Chapter 12 The Mystery of Afterlife

1. Transcendental Antinomy Regarding This Topic

The idea of afterlife has for its Object a pure noumenon beyond the horizon of possible living human experience. By definition, if there is an afterlife you can only know it *after* your life if it can be known at all. In the context of religion, the dictionary definition of "mystery" as "a religious truth that man can know by revelation alone and cannot be fully understood" is quite applicable to the idea of afterlife provided that by "man" one means "living men and women" as we know them. Against the thesis, "there is an afterlife," can always be set the antithesis, "there is no afterlife," and this thesis-antithesis pairing is one of our transcendental antinomies. Therefore, anything that can be said in this chapter in regard to afterlife can only be a product of unprovable premises and can be reached only through logical dialectic based upon premises of faith. Its concept is not made less important by this limitation of human nature, though. Rather, through such dialectic explorations one can gain a fuller appreciation of the primacy of faith over belief and the pertinence of Anselm's maxim: faith seeking to understand.

Some people use the mystery of afterlife as a reason to adopt a maxim of prudence, *viz.*, "I had better conduct my life in such-and-such a way *just in case* there really is an afterlife." There is nothing wrong with this maxim *per se* because a person can thereby choose to make it a Duty to himself, and without Duties to oneself there never can arise reciprocal Duties in regard to the situation of others. Without the latter there are no conditions for *moral* duties pertinent to the idea of divine Community to stand under. The maxim of prudence in relationship to a person's *humanity* is neither moral nor immoral *per se*, but the *use* of this maxim, and the subordinate duties standing under it that a person constructs, *can* be made contrary to Duties of Community if a person does not undertake to understand them from a *basis* in one's articles of faith.

Pernicious usages of this sort have been repeatedly demonstrated in history by pogroms in which one Community of people have rationalized persecutions and slaughters of another. One of the best known infamous examples is when Christians invent a ghost community – Christ killers – to stereotype Jewish people. But this is far from the only example. Others have included the ghost community of "Papists" to justify persecution of Catholics by Protestant sects, "bigamists" to justify persecution of Mormons, "pagans" to justify slaughters of Celtic and Germanic people during the European Dark Ages, and "infidels" to justify killing people of other religious sects; and this list does not exhaust the supply of examples.

One historical phenomenon seen again and again is that in which a religious sect preaches *tolerance* when they are in the minority but practice extreme *intolerance* when they attain to the majority in communities. And yet, at the same time, most major religions condemn this as hypocrisy. In Christianity this is made a moral lesson:

> If someone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar for the one who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. [1 John 4:20]

In the absence of any immediate and clear experience of divine revelation, a living human being has no possibility of *knowing* what an afterlife will be like or if there even is one at all. Noumenal afterlife is beyond the horizon of possible human experience not withstanding the fact that some individuals have told stories of having "near death experiences" and reported that during it they received a revelation of an afterlife. What is at issue for those of us who have had no such experience is whether these revelations are actually *divine* revelations or if they are merely subjective phenomena resulting from "disturbed bodily multisensory integration" that occurs during life-threatening situations, as neuroscience holds them to be. While I personally think the latter is more likely to be a correct explanation of near death experiences, I must also point out that the neuroscience explanation is speculation rather than fact – as is interpretation

of them as divine revelations. If you have had a near death experience, I will not argue your interpretation is either right or wrong because there is simply no way, no possibility, of proving either opinion beyond a reasonable doubt and with Critical objective validity. The divine revelation thesis and the neuroscience antithesis set up another unanswerable transcendental antinomy, and to argue about it is to argue about a matter of pure faith.

In Critical theology, holding the *Dasein* of afterlife to be true is an article of faith. If there is no afterlife then death is the oblivion of the individual and life is without any ultimate meaning or purpose. There are some people for whom the latter is a satisfactory article of faith. For others this idea is repulsive. Faith, again, is holding-to-be-true on a subjectively sufficient ground *with consciousness of doubt*, and doubt is consciousness of the possibility that the contradictory opposite of an objective judgment is true. Doubt is an affective perception of a disturbance to equilibrium that faith serves to equilibrate. If you find that, for you, the thesis of personal oblivion at death and of uttermost meaninglessness of life is not merely repulsive but, indeed, abhorrent, then for you faith in the *Dasein* of afterlife is made a necessary holding-to-be-true and made necessary by practical regulation of Reason under the categorical imperative. The necessitation is because the regulation of Reason will not tolerate a perpetuated state of disequilibrium.

Doubt about the *Dasein* of afterlife and doubt about the *Dasein* of personal oblivion-at-death are affective perceptions that stand in real opposition (*Realentgegensetzung*) to each other. This means these two affective perceptions tend to cancel each other out in sensibility [Wells (2009), chap. 5 §5]. Speaking for myself, I find I have no difficulty in putting their opposition in perfect balance such that I feel no disturbance to my equilibrium as a result, leaving me free to choose between the alternative opinions of afterlife vs. personal oblivion in whatever way I find to be the most subjectively satisfying. A person's mental health and well-being depend on learning how to live with doubt. I deal with doubt my way, you learn how to deal with it in your way, and, because this is a subjective matter, there is no universal right or wrong way to do it. Speaking for myself, I choose to have faith in the *Dasein* of afterlife.

