new experience of the recognition and reaffirmation of such rights. The story of the Christian faith is essentially a reinterpretation of the story of the secular faith in human rights.

The stories of the Christian and the secular faith, though not

in place of "reason" and "nature", even though the new terminology is not altogether unambiguous. Following Helmut Richard Niebuhr *(Radical Monotheism and Western Culture,* Harper Torchbooks ed., New York, 1970), I am drawing attention to the *faith* implied in the secular movement for human rights. Niebuhr would have certainly emphasized the tendency of secular faith to keep man enclosed within himself and the group, thus showing its sinful character. When saying that secular faith, rightly understood and practised, is already implicitly Christian, given its presupposition that the human person is transcendent, because he cannot and should not be entirely defined in terms of his place of origin, race, sex, religion and other conditioning factors, I am relying on a fundamental principle of Catholic theology, namely, that revelation assumes and perfects nature or, as it is here suggested, secular faith.

16. For a survey of the use of "story" in contemporary theology see John Navone S.J. "Narrative Theology and its Uses: A Survey", *The Irish Theological Quarterly* 52:3 (1986), 212 – 230.

identifical, have something in common. They both have a *covenantal* structure. The story of the Christian faith centres on the covenant between God and man: God offering to share His own life with that of man and man accepting/rejecting God's love. The story of the secular faith in human rights centres on the covenant, implicit or explicit, between men to respect one another. The covenant between God and man gives a new dimension to the covenant which mankind has made or sought to make in the course of history in order to defend and promote the dignity and rights of every human being. The story of the secular covenant, however, shows the new aspects which the human rights' question assumes as time goes on. For this reason, it may also have something important to contribute for a more adequate understanding of the covenant between God and man. Hence, it is useful to bring out, in the first place, the basic features of the contemporary secular faith in human rights.[17]

The Secular Faith in Human Rights

The faith which mankind today has in human rights is a *collective* kind of faith. It does not represent merely the conviction of a number of individual nations. It represents rather a general conviction or belief. The history of human rights had already reached a decisive point in the second half of the eighteenth century under the influence of such philosophers as John Locke in England, Jean-Jacques Rousseau in Switzerland and France and Immanuel Kant in Germany.[18] These thinkers upheld that political power is justifiable only when conceived as a means whereby society ensures the peaceful exercise of individual freedom. The power of the State is, therefore, necessarily limited and should never restrain freedom more than is required by public order. During the past two hundred years, this conviction consolidated the modern democratic movement.

The painful experience of two world wars seems to have proved to the founding members of the United Nations Organization the truth of the absolute need for power to respect the dignity and rights of every person.

17. The description of the secular faith in human rights is one thing, the interpretation of such rights is another. Human rights can be interpreted according to different models (cf. E.W. Böckenförde, *Staat, Gesellschaft, Freiheit: Studien zur Staatstheorie und zum Verfassungsrecht,* Suhrkamp ed., Frankfurt, 1976, pp. 221 – 252). The secular faith in human rights exibits features which are, in my opinion, not so controversial.

18. Cf. John Locke. *The Second Treatize of Civil Government and a Letter concerning Toleration*, ed. and introd. by J.W. Gough, (Oxford 1948); Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (Pocket Books ed., New York, 1967); *Kant's Political Writings* ed. and introd. by Hans Reiss and trans. by H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge, 1971).

The conviction which led in the past to the collapse of societies, based on class inequalities, and to the birth of societies, based on equality of rights, has led in recent years to a new awareness of the need for justice in international relationships. This does not mean, of course, that now unanimity exists on the theoretical level regarding human rights; in fact, there are still several controversial issues in this sphere. Much less does it mean that practice has changed significantly on the national and international level. The tendency of States to assert themselves in relation to their subjects and to other States still remains and cannot be eradicated or even restrained completely, since it forms an essential part of the human make-up. One can say, however, that in principle the world of today accepts that each and every person has a dignity and worth of his or her own.

Hence, the act of faith of which we are speaking in this context has a *global dimension*. Even though not more than fifty-six governments took part in the foundation of the United Nations Organization and the formulation of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, one may say, particularly in view of the subsequent wider participation by the peoples of the world in this Organization and in the ratification of international human rights' documents, the whole of mankind has practically adhered to the faith in the intrinsic dignity and worth of the human person in recent years. As a consequence, it has become generally accepted nowadays to treat questions of human rights as a matter of universal concern.

A convenant involves a *pledge*. The test measuring the strength of the secular faith in human rights is the degree of commitment which this faith generates in favour of such rights. Accordingly, the *Universal Declaration* recalled: "Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms."[19] One may surely say that the commitment which the Member States have undertaken was more of a moral than a juridical character, as no commensurate authority was established to enforce it. Yet the United Nations sought to give further support to the norms of the *Universal Declaration* by means of a number of covenants and conventions. The most important were the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (1966), the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (1966), the *International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination* (1966) and the *International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid* (1973). Besides, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and

19. Preamble.

Cultural Organization (UNESCO) made significant contribution to the promotion of human rights in the fields of labour and education respectively.

Moreover, one should note the measures which have been taken in modern times to ensure, as far as possible, observance of human rights. On the national level, several countries adopted a truly democratic constitution granting only limited power to the State precisely to guarantee the free exercise of individual rights and giving every person the chance of seeking, if necessary, court protection. To give further proof of their belief in fundamental human rights certain European countries adopted the *European Convention of Human Rights* and instituted the European Court of Human Rights to enable their subjects to appeal to a foreign court, if they are not satisfied with the judgement given in their own country.

A more widespread type of action to which the new awareness of human dignity has led is the formation of human rights' groups with the aim of making a continual assessment of the local situation. This was actually one of the developments taking place following the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference of 1975. As a result of the importance given by this document to human rights, groups were formed both in Western and Eastern countries to bring violations of human rights to national and international cognizance. The International Helsinki Federation, representing human rights' committees in Austria, Canada, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States, was set up to coordinate and promote action on behalf of human rights in these countries and elsewhere.

Faith in the dignity and worth of the human person, the *Universal Declaration* and other similar documents suggest, presupposes recognition of the *transcendence* of the human person. It is not race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status which define man and his rights. Historically, the belief that one race is superior to another led to hideous crimes against humanity; the belief that one religion only (identified with the true religion) should have the right to exist in society prevented the development of the right to religious freedom, while heritics were persecuted and even condemned to death; the belief that one's social rank determined one's rights and privileges, justified the institution of slavery for many years. Even in pre-modern times, however, the transcendence of the human person was affirmed by such philosophical movements as Stoicism and the *jus gentium* tradition and especially by the Judeo-Christian relgion. But the pre-modern belief in the transcendence of the human person could not serve to transform social relationships in a radical manner, as it presumed that the nature of society, involving a number of inequalities, was something sacred, and, hence, immutable. Today it is generally accepted that society

should change and adapt itself to give all its members a chance to an increasingly wider participation.

Hence, the modern faith in fundamental rights, correctly understood, implies a constant *critical attitude toward every form of ideology.* Ideologies have the tendency, directly or indirectly, to subordinate the human person to some secondary value. The faith in the intrinsic dignity and worth of every person can very usefully serve as a liberating memory of the transcendence of the human being. What man is cannot be defined, because he is a mystery which no definition can embrace. Similarly, what is good for man is a very complex question which is falsely answered, if it is answered one-sidedly. What man is and what is good for him are questions to which history can suggest only an imperfect answer. Rightly enough, the modern concept of human rights is no longer related to a fixed order of nature but to a history with an open future. In other words, it presupposes that man is not asked to conform himself to a pre-given world but to transform the world and make it a more human place to live in. Transformation of the self and the world is an ongoing process, requiring constant attention to the emerging possibilities of a better way of life and determination to use such possibilities as profitably as one can.

It is especially the recognition of man's transcending nature that make the modern faith in human rights Christian at least in an implicit way. The confession that in man lie a worth that cannot be measured and a mystery that cannot be fathomed completely is already a confession, albeit indirectly and inarticulately, in God as the mystery of the world – the mystery in relation to which the whole world of creation, above all man, acquires a yet deeper dimension. The correspondence of the secular faith in man with the Christian faith in God emerges even more closely, when considering its communal character and practical orientation. In fact, the faith which God wants is one which people are meant to share with each other and to put into practice.

The modern secular faith in human rights, however, is not just a faith requiring the light of Christian faith to realize its full potential. It is not merely a faith which needs explicitation. It is also a faith which offers new possibilities for understanding the deeper implications and satisfying the real exigencies of God's covenant with man. Mankind today is aware of its growing unity and interdependence, its obligation to respect the dignity and rights of each and every person and, finally, its responsibility to change society on the national and international level in a way as to enable every person to participate freely and intelligently in the available economic, social and cultural goods. Besides, mankind today possesses more adequate means to build itself into a truly human community than it possessed in the past. Such developments are certainly of very great interest for the Christian

community in its effort to respond positively and creatively to the divine presence in history.

The ascending or inductive approach in theology is a valid one. Theology should lead from reflection on human experience, as a historically developing reality, to revelation. But the descending or deductive approach is equally valid. Theology should also lead from reflection on the Word of God to human experience. In other words, one should ask not only what the secular faith in human rights can contribute to a more adequate understanding of the Christian faith in God but also what the Christian faith in God can contribute to a fuller understanding of the secular faith in human rights.[20]

Seeing human rights in the context of the covenant[21] between God and man means learning to see:

a) their promotion more as a religious than a moral duty;
b) their violation more as a sacrifice than a crime;
c) their realization more as a gift than a task.

The Promotion of Human Rights

When seen in the context of the Christian faith, the promotion of human rights becomes a religious obligation which is meant to be much more binding than any purely human norm.

In the story of the Old Testament covenant Egyptian domination of the Jewish people is seen more than an injustice provoking human disapproval, protest and denunciation. It is seen primarily as something against which God Himself rebels and intervenes to eliminate: "...I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold in bondage and I have remembered my covenant... I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage..."[22] The Jewish faith which Christianity has inherited sees and experiences God as the liberator. God intervenes in

20. The ascending and descending approach may be regarded as complementary (Cf. International Theological Commission, "Theses de dignitate necnon de iuribus personae humanae" in *Gregorianum* 66 (1985), 8 – 23, pp. 11 – 12.

21. In my opinion, the theme of the covenant provides a more adequate theological perspective for the treatment of human rights than such themes as the *imago Dei,* the Incarnation, the Church and liberation because, being the basic theme of the Old and New Testament, it includes the foregoing themes. This is the theme used by the International Theological Commission in the document mentioned in the previous footnote. Moltmann distinguishes between liberation, covenant and the right of God and develops a theology of human rights in relation to each one of the three salvation events. I am taking liberation (exodus) as a prologue and God's right to man as an epilogue to the covenant.

22. Ex 6:5 – 6.

human history to bring out of bondage. Of course, man may fall into various forms of slavery, including slavery to oneself, but whatever is enslaving him and preventing him from living in freedom and participating in social life is a contradiction of God's will. The story of the exodus should serve as a corrective against spiritualizing tendencies within Christianity. God is the liberator of the whole man. Socio-political liberation is necessary, even though it is insufficient by itself to ensure integral liberation and development.

It is important to note also that the Judeo-christian faith does not look at God as the god of one people. It differs from most other faiths in that it affirms that God is the creator of man and the world. Hence, the liberation which He brings does not mark a victory of a particular nation over another; it is a sign of His enduring protest against the enslavement of man by man.

In fact, the story of creation provides the background to that of exodus and the covenant and serves as a guard against any particularistic interpretations of the Deity.[23] The God whom the chosen people acknowledged as the liberator is the creator of all men. He is the author of life. He calls every man and woman into being and commissions them to take care of each other and the rest of creation. Every man and woman has his or her intrinsic dignity and worth, for God created every person in His own image and likeness. Unlike some of the neighbouring nations which regarded the king as someone resembling the divine and, hence, superior to the rest, the Jewish people affirmed that every person is created in the image of God and is entitled to an equally good treatment.[24] Seen in the context of the biblical story of creation, the dignity of every human person, which human rights' documents today clearly affirm, obtains a new significance and calls for an ever greater and more authentic respect.

The story of the covenant itself emphasizes that the creation of a new bond between God and His people implies the creation of a new form of life among the people themselves. The decalogue involved a double recognition: the right of God over man and the rights of men *vis-à-vis* each other. If the people are really God's people, then no human power has the right to enslave it and no on has the right to enslave another. Respect for life, marriage and the family, property and mutual trust is the test of a genuine faith in God. Trust in God requires the development of trustworthy relationships within the human community. Loyalty to God demands loyalty to each and every human being.

23. Westermann, *op.cit.*, pp. 16 – 18.
24. Cf. Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation: An Ecological Doctrine of Creation* (London, 1985), pp. 218 – 219.

Respect for human rights becomes a religious obligation when it is undertaken as a response to God's love for mankind. As a religious obligation, such respect has to be continually revised to see to what extent it is meeting not just the demands of justice but also those of human solidarity in the modern world. The covenant bound God's people not to kill, not to steal, not to bear false witness and so forth. But observance of the decalogue would be complete only if it opened up the person to accept and love God with all one's heart, strength and might and the neighbour as oneself.[25] This meant that the commandment would serve its ultimate purpose, if it transformed itself into a spontaneous life of unbounded love. By Christian standards, respect for the dignity and rights of man presupposes but goes beyond the strict requirements of justice to take the form of love and mercy.

The People of God is required to practise a specific kind of love and mercy. This is the love and mercy which dispose one to break through social prejudice and regard any person in need as one's neighbour calling for help and solidarity. In every family, in every town or village, in every country or region, in every place where people live, meet and work there are always some who lag behind, who fail to integrate themselves and eventually become isolated, who gradually begin to move away from society or against it. It is love and mercy which make people develop a more human sense of justice and adapt themselves and the social system to meet the needs of those who are not catered for at the moment.

This was already the heart of the prophetic message in the Old Testament.[26] Jesus took it over and made it the centre of his own life and teaching. He was born away from where people normally live, because there was no other place for him elsewhere. He died crucified between two criminals. During his life, he was continually surrounded by ordinary people; he was sought by public sinners and invited to their homes; he was approached by the sick and the handicapped. When asked by the disciples of John the Baptist to give his own identity, he answered: "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them."[27]

When interpreted in the context of the covenant, the obligation to defend and promote the dignity and rights of man assumes a dimension which is much deeper than any one can conceive on the basis of a purely human sense of duty. It can and should translate itself into the concrete

25. Dt 6:5; Mt 22:34 – 40; Mk 12:28 – 31; Lk 10:25 – 27.
26. Westermann, *op.cit.*, pp. 13 – 14.
27. Mt 11:4 – 5.

demands of justice but it would not be adequately fulfilled, until it takes the form of love and mercy, that is, a genuine interest in those who are in need of help and support.

The Violation of Human Rights

Perhaps the most original contribution of the Christian faith to human rights lies in the way in which it interprets their violation. A violation of human rights is a crime for which the law of the land generally provides suitable punishment. The problem, however, is what society regards as a violation of human rights. Human rights may be violated and yet society does not disapprove and much less does it provide any appropriate remedy.

One usually resorts to the image of the sacredness of order and/or progress to justify even serious lack of respect for human dignity and rights. Totalitarian regimes seek to justify restriction or even suppression of fundamental rights on grounds of national security or internal peace (that is to protect the country from allegedly foreign interference or from apparently uncontrollable internal strife). In its early stages, liberal capitalism condoned poverty among the working classes, alleging that this is a necessary evil for the general economy to thrive. Communism tends to justify restriction of civil and political rights to ensure the success of the proletariat revolution. Experiments in bioethics and other fields of research are being conducted today very often without much sensitivity to human rights for the sake of scientific progress.

One may also resort to the image of the scapegoat to remove the sense of guilt for having violated the rights of individuals or groups. This is a very primitive mechanism used to cope with guilt problems but it is still astonishingly very common even nowadays. When something goes wrong, the tendency is to point to someone or something as the cause of evil. The blame is transposed from the self or the group to some outside source. This kind of exercise, which takes place very often on an unconscious level, exempts from individual and collective self-examination and justifies harm done to innocent people.[28]

The story of the Biblical covenant, particularly the death of Jesus Christ, exposes the harmful character of the foregoing false interpretations of suffering. Jesus was accused of political, social and religious destabilization and judged as a grave menace to the established order. Apparently, Jesus was arrested, tried and sentenced in accordance with the law of the land. His death was the execution of a judgement passed by the

28. On the rôle of evil images on the personal and social level see H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Meaning of Revelation* (Macmillan Paperback ed., New York and London, 1960), pp. 73ff.

civil authority of the day. From the legal point of view, his death was not a crime.

The death of Jesus reminds us of the horrifying fact that the suffering and even death of innocent people may be caused by those who are responsible in society for the protection of human rights. Very serious crimes may be committed without being recognised for what they are. The memory of Jesus' Passion and Death should, therefore, alert us not to take restrictions and, much less, denials of human rights too lightly. A crime is not eliminated by explaining it away.

The Christian would prefer the personal to the impersonal, the concrete to the abstract form of language when speaking on human suffering. Behind every case of a violation of human rights, he is supposed to see a suffering person pointing to Jesus hanging on the Cross. The mystery of the Incarnation is the mystery of God's presence in man. In Jesus of Nazarth the human is united with the divine, man is united with God. More precisely, however, the story of Jesus of Nazareth remains the story of God present "in the form of a slave."[29] To the question where is God here and now, the Christian answer is: God is present everywhere but he is present in a special way in those who are deprived of their rights.

So the Christian should never remain neutral when the exercise of human rights is at stake. Personal involvement in this vital area of human life is a form of participation in the Passion of Jesus still going on in the suffering of men and women throughout history. Solidarity with all those whose rights are violated means solidarity with the suffering God. As the bearer of the memory of the crucified God, the Christian community should be among the first to side with the victims of injustice and oppression. Since the Christian faith is not meant simply to interpret but also and, above all, to change the world, the Christian community should never resign itself to the *status quo* but do its part to enable everyone to exercise one's rights as far as possible in the circumstances.

As part of society in general, the Christian community should work along with all people seeking justice, truth, human solidarity and freedom in order to expose injustice, untruth, conflict and oppression. Society usually succeeds in realizing that human rights have been violated through a long and laborious process in which individuals and groups could also have had to pay dearly for pressing on justice to be done, untruth to be confessed, conflict to be resolved and oppression to be broken. At the same time, the Christian community does not believe that by recognizing the crime which has been perpetrated and by fixing the punishment which is to be awarded the deeper requirements of justice, truth, human solidarity and

29. Ph 2:7.

freedom are fulfilled. While it is indispensable for society to acknowledge evil and try to restrain it by apprropriate means, including coercion, it is necessary for society to heal itself of the wounds it suffers through the violation of human rights.

The violation of human rights raises the problem of reconciliation.[30] How are those who have gained recognition of their legitimate rights to reconcile themselves with a society, a group or an individual that have been earlier oppressing them? In my opinion, Marx assumed too much when anticipating the almost spontaneous emergence of a free human society following a violent communist revolution. The slave who has to fight for his freedom usually tends to oppress his former master. The affirmation of justice, truth and freedom or the recognition of human rights is imperfect, until it expresses itself in the affirmation of human solidarity through reconciliation. Basically, the problem is how people are to interpret the suffering caused by the violation of their rights in a way as to make it possible for reconciliation to take place. The Christian faith has a significant solution to offer to this problem.

The story of the Cross manifests the pervading presence of sin in the world. The people who accused Jesus, the soldiers who arrested, tortured and killed him, the Sanhedrin which convicted him, Pilate who sentenced him to death, Judas who betrayed him, Peter who denied him, the disciples who abandoned him – all these were guilty of sin to a greater or lesser extent. But the sin for which Jesus died is *the sin of mankind.* This Christian truth is the basis of solidarity between oppressors and oppressed.

