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Ricoeur and Kant: Philosophy of the Will by Pamela Sue Anderson

Review by: Mark I. Wallace

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concept, has failed to do justice to the interests of both society and person, one and many" (p. 213).

Although Gunton falls prey to overschematization in subsuming the history of Western culture under the classical option of Parmenides versus Heraclitus, the one versus the many, his analysis proves an effective springboard for his trinitarian theology of creation presented in part 2. Situating his project methodologically as a *via media* between Barth and Aquinas, Gunton argues for a "non-authoritarian approach to a trinitarian theology of being, meaning the truth": a trinitarian fundamental ontology predicated on the basis of revelation, but whose categories "can be shown to correspond to the structures of universal human rationality" (p. 211). Developing S. T. Coleridge's insight that the Trinity is the "primary Idea" (p. 144), the source from which all universals spring, Gunton generates three transcendental categories from the divine trinitarian economy: perichoresis, hypostasis, and relationality. These trinitarian transcendentals, in turn, supply the coordinates for a relational ontology which essays to give due weight to both the unity and the plurality of being.

The One, the Three and the Many is Gunton's most ambitious and complex theological project to date, synthesizing various lines of thought from his earlier works (on the Enlightenment, the Trinity, and the doctrine of creation) into a mature theology of culture. This book ably fulfills its stated intent: to undertake a genuine dialogue between the truths of Christianity and the culture of modernity. On the one hand, Gunton integrates the Enlightenment critique of Christian theology into his account of the flawed development of the doctrines of God and creation in the West. On the other, he vigorously challenges modernity's immanent deities and ideologies with his trinitarian conceptuality of God and of the structures of created reality.

Where Gunton's project proves less successful is in delineating the practical consequences of his trinitarian theology of creation for the crisis of modernity. While the author argues convincingly that a theory of trinitarian transcendentals addresses the metaphysical problem of the one and the many, the anticipated concrete proposal for a trinitarian vision of culture remains disappointingly sketchy. Nonetheless, Gunton is to be commended for boldly taking up the classical challenge of defending the Trinity as the ultimate source of the truth, goodness, and beauty of all reality.

JOY ANN MCDUGALL, *Chicago, Illinois*.

ANDERSON, PAMELA SUE. *Ricoeur and Kant: Philosophy of the Will*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993. xvii + 147 pp. \$29.95 (cloth); \$19.95 (paper).

This fine book by Pamela Sue Anderson provides a close reading of Paul Ricoeur's philosophy of the will from the perspective of Immanuel Kant's critical philosophy. Anderson argues that Ricoeur's work is an extension and refinement of Kant's dual-aspect notion of the subject, in which the subject is understood as both active and passive, voluntary and involuntary, nontemporal and temporal. Anderson is particularly interested in the theological significance of Ricoeur's project, that is, in the way religious stories and symbols have the potential to mediate the dual-aspect nature of human experience.

The book's first three chapters make Anderson's case concerning Ricoeur's fundamental indebtedness to Kant's project. Beginning with Ricoeur's earlier poetics of the will in books such as *Fallible Man* (Chicago, 1965) and *The Symbolism of*

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Evil (New York, 1967), Anderson maintains that Ricoeur is basically sympathetic to Kant's hermeneutic of the symbols of radical evil as an exercise that can only take place outside the parameters of Kant's critical philosophy. The reason for the exteriority of religion to philosophy in Kant's thought stems from the problem of the "captive free will," an aporia that is not approachable on the basis of the methodology in the three *Critiques*. Kant argues that, while an originary disposition to evil is basic to the human condition, this disposition can only be indirectly "thought" by interrogating the figures and myths of religious belief; it cannot be directly "known" as an element of objective knowledge and experience. Anderson demonstrates Ricoeur's nuanced dependence on Kant's fundamental anthropology by virtue of Ricoeur's analysis of the innately faulted character of human volition. Humans suffer from the loss of free will through a propensity to evil, even though, paradoxically, the actual performance of evil is a result of free choice rather than "original sin." Evil, then, is our predilection but also our responsibility; we are both victimized by it and culpable for it. "Evil appears both as an aspect of conscious choice and as an aspect of the universally given" (p. 56).

Kant's response to this paradox—a response Ricoeur similarly deploys—consists in interpreting the archetype of Christ as a unifying symbolization of the divided will reconciled with itself. The value of this archetype lies in its ability to refigure the will and thereby liberate it from its predisposition to evil. The archetype is generated by a "schematism of hope" in which the rational *concept* of a will no longer bound by evil inclinations is rendered intelligible and applicable to experience by the concrete *example* of an individual who singularly embodies the autonomy of a rational will. Anderson notes, however, that for Ricoeur the christological archetype in Kant is a moral figure of the productive imagination, not an extension of knowledge into the inner nature of Reality, as one finds in Hegel's philosophical christology. Ricoeur, then, further agrees with Kant (*pace* Hegel) that the proper telos for philosophy of religion is to interpret the rich imagery of religious faith in order to enable the practical realization of human freedom. In the archetype of Christ as the temporal realization of an original nontemporal good, the problem of the dual-aspect will is symbolically mediated.

In the conclusion, Anderson provides her own critical assessment of Ricoeur's philosophy of the will against the backdrop of Kant's transcendental idealism. She notes that, as Kant can be read in two directions—as the "transcendental Kant" and the "Kant of practical reason" (p. 128)—so also does Ricoeur's appropriation of Kant's legacy saddle Ricoeur's project with an irresolvable tension between an idealist notion of the productive imagination and a historical concern with transformative praxis. Ricoeur seeks to resolve this tension through a poetics of narrative discourse that operates according to a two-fold hermeneutical gesture. The capacity to generate narrativized figures of hope and fulfillment is a transcendental feature of human experience that has the potential both to critique inauthentic forms of life (hermeneutics of suspicion) and to liberate new forms of praxis (hermeneutics of restoration). Ricoeur writes that one must always exercise caution and suspicion toward the figures and stories provided by the imagination because such figures and stories may be rooted in political and social distortions. But Anderson, by way of a sort of immanent critique of Ricoeur's work, argues that the French philosopher has not gone far enough in specifying the multiple historical conditions that can effectively subvert the supposedly authentic work of the imagination.

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