Accepting the *Dasein* of afterlife as a theological article of faith, the question of the *Existenz* of afterlife still remains open. Again, *Dasein* refers to existence in the context of that-which-exists. *Existenz* refers to existence in the context of the-manner-in-which-something-exists. Earlier in this treatise the many ways different religions view the *Existenz* of afterlife was surveyed. The doctrine of method for Critical theology is to examine human nature and try to glean from this understanding what *logical* dialectic can be inferred about supernature given the premises of Critical articles of faith. Those articles that are most immediately pertinent to the question of the *Existenz* of afterlife are:

1. God exists.
2. God created human beings and the temporal universe and did so for some divine purpose.
3. Human beings are a reflection or image of God.
4. Faith takes priority over belief.
5. God values never-ending striving for perfection.
6. God values freedom.
7. God is a supreme and supremely sublime benevolent leader.
8. No human being can thwart a divine purpose.
9. Divine purpose is fulfilled by humanity overall, not by individuals, and finds its expression in divine Community.
10. Every person unchosen for membership in divine Community has unchosen himself.
11. Life is an apprenticeship for afterlife; its lessons of virtue and morality are necessary preparations for afterlife *Existenz* for a being possessing free will.

The goal of this chapter is to logically assess implications of the Critical articles of faith above. The method of approach is to examine the subject of afterlife in terms of the four heads of representation in Critical epistemology: Quantity; Quality; Relation; and Modality [Wells (2009), chap. 2]. Every representation is a unity which is regarded as the synthesis of a *composition* that provides it with its

matter of representation and a *connection* that provides it with its *form of representation*. This analytic division produces what is called a "first level analytic representation" or 1LAR. A 1LAR can be analytically divided a second time into a "form of the matter" of combination (Quantity), a "matter of the matter" of combination (Quality), a "form of the form" of combination (Relation), and a "matter of the form" of combination (Modality). This second division produces what is called a "second level analytic representation" or 2LAR. This division process can be repeated indefinitely to understand any concept in greater scope and depth by representing it in 3LAR, 4LAR, 5LAR, … combinations. It is sufficient for this treatise, however, to limit ourselves to 2LAR description of afterlife. In terms of representational manifolds, Kant described his mathematical methodology in the following way:

> All *combination* (*conjunctio*) is either *composition* (*compositio*) or *connection* (*nexus*). The former is the synthesis of a manifold of what *does not necessarily* belong to *each other*, . . . and of such a sort is the synthesis of the *homogeneous* in everything that can be considered *mathematically* (which synthesis can be furthered divided into *aggregation* and *coalition*) [.] The second combination (*nexus*) is the synthesis of that which is manifold insofar as they *necessarily* belong *to one another*, as, e.g., an accident belongs to some substance or the effect to the cause – thus also as represented as *unhomogeneous* but yet as combined *a priori* . . . ([This synthesis] can again be divided into the *physical*, appearances with one another, and *metaphysical*, their combination in the *a priori* faculty of knowledge). [Kant (1787) B: 201-202 fn.]

Quantity thus pertains to composition by aggregation, Quality to composition by coalition, Relation to connection of appearances, and Modality to connection in the human capacity for knowledge.

When the Object of representation is afterlife, we are not dealing with an object of nature but, instead, with an object of supernature. For that reason, the following considerations of Quantity, Quality, etc. are logical representations and, more specifically, logical functions of understanding. As such the general 2LAR is that of figure 1 below. Before treating afterlife dialectically one must understand these functions.

2. The Logical Functions of Quantity and Quality

Different religions, and doctrines of divers denominations and sects within the major divisions of religion, posit a variety of ideas of afterlife. These range from no afterlife at all, to one (e.g., Universalism), to two types (heaven and hell), to different staged progressions of afterlife (e.g., the Mormon (LDS) Church), to individual afterlife experiences (e.g., the (Eastern) Orthodox Church).
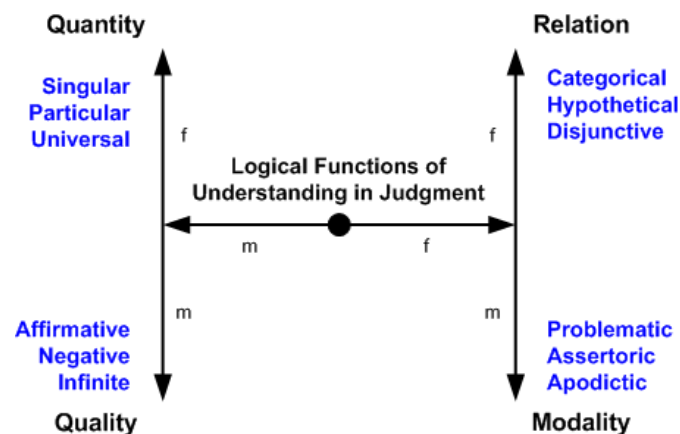

Figure 1: 2LAR of logical functions of understanding. 'm' denotes matter, 'f' denotes form. The terms under each of the four headings of Quantity, etc. denote synthesizing functions of logical judgments. Each combination requires one such logical function of synthesis from each of the four headings. Thus there are 81 possible types of logical judgments (= 3^4 possible combinations of synthesizing functions).