The story of the Cross manifests also the highest expression of love which Jesus can show. This story does not show only how evil man can be toward Jesus but also how good Jesus can be toward man. The story of the new covenant which Jesus established between God and man is the story of the mystery of divine love exposing itself to the risk of rejection and forgiving every time it is rejected, offering peace while gently showing its wounds. Jesus saw himself more than as a victim of injustice. He saw himself as one dying for those who were killing him. His disciples saw in his death more than a crime. They saw in it a sacrifice pleasing to God, that is, a self-offering love.[31]

According to the Christian faith, victims of injustice would act

30. St. Paul recalls that a primary task of the Christian community is the ministry of reconciliation through Jesus Christ (2 Cor 5:18 ff.). See also the appeal of the (1974) Synod on Human Rights and Reconciliation *Enchiridion Vaticanum,* vol. 5, pp. 380 – 383.
31. Heb 9:11 ff.

creatively, if they try to conform themselves with the Victim Jesus Christ. Like Jesus during the trial, they should not be afraid to affirm the truth, even though this would expose them to the risk of falling out of love with the powers that be and facing unpleasant consequences. The behaviour of a defenceless Jesus throughout the trial, especially his courage to speak the truth publicly, at a most critical hour, is (according to the Christian faith) the best form of self-defence. Beyond the coercive means available in human society for the purposes of affirming fundamental rights lies the strategy of an unprotected Jesus fearlessly affirming his own identity, his dignity and his rights as a unique person. When people became victims for having stood up for their own rights or those of others, let them understand that the same thing has happened to Jesus. Jesus triumphed in the end. His death was the source of a new life. It was a sacrifice, because it was an affirmation of the absolute worth of that very thing which was being taken away. It was a memorable confession of the basic truth that life is worth living if it is lived well. Dying for justice and freedom is the best proof one can give to show how strongly one believes in a just and free life.

Like the Victim Jesus Christ, victims of injustice are called to offer themselves for those who are making them suffer. Negatively, this means refusing to hate or derive pleasure and satisfaction from the thought of eventual retribution, human or divine. Positively, it means being always ready to forgive and allow the wounds of injustice to heal as time goes by.

The Christian strategy, therefore, is not against the use of coercive means for purposes of self-defence. It includes this and goes beyond it. To victims of injustice the Christian faith proposes the example of the Victim Jesus Christ. He teaches self-affirmation through self-expression and change through repentance.

The Realization of Human Rights

Continuing action on behalf of human rights is possible only on the basis of hope. This is the hope that a more human world will emerge as a result of the efforts which people make in defence of human rights in spite of the tragic and frustrating fact that such rights are always being violated in some way or another. It has been this human hope which led to the foundation of the United Nations and the formulation of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* after the painful experience of two world wars. Hope has been behind every historical initiative, individual or collective, in favour of human rights.

What new dimension does this hope acquire when seen in the context of

the story of the Christian covenant?[32] The covenant between God and man requires justice towards others and love of neighbour. It is a relationship imposing specific obligations. The story of the covenant, however, is a story of obligations undertaken and broken continuously in one form or another. And it is a story of a steadfast and forgiving love on the part of God. While recalling man's sin and its painful consequences, it announces new times when mankind will be once for all re-united in perfect justice and love. In Jesus Christ God has already sealed his love for man and man has sealed his love for God and other men, for in the person of Jesus Christ there is God in man and man in God, God's love for man and man's love for God and for each other. History continues to manifest man's rejection of God and neighbour (sin) and at the same time it continues to give signs of the active presence of the Holy Spirit, that is, God as a purifying, elevating and healing power (grace). This aspect of the Christian faith has very important consequences for a correct understanding of the finality and outcome of the action performed on behalf of human rights.

Such action is, in the first place, not to be directed simply to the exercise of a series of rights. Surely, the dignity of man is the basis and source of specific rights to which one can never put an end. But these individual rights are means to allow each and every man to develop himself or herself fully. Hence, the right to integral development as Vatican II calls it, is the right to which all other rights are supposed to lead.[33]

The problem in this context is how to understand the relationship between development and the Kingdom of God or eternal life as the Synoptics and St. John respectively say when speaking of the new life proclaimed and inaugurated by Jesus Christ.[34] Development is something to which every person has a right. The Kingdom of God or eternal life is a reality to which one can lay no claim, because it is a divine gift. One can pray for it and accept it as something bestowed from above, not by way of remuneration but as a sheer gift.

One is not identical with the other. Human development indicates the possibility of satisfying man as a being always open to "higher" needs. Its contents may only be determined up to a certain extent, because man can

32. On the relation between "Christian" and "secular" hope see André Dumas, "The Christian's Secular Hope and His Ultimate Hope" in *Technology and Social Justice: A Symposium Sponsored by the International Humanum Foundation* ed. by Roland H. Preston (London, 1971) 163 – 186; Paul Verghese, "This World and the Other", *ibid.*, 187 – 201.

33. Cf. David Hollenbach, *Claims in Conflict: Retrieving and Renewing the Catholic Human Rights Tradition* (New York, Ramsey, Toronto, 1979), pp. 84 – 89.

34. Cf. *Theology Meets Progress* ed. by Philip Land (Rome, 1971); R.H. Preston, *op.cit.*, pp. 99 – 160.

never reach a stage in history where all his or her needs are completely fulfilled. Complete fulfillment lies beyond history. The Christian faith identifies complete human fulfillment with the Kingdom of God as a reality transcending history.

The Christian, however, has not the privilege of knowing what others do not know about the content of human development.[35] Faith in the Kingdom of God or eternal life could protest against any ideology or utopia which pretend to be able to pronounce or announce all the ingredients of human development. Rather than trying to deduce practical conclusions from a pre-fabricated notion of development, one should note those rights which are threatened and those rights which are emerging. If the human cannot be entirely defined, it can be somehow experienced negatively through its absence and positively through its appearance in history at least in a partial form. Both the threat against existing human rights and the promise of new human rights have to be properly taken into account.

The German sociologist, Ralf Dahrendorf, recounts how he experienced a strong yearning for freedom as a result of his confinement, very early in his life, in a Nazi concentration camp.[36] When deprived of a right, a person or group suffers but the suffering can awaken even a stronger desire for the right which is being denied and a more powerful determination to work for its recognition. Schillebeeckx uses the phrase "negative dialectics" to describe this human phenomenon.[37] Historically, the negation of human rights, although painful and unjust in itself, has often led to a sharper conciousness of the threat of injustice to human life and a deeper desire to re-affirm those rights which are being violated.

In theological language, acknowledgement of injustice, in all its forms, is called *confession of sin*. When injustice is recognised as something sinful, it acquires a more radical significance: it is seen not merely as a rupture in the texture of human life but also as a rupture in the texture of that life which God wants to share with man on a personal and social level. Besides, such confession when motivated by faith in God's promise of forgiveness, is a step toward a change of attitude and behaviour. Indeed, confession of sin is authentic to the extent that it leads to such a change. This is one of the reasons why one cannot speak, at least from a theological point of view, of the historical realization of human rights as something depending solely on human effort. In a sense the realization of human rights in history is a

35. Cf. Dietmar Mieth, "Das 'Christliche Menschenbild' – eine unzeitgemäße Betrachtung?" in *Theologische Quartalschrift* 163/1 (1983), 1 – 15.
36. Cf. *The Listener*, 14.11.1974, p. 622.
37. Cf. E.Schillebeeckx, *The Understanding of Faith: Interpretation and Criticism* trans. by N.D. Smith (London, 1974), pp. 91 – 95.

task, because it requires the cooperation of man. In another sense, it is a gift, because it presupposes acknowledgement of guilt and acceptance of forgiveness.

The desire for a truly human life which the negative experience of the denial of human rights may awaken in the heart of men and women may also bear fruit. It may express itself through a number of appropriate concrete measures to redress injustice and protect the person from possible future violations of his or her rights. As it has been already noted, history contains many examples of this kind.

Theologically speaking, one may call the concrete steps taken in the course of history to defend and promote the dignity and rights of man approximations or foreshadowings of the Kingdom of God or eternal life. This Kingdom or life will manifest itself fully at the end of time as the God-given goal of history. Whenever it manifests itself in history, in the form of concrete proof of respect of self and neighbour, the manifestation is only an anticipation of or a prelude to its total and final appearance. In the course of history human rights will continue to be violated, perpetuating the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ. At most, what we can hope and work for is that suffering and death may give birth to a qualitatively new kind of life. The struggle for liberation may put an end to a definite type of oppression but it may generate eventually new forms of oppression. The dialectical movement of history, which proceeds from oppression to liberation and from liberation to oppression, will resolve itself in the triumph of freedom over slavery, truth over falsehood and solidarity over division not without human cooperation, for much depends on what man and women do in this field. But, ultimately, man's reconciliation with himself, others and the world remains a gift; it remains a goal which man can only desire as a world "other" than the present one and which the Christian can only discern in history in the form of "signs of transcendence" – pointers to that world which God has already given in Jesus Christ and is offering again and again in the course of history until the end of time.

Conclusion

In a way, mankind needs no help from theology to continue to work on behalf of human rights. Its efforts in this sphere are sustained by a secular faith in the possibility of making life more human in spite of continuing limitations, weaknesses and failures. This faith has been bringing the people of the world closer to each other and eliciting increasingly more effective measures for the protection and promotion of human rights. It implies a covenant, that is, an agreement, in this case, collective, to a specific kind of commitment. Basic to such a covenant is hope, again of a secular nature, in

the successful outcome of the whole undertaking. In other words, the problem as to the worthwhileness of working for the defence of human rights in a world where human rights are continually being violated and the possibility of a different, "more human" world to emerge has received a human answer which has proved historically very useful.

Theology proceeds precisely from the covenant implied in the secular faith in human dignity and rights. It studies the transformation which such a covenant undergoes when interpreted in the light of God's covenant with man. The gations of people to respect each other's rights, as human beings, acq...s a wider and deeper dimension as soon as it is understood as an obligation which is not merely imposed by man on man (moral) but by God to man (religious). Similarly, violations of human rights appear more serious when viewed not just as offences against man but offences against God Himself; they can themselves be creative of a new life, if victims of injustice look upon their sufferings as a continuation of Jesus' self-sacrifice on the Cross. Like their fellow men and women, Christians require hope to work for a different world, but their hope is nourished on the divine promise of the reconciliation of the world through Jesus Christ.*

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ERRATA CORRIGE

Page:	*Lines from Top*	*Corrections*
53	4	principle for princible
54	43	thrusts for thursts
57	14	communication for communications
57	27	Luis for Louis
61	35	Gen 11,27 for Gen 2,27
62	3	*m^{e}ʾod* for *m^{e} od*
63	28	*ʾîš* for *îš*
65 et passim	10	*hāʾāres* for *ha ares*
65 et passim	19	Hebrew quote should read: *w^{e}lōʾ nāśāʾ ʾōtām hāʾāres lāšebet jahdāw*
65	20	waw for way
67	28	*ʾetnennāh* for *ʾetnennah*
67	32	Abram's for Abrams
69 et passim	22	*b^{e}ʾelonê mamreʾ* for *b^{e} elonê mamre*
69 et passim	24	*nāʾ* for *na*
69	27	intervenes for intervens
71	10	*wayyar^{e}ʾ* for *wayyarʾ*
73 et passim	10	(a) Hebrew should read: *w^{e}ʿad bêtʾ ēl*
73 et passim	11	(b) *ʿad hammāqôm ʾăšer hāyāh šām ʾohŏlōh batt^{e}hillāh*
73 et passim	12	(a′) *bên bêtʾ ēl ûbên hāʿāy*
73	13	(b′) for (d′)
73 et passim	13	*hammizbēah* for *hammizbeah*
73 et passim	22	*bariʾšŏnāh* for *bari šonah*
73 et passim	24	Hebrew should read: *wayyiqrāʾ šām ʾabrām b^{e}šēm Yhwh*
75	18	*mē^{e}ālāy* for *meʿālî*
79	19	*ʿôlām* for *ʿolam*

Volume number should read XXXVIII instead of XXXIX.

GEN 13: ABRAHAM DISCOVERS THE LAND AS GOD'S GIFT

SEARCHING OUT THE AUTHOR'S INTENTION

Anthony Abela

1. How far Pope Pius XII's hermeneutical norm *"qua perspiciatur et definiatur, quid scriptor dicere intenderit"* may still be regarded as "summam interpretandi normam?"[1] Some approaches to the biblical text abandon this norm almost on principle: "We know, as students of literature, that the author's intention, his goals in writing for his contemporary audience, and his religious convictions, play a small role indeed in literary criticism and, more important, in the analysis of literary texts. We may be familiar with all this information, but we do not depend on it for interpretation, even with an avowedly religious poet such as Milton."[2] Diachronical analyses tend to obscure the concept with their insistance on seeing the text as a multi-levelled reality which owes its existence to several *intentiones* of several *auctores*.[3]

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1. *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (30th September 1943), *EB*, 557. "Quo in opere exsequendo ante oculos habeant interpres sibi illud omnium maximum curandum esse, ut clare despiciant ac definiant, quis sit verborum biblicorum sensus quem litteralem vocant .... ut auctoris mens luculenter patescat" ibid., *EB* 550.

2. Kenneth R.R. Gros Louis, "Some Methodological Considerations", *Literary Interpretations of Biblical Narratives*, II (eds. Kenneth R.R. Gros Louis/James S. Ackerman) (Abingdon; Nashville 1982) 16. This extreme position has been described as a miniature of the "antihistorical bias" nurtured as a reaction against the excesses of historical scholarship. Cfr. Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative* (Indiana University Press; Bloomington 1985) 7 – 8.

3. On diachronic and synchronic analysis cfr. Vern S. Poythress, "Analysing a Biblical Text: Some Important Linguistic Distinctions", *Scottish Journal of Theology* 32 (1979) 113 – 137 especially pp. 130 – 134. M. Sternberg distinguished between source-oriented inquiry and discourse-oriented inquiry. The former "concentrates on the real-life process that generated and shaped the biblical text: the origins and features of the material (documents, traditions) that went into the Bible, the passage from oral to written transmissions, the identity of the writers or schools, the modes of editorial work, the tampering by way of interpolation, scribal

Besides, the relatively recent appropriation by biblical scholarship of the methodology and principles of narrative poetics[4] has rendered the situation rather more complicated; for in the ambit of literary narrative art a distinction is usually drawn between the *author/writer* and the *narrator:* "Ce qui veut dire que, dans l'art du récit, le narrateur n'est jamais l'auteur, déjà connu ou encore inconnu, mais un rôle inventé et adopté par l'auteur."[5] "...Le narrateur du roman n'est pas l'auteur.. le narrateur est un personnage de fiction en qui l'auteur s'est métamorphosé."[6] "Whoever the biblical writer was, he did not speak in his own voice and by his natural privileges. Hence the imperative need to distinguish the person from the persona: the writer as the historical man (citizen, partisan, functionary, hunter of facts and records) behind the writing from the writer

misadventure, etc. In each case, then, interest focuses on some object behind the text – on a state of affairs or development which operated at the time as a source (material, antecedent, enabling condition) of biblical writing and which biblical writing now reflects in turn", *Poetics* 15. As an instance of the *überlieferungsgeschichtlich* approach to Gen 13, I shall mention the contribution of Rudolf Kilian, *Die vorpriesterlichen Abrahamsüberlieferungen literarkritisch und traditionsgeschichtlich untersucht* (BBB 24; Bonn 1966) 17 – 35. Behind the present text of Gen 13 (and that of Gen 12) Kilian distinguishes a basic stratum (Grundschicht) made up of 12, 1. 4a. 6a. 7. 8; 13, 2.5. 7a. 8. 9. 10a. 11a. and 14 (without the clause: "after Lot had separated from him"). 15 – 17. The narrative that emerges after this shearing process is supposed to be "eine ätiologische Bewältigung eines theologischen Problems, nämlich der Diskrepanz von Verheissung und Erfüllung." (33). If the entire land of Canaan was promised to our forefathers how come that the Jordan Valley does not belong to us? This narrative which presumes to meet this query arose at some period in Israelite history when the Jordan Valley was under the rule of the Maobites – cfr Judg 3,12 – 30. By time this narrative was combined to the Sodom – Gomorrah complex so that the original stratum was enriched through 13, 12b. 13. 18. This aetiology began to function "als Exposition der Abraham – Lot – Erzählung" (E. Blum, *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte* (WMANT 57; Neukirchen – Vluyn 1984) 284; cfr. R. Kilian, "Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte Lots", *BZ 132 14* (1970) 23 – 37). Besides these "vorjahwistischer" there were "jahwistischer" expansions of the original narrative nucleus. The main contribution of the Yahwist consisted of the insertion (Einschub) of the "matriarch in danger" narrative: 12, 10 (perhaps). 11. 12. 13 a bß. 14. 15. 17 – 20 which till then led an independent existance. This operation obliged J to create a number of link verses, namely 12, 9; 13, 1.3.4. This J redaction was also responsible for 12,2 – 3; 12, 6b; 13, 7b. 10b. 14a. Together with other historians of tradition Kilian identifies a number of elements coming from the Priestly (P) redactional activity: 12, 4b. 5; 13, 6. 11b. 12 ab . Finally, there remain two "nicht fixierbare Glossen" which are "she-asses and camels" in 12, 16 and "and his house" in 12, 17. For an evaluation of Kilian's reconstruction of the text's history of tradition consult Albert de Pury, *Prômesse Divine et Légende Cultuelle dans le cycle de Jacob Gen 28 et les traditions patriarchales*, I (Gabalda; Paris 1975) 47 – 85. Without entering into a detailed discussion of the single elements of this tradition-history or of the construction in its entirety may I remark that nothing thursts itself out of doorstep of the hypothetical. Cfr. Sternberg, *Poetics*, 13. 16.

4. Cfr. Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (Basic Books; New York 1981) 3 – 21.

5. Wolfgang Kayser, "Qui raconte le roman?" *Poétique du Récit* (eds R. Barthes; W. Kayser; W.C. Booth; Ph. Hamon) (Points; Paris 1977) 71 (This essay appeared for the first time in W. Kayser, *Die Vortragsreise* (Francke Verlag; Bern 1958) 82 – 101.

6. Ibid, 72.

as the authorial figure reflected in the writing. The person (the object of genetics) may be lost beyond recovery, but the persona (the object of poetics) is very much there, pervading and governing the narrative by virtue of qualification denied to his historical, quotidian, flesh and blood self anyway. Being two faces of the same entity – two modes of authorial existence – these are no more mutually exclusive than identical. Rather, they always remain distinct in principle, and so accordingly do the lines of inquiry oriented to them – the one concerned with the writer's features or portrait as an individual and the other with his portrait as an artist. Infact, they not only preserve but also redouble their essential distinctiveness amidst the mysteries that surround the formation of the Bible while leaving its art of communication in full view."[7] Moreover, since Wayne C. Booth's famous book *The Rhetoric of Fiction*[8] the subtle distinction between "implied author" and "narrator" (beside the "author" of course) is normally admitted. Booth discusses these distinctions again in an essay published in 1967.[9] "Even the novel in which no narrator is dramatised creates an implicit picture of an author who stands behind the scenes, whether as stage-manager, as puppeteer, or as an indifferent God, silently paring his fingernails. This implied author is always distinct from the "real man" – whatever we may take him to be – who creates a superior version of himself as he creates his work; any successful novel makes us believe in an 'author', who amounts to a kind of 'second self'. This second self is usually a highly refined and selected version, wiser, more sensitive, more perceptive than any real man could be. In so far as a novel does not refer directly to this author, there will be no distinction between him and the implied undramatised narrator."[10] "... Most tales are presented as passing through the consciousness of a teller, whether an 'I' or a 'he'. Even in drama much of what we are given is narrated by someone, and we are often as much interested in the effect on the narrator's own mind and heart as we are in learning what else the author has to tell us.... But even the most naive reader must recognise that something mediating and transforming has come into a story from the moment that the author explicitly places a narrator into the tale, even if he is given no personal characteristics whatever. One of the most frequent reading faults comes from a naive identification of such narrators with the authors who create them. But in fact there is always a distinction, even though the author himself may not have been aware of it as he wrote. The created author, the 'second self', is

7. Sternberg, *Poetics*, 69.
8. (University of Chicago Press; Chicago 1961).
9. Wayne C. Booth, "Distance and Point-in-view: An essay in classification" *The Theory of the Novel* (ed. Ph. Stevick) (London/New York 1967) 87 – 107.
10. Ibid., 92.

built up in our minds from our experience with all of the elements of the presented story."[11] The implications of this discussion for our subject matter are easy to see: if the point-of-view that features more clearly in the text is that of the *narrator* how shall we arrive to that of the *author*? They may not coincide.