Overall, these divers speculations take in all three logical *momenta* of Quantity: the singular, the particular, and the universal. To explain what these terms mean, it is necessary to take a moment and explain a few important technical ideas from Kant's transcendental Logic. Kantian Logic is not the same system of logic as is taught in school or written about in standard textbooks about logic [Wells (2006), chap. 7]. It is neither "classical Aristotelian logic" nor the "mathematical logic" of Quine [Quine (1982)] nor the "symbolic logic" of the late 19th and early 20th centuries [Whitehead & Russell (1910-1913)] – a fact many present day philosophers and mathematicians fail to grasp and therefore misunderstand.

A **predication** is an aggregate concept that describes or explains something (the subject concept) by means of another concept (the predicate concept) using the latter as a prescribed rule. In relationship to an Object, when a predicate concept is so used it is called a *mark* of the Object. The form of the structure of this combination of concepts is called the **copula** of the predication. A **rule** is an assertion made under a general condition. In predications the general condition is the object of the subject concept. Let s denote the subject concept and p denote the predicate concept. The predication says, in effect, if s then p is true. This can be abbreviated symbolically as $s \supset p$.[1] This definition of a predication is not-incongruent with the formal definition of a "meaningful sentence" in the sentential calculus of semantics theory [Tarski (1923-1938), pp. 39, 62].

It is important to note that the definitions just given are applied to *concepts* and a concept is a rule for the reproduction of an intuition in the synthesis of apprehension. Intuition is the conscious representation of an object in sensibility. This is where Kantian Logic differs *essentially* from classical, symbolic and mathematical logics. For Aristotle, logic (the "science of demonstration") and metaphysics were bound inextricably together and Aristotelian predications were made about *objects*, not their concepts. Later scholars gradually separated "metaphysical" notions from "logical" notions (Aristotle's metaphysics was regarded as "pagan" and the European Scholastics wanted to keep "Aristotle's logic" but do away with his metaphysics) until, in the 19th century, logicians did away with metaphysics altogether and reduced logic to what amounts to a doctrine for making mathematical statements about "variables" that have no real ontological significance. In point of fact, there was still an unspoken metaphysical underpinning to all of this and it was distinctly Platonic in character. Davis & Hersh refer to this as "Euclid's myth" [Davis & Hersh (1981), pp. 322-330]. In the 20th century, largely due to the work of David Hilbert, metaphysical considerations were reunited with logic more or less explicitly under the name "metamathematics" and this reintroduction gave rise to the discipline of semantics, although Tarski and others claim that in it

> no particular philosophical standpoint regarding the foundations of mathematics is presupposed [Tarski (1922-1938), pg. 62].

This is true only in that the theory rests on quirks of unsystematic metaphysics held by its practitioners.

Kantian Logic, in contrast, subsumes the functions of figure 1 within the epistemology-centered system of Critical metaphysics. He tells us,

> The logical *momenta* of all judgments are so many possible ways of uniting representations in a consciousness. [Kant (1783) 4: 305]

In other words, the functions of figure 1 pertain to formal structuring of predications in the manifold of concepts *without regard to objects* to which intuitions refer. This is a practical usage standing in the same role in epistemology-centered metaphysics as traditional logics play in ontology-centered disciplines. Because the context for these functions is the manifold of concepts, we need one more context-setting definition, *viz.*, the sphere of a concept. The **sphere of a concept** is the sum-total of all representations contained under a concept. The functions of Quantity describe structures of spheres of concepts.