Other scholars, however, are aware that every literary text constitutes an act of communication involving a human decision that operates on both the semantic[12] as well as on the poetic[13] level. And this puts the *intentio auctoris* in the limelight. These scholars give the author's intention its due in the formation of a literary work without committing "the intentional fallacy"[14] of attributing all the text's meaning to this intention.[15] Within the Catholic tradition there has long existed the debate about the so-called *sensus plenior* of biblical texts.[16] And the most authoritative of the Church's recent documents on the Bible, the *Dogmatic Constitution on*

11. Ibid., 92–93. In the Bible "... the implied author and the narrator to whom he delegates the task of communication practically merge into each other... The biblical narrator is a pleni-potentiary of the author, holding the same views, enjoying the same authority, addressing the same audience, pursuing the same strategy, self-effacement included... no ironic distance separates these figures of maker and teller. They stand and fall together. And since keeping the two apart yields no practical gain, I shall employ the more univocal term 'narrator' to refer to the master of the tale in general" Sternberg, *Poetics,* 75.

12. "L'intenzione dell'autore è un atto della volontà sul linguaggio del quale determina il senso ... Con la propria intenzione egli precisa o delimita fra le molte possibiltà del linguaggio. Questa descrizione è valida se osserviamo dal basso il compito artigianale di ordinare parole. In realtà il processo inizia dal ricordo o dalla percezione globale che tende ad articolarsi in parole: è un processo di divisione che raccoglie a poco a poco vocaboli già delimitati, senza pensare a tutte le possibilità che tali parole o frasi offrono. L'autore ha assimilato il proprio vocabolario, gli schemi grammaticali ecc., nell'atto di esprimersi una forza configuratrice porta alla coscienza elementi del linguaggio con criteri selettivi." Luis Alonso Schökel, *Il dinamismo della Tradizione* (Paideia; Brescia 1970) 112–113.

13. "We sometimes forget that a story represents a narrator's choice.... just as the writing of history involves interpretation, so does telling a story. This is true both of stories which have a factual foundation and those which do not. Even when it reports actual events, a story represents a narrator's choice, for few events of our world are important enough to be remembered in story. The narrator also chooses how to tell the story. This choice will reflect the narrator's selective emphasis and values, and the story's composition helps to communicate the narrator's emphasis and evaluation to the reader... The narrator chooses the way which fits his purpose or limits his purpose to the narrative forms at his disposal, and so his purposes are mirrored by his stories", Robert C. Tannehill, "The Disciples in Mark: The Function of a Narrative Role", *Journal of Religion* 57 (1977), 387–388.

14. Cfr. W.K. Wimsatt/Monroe C. Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy" in *The Verbal Icon* (Noonday; New York 1958).

15. Cfr. R. Wellek/A. Warren, *Theory of Literature* (England[3] 1963) 42–43. "... Nelle opere puramente umane l'intenzione dell'autore è il fattore primordiale ma non unico nella determinazione del senso. L'interprete deve ricercare l'intenzione dell'autore ma non se ne può accontentare", Alonso Schökel, *Dinamismo*, 119. Cfr. Raymond E. Brown, *The Critical Meaning of the Bible* (Paulist Press; New York/Ramsey 1981) 30–33.

16. For bibliography cfr. Henning Graf Reventlow, *Problems of Biblical Theology of the Twentieth Century* (SCM Press; London 1986) 37–47.

Divine Revelation, reflects this certainty of scholarship that the author's intention cannot explain everything in the text: "Cum autem Deus in Sacra Scriptura per homines more hominum locutus sit, interpres Sacrae Scripturae, ut perspiciat quid Ipse nobiscum communicare voluerit, attente investigare debet, *quid hagiographi reapse significare intenderint et eorum verbis manifestare Deo placuerit*" (article 12).[17]

This conciliar statement alludes to what christians hold as the transcendental dimension of the biblical text, inspiration, which is not simply an "institutional rule for writing and reading" providing the biblical narrator with the source of his omniscience[18], but a mysterious "Dei cum homine communitas laboris ad unum idemque opus conficiendum"[19] which christian theologians still labour to understand and explain.[20] This divine/human partnership in the composition of the Bible renders V.S. Poythress's[21] schema of verbal communications rather more complicated, since it involves at least two authorial perspectives[22] and it may entail two levels of meaning within the same textual reality, a *sensus humanus* and a *sensus divinus*[23] which are distinct though intimately related: "... quod auctores inspirati seu hagiographi asserunt, retineri debeat assertum a Spiritu Sancto."[24]

17. *AAS* LVIII (5th November 1966) 823. For some commentary on this involved statement consult Alonso Schökel, *Dinamismo*, 107 – 119; Pietro Dacquino, *La Costituzione Dogmatica sulla Divina Rivelazione* (Elle DI CI: Collana Magistero Conciliare 3; Turin/Leumann 1967) 308 – 310.

18. Contra Sternberg, *Poetics*, 81 – 85.

19. Pope Benedict XV, *Spiritus Paraclitus*, 15th September 1920; *EB*, 448.

20. Karl Rahner, *Inspiration in the Bible. Questions Disputatae* 1 (Herder & Herder: New York[2] 1964); Louis Alonso Schökel, *The Inspired Word* (trans. Francis Martin) (Herder & Herder; New York 1966); cfr. James T. Burtchaell, *Catholic Theories of Biblical Inspiration since 1810* (Cambridge University Press; Cambridge 1969); Valerio Mannucci, *Bibbia come Parola di Dio* (Queriniana; Brescia 1981) 121 – 188; Raymond F. Collins, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Doubleday & Company; Garden City, New York 1983) 317 – 355; Robert Gnuse, *The Authority of the Bible* (Paulist Press; New York/Mahwah 1985).

21. "In a typical case of human verbal behaviour we find three elements (a) a speaker; (b) the discourse which he produces, and (c) the situation in which it is produced. To these three elements correspond three types of analysis, speaker analysis, discourse analysis and situational analysis. In the case of graphic material, of course, the first might be called author analysis and the second literary analysis", "Distinctions", 120.

22. Cfr. Dom Célestin Charlier, *La Lettura Cristiana della Bibbia* (Edizioni Paoline; Rome[5] 1979) 305 – 314.

23. Cfr. Alois Grillmeier, "The Divine Inspiration and the Interpretation of Sacred Scripture", *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, 3 (ed. Herbert Vorgrimler) (Burns & Oates/Herder & Herder; London/New York 1968) 238 – 239 for the relationship of the two *sensi*.

24. *Dei Verbum* art 11; *AAS* LVIII (1966) 822 – 823. "Across all doctrinal boundaries, inspiration simply figures as an institutional rule for writing and reading; and it is more liable to questioning than the Bible's rules of grammar... To make sense of the Bible in terms of its own conventions, one need not believe in either, but one must postulate both. And to postulate inspiration is to elevate the narrator to the status of omniscent historian, combining two

The research for the *intentio auctoris* is, therefore, still relevant. But with an important qualification. "As interpreters of the Bible, our only concern is with 'embodied' or 'objectified' intention; and that forms a different business altogether, about which a wide measure of agreement has always existed. In my own view, such intention fulfills a crucial role, for communication presupposes a speaker who resorts to certain linguistic and structural tools in order to produce certain effects on the addressee; the discourse accordingly supplies a network of clues to the speaker's intention. In this respect, the Bible does not vary from any other literary or ordinary message except in the ends and the rules that govern the forms of communication... 'intention' no longer figures as a psychological state consciously or unconsciously translated into words. Rather it is a shorthand for the structure of meaning and effect supported by the conventions that the text appeals to or devises: for the sense that the language makes in terms of the communicative context as a whole."[25] And perhaps the best approach to the conventions that the text appeals to or devises in order to arrive at the structure of meaning and effect is literary analysis.[26]

2. In approaching Genesis 13 as a literary expression there exists a fundamental question to be asked. This question probably includes the entire set of queries which Gros Louis believes a literary critic should consider in approaching a work of literature:[27] how may one reach to its "embodied" or "objectified" intention? A question of method, therefore.

Source oriented approaches diagnose the narrative as the splicing of two narrative threads, J's and P's.[28] These identify the narrative's meaning(s) with that of its presumed sources. Claus Westermann accepts vv. 6.11b.12a as "eine literarische Parallele, die eine andere Konzeption voraussetzt, hochstwahrscheinlich P"[29] but when towards the end of his commentary over this chapter the exegete discusses the "Ziel" of the

otherwise irreconciliable postures or models: the constrained historian and the licensed fiction-maker," Sternberg, *Poetics* 81. The acknowledgement of biblical inspiration belongs to the category of faith, indeed; but as we have already stated, inspiration is not "an institutional rule for writing and reading". The explanation of the narrator's omniscience lies elsewhere.

25. Sternberg, *Poetics* 9. Cfr. Wellek/Warren, *Theory*, 149.

26. We adopt Robert Alter's definition for the scope of this study: "By literary analysis I mean the manifold varieties of minutely discriminating attention to the artful use of language, to the shifting play of ideas, conventions, tone, sound, imagery, syntax, narrative viewpoints, compositional units and much else," *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 12.

27. "Methodological Considerations", 17–20.

28. Not to mention the more articulate source analysis which distinguishes at least two strata within the J source, cfr. for instance C.A. Simpson, *The Early Traditions of Israel. A critical Analysis of the Pre-Deuteronomic Narrative of the Hexateuch* (Oxford 1948) 70.

29. *Genesis* (BK 1/2; Düsseldorf 1981) 202.

narrative he seems to take into consideration only J's perspective.[30] Without entering the current debate about the validity of the so-called "Wellhausen hypothesis"[31] one may still remark that

(a) if such interweaving of sources did actually happen, P's "andere Konzeption" as the definitive "relecture" must have coloured the entire narrative;

(b) even if several fingers were involved in the making of this pie, "As far as the basic narrative traits and tactics that make up a storyteller's portrait are concerned, they all show an impressive family resemblance or, in diachronic terms, continuity: a unity of artistic persona in a variety of historical person."[32] This basically means unicity of authorial perspective as the text now stands.

Recently a number of *holistic approaches* appeared which refrain from reading Gen 13 without reference to its wider immediate context, the Abraham narrative.[33] Unfortunately these synchronic readings of the text tend towards summary and superficial exegesis of our narrative, unmindful of the minutae of its structural and literary make up. The result of these holistic approaches is that, notwithstanding the valid intuitions they offer here and there, what they say often hangs in mid-air and their criticism

30. Cfr. ibid., 212. For similar source-oriented exegesis of this text we refer to Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis. A Commentary* (SCM Press; London 1972) 170–174; John Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (Yale University Press; New Haven/London 1975) 209–226 especially 221–226; Robert Davidson, *Genesis 12–50* (Cambridge Bible Commentary; Cambridge 1979) 26–30.

31. To mention just a handful of authors engaged in the debate: R. Rendtorff, *Das überlieferungsgeschichtliche Problem des Pentateuch* (W. de Gruyter; Berlin/New York 1977): ibid., "The 'Yahwist' as Theologian. The Dilemma of Pentateuchal Criticism", *JSOT* 3 (1977) 2–45 which includes the responses from several authors; R. North, "Can Geography Save J from Rendtorff?" *Bib* 63 (1982) 47–55; V. Long, "Higher Criticism has Gone Bankrupt" *Homelitic and Pastoral Review* 83 (1, 1982) 50–57; A.H.J. Gunneweg, "Anmerkungen und Anfragen zur neueren Pentateuchforschung" *Theologische Rundshau* 48 (1983) 227–253; 50 (1985) 107–131; J.G. McConville, "The Pentateuch Today" *Themelios* 8 (3, 1983) 5–11; A.L. Nations, "Historical criticism and Current Methodological Crisis" *SJT* (1983) 59–71; A. Stock, "The limits of Historical Critical Exegesis", *BTB* 13 (1983) 28–31; S.L. Portnay/D.L. Peterson "Genesis, Wellhausen and the Computer. A Response", *ZAW* 96 (1984) 421–425. cfr. *ZAW* 94 (1982) 467–481, R. Rendtorff, "The Future of Pentateuchal Criticism", *Henoch* 6 (1984) 1–14; Y.T. Radday/H. Shore, *Genesis. An Authorship Study* (Biblical Institute Press; Rome 1985); J. Blenkinsopp, "The Documentary Hypothesis in Trouble", *Bible Review* 14 (1985) 22-32; R. Brown, "Historical Critical Exegesis and Attempts at Revisionism" *The Bible Today* 23 (1985) 157–165.

32. Sternberg, *Poetics*, 71.

33. I am referring particularly to Edwin M. Good, *Irony in the Old Testament* (The Almond Press; Sheffield[2] 1981) 81–114 especially 89–97; Kenneth R.R. Gros Louis, "Abraham I", "Abraham II", *Literary Interpretations of Biblical Narratives* (eds. K.R.R. Gros Louis/J.S. Ackerman) (Abingdon; Nashville 1982) 53–84; Robert L. Cohn, "Narrative Structure and Canonical Perspective", *JSOT* 25 (1983) 3–16; Larry R. Helyer, "The Separation of Abram and Lot: Its Significance in the Patriarchal Narratives" *JSOT* 26 (1983) 77–88.

nears rather "eisegesis'. We shall consider only Larry R. Helyer's essay on Gen 13.

Without bothering to examine in detail the various literary aspects of the text in question (except for its geographical perspective and the consequent self-exclusion of Lot from Canaan) Helyer devotes most of his essay (pp. 80 – 85) to a discussion on the relationship of Genesis 13 to the rest of the Abraham cycle. On the basis of David J.A. Clines' view of unicity of theme in the Pentateuch[34] and Walter Kaiser's emphasis on the centrality of the promise to Abraham in Genesis 12,1 – 3[35] the author arrives to the conclusion that the Abraham cycle is dominated by the theme of posterity "and more precisely with the question who will be Abraham's heir?" "Genesis 13, too centres on the problem of an heir."[36] He takes issue with the study of Walter Vogels, "Abraham et l'offrande de la terre (Gen 13)"[37] which saw the real heart of Genesis 13 as Abraham's willingness to sacrifice the land of Lot. Helyer considers Gen 13 as an "obstacle story"[38] narrating one of the setbacks to the fulfilment of God's promise of an heir to the patriarch.[39] From the importance accorded to Lot in the several reports in which he is mentioned in the introductory episodes of the Abraham narrative (11,27 – 12,9) the author arrives to the "probability that Lot was viewed by Abraham as his heir." Gen 13 narrates a crises because "Abram's heir-apparant virtually eliminates himself from the promise by leaving the land of promise, Canaan. Yet just at this juncture (after Lot had parted from him 13, 14) Yahweh reaffirms the promise of the land which will be given to Abrams offspring . . ."[40]

Helyer concludes: the primary purpose of Genesis 13 "is to draw attention to the crisis of faith which Lot precipitated by his choice of pasturage outside the land of Canaan. At stake is nothing less than Lot's elimination as heir to the covenant promise. Furthermore, this crisis provides its intended meaning within the entire Abraham cycle when it is seen as one of eight such crises which threaten the fulfilment of one aspect of the tripartite promise of Gen 12,1 – 3: 'I will make you into a great nation' (v.2). Thus the overall concern of the cycle is, Who will be Abraham's heir?"[41]

34. *The Theme of the Pentateuch* (*JSOT* Supplement Series 10; Sheffield 1982) 20.
35. *Toward an Old Testment Theology* (Zondervan; Grand Rapids 1978) 35.84 – 99.
36. "Separation", 81.
37. *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 4 (1974 – 75) 51 – 57.
38. "Separation" 80. This term is borrowed from Peter E. Ellis, *The Yahwist, the Bible's First Theologian* (Fides; Notre Dame 1968) 136.
39. "Separation", 83.
40. Ibid.
41. "Separation", 85.

Three are the problems with Helyer's ingenuous explanation:

(a) that Lot is viewed by Abram of the Abraham narrative as his heir is only a *probability*, and at least another explanation is possible for the several references to his presence with Abram in his travelling;[42]

(b) Gen 13 itself drops no hint at all that it is interested in the problem of who was to be Abram's heir; Abram may have meant to have Lot to the north or to the south of Canaan, but whose perspective it is which reckons the five cities of the plain as not belonging to the land of Canaan: Abram's or the narrator's?

(c) The view that Genesis 13 constitutes one of eight crisis narratives that keep the Abraham narrative together has little to recommend it in the narrative's dynamics itself.[43]

3. The present author shares with holistic approaches to Scripture the view that no episode of the Abraham narrative in Genesis may be interpreted in sheer isolation from its present wider literary context.[44] But situating the single episodes within this vital context does not dispense the literary critic from starting with a detailed analysis of the text's morphology and syntax,[45] its structural orientation, perspective, characterization patterns, its literary dynamics in short. And this is the manner the writer of this essay means to examine Gen 13 in order to discover the *intentio auctoris*.

3.1 Structuralising Elements

A deep reading of the episode under study would reveal that a number of linguistic phenomena are of poetic significance:

(a) *Circumstantial Clauses.* Their number is relatively high considering the length of the episode: vv. 2. 5. 6. 7b. 12. 13. 14, and often they occur in close succession. What is their function within our text? "Circumstantial clauses serve a variety of functions: to indicate synchroneity, to introduce new characters or new episodes ... Now it

42. Cfr. for instance Gros Louis, "Abraham I", 53 – 57.

43. The hypothesis that the Abraham narrative is so structured that narratives about trials alternate with others about "divine communications of benison and promise" had already been proposed by Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis II, From Noah to Abraham* (Jerusalem 1964) 294 – 297. But the present author has suggested that this view tends to ignore the internal dynamics of the single episodes. Cfr. Anthony Abela, *Reading the Abraham Narrative in Gen 2,27 – 25, 18 as a literary Unit.* (Dissertation: Pontifical Biblical Institute; Rome 1985) 2 – 3.

44. Cfr. Anthony Abela, "Genesis 15: A Non-Genetic Approach" *Melita Theologica* XXXVII (1986) 14.

45. Whatever insights one may shear from Gros Louis's "Abraham I" into the psychology of Lot and Abraham, one may not loose sight of the fact that the author worked on a translation not on the Hebrew text (p. 9). And this is a basic short-coming.

appears that in addition to these functions, certain circumstantial clauses also indicate point of view. This is true even in the absence of a verb of perception and or hinneh."[46] *We'abrām kābēd mᵉ od bammiqneh bakkesep ûbazzāhāb* (v.2) remarks the narrator. This circumstantial clause comes after a chain construct which narrates how Abram returned with all his belongings and relatives *mimmisrayim* towards the Negeb (v.1). Gen 13, 1 with its main verb *wayyaᶜal* that contrasts with the *wayyēred* of Gen 12, 10[47] is often considered as the conclusion to the previous episode as well as a passage to the following one.[48] This would leave the function to introduce the new episode to verse 2. From this verse we expect a narrative in which Abraham's belongings play some part. The next circumstantial clause which is separated from the first by a series of action words and geographical information (vv. 3–4) deals with riches as well: *wegam lᵉlôṭ hahōlēk 'et 'abrām hāyāh ṣō'n ûbāqār weᵓōhālîm* (v.5). The adverbial particle *wᵉgam* adds emphasis to the information imparted and confirms the intuition sheared from v.2 that this narrative concerns the characters' property. Through *wᵉgam* this second circumstantial clause recalls the first one.

The following circumstantial clause (v.6) is more complicated. It consists of a bicolon comprising two *wᵉlō'* clauses revolving around an explicative *kî* clause. The two *wᵉlō'* clauses are perfect parallels with identical endings: *lā šebet yahdāw*; the subjects of the two clauses are different: *hā'āres* in the first clause with the verb *naśa'*[49] qualified by *wᵉlō'*, included in the verb *yakᵉlû*. The *kî* clause has *ʳkûšam* for subject, pointing back to both Abram and Lot. Expressed graphically the complex would figure something like this:

(a) *wᵉlō' nāśā' 'ōtām hā'āres lāšebet yaḥdāw*
(b) *kî hāyāh rᵉkûšām rāb*
(c) *wᵉlō' yākᵉlû lāšebet yaḥdāw*

Verbatim and non-verbatim repetition in this complex is meant to emphasize that Abram and Lot could not settle together any longer.[50] The *aba* pattern

46. Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative* (Almond Press; Sheffield 1983) 63; Cfr. F.I. Andersen, *The Sentence in Biblical Hebrew* (Mouton; The Hague 1974) 77–91.