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[1] I use this symbolic notation because the symbolism mimics that of Whitehead & Russell (vol. I, pg. 7) and is not-incongruent with how this symbol is used in symbolic logic.
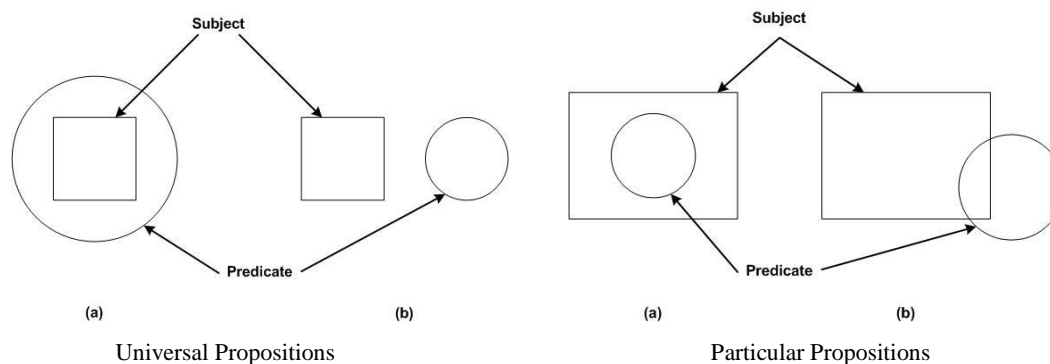
Figure 2: Euler diagrams[2] of universal and particular predicate propositions in Kantian Logic. Diagrams (a) represent affirmative copulas, i.e., *x* is *y*. Diagrams (b) represent negative copulas, i.e., *x* is-not *y*. See footnote.

First, a concept might be uncombined with other concepts contained under it (a "simple" or "point" concept). Such a concept is said to ***have no sphere***. The **singular** function of Quantity in figure 1 denotes such a concept is used in a predication. Such a concept may, in a manner of speaking, be said to be *unpredicating* because it has no other concepts under it for which *it* serves as a predicate concept. Other than for this restriction on the sphere of the subject concept (i.e., that it has no sphere), singular judgments are in all other aspects like universal judgments of aggregate subject concepts.

An *aggregate* concept, on the other hand, is structured using combinations of predicate concepts and subject concepts united in inferences of reason [Wells (2011); (2012)]. In terms of spheres, there are two general forms possible here. These are depicted by Euler diagrams[2] in figures 2 above [Wells (2009), chap. 6], [Kant (1800) 9: 102-103]. An Euler diagram for a singular function looks like the universal functions in figure 2 except that the subject concept (denoted by □ in figure 2) is a point rather than a sphere. Figures 2(a) denote predications for which the Quality function of the predication is the affirmative (figure 1). For the affirmative function, the subject concept is one of the concepts judged to be *under* the mark of the predicate concept. For example, the universal-affirmative predication "human beings are mammals" means "being human" always implies "being a mammal" is a mark of "being a human."

Figures 2(b) denote predications for which the Quality function of the predication is the negative function. For example, the universal-negative predication "human beings are-not reptiles" means that "being a reptile" *contradicts* "being a human being." The sphere of the subject concept in such a judgment is entirely *outside* the sphere of the predicate concept in a universal judgment.

In particular judgments, the sphere of the predicate concept only *partly* contains the sphere of the subject concept; the rest of the sphere of the subject concept is *outside* the sphere of the predicate. One classic example of such a predication is "some human beings are men" (particular-affirmative). Because the sphere of "being a human being" includes "being a woman" and "women are-not men," the sphere of the *subject* concept "human being" stands partly inside the predicate concept of "being a man" and partly outside it (particular judgment (a) in figure 2). In a particular-negative judgment, part of the sphere of the subject concept contradicts the predicate concept *and* part of it does not contradict the predicate.

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[2] An Euler diagram is a diagram representing the extensive sphere of a concept. It represents the aggregation of all concepts *standing under* the concept described by the diagram. It differs from a Venn diagram in that an Euler diagram represents all concepts for which the diagrammed concept is a mark, whereas a Venn diagram depicts all the marks *of* the concept being diagrammed. A Venn diagram is said to represent what is contained *in* a concept, whereas an Euler diagram is said to represent all that is contained *under* a concept. A higher concept is said to be "contained in" the lower concept, and the lower concept is said to be "contained under" the higher concept. An Euler diagram represents *a parte posteriori* (predicate to the subject) whereas a Venn diagram represents *a parte priori* (subject to the predicate).

While the affirmative and negative functions of Quality express characteristics of the subject concept, the infinite function of Quality expresses a *limitation on the sphere of the predicate concept* [Kant (1800) 9: 103-104]. For example, the predication "Fred is not-German" means that "being a German" contradicts "being Fred" but it tells us *nothing beyond this* about the concept of *Fred*. "Fred" might be a cat, a popular song, the name of a planet or anything else except "being a German" insofar as the predication "Fred is not-German" goes. Strictly speaking, infinite judgments do not properly have an Euler diagram representation because they do not judge what predicate concepts the subject concept *does* stand under. They can, however be given a Venn diagram representation. Infinite judgments pertain to *predicate* concepts *as limitations of their spheres*. There is nothing in either classical logic or mathematical logic or symbolic logic that corresponds to the infinite logical function of Quality [Kant (1800) 9: 104] because these logics are ontology-centered (in particular, a more or less Platonic ontology) and are not concerned with structures of manifolds of concepts.