47. Cfr. G.R. Driver, "OrLH 'went up country' and YRD 'went down country'" *ZAW* 69 (1957) 74–77.

48. Cfr. George W. Coats, *Genesis with an Introduction to Narrative Literature*, I, *The Forms of the Old Testament Literature* (William B. Eerdmans; Grand Rapids, Michigan 1983) 116.

49. The Samaritan version suggested we parse *hā'āres* as feminine and amend the verb to *naśᵉ'ah*. Cfr. *KBH*. But in view of *'eres*'s possibility to be also of masculine gender, cfr. Ez 21,24, the present MT ought to be retained Cfr. *BDB*, 75b.

50. On the use of repetition for emphasis cfr. Alter, *Art*, 77; Berlin, *Poetics*, 65–66.

draws attention to the one factor which rendered common settlement impossible, *rᵉkûšam*, their possessions. The three indirect references to Abram and Lot together with the global expression *rᵉkûšam* to include vv. 2.5, mark the anaphoric character of the statement in verse 6. Here we have a "summary subscript"[51] to close a sub-unit within this episodic extension. This conclusion is confirmed by the presence at the head of the following sentence of introductory *wayhî* (v.7).[52]

In the seven verses that come next (vv. 7 – 13) we encounter two participial clauses and a circumstantial clause without the conjunction *wᵉ*. After we have been told of the quarrel between Abram's and Lot's herdsmen we read this unexpected comment: *wᵉhakkᵉnaʿanî wᵉhappᵉrizzî yōšēb bāʾāreṣ* (v. 7b). This clause follows the *wayhî* clause, while the construct chain is resumed in the succeeding sentence: *wayyōʾmer*. More than anything else we have here an interruption of the narration flow by the narrator to sandwich his own commentary on what he narrates.[53]

Another clause which breaks the narration is found in verse 13. Here again we read a value judgement about people who are not at all involved in the narrative dynamics of our text: *wᵉanšê sᵉdôm raʿîm wᵉhattaʾîm laYhwh mᵉʾōd*. This clause comes after we have been told that Lot settled (*yāšab*) among the cities of the valley and moved his tents *ʿad sᵉdôm* while Abraham *yāšab bᵉʾeres kᵉnaʿan* (v.12). Two observations can be made:

(i) In as much as the narrator's comment in verse 13 is attached to the place name *sᵉdôm* found immediately preceding it, we may not read verse 13 without verse 12.

(ii) Verse 12 itself is a circumstantial verbal clause without the introductory *wᵉ*. It looks explicatory to a previous statement about the two relatives being separated after the departure of Lot to his new settlement area (v. 11a): *wayyippārdû îs mēʿalʾāḥîw* (v. 11b). So that verse 12 carries the characteristics of a summary to which a commentary by the narrator is inserted (v. 13). After these two verses we should expect a new beginning.

The new beginning is marked by a circumstantial clause that also introduces a new character, *Yhwh: waYhwhʾāmarʾelʾabrāmʾaḥărê hippāred lôt mēʿimmô* (v.14): "Larger sections can be marked by the introduction of a new character. Frequently this involves the use of a circumstantial

51. On summary subscripts cfr. D.W. Baker, "Diversity and unity in the literary structure of Genesis" in *Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives* (eds. A.R. Millard/D.J. Wiseman) (Leicester 1980) 196.

52. On the role of *wayhî* to introduce new sentences or new paragraphs cfr. Baker, "Diversity and unity", 191 – 192, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (ed. K. Kautzsch) (Clarendon Press; Oxford² 1910, 1980) § 111 f – h.

53. This is known as "breaking frame" which is quite common in biblical narrative. Cfr. R. Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist. A Literary Study of the Deuteronomic History* (Seabury; New York 1980) 30 – 31; Berlin, *Poetics*, 57 – 58. 99; Sternberg, *Poetics*, 120.

clause, i.e. one which breaks the ordinary Hebrew narrative prose chain .... Commonly this is done by inserting the subject, which generally follows the predicate in Hebrew prose, between the word-consecutive and the verb."[54] The time indication about the moment *Yhwh* started to communicate with Abram confirms that here a new narrative sub-unit is envisaged.[55]

From what we have been saying it is easy to note how several of the circumstantial clauses play significant structuralising roles within Gen 13 as a narrative unit. The circumstantial clauses in vv. 2.14 are meant to introduce two sub-units while those in vv. 6.12 – 13 feature as concluding summaries to separate sub-units. Gen 13 would thus appear as a tripartite structured narrative unit made up of:

(i) VV. 2 – 6 in which only the narrative voice is heard and which furnish the reader with the necessary information to understand the ensueing story: we shall call this with George W. Coats[56] the narrative's exposition;[57]

(ii) VV. 7 – 13: here, besides the narrative voice, we hear Abram talking while we are ensured that Lot is "on scene" even though he simply listens to what his uncle has to say. As a result of what Abram says, Lot "acts", he chooses his separate settlement area and moves to his new grounds;

(iii) VV. 14 – 18: in this unit we encounter a new character, *Yhwh*, who does the speaking while Abram listens in silence. Towards the end of the unit Abram "acts", he strikes his tent and goes to settle in the south of Palestine where he engages in religious activities. We shall call vv. 7 – 13 and vv. 14 – 18 "scenic units."[58]

(b) *Leitwörter or Key-words.* Increasing attention is being paid in modern research on biblical narrative to the use of *Leitwörter* or key-words. "A *Leitword* is a word or word-root that recurs significantly in a text, in a

54. Baker, "Diversity and Unity" 192; cfr. Andersen, *Sentence*, 77 – 78.

55. Cfr. Baker, "Diversity and Unity", 190 – 192.

56. *Genesis*, 116; von Rad ignores the structuralising role in v. 6 and draws the demarcation line of the introductory sub-unit after verse 7, cfr. *Genesis,* 170 – 171.

57. "The paradigmatic biblical story... starts with a few brief statements that name the principal character or characters, locate them geographically, identify significant family relationships, and in some instances provide a succint moral, social, or physical characterization of the protagonist.... the opening exposition, then, is pretemporal, statistically enumerating data that are not bound to a specific moment in time: they are facts that stand before the time of the story proper" Alter, *Art,* 80; cfr. Jacob Licht, *Storytelling in the Bible* (The Magnes Press; Jerusalem 1978) 28.

58. This tripartite division of the text, based upon fine though visible demarcation elements, differs from the one proposed by Coats except for the first part, the exposition. Coats distinguishes also three parts in this episode: I Itinerary (v. 1), II Narrative body (vv. 2 – 17), III Itinerary (v. 18). "This unit is framed by itinerary notices (vv. 1, 18) each somewhat extrinsic to the unity of the whole" *Genesis*, 116. The narrative body in turn is made up of A, Exposition (vv. 2 – 6), B, Complication (v. 7); C, Denouement (vv. 8 – 17). This structuring ignores the role that the circumstantial clauses are playing within the narrative as a whole.

continuum of texts, or in a configuration of texts: by following these repetitions, one is able to decipher or grasp a meaning of the text, or at any rate, the meaning will be revealed more strikingly. The repitition.... need not be merely of the word itself but also of the word-root; in fact, the very difference of words can often intensify the dynamic action of the repitition.... The measured repetition that matches the inner rhythm of the text, or rather, that wells up from it, is one of the most powerful means for conveying meaning without expressing it."[59] Beside other uses, *Leitwörter,* therefore, function as unifying elements and as pointers to the semantic direction. In our text two may be considered as key-words, the term *ha ares*, "the land", occuring no less than eight times in significant points within the narrative, and the verb PRD in its niphal form, "to separate oneself from", with composite preposition *mēʿal* qualifying the person from whom the subject separates himself.

U. Cassuto[60] has already noted that the use of *hā āres* as a thematic key-word. Significantly the word occurs for the first time in the concluding statement of the exposition: v.6 which states that their possessions made common settlement impossible:

wᵉlō nāśā ōtam hā āres lāsebet yahdāw

The way of *wᵉlō* carries a consecutive sense because this statement rests on what the narrator has been saying about the huge possessions of both Abram and Lot (vv. 2.5):

> "so that the land could not support both of them dwelling together" (*RSV*)

In the third part of this statement, when we read *wᵉlō yakᵉlû lasebet yahdaw*, is the narrator insinuating that the two personages themselves are conscious of overpopulating the land with their herds? In other words, in repeating basically what he said in the first statement, is the narrator considering the issue from the characters' point of view?[61] Whosoever the perspective in verse 6b, the narrator informs us that the initial situation of the narrative is one of tension because Abram's and Lot's belongings made living together an impossible task for the land could not support them dwelling together.

The first scenic unit (vv. 7 – 13) can boast of no less than four presences

59. Martin Buber, *Werke,* II, *Schriften zur Bibel* (Munich/Heidelberg 1964) 1131. The translation is owed to Alter, *Art,* 93. On the use of the keywords cfr. Alter, *Art,* 91 – 95. 179 – 180; Berlin, *Poetics,* 105.

60. *Genesis*, 368.

61. On the use of repetition in biblical narrative to express different points of view cfr. Berlin, *Poetics*, 72 – 82.

of the word *ʾeres*. Twice it features in composite phrases to indicate geographical units: in verse 10 the tract of land leading to Zoar is compared to the lush delta of the Nile: *kᵉʾeres misrayim*, while in verse 12 we are told *ʾabrām yāšab bᵉʾeres kᵉnaʿan* as Lot settled among (*bᵉ*) the cities of the valley. In the other two instances *ʾeres* is not qualified for identification; yet from the context we know that "the land" stands for Canaan. In the aside comment[62] of the narrator in v. 7b we read that the quarrel between the herdsmen of the two relatives took place when "the Canaanite and the Perizzite" *ʾāz yōšēb bāʾāres*. This quarrel (*rîb*) rendered the precarious situation of Abram's clan explosive and an early solution was called for. Abram proposes separate settlements:

hălōʾ kol hāʾāres lᵉpānèkā
hippāred nāʾ mēʿālāy (v.9)[63]

This superficial analysis of the word *ʾeres* in this scenic unit already allows an insight into the complexity of the theme involved. Why does the narrator remind us of the Canaanite and Perizzite occupation of the land as soon as he mentions the quarrel between Lot's and Abram's herdsmen? Is it to enhance its inadequacy to provide for their herds if they are left to graze together?[64] The grammar of verse 10 shows that the comparison of the Zoar region to *Yhwh*'s garden and *kᵉʾereṣ miṣrayim* belongs to the narrator's not to Lot's perspective.[65] But why should he compare this area of Zoar to two places already met with within the Genesis narrative? Is this reference to *Yhwh*'s garden inviting us "to consider the patterns that have been established in the first eleven chapters of Genesis?"[66] The entire land of Canaan has been promised to Abraham by *Yhwh* (12, 7). Is the patriarch trespassing

62. Cfr. Westermann, *Genesis*, 205 – 206.
63. For the geographical perspective involved. cfr. Helyer, "Separation", 79 – 80.
64. Cfr. the comment of Rashi of Troyes on *wayhî rîb*: "Essa avvenne perchè i pastori di Lot erano malvagi, e conducevano al pascolo il loro bestiame nei campi altrui. I pastori di Abram li rimproverarono per questo loro furto, ma essi replicarono: 'Il paese è stato dato ad Abram; siccome egli non ha eredi, sarà Lot il suo erede. Di conseguenza, il nostro non è affatto un furto!' Ma la scrittura dice subito dopo: I Cananei e i Perizzei abitavano allora nel paese: Abram non aveva dunque ancora alcun diritto su di esso'" Rashi di Troyes, *Commento alla Genesi* (Marietti; Casale Monferrato 1985) 92. For similar interpretations in other Jewish writings cfr. *Genesi* (Biblia AT I; Gribaudi; Turin 1986) 195. But were these moralising interpretations in the narrator's mind? Is the narrator here being mimetic of the life conditions for the patriarchal period. (Cfr. von Rad, *Genesis*, 170 – 171; Westermann, *Genesis*, 205 – 206)? But if so why should he choose to narrate only the definitive solution to the quarrel (cfr. Westermann, *Genesis*, 206)?
65. Contra Gros Louis, "Abraham I", 56. The Lot of the Abraham narrative cannot echo and foreshadow the experience of Sodom's and Gomorrah's destruction. The narrator stops the narrative flow to insert his own comment on the fertility of the area to be chosen by Lot.
66. Cfr. Gros Louis, "Abraham I", 54.

his rights in suggesting to divide it with Lot his newphew?[67] But is he proposing to divide the land at all? Why should *Yhwh* await the departure of Lot (v. 14) to solemnly promise to give to Abram *kol hā'āres 'ăšer 'attāh rō'eh* (v. 15). (One should note how this *kol hā'āreṣ* here recalls the *kol hā'āreṣ* of v. 9 where Abram invites Lot to choose his grazing area from *kol hā'āreṣ* which was in front of him). And finally why should the narrator insist so much of Lot's and Abram's respective settlement (vv. 11 – 12)? Does he mean to contrast *'eres k'na'an* to *'ārîm hakkikkār*? There is one statement that can be made at this stage of our inquiry: the first scenic unit deals with the land theme.

The second unit consists mainly of *Yhwh*'s promise address to Abram. The term *'ereṣ* features thrice in this short speech, but only twice does it refer to the "land of Canaan". The first instance of the term features within the *kî* clause (v. 15) that is meant to explain *Yhwh*'s invitation (*nā'*) to Abram to raise his eyes and look into the distance from the spot he was on (v. 14). *Yhwh* declares that *kol hā'āreṣ 'ăšer 'attāh rō'eh* was to be his gift (*'etnennāh*) to the patriarch and his progeny forever *'ad 'ôlām*. One may easily ask why should the narrator mention Abram's progeny at this point. Not only that. The narrator insists upon this progeny and its numberlessness (v. 16). These descendants of Abraham were to be numerous *ka'apar hā'āreṣ* (v. 16a) here mentioned for the incapacity of enumeration (v. 16b). *Yhwh*'s speech ends with an invitation to Abram to travel *ba'areṣ* through and through *(le'orkah ûle'roḥbāh)* because *lekā 'etnennāh* (v. 17). No doubt the theme of *Yhwh*'s speech is that of the land, but it is interweaved with that of posterity. There is room for another question. Why should the narrator insist so much upon Abram's personal involvement in this gift-receiving of the land? *Yhwh* insists that *lekā 'etnennah ûlezar'ăka 'ad'olam* (v. 15), *kî leka' etnennah* (v. 17). Why is God not content with promising the land simply to Abram's descendants?

The term PRD in its niphal form is found only three times in the entire narrative. It is Abram who pronounces the word for the first time when quarrelling breaks out between Abram's and Lot's herdsmen (v. 7). Abrams is actually an invitation (*nā'*) and this separation is meant to avoid quarelling (*me'rîbāh*) between the two relatives *kî 'ănāšîm 'āhîm 'ānāḥnû* (v. 8). Lot follows his uncle's instructions, he chooses the Jordan valley and moves his tents to his new settlement; the narrator then remarks *wayyippardû 'îš me'al 'aḥîw* (v. 11). One should notice that here we do not find a perfect command-execution sequence wherein normally the same verb is employed in both command and execution (cfr Gen 12,1.4; 22,1 – 3). Besides, we

67. This is what Walter Vogels states in his article, "Lot in His Honour Restored. A Structural Analysis of Gen 13, 2 – 18", *Église et Theologie* 10 (1979) 5 – 12.

should see whether this clause constitutes a global description of Lot's initiative and whether for a while the narrator is adopting Abram's perspective, or that of both Lot and Abram, since Abram insists that quarrelling between them is out of place *kî ʾănāšîm ʾāhîm ʾănāhnû*. While the theme of separation of relatives must be considered basic to the first scenic unit,[68] what is important for this *Leitwört* is that it serves as link-word[69] between the first and second scenic unit: *Yhwh* spoke to Abram *ʾăḥarê hippāred lôt mēʿimmô* (v. 14). The question about *Yhwh*'s motivation for breaking the silence only with Lot's departure is intrigueing enough.[70] But the query to make at this stage is whether the narrator is expressing his own perspective or only that of Abram when he changes the formulation or the separation statement from that of verse 11.

(c) *The two scenic units: parallels and contrasts.* That the narrator purposely makes *Yhwh* deliver his promise speech to Abram *after* Lot's departure, testifies to his intention of building two scenic units. The "narrative mode of the Hebrew Bible is predominantly scenic... The scenic manner focusses the reader's attention on the more dramatic and significant events, it causes a dearth of description and comment, and leads to indirect characterization by speech and action."[71] What events does the narrator mean to focus upon? What is he indirectly saying about the characters that take part in the narrative dynamics? The present writer has already drawn attention to a number of conscious parallels and contrasts between the two scenes;[72] in this essay he means to enter into a deeper analysis in order to bring out better both parallels and contrasts. For the sake of simplicity we shall label scenic unit one (vv. 7 – 13) as (a) and scenic unit two (vv. 14 – 18) as (b).

(i) Both scenic units contain one speech introductory formula. In (a) we read *wayyōʾmer ʾabrām ʾel lôt* (v. 8) while (b) opens with the formula *waYhwhʾāmarʾel ʾabrām* (v. 14). Besides the formal differences of addressers and addressees due to the context, the only significant variation concerns the verb's form. In (a) the formula forms part of a narrative chain introduced by *wayhî* in verse 7. The fact that Abram should speak and take the initiative is seen as a matter of fact. This seems to correspond to the narrator's intuition in assuming the personages' point of view in v. 6b, that

68. Cfr. ibid.

69. On link-words cfr. Dionisio Mínguez, *Pentecostés. Ensayo de Semiótica narrativa en Hch 2* (Biblical Institute Press; Rome 1976) 25 – 26.

70. "Finchè l'empio Lot stava con Abram, la parola di Dio si teneva lontana da lui" Rashi, *Commento*, 94. Is this what the narrator means to say? Is he seeing in Lot a paradigm of wickedness?

71. Licht, *Storytelling* 50.

72. Abela, *Reading*, 21. 206 – 209.

the two patriarchs were themselves conscious that they could not continue to live together.[73] The translation of verse 7b by the *New English Bible* is to be preferred because it conforms to this awareness of the personages as to the state of tension within the clan: "... and there were quarrels between Abram's herdsmen and Lot's."

In (b) the speech formula marks an abrupt introduction of a new word-event as well as of a new speaker: *Yhwh*. As if *Yhwh*'s address reaches Abram as a surprise. The narrator ignores completely the question as to how *Yhwh*'s word reaches Abram, and concentrates on the subject-matter of this promise speech. One may ask how is it that in 12,7 the narrator describes *Yhwh*'s communication as a vision while in our text, where God's speech is much more articulate, no word is spent upon the modality of *Yhwh*'s intervention.

(ii) The personages. The two scenic units conform to the canon of biblical narrative of allowing normally two characters on scene.[74] In each unit we have a speaker and a listener who does no talking at all. In (a) Abram addresses Lot who listens in silence while in (b) it is *Yhwh* who speaks with Abram doing the listening. In each case, however, the character who listens is reported towards the end of the scene as changing settlement area. When Abram finishes with what he has to say Lot moves "towards the east"; likewise the end of *Yhwh*'s speech is marked by Abram's striking his camp, travelling towards Hebron and settling *b^{e} elonê mamre* .[75] One should notice that *Yhwh* as personage is treated just like Abram in (a): both speak, their speech is rather an invitation (the presence of particle *na* in both speeches), no description is provided by narrator of either character, and no circumstantial information is imparted. The two speak when an event involving somebody out of scene happens: Abram intervens as expected when quarrelling between herdsmen threatens to worsen the situation while *Yhwh* delivers his speech when Lot separates from Abram. The narrator's decision to leave out any circumstantial information of the speakers may

73. This would lend weight to Westermann's exegesis which do not read in Abram's behaviour an example of generosity and magnanimity. (cfr. Bruce Vawter, *On Genesis. A new Reading* (New York 1977) 183; E.A. Speiser, *Genesis* (Anchor Bible 1; New York 1964 98); Abram was obliged both to find peaceful solution to the quarrelling that broke out and to provide adequate grazing space for their cattle. The future of his clan hanged upon his taking the right initiative. Cfr. *Genesis*, 206 and Vogels, "Lot in His Honour Restored", 5 – 6. 11 – 12.

74. Cfr. Hermann Gunkel, **Genesis** (HKAT 1,1; Göttingen 1901) Einleitung XXII – XXIII; William McKane, *Studies in the Patriarchal Narratives* (The Handsel Press; Edinburgh 1979) 31 – 32; Licht, *Storytelling*, 38.

75. Contra Coats, *Genesis*, 116 where he writes that while verse 18 meshes relatively well with the instructions in v. 17, yet the "relationship is superficial and does not contribute substantially to the unity of the text".

explain the absence of total information about the modality of *Yhwh*'s speaking.[76]

(iii) The speeches by the main characters and the reactions of the secondary characters. The two scenic units are made up of discourse and narration, of direct speech by the main character in each scene, who alone does the speaking, and of reports about action carried out by the secondary characters who in each unit do the listening. Besides, in (a) we encounter three direct interventions by the narrator who enters the scene to comment first about the historical background of the quarrelling within Abram's and Lot's clan (v. 7b); halfway within the scene he interrupts the narration flow again to inform us about the state of the Zoar neighbourhood before it got devasted by God (v. 10b); to the end of the scene we meet the narrator once more to tell of Abram's and Lot's respective settlements (v. 12). This means that scenic unit one is heavily characterized by the presence of the narrator who feel he should "break the frame" to allow the reader a wider perspective than that of the characters. No such explicit comment is to be found in scenic unit two; but we should not forget that pure, objective narration constitutes the vehicle for the narrator's point of view[77] so that the absence of direct, explicit commentary by the narrator should not be taken as indicators of no commentary at all.

In both units the principal feature is the speech of the main character. The two speeches carry the inclusive phrase *kol hā āres* and in each the land theme plays a significant role. However Abram's speech in (a) revolves around the problem of unity and division within his clan. The initial harmony and unity within the clan (v. 1) began to crack owing to the narrowness of the land (vv. 2.6) until tension mounted (v. 7) and division is proposed by Abram as the only adequate solution to the problem (vv. 8 – 9). *Hippāred nā mēʿālāy* epitomizes the entire speech. The land which lay in front of the two relatives could help to institutionalize the division (v. 9b).[78] In the second scenic unit the land theme occupies the first place: its numerical presence (four times) within this speech is already an indication. While in (a) Abram considers "all the land" as from hence divided between *haśśᵉmō l* and *hāyyāmîn* (v. 9b), in (b) *Yhwh* tends to see the land as a unity: *sāpōnāh wanegbāh wāqēdmāh wāyāmmāh* (v. 15).[79] But one may

76. On God as a personage cfr. Sternberg, *Poetics*, 153 – 159.
77. Cfr. Berlin, *Poetics*, 64.
78. Cfr. Vogels, "Lot in his Honour Restored", 7 – 9.
79. Ibid., 10 – 11. "Abram is in harmony with God in the beginning of the narrative and rediscovers this same harmony at the end. The transformation in the story starts with the disrupture of harmony, a dispute, which Abram wants to solve by division, but which God solves by unity." But one should note that the unity that has been achieved towards the end of the narrative is not identical with that of the beginning where we read that as Abram returned to Canaan from Egypt *wᵉlôi ʿimmô* (v. 1).

ask whether by insisting that *Yhwh*'s speech is delivered *ʾaḥărê hippāred lôt mēʿimmô* (v. 14a) the narrator intimates that the unity of the land as a gift is achieved with the departure of Lot "from the land" *miqqedem*.

Narration consists mainly of objective reporting of actions carried out by the secondary characters in each scene. Similarity of global patterns: speech by main characters plus change of settlement by secondary characters, is evident. Yet significant variations exist. In (a) Lot is the subject of two verbs of perception: Abram's invitation to separate (vv. 8–9) is followed by a report which includes this information: *wayyiśśāʾ lôṭ ʾet ʿênāw wayyarʾ ʾet kol kikkar hayyarden* (v. 10). These two actions of Lot succeed Abram's demonstration of the land: *hălōʾ kol hāʾāres lepānèkā* (v. 9a). One should notice that the same two verbs in the same order open *Yhwh*'s speech to Abram: the mood is imperative and express an invitation (the presence of deprecative *nāʾ*): *śāʾ nāʾ ʿênèka ûrʾeh:* the object of the two correlated verbs is not expressed: instead we have the four directional words north, south, east and west (v. 14b): the real object is *kol hā āres* governed in the text sentence by the indicative *ʾattāh rōʾeh* (v. 15). The presence of this pair of verbs in both scenic units, once in narration (a) and then in discourse (b) is bound to be of some semantic relevance.

Apart from these two verbs of perception which have Lot for subject, most verbs in both units belong to the categories of movement and settlement. In (a) we read *wayyiśśaʿ lôṭ miqqedem* (v. 11) and *wayyeʾĕhal ʿad sᵉdōm.*[80] In (b) we are told that *wayyeʾĕhal ʾabram wayyābōʾ wayyēšeb beʾēlōnê mamrēʾ*. All these verbs describe the secondary characters' reaction to the main characters' speech in each scene. However Lot and Abram are each subject of a verb found only in that scene which includes the narration of their actions. Lot's raising his eyes and seeing (considering) the Jordan Valley (v. 10a) is succeeded (besides the narrator's comment in v. 10b) by another action-word: *wayyibhar lô lôṭ ʾet kol kikkar hayyardēn* (v. 11a) "So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan valley" (*RSV*). The point to make is that Lot chooses his settlement area: this explains his being the subject of the two perception verbs. Abram instead does not choose his land: he is going to receive it. Twice *Yhwh* declares in (b) his intention to make of the land his particular gift to Abram himself and to his descendants (vv. 15.17). This explains both his invitation to raise eyes and see *kol hāʾāreṣ* in its physical reality (the four directional points) (v. 14) and to travel the land *leʾorkāh ûleroḥbāh* (v. 17), that is to possess it.[81]

It is to this point that the narrative has been leading, to this contrast in the relationship to the land. Abram does not choose "his land", he receives

80. We are not counting *wayyippardû* (v. 11) which refers to both Abram and Lot.

81. D. Daube, *Studies in Biblical Law* (Cambridge 1947) 37–38. Cfr. von Rad, *Genesis*, 173; Westermann, *Genesis*, 211.

it as a gift, and this explains how as soon as he settles (*wayyēšeb*) in the Hebron area the first characteristic action of Abram is *wayyeben šām mizbēaḥ lā Yhwh* (v. 18).[82]

3.2 A non-genetic re-reading of Genesis 13

What is the narrator saying? How is he telling what he wishes to communicate? These two questions belong together and ought to be answered together.

(a) The first significant element which attracts attention is the opening circumstantial clause which interrupts the narration flow. Technically this is called "inversion".[83] This grammatical feature helps the narrator to put in the limelight some detail pertinent to the context which might pass unobserved. In our case Abram's riches are focused upon. But the fact that the narrator stops his narration for a short while to draw the reader's attention upon this element, already hints to his intention of narrating the following episode as part of a longer story. Scholarship has correctly depicted Gen 13, 1 as a transition piece[84] with its tentacles feeling both backward and forward. With reference to the proceeding episode the report mentions Abram's point of departure (*mimmisrayim*), the presence of his wife (*wᵉʾišťô*) and his property in its entirety (*kol*). But there is an element which has not appeared in 12,10–20, Lot, whom the narrator mentions, therefore, in view of the ensueing episode: *wᵉlôt ʿimmô*[85] It is essential to notice that the sentence construction seems intentional to treat Lot as not belonging to Abram's household; *hûʾ wᵉʾišťô wᵉkolʾ ăšer lô wᵉlôt ʿimmô* Lot comes to Canaan *with* Abram, but he does not strictly speaking belong to his household.

(b) The narrator's intention somehow to distinguish between Abram and Lot becomes evident in the narrative's exposition (vv. 2–6). Instead of one statement about the possessions of the two characters, the narrator makes two, one for each patriarch (vv. 2.5). He even emphasizes their distinction by (i) formulating differently the statements about their wealth: in the comparison Abram comes out the winner because he *kābēd mᵉʾōd* (v.2) (no such intensifying elements in the Lot statement in v. 5); (ii) listing different items of possessions: while Lot's possessions are primarily

82. The building of the altar in 13, 18 would appear thus as a response to *Yhwh*'s gift of the land, as thanksgiving rather than as symbolic appropriation, contra W. Zimmerli, *1 Mose 12–25: Abraham* (ZBK 1,2; Zurich 1976) 33.

83. Cfr. Kilian, *Abrahamsüberlieferungen*, 17–18.

84. Cfr. Westermann, *Genesis*, 202–203; Coats, *Genesis*, 116.

85. Source-oriented exegesis often treated this note as a gloss, cfr. Westermann, ibid; other approaches read in this phrase the preparation for what follows where Lot plays an important role. Cfr. Cassuto, *Genesis*, 362–363.

pastoral, Abram's riches includes *kesep ûzāhāb*. Silver and gold play no role in the narrative dynamics of the story which is being introduced; so what's the narrator's point in mentioning them now if not for the sake of contrast? But there is another indirect way which the narrator employs to demonstrate that his main interest stands with Abram. Once he makes his introductory statement about Abram's possession, the narrator takes up the narrative thread to transfer Abram from the Negeb on to the scene of what is going to happen: *wayyelek l^emassa ^caw minnegeb* (v. 3a). There follows a scrupulous identification of the place of encampment:

(a) *we^cad bêt ēl*

(b) *^cad hammāqōm aser hayah sām oholōh battēhillah*

(a′) *bên bêt el ûbên ha^cay*

(d′) *'el m^eqôm hammizbeah 'ăšer ^cāśah šām bāri'šōnāh*

The symmetrical arrangement aba'b' is clear: the final pair a'b' adds some information over the pair ab. It is obvious that the narrator identifies Abram's former place of encampment and that of his liturgical activity. The aba'b' pattern helps him to distinguish between the two. There must be some reason for his emphasis upon separate location of the two activities. Is he simply echoing 12,8? But in this latter text there is no mention of separate localization for the encampment and for the building of the altar, as we find here. Therefore the narrator means to distinguish between the two: the parrellel adverbial phrases *batt^ehillah* and *bari sonah* point to this desire of the narrator. The reason for this desire may be gleaned from the next clause *wayyiqrù sam abram b^esem Yhwh*.

Several authors read this clause as continuation of b', recalling 12,8, and translate the verb with the pluperfect (cfr *NEB*); the present writer prefers the opinion of those who parse *wayyiqrā* as main verb: "and there Abram called on the name of the Lord" (*RSV*). By way of confirmation one may quote the repetition of the personage's name *abrām*, which strictly speaking is not necessary for the context. This clause does not enter the pattern aba'b' and is to be read in series with *wayyelek* of v. 3a. Since this main clause stands within the narrative's exposition one should consider it as essential for understanding the episode itself.

When the narrator comes to Lot and reports that also he (*w^egam*) was rich, he has no further information to add. One may explain away this lack of attention as a blackout of traditional material.[86] Another solution would posit that the narrator wants to concentrate on the Abram figure. The fact,

86. But we should not forget that for source-oriented approaches this narrative is not supposed to have had any concrete tradition behind it. Cfr. Van Seters, *Abraham*, 221 – 222; which means that the narrator had a freer hand in the shaping of the story.

though, that the narrator deems it necessary to interrupt the story in order to insert his report about Lot's possessions demonstrate his interest in Lot as well. The only plausible answer lies in the narrator's wish to contrast Abram to Lot. And this helps to understand why the report about Abram's cultic activity in v. 4b has not been fitted within the symmetrical pattern of vv. 3b – 4a. Since *wᵉlôt ʿimmô* encampment for both Abram's and Lot's household was common; Lot however takes no part in what must therefore be seen as Abram's characteristic action presented as essential to understand the on-coming story. Why is the narrator insisting that while Lot and Abram move together and live in the same area they are actually different and their main difference consisting in the "calling *Yhwh*'s name?"

The narrative's economy presses the narrator to concentrate mainly on the difficulty raised by the possessions of both patriarchs to settle together (v. 6).[87] The land was too small for them to stay in the same area. He intimates also that both Abram and Lot were themselves aware that they could not *lāšebet yahdaw* (v. 6b). But no one was willing to take the initiative in order to solve the problem.

(c) The narrative proper starts with a crisis. The situation of tension sensed already within the exposition becomes critical when the herdsmen of the two patriarchs quarrel. The narrator employs a rather ambiguous verb, *wayhî* which has both of the punctual *(RSV)* and of the iterative *(NEB)*.[88] Perhaps in the context the latter sense prevails. The narrator recounts that there was quarrelling *(rîb)* between Abram's and Lot's herdsmen: *(rôʿê miqneh)* (v. 7a). The motive for this *rîb* is not stated explicitly; but it probably involved grazing rights. Here the narrator intervenes to inform us that the Canaanite and the Perizzite *ʾāz yōšēb bāʾāres* (v. 7b). What is the motivation for this explicit comment? Perhaps he wants to intimate the danger the divided household is incurring. A more plausible explanation is that the narrator enhances the difficulty by informing us that Abram and Lot were not the only occupants of the land.

The initiative to resolve this situation of tension is taken by Abram: *wayyōʾmer ʾabrām ʾel lôṭ* (v. 8a). Abram makes a Lot the proposal (Westermann) to separate (vv. 8 – 9). Abram takes the cue from what the narrator tells but stresses aspects which conform to his point of view. The narrator recounts that *wayhî rîb*: Abram begs *ʾal nāʾ tᵉhî mᵉrîbāh*. The

87. "The description of Abram's wealth in v. 2, however, is not as appropriate as that of Lot's possessions in v. 5 for what follows", Van Seters, *Abraham*, 224. This is what the exegete thinks not what the narrator thought of as important and appropriate for his narrative. The use of *miqneh* in vv. 2.7 argues for the relevance of Abraham's pastoral wealth for the dynamics of the narrative.

88. Cfr. P. Paul Joüon, *Grammaire de l'Hébreu Biblique* (Pontifical Biblical Institute; Rome 1965) § III i.

narrator says that quarrelling took place *bên rō'ê miqneh 'abrām ûbên rō'ê miqnēh lôṭ*. Abram asks that there be no strife *bênî ûbênèkā ûbên rō'ay ûbên rā'èkā*. The stress in Abram's plea lies on the personal and familiar aspects as the motivation clause indicates: *kî 'ănāšîm 'aḥîm 'ănāḥnû*. Two comments are in order on this first part of Abram's speech.

(i) Why does the patriarch employ *me'rîbāh* instead of the narrator's *rîb*. Practically there exists no difference in meaning between the two terms. Perhaps the wish for variety dictated the use of this second word. But it may also be possible that while *rîb* is attached to the iterative sense of *wayhî*, *me'rîbāh* points to the punctual sense. Abram expresses the desire of total exclusion of strife within the family ambit above all, but also within the household at large. And his motivation: the existing strong family links.

(ii) The motivation clause must be understood in strictly personal and familial sense: it must be read in the context of Gen 11, 29. 31,; 12,5.[89]

The second half of Abram's speech (v. 9) is a complex comprising an interrogative, an imperative qualified by imprecative particle *nā'*, and an indicative-conditional double clause. In short Abram proposes separate grazing areas within the ambit of *kol hā'āres: hippāred nā'mē'ālî*. To appreciate Abram's geographical point of view one must take into consideration the Hebrew perspective on directions.[90] In other words Abram is proposing to Lot to choose his grazing ground to the south or to the north of his encampment in the Bethel region. One should notice that

(i) the imperative does not contain the concept of choice;

(ii) the formulation of the Lot's choice of direction does not imply definitiveness.

If after this interview Lot would choose to tend his *miqneh* in the north Abram would graze his in the south; but Lot in the future could turn to the south: Abram is promising that he will search pastures in the north. So that, Abram's proposal entails no permanent division of the land. To speak of generosity on Abram's part, therefore, is not out of order.[91]

The narrator picks up the narrative thread to tell us about Lot's reaction to Abram's proposal. One should note that the first verb to resume the narration flow is not PRD (although we are bound to meet it in the coming lines) but two perception verbs which have as object *'et kol kikkar hayyarden* (v. 10): *wayyiśśā' lôṭ 'et 'ênāw wayyar'e'*. The narrator here assumes Lot's perspective[92] and describes it *kî kullah mašqeh*. But soon the

89. Cfr. Speiser, *Genesis*, 98; Westermann, *Genesis*, 206.
90. Cfr. Helyer, "Separation", 79 – 80.
91. Contra Vogels, "Lot in His Honour Restored", 5 – 12.
92. "The narrator exposes the inner psychological process of reflection and decision completely in its outward attitude of gazing, where indeed it does take place, " von Rad, *Genesis*, 172.

narrator "breaks the frame" and comes on scene to dialogue with the reader: the latter's knowledge of the area is probably that of a rugged, treesless and waterless place. But such desolate state did not always exist. Before *Yhwh* destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah the area resembled *kᵉgan Yhwh kᵉʾeres misrayim*. This intervention is considered necessary in order to explain Lot's choice of permanent settlement. Perhaps the narrator means also to enframe Lot's choice within wider thought patterns.[93] The reader is bound to ask, if he is not cognizant of how the Abraham narrative is going to end, why will *Yhwh* destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. As well as he may get curious about the narrator's special interest in the Zoar's area if soon we shall read that Lot chooses Sodom rather than Zoar to pitch his tents by (v. 12).

When the narrative begins to move again we encounter what has been seen to be Lot's characteristic action within this episode: *wayyibhar lô lôṭ*. The verb BHR basically means "to choose"; when it governs the preposition *lᵉ* the verb acquires a slightly intensified meaning: to choose someone or something for (cfr 1 Sam 17, 40; 1 Kgs 18, 23.25; Job 34, 4).[94] The narrator reports the object of this choice *ʾet kol kikkar hayyarden*. The verb BHR *lᵉ* together with intensive *kol* demonstrate how different the points of view of Abram and Lot concerning the land were. The former has proposed separate grazing grounds which could change on Lot's choice; the latter opts for a permanent settling area. He means to travel no more. The narrator then tells of Lot's travelling to his definitive settlement area with some emphasis. He repeats the subject *lôt* which grammatically is not necessary. Besides to indicate direction he uses a queer word, *miqqedem*, which always troubled translators. Parsed as indicating "direction from" the term makes no sense: but if we repoint the word as participle of denominational verb QDM, *mᵉqaddem,* meaning "going before, in front of"[95] the word fits the context perfectly. Abram proposes left or right directions (north or south); Lot chooses to go east, just infront of him: to there he journeys.

The narrator intervenes again to evaluate Lot's decision. Actually, he makes three or four comments:

(i) the first is very subtle and not even the inversion marker is employed: *wayyippārdû ʾîš mēʿal ʾāḥîw*.

One should note the change of subject within this construct chain. The subject of the two previous clauses has been Lot: now the narrative switches to the plural to include Abram. There is then the use of *ʾāhîw* which here

93. Cfr. Gros Louis, "Abraham I", 56 – 57.
94. Cfr. *BDB*, 104a.
95. For this meaning of the verb cfr. Ps 68, 26; *BDB*, 670a.

must mean relative, literally "brother". The narrator, therefore, underlines the psychological cost for both Abram and Lot. No one was happy with the situation. All accepted the separation as an inevitable evil.

(ii) But the narrator may be implying more in underlining the separation of the two relatives. Perhaps he means to intimate the definitive character of the separation. Abram and Lot separated for good. He makes this clear by identifying their respective settlement area (which in the case of Lot is not all necessary since we have been told already whither he has repaired (v. 11). In v. 12 we read

ʾabram yāšab bᵉʾereṣ kᵉnaʿan
wᵉlôṭ yāšāb bᵉʿārê hakkikkār

In this double statement we have an implication already noted by some scholars:[96] if Abram settled *bᵉʾereṣ kᵉnaʿan ʿārê hakkikkār* must be reputed as being situated outside Canaan. Lot has left Canaan, therefore. He *has chosen* not to live in Canaan; and this is an important detail to keep in mind in order to understand the narrator's intention.