3. The Logical Functions of Relation

The functions of Relation pertain to how concepts are subordinated (placed higher to lower) in the manifold to produce a unity of consciousness. The three ways of doing this are: (1) predicate concept and subject concept with the predicate being the higher concept (categorical function); (2) ground or condition concept to consequence concept with the ground or condition being the higher concept (hypothetical function); and (3) divided concept to members of its division concepts with the divided concept being the higher concept (disjunctive function) [Kant (c. 1780) 24: 932-933]. For example, in the predication "man is mortal" the concept of "being mortal" is a higher concept than "being a man" because many other things aside from man are characterized as "being mortal."

Although it can be tempting to think they are, it is important to understand that logic and language are not the same thing and logical structuring is not equivalent to language structuring. It is risky to use sentences as examples of logic structures because natural language is not-logic and logic is not-natural-language. This can be hard to see in one's native language but is easier to see in other languages. For example, we can look at the Japanese sentence, *Kore wa boku no kippu desu*, which literally and word-for-word in English is "This as-for I of ticket is" but translates *meaningfully* to English as "This is my ticket." Even within one language, grammar structure and logic structure are different things. For example, consider the following two grammatically correct and meaningful English sentences:

(1) Time flies like an arrow;
(2) Fruit flies like a banana.

In sentence (1), "time" is the noun, "flies" is the verb, "like" is a preposition, and "an arrow" is the object of the preposition. In sentence (2), "fruit flies" is the noun, "like" is the verb, and "a banana" is the object of the verb. A human being has little to no difficulty understanding the meanings of these sentences but making a computer correctly distinguish between them requires a very complicated exercise in logic. Finally, natural languages have different ways of expressing the same meanings, such as

They made the boy a captive = They captured the boy;
This made him unhappy   = This disheartened him.

A **proposition** is the aggregate concept of a determinant judgment in which the concepts of two or more Objects are connected in a function of Relation. The connected concepts can themselves be aggregate concepts. In Critical Logic there is an important epistemological distinction between a mere formal layout of coordinated representations in a manifold and organized structures of combined *series* of concepts in polysyllogisms [Wells (2011)] or Classifications[3] of concepts made by disjunctive inferences of reason

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[3] A Classification synthetically partitions the sphere of a concept disjunctively. It pertains to thinking about what is contained under a concept in its sphere insofar as the sphere is partitioned into complementary subspheres.

[Wells (2012)].

Categorical Relation is the most basic of the three logical functions. The concept of the predicate is placed in connection with the concept of the subject as *Existenz* (predicate) to *Dasein* (subject). The other two functions of Relation form propositions using categorical propositions as the connected parts. Like a categorical proposition, a **hypothetical** proposition is a determined concept. It contains three parts: the antecedent proposition; the consequent proposition (*Nachsatz* or "after-proposition"); and the *Consequenz*. Kant went into hairsplitting technical detail in explaining these terms. He tells us,

> What the copula is for categorical judgments, so the *Consequenz* is for hypotheticals – their form.
> [Kant (1800) 9: 105]

Given that the antecedent proposition is held-to-be-true, it follows that the consequent proposition is held-to-be-true (hence the term "after-proposition") [Wells (2009), chap. 6].

A disjunctive proposition is a proposition that divides the sphere of a concept into reciprocally determined and mutually exclusive subspheres. By mutually exclusive it is meant that if at some moment in time one subsphere is held-to-be-true then at that same moment in time all the other subspheres are held-to-be-false. For example, if the-pack-of-cards is on-the-table then the-pack-of-cards is-not in-the-drawer. The "if" clause here is an antecedent, the "then" clause is a consequent, and the *Consequenz* subsists in the requirement that the subspheres must be reciprocally determined. Thus, disjunctive propositions are synthesized as categorical propositions *regarded as* hypothetical propositions.

If you reflect upon this, it will become clear that Kantian Logic is indeed something quite different from the rather stale and "algebra-like" formalism one finds in the classical, mathematical, and symbolic logics. One might call each of these other logics a "morality of thinking" but Kantian Logic pertains to *how thinking works*. A traditional logician takes whatever logical statements he wishes to make in whatever order he wishes to make them and operates mechanically on the static situation he has just posed. *Thinking* does not have this freedom because it is bound by the conditions of Critical metaphysics [Wells (2016)]. This is one reason why it is much simpler to design computers or write computer programs than it is to understand the phenomenon of thinking.

4. The Logical Functions of Modality

Modal logics have been around since Aristotle [Aristotle (c. 350 BC a, b)]. Modal logic is considered by most as, at best, a complicated topic and, at worst, dismissed altogether as unimportant. For example, the subject is not taught at all to logic circuit design students in engineering schools even though it might seem that anyone studying something called "logic design" ought to be thoroughly trained in logic. Even in classical antiquity Aristotle's modal logic was amended by later writers (e.g. Theophrastus, Diodorus Cronus, Philo the Dialectician, and Chrysippus the Stoic). It underwent more amendment and rethinking in later medieval times by the Scholastics and the Muslim Scholastic Avicenna[4] [Kretzmann *et al.* (1982), pp. 342-357]. It underwent further tinkering and development in the 20th century to the point where "modal logic" is now a class name for divers "modal logics" (e.g., alethic, so-called epistemic, so-called deontic, and semantic modal logics). Symbolic and mathematical logics have also tinkered with them. It would not be unfair to say traditional logicians regard the idea of modal logic as a kind of appendage attached as a nonessential auxiliary to the principal doctrines of ontology-centered logics.

In Kantian Logic the situation is quite different. Modality is embedded at the roots of representation theory and every kind of representation *must* include functions of Modality. Right now, our concern is with the logical functions of Modality in understanding.

Kant tells us,

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[4] "Avicenna" is the name by which Europeans know Abu Ali al-Husein ibn Sina.

> The modality of judgments is a quite special function of them, which has the distinction that it contributes nothing to the content of the judgment (for besides magnitude, quality, and relationship there is nothing more that makes up the content of a judgment), but rather only has to do with the value of the copula in reference to thinking in general. Problematic judgments are those where one accepts the assent or denial as merely possible (arbitrary); assertoric [judgments] are those regarded as actual (true); apodictic [judgments] are those one sees as necessary. [Kant (1787) B: 99-100]

Modality in judgment is judgment *of the judgment*. It adds nothing to the concept of an object *as* an object and concerns only how the concept is used in cognitions. The *logical* functions (problematic, assertoric, and apodictic) are not synonyms for the *categories* of Modality in understanding – which as notions pertain to *meanings* a person symbolizes with his or her concepts.

Let us begin with the problematic function. If you look up the word "problematic" in a philosophy dictionary what you will likely be treated to is an erudite description that might well leave you scratching your head. On the other hand, if you hear someone say something like, "such-and-such predication is problematic," what the speaker typically means is that the predication is *questionable*, that it can be or ought to be *doubted*. Using the word "problematic" is usually regarded as more polite than exclaiming, "What!? Are you kidding me?" Removing the passion implicit in this latter expression and limiting the connotation to "questionable or doubtful," *this is what Kant's problematic function means*. In Critical epistemology, every act of thinking is implicitly and inherently connected to the *I* of transcendental apperception in a form Kant described as "*I* think <predication>." The logical functions of Modality are the basic forms of this connection. For the problematic function, the form is *I* think *maybe* <predication>.

The problematic function underlies the human capacity of creativity because it pertains to the ability to imagine possibilities one has not seen or otherwise experienced before. Research on child development has shown that a baby's behavioral demonstration of problematic thinking develops relatively late, at around age ten months to one year [Piaget (1952), pp. 263-356] and [Piaget (1983), vol. I]. Prior to this, the experimental and observational evidence is consistent with the hypothesis that an infant's earliest form of thinking is assertoric (the next logical function discussed here). Indeed, this very well may explain the naive realism babies and young children (and a fair number of adults) exhibit in "the way they look at the world." Problematic judgments employ the use of *productive* imagination.

If you look up the word "assertoric" in Mautner (1997), it will tell you, "An assertoric proposition is one which simply claims that something is or is not the case." This is also what Kant means by assertoric Modality in the logical functions of judgment. Assertoric judgments are the basis of *beliefs*, i.e., for *unquestioned* holding-to-be-true or holding-to-be-false. Understood in this way, it is little wonder that the earliest concept structures an infant builds are belief structures, i.e., structures connected to the "*I* think" as assertoric judgments. The form of connection is simply *I* think <predication>.

The apodictic function (sometimes called the apodeictic function) can be regarded as a function in which the first two functions are combined in a synthesis in the sense that it is seen as a problematic proposition regarded as an assertoric proposition. Webster's Dictionary defines "apodictic" as "expressing or of the nature of necessary truth or absolute certainty," although it is not technically correct to use the word "absolute" in this definition. The Greek root of the word means "to demonstrate" and this is what Kant's term implies. In an apodictic judgment, what is held-to-be-true (or -false) carries an *a priori* conviction that the predication is true. By this I mean the conviction precedes any actual experience of what is predicated. For example, I have never had an immediate experience with a chemical "atom" yet I hold-it-to-be-true that "atoms are *made of* something." Why? Because chemical atoms are held-to-be the "building blocks" of all physical objects, you can't build something out of nothing, and, therefore, atoms must themselves be "made of something." What, exactly, this "something" might be is one of the most active topics with which theoretical physicists (e.g., "elementary particle physicists") occupy their professional time. Theirs is an occupation with lifetime employment because as soon as one thinks he has nailed down one of these "somethings," the question naturally arises, "Okay, what is *this* something made

of?" All the while physicists have no definite answer to that question, the "something" is called a "fundamental particle." An electron is one such example. We have a legion of electron-describing empirical properties by which one can be theoretically *described* but, as of yet, no one has ever succeeded in "splitting" an electron (the way physicists have split atoms and claim to have split protons and neutrons) and so we have no idea of what the "stuff" electrons "are made of" might be. Many – perhaps almost all – physicists think an electron *cannot* be split, although if anyone ever does it's an instant Nobel Prize. Borrowing a phrase Winston Churchill once used to describe Russia, Leonard & Martin described an electron as "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma" [Leonard & Martin (1980), pg. 2].