(iii) The narrator adds a piece of information which again throws light on how he views Lot's choice: *wayyeʾĕhal ʿad sᵉdōm*: ". . . . and pitched his tents near Sodom" (*NEB*). Why should the narrator mention that of all the cities of the *kikkar* Lot should pitch his tents near Sodom? Sodom has already been referred to in passing as having been the object of *Yhwh*'s destructive activity (v. 10). How is it that Lot chooses to encamp there? Is Lot seeking city life over against country life notwithstanding that his possessions (v. 5) equip him rather for pastoral living? (Abram instead possesses gold and silver (v. 2) and can well fit the life of the city). Is the narrator implying a contrast between Abram and Lot not only on the geographical level but also in the significance that their settlement areas assume in the context? A positive answer to these queries will appear possible when we read the narrator's next comment which in the literary context seems unnecessary: *wᵉʾānšê sᵉdōm rāʿîm wᵉhattāʾîm lāYhwh mᵉʾōd* (v. 13). Why should we be told that the moral life of Sodom's citizens ebbed to its lowest levels when Lot settled by Sodom's walls? Did Lot know of the moral state of the place he has chosen for his permanent residence?

(iv) It is very difficult to answer these questions. In his deliberations over which place to choose (v. 10). Lot took into consideration only that the Jordan Valley was well watered. Nothing more. Here we have a case where the narrator (and readers capable of reading between the lines) knows more than his characters.[97] The narrator means to be ironical at Lot's expense. Lot thinks to have made the best choice in the circumstances. But how could

96. Vawter, *Genesis*, 184 – 185; Helyer, "Separation", 79 – 80.
97. Cfr. Sternberg, *Poetics*, 159 – 172.

he know what was being prepared in the labyrinths of the future.[98] His was a mistaken decision. For the moment however he may live in the illusion that he couldn't have chosen better.

(d) The narrator abandons Lot to his fate and returns to Abram. He resorts to the inversion techniques to open a new scenic unit wherein he introduces a new personage: *wāYhwh ʾāmar ʾel ʾabrām* (v. 14). In the exposition we are told of *Yhwh*'s existence: we read of Abram's calling upon *Yhwh*'s name as his special characteristic. But then we hear no more of the divinity. The narrative so far has been an essentially human affair. All of a sudden *Yhwh* enters the scene. "To enter the scene" is perhaps exaggerated since no circumstantial details are offered. We read simply of *Yhwh*'s speaking to Abram and of Abram's response in v. 18. Yet the narrator gives one important annotation: *Yhwh*'s intervention takes place *ʾăḥarê hippāred lôt mēʿimmô*. This should not be taken as a simple chronological note introduced here to link the present scene to the previous one. No doubt this motive is also present. But it seems that the narrator is giving greater weight to Lot's departure. To begin with he takes on Abram's perspective as in v. 9: he emphasizes his loss. Somehow *Yhwh*'s speech has to do with Lot's separation from his uncle. Does *Yhwh* mean to console Abram? Or does *Yhwh* take the occasion of Lot's departure to launch a new a new idea which Lot's presence would have blocked? *Yhwh*'s may be said to have something of both possibilities although one should remember that no direct references to Lot are found in what *Yhwh* says.

Yhwh's speech contains significant echoings to the previous scenic unit as well as important novelties. This speech opens with a double imperative involving two verbs which have featured as action-words with Lot as subject (v. 10): *śāʾ nāʾ ʿênèkā ûrʾēh*. Instead of the expected direct object we find instead a reference to the place of encampment: *min hāmmāqôm ʾăšer ʾattāh šām:* from this place, therefore, Abram could acquire a global view of the surroundings. Actually *Yhwh* invites a survey in all directions (v. 14c). The object of NSʾ and RʾH soon appears: in the following *kî* clause we read that Abram is seeing/considering *ʾet kol hāʾāres* (v. 15). "All the land" is the theme of *Yhwh*'s speech. The land as an independent theme in *Yhwh*'s intervention – excluding the two instances of verse 16 where it appears twice as element of the simile *kaʿapar hāʾāres* – features twice. In each case it is the object verb NTN which has *Yhwh* for subject while Abram with his descendants or Abram alone constitutes the indirect object:

98. "Lot is not cast-in a correspondingly selfish or mean-spirited role: it is only the part of good sense to seize the opportunity that offers most for oneself and one's family. Nevertheless, there is irony in the scene, for Genesis knows Lot to be a man for whom luck sours, whose choices inevitably end up badly", Vawter, *Genesis*, 183. Cfr. Speiser, *Genesis*, 98; Gros Louis, "Abraham I", 57.

kî ʾet kol hāʾāres . . . . lᵉkā ʾetnennāh ûlᵉzarᶜăkā (v. 15); *kî lᵉkā ʾetnennāh*. In this second case we have the pronominal suffix *nāh* which plays a resumptive role with reference to *bāʾāreṣ*. The particle *kî* carries the nuance of emphasis especially in v. 15. "Indeed all the land you are seeing, to you I shall give it and to your seed forever."

Yhwh is therefore stressing the element of gift attached to the theme of the land. The use of the two verbs of perception NSʾ and RʾH (here employed twice) suggests the narrator's wish to contrast Abram's deliberating over the land to Lot's. The latter has raised his eyes and saw in order to choose. Abram is invited to do the same in order to see what *Yhwh* is promising *(ʾetnennah)* him. Besides, Abram in scenic unit one indicates the entire land to Lot (v. 9), but his nephew fixed his mind immediately over the Jordan valley *kî kulloh mašqeh* (v. 10). *Yhwh* again prospects *kol hāʾāres* as his future gift to Abram. Abram proposes to Lot no permanent possession of any part of *hāʾāreṣ* also because *wᵉhakkᵉnaᶜănî wᵉhappᵉrizzî ʾāz yôšeb bāʾāreṣ* (v. 7b, but only the possibility of grazing his cattle wherever he liked; *Yhwh* promises Abram permanent and stable possession of *kol hāʾāreṣ*: in verse 15 the verb *ʾetnennāh* is qualified by adverbial clause *ᶜad ᶜolam*. But there is also a new element: the mention of the descendants. In verse 15 the promise of the land is made to Abram *ûlᵉzarᶜăkā ᶜad ᶜôlām*. The stability and permanence of the land theme is attached to the factor of descendants. But if Abram is childless and his wife *ᶜaqārāh* (11, 30) where can the patriarch hope to get his children from? We can understand why in verse 16 *Yhwh* stresses the promise of numerous progeny: *wᵉśamtî ʾet zarᶜăkā kaᶜapar hāʾāreṣ*. The theme of posterity here comes in help of that of land.[99] *Yhwh* is promising to make of the land his permanent gift to Abram; permanence in time cannot but include the continuation of Abram through his seed.[100]

(e) There are two questions the answers to which are only possible if one reads Gen 13 as part of a larger whole. The first concerns the emphasis the narrator puts on *Yhwh*'s promise of the land being addressed above all to Abram himself: *lᵉkā ʾetnennāh* (vv. 15. 17). The second entails Abram's response to *Yhwh*'s speech: why should Abram move his tents, travel to Mamre and settle *(wayyešeb)* among its Oaks when *Yhwh* instructed him to arise and travel the land through and through (v. 17)? Only partially may we

99. Helyer, "Separation", 85 – 86 identifies the main theme as that of heir since this is the concern of the entire Abraham's cycle. But he does not exclude the presence of "other secondary purposes" like the narrator's wish to portray the slow process of settlement. An analysis of the text has shown, however, that the narrator's main concern is to depict Abram's relationship to the land with the posterity aspect fitting in as an important factor. It may be of relevance that *Yhwh*'s promise to give Abram numberless descendants is expressed only after Lot's departure.

100. Cfr. Abela, *Reading*, 161 – 163 for a discussion of the structure beneath *Yhwh*'s speech.

answer these questions if we isolate Gen 13 from its wider context. To the first question one may answer, of course, that *Yhwh* emphasizes Abram's role as addressee of his promises in contradistinction to Lot. *Yhwh* excludes Lot purposely. But the stress on Abram seems too heavy to be explained adequately in that manner. To the second question one may say that Abram's behaviour may not constitute an act of disobedience if *Yhwh*'s command in v. 17 is simply an invitation to possess the land symbolically (Daube).

When one reads Gen 13 within its wider literary context he will notice that Gen 13, 18 is the first report about Abram which states that he settled (*wayyēšeb*) somewhere (we should exclude 11, 31 which has Terah and the entire clan for subject, and 13, 12 which we have seen, is the narrator's comment). Most action-words which have Abram for their subject are verbs of motion: *wayyēlek* (12, 4); *wayyēṣᵉ'û lāleket* (Abram and Clan) (12,5); *wayyēbō'û* (12, 5); *wayyaᶜabōr* (12, 6); *wayyaᶜtēq* (12, 8); *wayyissaᶜ... hālōk wᵉnasôaᶜ* (12, 9); *wayyēred miṣraymah lāgûr šām* (12, 10); *wayyaᶜal* (13, 1); *wayyēlek lᵉmassāᶜāw* (13, 3). Only in 13, 18 we read *wayyeᵓōhal ᵓabrām wayyābōᵓ wayyēšeb bᵉᵓēlōnê mamrēᵓ*. This is the first time that Abraham settles down. One may be entitled to ask for the reason that only after this last intervention of *Yhwh* Abram feels he should settle to a fixed area. The answer lies perhaps in *Yhwh*'s emphasis that his promise of the land is directed to patriarch personally: *lᵉkā ᵓetnennāh*. In his original command to leave his environment *Yhwh* promised to show Abram the land to where he has destined him to travel (12, 1). Once in the region of Shechem the patriarch received the assurance that "this land" was to be given to his descendants (12, 7). Abram still felt disenchanted with this land because he himself after all was not involved in the promise dynamics; he kept travelling south without fixed abode (12, 9). When the land created serious difficulties (12, 10) Abram solved the problem by choosing temporary residence (*lāgûr*) in Egypt. But Egypt was not the land of the promise, and were it not for *Yhwh* his stay there could have been disastrous (12,10 – 20). When Abram returned to Canaan and Lot decided to live in an area "outside Canaan" *Yhwh* renewed this promise of the land; this time however the promise is not vague and futuristic as in 12, 7 but concrete, involving the patriarch himself. The patriarch could finally settle on his own land notwithstanding the current occupation by other peoples. By now Abram learned that the land he was settling in has been *Yhwh*'s gift to him and his posterity.[101]

101. Cfr. ibid., 209. 275 – 276. One should perhaps add that if Gen 13 takes for granted what has been already narrated of Abram in the previous episodes, some narrative elements point rather to the future. For instance the reference to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and to the wickedness of Sodom's inhabitants prepare us for episodes which have still to be told. But this proves that Gen 13 may not be read in isolation.

THE SOLOMON LEGEND IN MUSLIM TRADITION

Edmund Teuma, O.F.M. Conv.

The principal two components of Muslim Law are the Qur'ān and Tradition. Originally both these sources were transmitted down from father to son orally. It is believed that it was only a century after Muhammad's death that Tradition was set to writing. Nowadays we have free access to Muslim Tradition through *Hadīth* narrations. The actual account of a Prophet's example in deed or word is narrated in small and rather very short stories in which the morale of the "fable" comes up in the end. Every single account of these is called "*Hadīth*" (= *new, modern, recent*; but also: *news, tidings*). Each account is preceded by a chain of authorities (*isnād*) going back to Muhammad himself or to some companion of his as the original narrator who set the ball rolling. Western scholars do not attach much attention to *isnād*, which for the Muslims it might turn out to be more important than the *matn* (= the body of the narration), since from it, through a most complicated process, they try to judge whether a given *hadīth* narration is to be accepted as authentic or not.

One of the main purposes of *hadīth* narrations is, without doubt, to serve as commentary to the Qur'ān, thus providing the believer with a valid explanation elaborating the often concise or hidden message contained in the Book. The Prophetic *Sunna* (= the Tradition or way of behaving of the Prophet Muhammad) therefore, finds its starting point in the Qur'ān of which it is no less than a commentary. If we were to classify *hadīth* narrations and put them in a hierarchical order we would find ourselves dividing these vehicles of Tradition into three main blocks. First in importance come what are called *Hadīth Qudsī* (= Holy narrations), the final source of which is God most high and not just Prophet Muhammad. Since these narrations come directly from God through His Prophet, their authority is only second to the Qur'ān. Next in authority are the *hadīth nabawī* or Prophetic narrations, the final source of which is Muhammad. Finally in order of merit come the *Isrā'īlīyāt*.

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The *Isrā'īlīyāt* are stories with a Palestinian context and background. This type of *hadīth* narrations is made up of legendary material which grew up around the Bible, promoting apocalyptic literature and mythological figures. The more staunch Muslims at first rejected this type of narrations, and many people in North Africa still do nowadays. The majority of Muslims, however, were not that strict and by time they readily accepted *Isrā'īlīyāt* as part and parcel of Tradition. In the long run it was recognised that *Isrā'īlīyāt* narrations were written and promoted to serve as devotion and not to give rise to polemics. Many *hadīth* narrations of this type were collected by *al-Tha'labī* in a book entitled "*The Stories of the Prophets*".[1] In the present article we are about to examine some *Isrā'īlīyāt* illustrating the Solomon legend in Muslim Tradition.

Solomon's legendary wealth

To get an idea of the wealth possessed by Solomon, we shall first take a look into a *hadīth* narration without *isnād* reported by *Zamakhsharī* in which there is a sort of inventory of the King's possessions. It also explains in what way did Solomon have power over the wind – a sort of explicatory note to the Qur'ān's allusion (Q. 34,12). Another interesting element in this narration is the scale of hierarchy in which the first seats of gold are allotted to the prophets, the second seats of silver go for the *'ulamā'* (learned men), then come common people, and fourth preference is given to *jinn* and satans. No seats are mentioned for the last two groups. This scale, however, is not respected in the inventory list, where the *jinn* are mentioned before mankind, and these before birds and beasts.

> It is narrated that his (Solomon's) army camp measured 100 parasang by 100: 25 for the *jinn*, 25 for mankind, 25 for birds, and 25 for beasts. He also possessed 1,000 houses of glass (*qawārīr*) built on wood, with 300 women in them and 700 concubines. The *jinn* weaved for him a carpet of gold and silk measuring one parasung by one. His rostrum, which was made of gold, was placed in the middle of it; he sat upon it and around it were 700,000 seats made of gold and silver. The prophets sat on the seats of gold, while the *'ulamā'* sat on the seats of silver. Around them were the people and around the people were the *jinn* and the satans. The birds overshadowed him with their wings so that candle drops might not

1. Al-Tha'labī, Abū Ishaq Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Ibrahīm, *Kitāb qisas al-anbiyyā*, Misr (Cairo), al-Matba'a al-'āmira, 1898.

fall upon him. The east wind elevated the carpet and departed with it for a month's journey.(2)

Not only did the Prophet-King possess great wealth, but he also had angel "bodyguards". One of these angels is mentioned in the following narration; he seems to have occupied the post of supervisor over the *jinn*:

From *Ibn ᶜAbbās*: He (Solomon) had with him an angel with a fiery whip in his hand. When someone rebelled against him, he (the angel) hit him without the *jinnī* seeing him.(3)

Solomon's adventure with the *jinn*

We pass now to Solomon's adventure with the *jinn* of which six versions have been collected. Each version has its own particular events which serve as etiologies justifying Qurʾānic allusions. In the first story, Solomon's *jinn*, being builders, are said to have been commissioned with the finishing of the temple.(4) The King's death remained hidden from them principally that they may go on working:

It is narrated that David, peace be upon him, layed the foundations of the building of the temple on the site of Moses' tent, peace be upon him. But he died before bringing it to an end, so he entrusted it to Solomon. He therefore commanded the *jinn* to finish it. But when there remained only one year of his life, he asked that his death be hidden from them that they may finish the building of the temple, and their pretence that they know the unseen (*al-ġayb*) may be rendered vain.(5)

In another version it is said that the *jinn* were ordered to build a castle for Solomon. The temple is not mentioned. Another character comes on the scene – the Angel of Death disguised as a young man:

It is narrated that he (Solomon), peace be upon him, ordered the building of a castle for himself. So they (the *jinn*) built it and he retired in it one day at a time of distress to devote himself (to

2. Al-Zamakhsharī, Abū al-Qāsim Mahmūd b. ᶜUmar, *Al-Kashshāf ᶜan haqāʾiq al-tanzīl*, Misr (Cairo), al-Maktaba al-tijāriyya al-kubrā, 1953, III, 279.
3. Al-Zamakhsharī, *Al-Kashshāf*, III, 451 – 453.
4. "Besides the building of the Temple, the *masjid al-Aqsā* is likewise claimed as his work. And a mosque in Alexandria." Cfr. *Shorter encyclopaedia of Islam edited on behalf of the Royal Netherlands Academy by H.A.R. Gibb and J.H. Kramers...*, Leiden, E.J. Brill; London, Luzac & Co., 1961, 549 – 551.
5. Al-Alūsī, Abū al-Thanāʾ Mahmūd Shihāb al-Din, *Rūh al-maᶜānī*, Misr (Cairo) Idāra al-tibāᶜa al-munīriyya, 1926, XXII, 113 – 114.

> prayer). But a young man entered before him. He (Solomon) said, "How did you enter to me without permission?" He said, "But I entered with permission." He said, "Who gave, you permission?" He said, "The Lord of this castle." Solomon knew that it was the Angel of Death who came to seize his soul, so he said, "Glory be to God, this is the day in which I asked for serenity." The young man said to him, "You have asked that which is not fitting." So Solomon sought security by leaning on his staff. And his soul was grasped, but his death was hidden from the *jinn* until he fell.(6)

The following narration again of Solomon, the Angel of Death (*Malak al-mawt*), and the *jinn*. This time the stress is perhaps put more on the *jinn*'s ignorance of the unseen:

> From *Ibn Zayd:* Solomon said to the Angel of Death, "O Angel of Death, when you are commanded to strike me make me know." The angel went to him and said, "O Solomon, I have been ordered to strike you; only a little while is left for you." So he called the satans and they built around him an imposing castle with no door. He started performing *salāt* (canonical prayer) leaning on his stick. The Angel of Death went to him and grabbed his soul while he was leaning on his staff, nor was that done quickly by the Angel of Death. The *jinn* worked before him watching him, thinking that he was alive. But God sent the beast of the earth, a beast that eats wood and which is called "the borer" *(al-qādih).* It entered into the staff and began gnawing at it until it had eaten its inner part. Thus the staff became weak and Solomon became heavy upon it, so he fell down dead. When the *jinn* saw that, they disbanded and went away.(7)

A new element comes in – this time the talking tree sprouting in the temple seems to replace the Angel of Death in announcing the prophet's imminent death together with the destruction of the temple. Of some interest is perhaps the play on words: "*kharrūba*" = carob tree, and "*kharaba*" = to destroy, ruin, which come from the same root: "*KH-R-B*". From one of the branches of this tree the King made a staff, leaning upon which, he died. On this occasion Solomon prays that his death may be rendered obscure to the *jinn*, not that they might go on working, but that men may know that the *jinn* were lying when they pretended to know the unseen:

6. Al-Alūsī, *Rūh al-maᶜanī,* XXII, 113 – 114.
7. Al-Tabarī, Abū Jaᶜfar Muhammad b. Jarīr, *Jāmiᶜ al-bayān ᶜan ta'wīl al-Qur'ān,* Al-Qāhira (Cairo), 1954, XXII, 68 – 76.