Apodictic judgments are judgments of *models* that appear to integrate and explain many facts and held-to-be-true propositions [Piaget (1983)]. If problematic judgments are the artists of understanding, apodictic judgments are the craftsmen of reasoning. The form of connection they make to the "*I* think" is "*I* think *it must be that* <predication>" (e.g., "*I* think it must be that atoms are made of something").

In a theology, if all its articles of faith are held-to-be-true (as problematic judgments), then a *systematic* doctrine that comes out of dialectic reasoning consists of apodictic judgments (provided no errors in following formal rules of dialectic reasoning are made). The apodictic Modality of these judgments does not mean, for example, "supernature is really real" or "God really exists." Recall that "God exists" is the first article of faith in Critical theology – a logically problematic judgment. But because the idea of God is, by definition, the idea of a supernatural being, "supernature exists" is an *apodictic* judgment. This does not mean one is *certain* supernature exists; it means that *if* God exists then it must be that supernature exists too or else the theological doctrine is not systematic and, indeed, is *internally inconsistent*.

Theologians need not be embarrassed about, nor apologize for, the problematic Modality of their articles of faith. If they did then physicists would be obliged to feel embarrassed by and apologize for the doctrine of physics. Although most of them don't talk about it, Nobel laureate Richard Feynman pointed out,

> In addition to these [fundamental] particles, we have all the principles that we were talking about before, the principles of symmetry, of relativity, and that things must behave quantum mechanically; and, combining that with relativity, that all conservation laws must be local.
>
> If we put all these principles together, we discover that there are too many. They are inconsistent with each other. It seems that if we take quantum mechanics, plus relativity, plus the proposition that everything has to be local, plus a number of tacit assumptions, we get inconsistency because we get infinity for various things when we calculate them, and if we get infinity how can we ever say that this agrees with nature? . . . However, it turns out that it is possible to sweep the infinities under the rug by a certain crude skill, and temporarily we are able to keep on calculating.[5] [Feynman (1965), pp. 155-156]

One of the things I've long admired about Feynman is that when the emperor wasn't wearing any clothes, Feynman had a habit of saying so. Scientists who ridicule religion and theology should take a lesson from this and look to their own fields. A wise old proverb says, "People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones." As it counsels in Matthew,

> first take the log out of your own eye and then you will be able to see clearly to remove the speck out of your brother's eye. [Matthew 7:5]

5. Dialectic Theorems of Afterlife

In its most basic sense, "afterlife" means the continuation of a person's *Existenz* after death has ended this *Existenz* in the temporal Nature into which we are born. Mathematically, a dividing line marked by death

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[5] The "certain crude skill" Feynman refers to is the computational methodology of quantum electrodynamics. He, Schwinger, and Tomonaga received the 1965 Nobel Prize in physics for their inventions of this methodology.

sets up a sort of dichotomy of *Existenz*, and so it does not seem especially peculiar that many religions tend have doctrinal views of supernatural afterlife as a second *and final* (eternal) stage of a person's *Existenz*. Many sects within the Abrahamic faiths more or less hold to such doctrines.

The most obvious exceptions to this finality appear in Hinduism and Buddhism with their doctrines of reincarnation. In some Buddhist doctrines there is a period of 49 days that elapses between death and rebirth. However, this doctrine holds, that 49 day period is not a period of non-*Existenz* but, rather, consists of three stages (called *bardos*) during which the deceased individual's spirit is prepared for his rebirth. Hindu doctrines also hold that there are intervening periods of *Existenz* between death and rebirth but in Hindu doctrine the duration of these periods is variable.

As in so many other things, it is difficult to characterize Chinese folk religions in terms of the idea of an afterlife. Indeed, "afterlife" is a somewhat meaningless concept in these religions because the idea that "death" is an ending of some sort is foreign to it. *Existenz* is seen in terms of transformations of a person's spirituality and *qi* (the "breath or substance" of which all things are made) as a continuum of *Existenz*.

Epistemologically, the death *of another person* is an objectively valid empirical concept. There are a host of differences separating one's experiences with a living person from one's experiences with a corpse. The Critical *Realerklärung* of **life** is the capacity of a being to take action in accordance with the laws of appetitive power; and appetitive power is both: (1) the practical ability of a person to take an action and thereby be the efficient cause of the actuality of the object of that action; and (2) the capacity of a person to be, through his or her representations, the cause of the actuality of the objects of those representations. The first is an explanation from the Practical Standpoint, the second from the Theoretical Standpoint. A corpse lacks the practical ability to take an action and so the death of another person is a practical and objectively valid concept. As such, it can legitimately be used to mark a boundary between natural life *Existenz* and supernatural afterlife *Existenz*. The first is an experiential concept of nature, the second is a mathematical idea of a pure noumenon.