> From *Ibn ʿAbbās*, from the Prophet, may God bless him and keep him: Solomon, the Prophet of God, while performing *salāt* used to see a tree sprouting before him. He said to it, "What is your name?" It said, "Such-and-such." He said, "For what purpose are you?" If it was to be planted it used to be planted, and if it was for medicine it used to be written down.[8] One day while he was performing *salāt* he saw a tree before him. He said to it, "What is your name?" It said, "Carob (*Kharrūba*)." He said, "For what purpose are you?" It said, "For the ruin (*kharb*) of this house." Solomon said, "O God, render my death obscure to the *jinn* that mankind may know that the *jinn* do not know the unseen." So he formed a staff out of it and he died supporting himself upon it. He remained in that position for one year. But the woodworm gnawed at the staff and he fell. So men and *jinn* saw clearly that had they only known the unseen, they would not have continued for one year in the humbling chastisement. Then the *jinn* thanked the woodworm and they used to bring water to it.[9]

The following narration admits both the talking tree and the Angel of Death. New elements are: after that the tree was pulled off and a staff taken from its branches, it was planted in one of the temple's walls; the glass construction with no door where Solomon entered to pray, in contrast with the already mentioned castle; the punishment which used to be imparted to the *jinn* for eavesdropping; and the mathematical calculation from which it resulted that the King had been dead since a year:

> It was the custom of Solomon, peace be upon him, to devote himself for long moments in the holy temple. On those occasions it would not yet be dawn when he would see in the sanctuary a growing tree to which God most high had granted speech. He would ask it, "For what purpose are you?" It would say, "For such-and-such." Until one day he saw the carob tree and he asked it. It said, "I have sprouted for the destruction of this temple." He said, "God most high will not destroy it while I am alive; you are the one who brought my death and the destruction of the holy temple." So he pulled it out and planted it in a wall of the temple and took off a staff from it. He said, "O God, hide my death from the *jinn* that it may be known that they do not know the unseen as they feign to do. So he said to the Angel of Death, "When you are

8. Cfr. I Kings 4, 33: "He (Solomon) spoke of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of the wall..."
9. Al-Tabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, XXII, 68 – 76.

commanded to strike me make me know." He said, "I have been ordered to strike you; only an hour is left of your life." So he called the *jinn* and they built around him a castle of glass (*qawārīr*) without a door, and he started to perform *salāt*, leaning on his staff. His soul was grasped while he was leaning upon it. While he was performing *salāt* the *jinn* were gathered around his place of worship. Any satan who eavesdropped Solomon during prayer used to get burnt.[10] A *jinnī* passed by but he did not hear Solomon's voice, then he returned again but did not hear anything. So he looked: there was Solomon who had fallen dead. So they opened where he was and saw that his staff was gnawed at by a woodworm. They wanted to know the time of his death, so they placed the woodworm on the staff and it gnawed at it for a whole day and night. They calculated on that average and found out that he had died a year before. They were working for him thinking him alive. They saw clearly that had they known the unseen, they would not have continued in the punishment for a year.[11]

We end this article by giving the whole text of the most complete narration of all. The Angel of Death, however, is absent; and the Prophet is said to have died in the sanctuary of the temple not in a glass castle. The satan who dared to enter where Solomon was praying is here described as a rebel, his action was therefore an act of disobedience punishable by burning. The *hadīth* is concluded by the *jinn* thanking the woodworm for its good service in helping them to discover Solomon's death, and for that they gave it some gifts, not only water, as has been mentioned elsewhere, which it surely appreciated:

From *Ibn Masᶜūd*, from people among the companions of the Messanger of God, may God bless him and keep him: Solomon used to retire in the holy temple for a year or two, or for a month or two, or for less than that or more. His food and drink used to be brought to him. On the day he died it was brought to him. There passed not a day in which on waking up he would not see a tree sprouting and he would ask it, "What is your name?" The tree would say, "My name is such-and-such." He would ask again, "For what purpose are you?" It would say, "I am for such-and-such a purpose." So he would give an order and it was chopped off. If it had sprouted for plantation, it used to be

10. This was the punishment inflicted by Solomon upon those *jinn* who dared to eavesdrop on him while he was praying.

11. Al-Alūsī, *Rūh al-maᶜanī*, XXII, 113 – 114.

planted. But if it had sprouted for medicine it used to say, "I sprouted for the cure of such-and-such." And he would use it for such a purpose. Until a tree sprouted which is called carob. He asked it, "What is your name?" It said to him, "I am the carob tree." He said, "For what purpose did you sprout?" It said, "For the ruin of this temple." Solomon said, "God will not destroy it while I am alive; you are the one who brought my death and the destruction of the holy temple." So he took the tree away and planted it in one of the walls of the temple, he then entered the sanctuary and began to perform *salāt* leaning upon his staff. He died, but the satans did not know it. While they were working for him, they were afraid that he would come out and punish them. The satans used to gather around the sanctuary, which had some windows in front and at the back. The satan who wanted to rebel used to say, "Would I not be daring were I to go in and come out from the furthest side?" So one of the satans went in and passed by. Now, any satan who eavesdropped on Solomon in the sanctuary used to get burnt. This satan passed by but he did not hear the voice of Solomon, peace be upon him. Then he returned again but did not hear anything. Again he returned and went in the sanctuary but did not burn: there he saw Solomon who had fallen. So he came out and informed the people that Solomon was dead. They opened where he was and brought him out. They found his stick which the woodworm had gnawed. But they did not know how long he had been dead, so they placed the woodworm on the staff and it gnawed at it for one day and one night. Then they calculated on that average and found out that he had been dead for one year, during which time they continued to be devotedly attached to him. At that the people were convinced that the *jinn* were telling them lies, for had they known the unseen, they would have known about the death of Solomon and would not have persisted in the chastisement for one whole year, working for him. Then the satans said to the woodworm, "Had you used to eat food, we would have brought you better food; and had you used to drink, we would have given you better drinks, but we shall bring you water, soil and wood stuffing." This is what the satans gave it with thanks.[12]

12. Al-Tabarī, *Jāmiᶜ al-bayān*, XXII, 68-76. As to the origin of these legends cfr. *Shorter encyclopaedia of Islam*, 549 – 551, where it is stated: "Later legendary lore has magnified all this material, which is chiefly Rabbinic in origin." Many of these elements are also found in: Al-Thaᶜlabī, *Qisas al-anbiyyā'*, 164 – 165.

ACTIONS AND BODILY MOVEMENTS

Joe Friggieri

In my last contribution to this review[1] I showed why it was necessary to distinguish between particular actions and action-kinds. Failure to make this distinction, I argued, generates misunderstanding. One thesis which can lead to a great deal of perplexity, precisely on account of such failure, is Davidson's claim that actions are bodily movements.[2]

We can react to such a claim in different ways. We may say: "This cannot be a claim about all actions," and mention cases where it doesn't apply. I can carry out long sums in my head, stand to attention when told to, allow you to pass, decide to read a book tomorrow, lie perfectly motionless in bed. In all these cases I may be said to be engaged in some kind of action or activity, though my body can remain quite still.

This is, of course, true; but if we are convinced, as I think we should be, that there is an interesting and important truth in Davidson's claim, then we might agree to limit the field to what we pick out as (intuitively) physical actions[3] – including *inhibitions* of bodily movements, like standing to attention, but excluding all mental actions – and see whether Davidson's theory applies to *them*.

Davidson asks us to interpret the idea of a bodily movement generously. "The generosity," he says,

> must be openhanded enough to encompass such "movements" as standing fast, and mental acts like deciding and computing.[4]

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1. *Melita Theologica*, Vol. 38, 1987, n. 1, pp. 19 – 22.
2. D. Davidson, "Agency", in *Essays on Actions and Events,* Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1980, p. 49.
3. The class of actions that is being invoked here is roughly the same as is referred to by Austin in his paper "Pretending". In considering the construction in which "pretend" is followed by "to A" or "to be A-ing", Austin asks us to focus especially on "cases where the verb "A" is one which describes the doing of some *deed* (for example "bite" as opposed to, for example, "believe"), and more particularly when that deed is of a pretty "physical" kind (for example, biting as opposed to giving)". And he speaks of "public physical actions" in which "there must be . . . something public that I am actually doing" and that I can pretend to do (as when I "pretend to take a bite out of your calf"). J.L. Austin, *Philosophical Papers*, OUP, 3rd ed., 1979, p. 258.
4. D. Davidson, *loc.cit.*

Many of us, I am sure, would feel rather reluctant to be as generous as Davidson expects us to. I offer the suggestion of eliminating such actions as computing and deciding as an alternative strategy which should make Davidson's proposal look less obviously controversial but would still allow us to deal with a wide variety of interesting examples.

However, even if the suggestion to limit the field as proposed is accepted, we would still need to distinguish between the transitive and the intransitive senses of the verb "to move" and insist that the "movements" in "Actions are bodily movements" be interpreted in the transitive, not the intransitive, sense. Jennifer Hornsby writes:

> The sort of answer we expect to the question "What did he do?" is not "His body moved" ("His arm rose", "His knee bent") but rather "He moved his body" ("He raised his arm", "He bent his knee"). It is the same when we go beyond the agent's body to describe his action: what he did, we say, was melt the chocolate; and we cannot say that what he did was the chocolate melted.[5]

It may be that some of the resistance to Davidson's claim that actions are movements of the body comes as a result of his failure to distinguish clearly from the start between these two senses of "movements of the body"; so we do well to remove the ambiguity.

But at this stage a different kind of reaction is possible, one which, I suggest, completely misses the point of Davidson's claim. For an objector might think of all the things we do over any period of time – build houses, cross bridges, drive cars, play chess, load guns – and point to these – the things we "achieve" – as flatly contradicting Davidson's thesis. "Of course", we can hear our objector protest, "when I give my girl-friend flowers on her birthday, I move my body in some way. But is that all there is to it? Is that how you would describe my action?"

Clearly in this case the objector has moved from speaking about particular actions – the subject of Davidson's claim – to speaking about the kind of action his or her action was of. From the simple truth that you can describe your action as a bodily movement, you should not derive the (reductivist)

5. J. Hornsby, *Actions*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980, p. 3. Compare Wittgenstein: "I should not say of the movement of my arm, for example: it comes when it comes, etc. And this is the region in which we say significantly that a thing doesn't simply happen to us, but we *do* it. 'I don't need to wait for my arm to go up – I can raise it'. And here I am making a contrast between the movement of my arm and, say, the fact that the violent thudding of my heart will subside". L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations,* Part I, § 612. We have here different ways of expressing Aristotle's definition of a voluntary action as one in which the principle that moves the instrumental parts of the body is in the agent. *Nicomachean Ethics* III, 1110a 15 (tr. W.D. Ross, Oxford University Press, 1925).

conclusion that all other descriptions are equivalent to bodily movement descriptions. If you gave your girl-friend flowers (you did not ask someone to deliver them for you), then you must have moved your body in some way or other. (This is the "simple truth" our objector accepts when he says "Of course"). Davidson's thesis, however, while capturing this idea, clearly does not prevent you from (further) describing your action as an expression of love, devotion, etc. (This is the point of the objector's protest "But is that all there is to it").[6]

In "A Plea for Excuses" Austin writes:

> There is indeed a vague and comforting idea in the background that, after all, in the last analysis, doing an action must come down to the making of physical movements with parts of the body; but this is about as true as that saying something must, in the last analysis, come down to making movements of the tongue.[7]

To rid ourselves of this idea, Austin says,

> We need to realize that even the "simplest" named actions are not so simple – certainly are not the mere makings of physical movements – and to ask what more, then, comes in (intentions? conventions?) and what not . . . .[8]

In similar vein he says in "Performative Utterances":

> Philosophers at least are too apt to assume that an action is in the last resort the making of a physical movement, whereas it's usually, at least in part, a matter of convention.[9]

Our question must be: what hangs on "mere" in Austin's remark that our actions "are not the mere makings of physical movements"? And what is the force of the expressions "in the last resort" and "in the last analysis" in the other passages I quoted? If (as it seems) Austin's point is that we have not said all that matters about an action when we have described it as a bodily movement, then it is hard to see how anybody could disagree.[10] If, on the contrary, it is that we can never identify a person's particular action

6. I point at a dog. I say: "That's an animal". Am I wrong? Certainly not. I am not denying that one can give a more detailed, fuller account of what a dog is. What I'm saying is, simply, that it would be wrong to *deny* that a dog is an animal.
7. J.L. Austin, "A Plea for Excuses", in *Philosophical Papers, op.cit.*, p. 178.
8. *ibid.*, p. 179.
9. J.L. Austin, "Performative Utterances", in *Philosophical Papers, op.cit.*, p. 237.
10. Austin, in fact, does not accuse any *particular* philosopher of such reductivism. He speaks of "a vague and comforting idea in the background" and attributes to philosophers generally the assumption which he then goes on to attack.

with that person's moving (a part of) his body, then the claim is counterintuitive and, moreover, goes directly against Austin's insights as manifested in those other passages where he sees quite clearly that we can describe the same action in different ways; and that in many episodes of a person's doing something, one of the descriptions we give of his actions is in terms of some sort of bodily movement.

It is important not to confuse these two claims; and it is rather unfortunate that Davidson does not always express himself unambiguously in this respect. For whereas the sentence "All actions are bodily movements" says about particular actions that they can be described in terms of the agent's moving (parts of) his body, the sentence "We never do more than move our bodies," which Davidson also uses,[11] gives the impression that all descriptions of actions can be reduced (or are equivalent) to bodily movement descriptions. On Davidson's own account, however, this cannot be right. For if it is true, as Davidson clearly thinks it must be, that "we are capable, for better or for worse, of building dams, stemming floods, murdering one another, or, from time to time, hitting the bull's eye,"[12] then here are some examples of the things we do *beyond* or *over and above* moving our bodies: what we do is build dams, stem floods, murder one another, and hit the bull's eye.

"Agency" was presented at a philosophy colloquium in 1968 and first published in 1971.[13] In a note added in 1979 Davidson admits that "while not false, the sentence ('we never do more than move our bodies') is misleading."[14] But the example he gives in the note does nothing to remove the ambiguity. He says: "If I move the earth, this *sounds* like more than moving my body. The argument shows it is not." But clearly there is a sense in which it is plainly and straightforwardly true (not just *sounds* true) that moving the earth is something I do over and above moving my body: it is precisely one of the many things which Davidson says I could achieve, "for better or for worse," by moving my body. So, taken as a claim about things we do (i.e. action-kinds), Davidson's dictum "We never do more than move our bodies" is not just misleading but false. The misconception is removed only if we interpret Davidson's claim to be a claim about the right *sort* of things, viz., particular actions, our doings of things, not the things we do. The point could then be put thus: my particular action is identical with (i.e. is nothing other than) some movement$_T$ of the body; e.g. Archimedes' moving the earth is the same action as Archimedes' moving his body.

11. D. Davidson, *op.cit.*, p. 59.
12. *ibid.*, p. 60.
13. See Davidson's short preface about the provenance of the essays, *op.cit.*, p. vii.
14. *ibid.*, p. 59, note 20.

Because of the way Davidson expresses himself on occasions like the one just quoted, it would be easy to construe Austin's warning – "that even the simplest named actions ... are not the mere makings of physical movements" – as aimed directly against Davidson's position. But Austin's claim that "Actions are not the mere makings of physical movements" seems to suffer from the same kind of ambiguity as it present in Davidson's claim that "We never do more than move our bodies". In both cases the medium and the message are at odds. A reading of these remarks in the light of the distinctions which both Austin and Davidson failed to make explicit shows that the alleged conflict does not exist.

Commenting on some of Austin's examples, L.W. Forguson argued that because

> a great many actions, if not all, are as much socially constitued as they are physically constituted

it follows that

> an action is not to be simply identified with the bodily movements involved in its performance.(15)

But Forguson's point does not show the non-identity of particular actions with particular makings of bodily movements. All it shows is that particular actions can be variously classified, that an action which has been described in physical terms may very often be redescribed with reference to social conventions, rules of the game, etc.

We may gather further evidence for the claim that many actions are bodily movements (in the transitive sense) from Austin's analysis of what he calls "the machinery of action". Rather than warning us that actions are not "merely", or "in the last analysis", the making of physical movements with parts of the body, this time Austin talks about

> the stage at which we have actually to *carry out* some action upon which we embark – perhaps we have to make certain bodily movements...(16)

The stage at which the action occurs – in Austin's words, the stage at which we have "actually to *carry out*" the action, or, occasionally, "*muff* it" –

15. L.W. Forguson, "Austin's Philosophy of Action", in K.T. Fann, ed., *Symposium on J.L. Austin* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), pp. 137–8. More or less similar arguments were used by P.F. Strawson and G.J. Warnock in David Pears, ed., *Freedom and the Will* (London, Macmillan, 1963), esp. p. 64; A.I. Melden, "Action", *Philosophical Review,* 65 (1956), pp. 530–2; Annette Baier, "The Search for Basic Actions", *American Philosophical Quarterly,* 8 (1971), p. 166; David Schwayder, *The Stratification of Behaviour* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), p. 174.

16. J.L. Austin, "A Plea for Excuses", *op.cit.,* p. 193.

(as opposed to, for example, preparing for it, planning it, or merely thinking about it) – is the stage where we move our bodies. And he goes on to say that

> in the stage of actually *doing* those things (getting weaving) . . . we must exercise sufficient control over our bodily parts . . .[17]

At the crucial stage – the "executive" stage, as Austin calls it – we move our bodily parts in a controlled way. But if beyond the executive stage there is nothing we can control in a way similar to the way in which we control the physical movements with parts of our bodies, then we can argue that our moving parts of our body is the action. Such tension as there is in Austin between this passage and the ones I quoted earlier can best be explained if we accept that the claim that our (physical) actions are identical with our (transitive) bodily movements is a claim about *particular* actions, while the remark about our actions not being "merely", or "in the last analysis", movings of the body is a remark about the *types* under which our actions may be subsumed, the concepts under which they may fall. It is a reflection on the way we name or describe our actions in the light of our intentions, principles, aims, etc – a reminder that, as Davidson succinctly puts it, we may achieve a lot my moving our bodies.

17. *ibid.*

CRITICAL SYMBOLISM: THE THOUGHT OF L. AUGUSTE SABATIER

Richard Penaskovic

Introduction

Louis Auguste Sabatier (1839 – 1901) should not be confused with Paul Sabatier (1858 – 1928). Auguste Sabatier was a professor of reformed dogmatics at Strasbourg and Paris, ending his career as dean of the Theological Faculty of Paris. His philosophy of religion had a great influence on Loisy and other Catholic modernists.

Paul Sabatier made some outstanding contributions to Franciscan scholarship, among them his *Vie de S. Francois d'Assise* (1894). He played a part in Modernism between 1904 – 1914 with his *An Open Letter to His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons* and his *Jewett Lectures on Modernism* (1908). The precise role he played in Modernism has yet to be determined by scholars.

The name "Symbolo-fideism" refers to a tendency in French theology around the turn of the century. It is associated with the names of two professors on the Faculty of Theology at Paris, Auguste Sabatier and Eugene Ménégoz. Our knowledge about "Symbolo-fideism" or the "Parisian School of Theology" derives mainly from two books, *Esquisse d'une philosophie de la religion d'après la psychologie et l'histoire* by Auguste Sabatier (1897) and the *Publications diverses sur le fideisme et son application a l'enseignement chrétien traditionnel* by Eugene Ménégoz (1900).[1]

The task of critical symbolism is this: to point out the inadequacy and metaphorical character of all religious ideas. Sabatier does this by investigating philosophically the limits of religious knowledge, by investigat-

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1. Bernard Raymond, 'L'École De Paris,' *Études theologinques et religieuses* 52 (1977), p. 374.

ing the relationship between religious knowledge, on the one hand, and scientific knowledge on the other, and attempting to hit upon the essence of religion making use of the historical-psychological method.

Whereas the term, "symbolism," has mainly a critical function, the "fideism" of Ménégoz has a positive note to it, dealing with an elucidation of the Lutheran formula "justification through faith alone." Gustav Lasch puts the matter well when he writes that Sabatier's symbolism concerns the formal principle, that is, basic questions about the limits of religious knowledge, about the essence of religion and revelation. The fideism of Ménégoz, on the other hand, deals with the material principle, questions such as the true meaning of faith, justification and salvation, the traditional Lutheran concerns. Both theories complement each other despite their diverse points of departure.(2)

This essay has as its focus Sabatier's theory called critical symbolism, omitting a discussion of Ménégoz fideism. In order to get a handle on Sabatier's critical symbolism one must see it within the context of Sabatier's philosophy of religion as found in the *Outlines*.

I. Sabatier's Philosophy of Religion

Sabatier's *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion based on Psychology and History* was written as the personal confession of a mature Christian. It is the source book of critical symbolism, the rich fruit of philosophical and theological reflection, written by a master of French style.

The entire book is written with a certain élan which pulsates throughout. It contains many metaphors and comparisons which make reading it an intellectual feast. At the same time, it is not written very systematically. Sabatier constantly repeats himself, returning again and again to basic themes in the manner of certain liberation theologians such as Gutierrez. This makes it difficult to summarize his thought succinctly.(3)

The central issue in Sabatier's *Outlines* is this: What is the essence of religion? Sabatier summarily rejects Comte's theory about the three stages through which human thought has passed, the theological stage of primitive times, the metaphysical stage in the Middle Ages, and the positive or scientific stage of modern times. For Sabatier the three stages correspond to three perennial needs of the human soul rather than to three distinct periods of history. Sabatier adds that his basic difficulty with the three stages has to do with the fact that knowledge is not the essence of religion as Comte mistakenly thought. (*Outlines*, p. 8)

2. Gustav Lasch, *Die Theologie der Pariser Schule* (Berlin 1901), p. 4.
3. Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1973).

What, then, is the essence of religion? Prayer and piety are the core and rind of religion for Sabatier. Prayer may almost be defined as religion in act. Prayer may be regarded as the movement of the soul putting itself into personal power with the Transcendent, whose presence it feels even before it can be named. Religion is thus at the core of the human heart. It can be removed only by obliterating that which constitutes our very humanity. (*Outlines,* p. 31) Where is Sabatier coming from in this? He seems to be influenced by Pascal. For Pascal piety means that God is sensible to the heart. To speak of religion for Sabatier is to speak of revelation since both these concepts are organically related. (*Outlines,* p. 34)

Religion may be seen as the subjective revelation of God in man whereas revelation is God's response or in Sabatier's own words, revelation is religion objective in God. Religion and revelation are correlative terms. If religion is the subjective element, then human prayer or revelation is the objective element, the response of God. Psychologically speaking, they are identical phenomena.

Sabatier takes to task those scholastic theologians of his day who distinguish three elements in revelation, the object, namely dogma, the form, viz., Scripture, and the proof, namely miracles. The Scholastics are faulted on two counts. First, to make of dogma the object of revelation is tantamount to eliminating from it its religious character. It means, observes Sabatier, to both separate dogma from piety and to put it in perennial conflict with reason. Second, to distinguish between the object, the form, and the proof in revelation is to make artificial and unnecessary constructions. The Scholastics also make insoluble antitheses in distinguishing between natural and supernatural revelation, universal and special revelation and mediate/immediate revelation. (*Outlines,* p. 64)

Sabatier has been accused of interpreting dogmas as simply a symbolical expression of our religious feelings. Such a bold summary statement of Sabatier's views on dogma hardly does justice to his thought. One may distinguish at least two elements in dogma, a properly religious element and an intellectual element. The intellectual or theoretical element may best be regarded as the expression or envelope of the religious experience.[4]

In constructing her dogmas the Church uses ideas taken from the current philosophy and science. To be fruitful dogmas must constantly intermingle with the evolution of human thought. Sabatier sees dogmas as developing and changing. He compares dogmas to language which is modified 1) by disuse, 2) by acquiring new significations, and 3) by the renascence of old or the creation of new words. (*Outlines,* p. 251)

4. K. Schmitt, "Sabatier, Louis-Auguste", in *LThK IX,* ed. by Josef Höfer-Karl Rahner (Freiburg: Verlag Herder, 1964), p. 187.

Sabatier believes that dogmas need to be criticized. To criticize a dogma is not to eliminate it or to change its substance. To criticize dogma is to make an appeal to a better understanding of the dogma. Sabatier sees a vast difference between the Catholic and the Protestant understanding of dogma.

Catholics, in their attempt to be orthodox, fail to see the historical and psychologically conditioned character of all doctrines. Instead, they tend to absolutize that which is temporal, failing to see the symbolic character of dogma. Sabatier rejects the Catholic understanding of dogma as anti-historical forgetting that the fundamental principle of Christianity is a religious experience, namely, that of Christ and the Apostles. (*Outline,* p. 267)

How does Sabatier view the Protestant understanding of dogma? He believes that the Reformation substituted the internal principle of Christian experience for the external principle of authority. Not only dogmatic theology but theology *per se* aims to give an account of the religious experience of the Christian Church.

In regard to dogma one must be careful to distinguish between the essence of the faith or the religious substance of doctrine and its historical manifestations. For Sabatier dogmas do change. The very fact that they have a history proves that they change. The language of dogma is often borrowed from philosophy. The substance of a dogma derives from piety or the religious experience of believers. Sabatier sees dogmas as living things, grounded in religious experience. As living, dogmas are in a perpetual state of transformation. When they are no longer discussed, they do, in fact, die. (*Outlines,* p. 231)

Dogmas, for Sabatier, have their taproot in religion. Religion has both an internal element and an external one. The internal element or soul of religion is inward piety; the body or external element of religion is in external forms such as dogmas, codes and institutions. In religion one finds an organic union of both these elements. (*Outlines*, p. 232)

II. Critical Symbolism: An Answer to a Question

How does Sabatier come to his theory of "critical symbolism?" He formulated his theory by trying to differentiate between scientific knowledge which deals with immanent phenomena and religious knowledge which concerns transcendent phenomena. The notions formed in the exact sciences such as physics are adequate to their object whereas none of the notions formed in religious knowledge are adequate to reality. Sabatier writes that the theory of religious knowledge requires for its completion a theory of symbols and symbolism. This he provides.

There are two distinct orders of knowledge, or two different kinds of consciousness. There is a consciousness of the world and a consciousness of the ego. In regard to the former, the ego is absorbed by the non-ego so that the laws of the non-ego (the object of thought) should become the laws of the ego (the subject). *In re* consciousness of the ego, the object should enter into the subject so that the laws of the subject should become the law of things. (*Outlines*, p. 295)

Sabatier believes that the knowledge of nature is objective. This is the knowledge found in the natural sciences concerned with a simple description of phenomena. In science we have judgements based on sensation. These are judgements of existence bearing on the relation of objects to each other, apart from the subject. Opposed to these are judgements of estimation or dignity in which the category of the good becomes the necessary form of these new judgements. (*Outlines,* p. 299)

Whereas, scientific knowledge is objective, religious knowledge always remains subjective. Religious and moral knowledge are always subjective for their object are not phenomena grasped outside or independently of the knower. God, for example, reveals Himself only in and by piety. For Sabatier, God cannot be known apart from the knowing subject nor is the existence of God a truth demonstrable by logical reasoning.

In sum, religious/moral truths are known by the human heart. Moral evidence forms the basis of moral certitude. Sabatier would say that to know the world religiously means to determine its value in relation to the life of the spirit. (*Outlines,* p. 310)

Is there a conflict between science and religion? Although Scholasticism saw an opposition between faith and science, Sabatier did not. He says that the order of science and the order of religion move on different levels and never meet so as to conflict. If, for instance, my child becomes ill, I call a physician to use his skills to save my child. This is the order of science. On a different level, the religious plane, I pray to God to heal my child. Each order has its own particular kind of certitude. Intellectual evidence forms the basis of scientific certitude; moral evidence for religious certitude. (*Outlines,* p. 312)

It is at this point that Sabatier's theory of critical symbolism comes into play. The hard sciences have as their aim the elimination of the knowing subject. An astronomer, for example, need not be a morally upright woman to convince us of the reality of her discoveries. However, a fundamentally deceitful man will always be a horrible ethics professor. The relationship between scientific and religious knowledge parallels the relationship between a text and its interpretation. One may argue that by its discoveries the hard sciences, such as physics and chemistry, establish the text but

without the exegesis of consciousness the naked text signifies nothing. (*Outlines,* p. 320)

In the exact sciences the notions formed are equivalent or adequate to reality whereas all religious knowledge is symbolical. We use symbols to express the invisible and the spiritual by the sensible and the material. I am able to communicate to you today Sabatier's *Religious-philosophie* only by using words and sounds to express his thoughts. Symbols attest to the royalty and victory of the spirit in a way science could never do. One may say that the exact sciences reveal nature. Correspondingly, symbols make of nature the glorified image of the inner life of spirit. (*Outlines*, p. 324)

For Sabatier, symbols rule the world. They address themselves more to the inner life and emotions than to the naked intellect. Parables, for example, address themselves to the heart. All of the arts from painting to music to architecture are symbolical. Art tries to enshrine the ideal in the real. Using a material form art attempts to give expression to what is inexpressible. The best examples of symbols are speech and writing. (*Outlines,* p. 323)

The theory of critical symbolism functions as a *via media* between Roman Catholicism or "orthodoxy" and rationalism. Roman Catholics try to absolutize dogmas forgetting their historical, psychologically conditioned character. They lose sight of the symbolical character of dogmas so that their understanding of dogma may be termed anti-historical.

Rationalism, the other extreme, empties religion of its real content, namely, religious experience. Rationalism, mistaken as to the soul of religion, winds up killing faith. In contradistinction to Roman Catholic orthodoxy on the one hand, and rationalism, on the other, Sabatier's theory of critical symbolism permits believers to combine veneration for traditional symbols with perfect independence of spirit by leaving to believers the right to assimilate them and adapt them to their own experience. (*Outlines,* p. 342)

III. Discussion

In his theory of critical symbolism Sabatier gives primacy to the religious experience of the believer. Compared to this primordial datum, the dogmas of Christianity are but secondary and transient symbols of this central religious experience. Dogmas are human and inadequate attempts to express the eternal by the temporal, the invisible by the visible.[5]

5. Auguste Sabatier, *Outlines*, p. 323. Cf. John Weiss, "Sabatier, Auguste," *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* ed. by Paul Edwards. (New York: Macmillan & The Free Press, 1967), p. 274. See Gabriel Daly, "Catholicism and Modernity," *JAAR* 53 No. 4 (December, 1985), p. 783.

To the Scholastic authors of his day, Sabatier's views on dogma were anathema. The Scholastics saw dogmas as immutable, unchanging, absolute.[6] There is a larger element involved in all of this and it has to do with the relationship between Christianity and the modern world.

There are two opposing forces or kingdoms in the world. The reign of autonomy to which secular reason aspires and that of "heteronomy" the form and principle of the religions of authority. Sabatier sees his generation as marching between two fronts, modern science with its rigorous methods and the church with her customs and dogmas. Sabatier himself tries to find a via media between these two camps.[7]

Modern culture has "autonomy" as its principle of being. Autonomy refers to the unconquerable assurance of the mind that it has within itself the norm of its thought and of its life, plus the deep-seated desire to realize itself by obeying its own law. For Sabatier, autonomy is a global term referring to the unity of principle which covers all the general manifestations of the modern spirit in every department.[8]

The reign of autonomy begins with Descartes' *Discourse on Method* (1637) and the effort made by the mind to look into itself and to take immediate cognizance of itself in the initial phenomena of consciousness. With the methodical doubt, says Sabatier, comes the rejection of external, traditional authorities such as the Church and of the ideas based solely on custom or the words of a master, be he ever a Pope.[9]

With the Cartesian doubt what we have is the recognition that reason is a king unto itself, the autonomy of the mind. Concomitant with the exaltation of reason is the rise of the natural or experimental sciences. The latter are, says Sabatier, a practical demonstration of the mind's autonomy. We see the same thing, *mutatis mutandis*, in regard to the use of the historical critical method, which is simply a continuation of the mind's autonomy.[10]

Sabatier held that Catholicism and modern culture were completely at loggerheads. There was open hostility between them particularly in France. Because of this opposition an impossible gulf has been formed between sacred and profane, the clergy and the laity. On the one hand, we have in modern culture a system of free inquiry and of perpetual discussion where

6. Michael Richards, "The Historical Backgrond to the Rise of Modernism," *Clergy Review* 70 (June, 1975), No. 6, p. 207. As opposed to the Scholastic, Sabatier repeatedly insists on the fact that dogmas have to be understood historically. He believes that the advent of the historical method is the third intellectual evolution in his own day. Cf. *Outline*, p. 256.

7. John Weiss, "Sabatier, Auguste," p. 274.

8. Auguste Sabatier, *Religion and Modern Culture* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), p. 169.

9. Sabatier, *Religion*, p. 170.

10. Sabatier, *Religion*, p. 172.

everything in science rests upon evidence alone. On the other, in the Church we have an intellectual and moral system in which everything rests upon the authority of the past and tends to be a denial of the mind's autonomy.(11)

In Protestantism the opposition between religion and modern culture was relative and changing instead of remaining absolute as in Catholicism. Here the center of gravity in religion was removed from without to within, from a hierarchy to the sanctuary of the conscience.(12)

Sabatier himself wanted a mutual penetration of religion and modern culture. In order to remain healthy, human culture has need of religion. Religion regenerates everything from art to science to politics. Civilization bows beneath its own weight when religion weakens. Religion is indeed the salt of the earth of which Jesus spoke.(13)

To remain vibrant and living, religion needs to stay in close contact with human culture. This culture obliges religion to exercise a critical function. Far from borrowing from culture that which constitutes the efficacy of its own action, religion sloughs off everything that does not really belong to it. By shedding antiquated forms, religion returns to its religious/moral principles from which it draws its strength.(14)

The relationship between religion and culture, for Sabatier, may be summed up by saying that modern culture acts upon the forms of religion by its criticism, and religion, in turn, purifies and elevates criticism by its spirit. This twofold operation deepens and broadens the faith. How so? Faith separates itself from the forms of religion, turning to that which constitutes its essence. By losing its external material support faith is made to become an internal and exclusively moral act.(15)

IV. Sabatier and The Modernists

First, some general comments will be made about the points on which the thought of Sabatier and that of the Modernists coincide. Then, there follows a short note on the influence of Sabatier's thought on Alfred Loisy.

There are at least three areas in which the thought of Sabatier and that or the Modernists coincides. First, we have the dislike for Scholasticism and the use of Scholastic method for getting at the truth in theology and religion. Both Sabatier and the Modernists were aware of the limitations of the Scholastic method.(16)

11. Sabatier, *Religion*, p. 190.
12. Sabatier, *Religion*, p. 195.
13. Sabatier, *Religion*, p. 217.
14. Sabatier, *Religion*, p. 218.
15. Sabatier, *Religion*, p. 226.
16. Lester R. Kurtz, *The Politics of Heresy: The Modernist Crisis in Roman Catholicism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), p. 60.

Second, they recognized the limits of Scholasticism because of their historical consciousness. Throughout his philosophy of religion as contained in the *Outlines*, Sabatier makes constant recourse to history. The same kind of historical consciousness is to be found, for example, in Loisy as the work of Ronald Burke and others points out.[17]

The nineteenth century Scholastics thought of revelation as the discovery of eternal truths thought of as so many objective realities which, so they believed, could be translated into dogmatic formulas. The formulas were thought to be immutable. Sabatier and the Modernists, on the other hand, recognized the historical dimension of revealed truth, anticipating the Second Vatican Council.[18]

Third, both Sabatier and the Modernists firmly believed in the possibility of a synthesis between the essential truth of Christianity and the essential truth modenity. This may also help to explain why the Modernists and the anti-Modernists went for each other's jugular vein. To say that there should be some kind of accommodation between Christianity and the modern world implied the possibility of a synthesis between good and evil, light and darkness, belief and disbelief.[19]

Moreover, to insist on an absolute separation between Christianity and the modern world implied fidelity to the Catholic position. To relativize the opposition between Christianity and the modern world was to make overtures to the Protestant position. At the turn of the century there was no ecumenical movements *per se*. Catholics look upon Protestants as outright heretics. Polemicism best sums up the attitude present between Protestants and Catholics.

The reason why L. Auguste Sabatier is not considered a Modernist *in sensu stricto* revolves around the fact that he was already a Protestant and thus not a direct threat to the Catholic Church as were the insiders within her own bosom, men such as Loisy, Tyrell and von Hugel.[20]

Of all the Modernists, no one was more deeply influenced by Auguste Sabatier than was Alfred Loisy. The latter's "Firmin" articles are an attack on both Harnack and Sabatier but by the same token they show how

17. Ronald Burke, "Loisy's Faith: Landshift in Catholic Thought," *Journal of Religion*, 60, No. 2 (April, 1980), p. 145.
18. Robert Coffy, "The Magisterium and Theology," *Readings in Moral Theology No. 3: The Magisterium and Morality*, ed. by Charles E. Curran – Richard A. McCormick, S.J., (New York: Paulist, 1982), p. 215.
19. Daniel L. Donovan, "Church and Theology in the Modernist Crisis," *Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society of America* 40 (1985), p. 150.
20. Vidler believes that one should speak of modernists rather than modernism. To speak of modernism is to exaggerate the extent to which the modernists agreed with one another and so to distort the character of the movement. Cf. *A Variety of Catholic Modernists*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1970), p. 18.

extensively Loisy was influenced by both of them. For example, in his fourth "Firmin" article Loisy writes that revelation makes the divine accessible by humanization, while man communicates the original experience using symbols which are a kind of "algebraic notation" representing ineffable quantities. Sabatier uses the very same words in his *Outlines* when he writes that our ideas are simply "algebraic notations" of our impressions and movements.(21)

In his *Mémoires* (I, p. 454f) Loisy notes that although his presentation of salvation history had points in common with the views of M. Blondel and Ollé-Laprune, his ideas on the relative value of religious symbols had a greater affinity with those of Auguste Sabatier, as G. Daly observes.(22)

Gabriel Daly makes another astute observation about Sabatier's influence on Loisy. In *L'Évangile et l'Église*, Loisy chose Harnack rather than Sabatier as his adversary because the latter's influence on Loisy was too great for him to achieve a convincing discrimination between them.(23)

Joseph Lemius, the author of *Pascendi*, thought that Loisy was more deeply influenced by Sabatier than Loisy was prepared to admit. Lemius could see the influence of Sabatier on Loisy since the surviving notes and papers of Leminus show that he had carefully read both Loisy and Sabatier's *Outlines*.

In his lecture "Sur les doctrines de Loisy," given on May 14, 1905, Joseph Lemius begins by stating that Loisy has learned from L. Auguste Sabatier how to combine an atheistic intellect with a religious and believing heart.

Another area in which we get some idea of the influence of L. Auguste Sabatier on Modernism comes from the encyclical, *Pascendi*. The understanding or "immanence" in *Pascendi* may be attributed first to Joseph Lemius, second, to L. Auguste Sabatier and third to Loisy and Laberthonnière.(24)

V. Some Observations

1. Recent research on Modernism during the past twenty years has had a ripple effect in terms of our understanding of L. Auguste Sabatier. Just as the Roman Catholic Modernists were ahead of their time because of their historical consciousness so too, *a fortiori,* was Sabatier. Recent research on Modernism puts Sabatier in a new light so that Loisy's words may be

21. Sabatier, *Outlines*, p. 276.
22. Gabriel Daly, *Transcendence And Immanence: A Study of Catholic Modernism and Integralism*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 66.
23. Daly, *Transcendence,* p. 66.
24. Daly, *Transcendence,* p. 199.

applied to Sabatier. "The heresies of today are part of the orthodoxies of tomorrow."[25]

2. Sabatier's distinction between the objectivity of scientific knowledge vis à vis the subjectivity of religious knowledge appears, at times, to be facile. One cannot say with Sabatier that the knowledge of nature is objective not with W. Heisenberg's discovery of the uncertainty principle in physics. At best one could say that scientific knowledge has objectivity as its ideal.

Sabatier tends, on occasion, to incline toward "objectivism" understood as the belief that what science discovers can be separated from the intervention and intentionality of the knowing subject. In objectivism the knowing subject is rendered irrelevant to the pursuit of knowledge, replaceable by any dispassionate observer such as the computer, the camera or the objective eye.[26]

3. Sabatier saw quite clearly the importance of personal experience in the religious enterprise. On this particular score his work found resonance in the existential theologians of the twentieth century. In a similar vein, his theory of critical symbolism presages the work of Paul Tillich, Paul Ricoeur, Mary Gerhart and Sally McFague on symbolism and metaphorical theology.[27]

25. Alfred Loisy, *Mémoirs pour servir à l'histoire religieuse de notre temps I*, (Paris, 1930–1), p. 35.
26. Phillip Lewin, "Instrumental Reason and the Crisis in the Humanities," in *The Crisis in the Humanities: Interdisciplinary Responses,* ed. by Sara Putzell-Korab–Robert Detweiler, (Potomac, Maryland: Studia Humanitatis, 1983), p. 11.
27. See Sally McFague, *Metaphorical Theology: Models of God in Religious Language* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982) and Mary Gerhart–A. Russell, *Metaphoric Process: The Creation of Scientific and Religious Understanding,* (Fort Worth: Texas University Press, 1984).

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- Ride bus.
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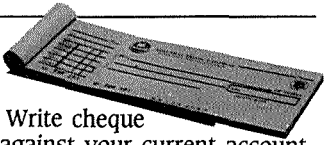

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