Almost all of us either have experienced or will eventually experience the death of another person. But does any person ever *experience his own death*? If we posit the answer to this as "yes" this concept stands in contradiction of the Theoretical *Realerklärung* of life just given above. To die is to cease to be able to make mental representations, and without the capacity for mental representation there is no *experience*. If we answer "no," this answer is equally without *objective* validity for the same reason. The idea of *your own personal death* is an idea beyond the horizon of possible human experience in nature. If there is a supernatural afterlife, you can only find out after you die; if there isn't, you will never know it. That is how the question stands *epistemologically*.

Theologically, however, the question has *apodictic* answers *given problematic premises* of the articles of one's faith. In Critical theology, the premising foundational articles of faith pertinent to our present discussion are numbers 2 and 9 listed at the start of this chapter: (2) God created human beings and the temporal universe, and did so for some purpose; (9) divine purpose is fulfilled by humanity overall, not by individuals, and finds its expression in divine Community. As there can logically be no divine Community unless there are at least *some* individuals to form one, it follows dialectically that there is an afterlife *Existenz* for at least *some* persons. This is the first dialectic theorem of afterlife.

This conclusion is theologically apodictic but it is not enough by itself for understanding the supernature of afterlife. Is there only *one* divine Community or might there be *many*? Is a person's post-death afterlife a final state of *Existenz* or are there *stages* of after*lives*? The major religions all hold that there are afterlife rewards for deeds of morality and virtue in pre-death life. Are there? The noun "reward" means something that is given in return for good or evil done or received. Ideas of afterlife in Paradise and afterlife in Hell are ideas of this sort. Is there a Paradise and, if so, is there only one or are there many? Is there a Hell and, if so, is there only one or are there many? Do *only* some people pass on into an afterlife or do *all* people pass on to some kind of afterlife? Can we reason out dialectic answers to these questions from the Critical articles of faith? Let us find out.

5a. Afterlife is seriated with grades of Community

The titles of this and the following subsections are statements of theological theorems deduced using additional Critical premises of faith. These premises are:

4. Faith takes priority over belief.
5. God values never-ending striving for perfection.
6. God values freedom.
7. God is a supreme and supremely sublime benevolent leader.
8. No human being can thwart a divine purpose.
9. Divine purpose is fulfilled by humanity overall, not by individuals, and finds its expression in divine Community.
10. Every person unchosen for membership in divine Community has unchosen himself.
11. Life is an apprenticeship for afterlife; its lessons of virtue and morality are necessary preparations for afterlife *Existenz* for a being possessing free will.

One of these articles of faith is one with which no theorem can stand in contradiction. This is the 4th article: Faith takes priority over belief. If a theorem necessarily implies no further need for faith then that theorem must logically be held-to-be false.

The first argument begins with the 5th article of faith: God values never-ending striving for perfection. From whom is such striving expected? Clearly the answer to this can only be "from individuals as persons." From this answer, the 6th article of faith enters into the argument: God values freedom.

What is meant by saying, "God values" something? In general philosophy to value something means to take it into account in decision making, i.e., to advance it as a consideration that influences choice [Blackburn (1996), "value"]. Used as a noun, "a value" is the importance, merit, or excellence in which something is held or regarded. "Merit" in deontological ethics means the quality of an action whereby more good occurs from it than that for which the actor was morally responsible. A meritorious action can be regarded as an action that "goes above and beyond the call of duty." In the context of divine purpose in regard to human beings, to say God values freedom means that a person's freedom of choice (the autonomy of appetitive power from being determined because of sensuous impulse and the ability of pure Reason to be in itself practical) is held to be important in judging fulfillment of divine purpose. In the context of divine Community what is valued is meritorious action grounded in reciprocal (social) Duty.

Merit, however, requires more good to come of an action than merely the good for which a person can be held morally responsible. A person is morally responsible *to himself* for fulfilling Duties to himself but actions grounded in one's Duties to himself fall short of constituting meritorious actions because everyone *expects* people to act in such a manner. But actions that are so grounded do not take into consideration Obligation to human Community under a social contract. Mill wrote,

> There are, no doubt, in all countries, really contented characters who not merely do not seek but do not desire what they do not already possess, and these naturally bear no ill-will towards such as have apparently a more favored lot. But the great mass of seeming contentment is real discontent, combining with indolence or self-indulgence, which, while taking no legitimate means of raising itself, delights in bringing others down to its level. And if we look narrowly even at the cases of innocent contentment, we perceive that they only win our admiration when the indifference is solely to the improvement in outward circumstances, and there is a striving for perpetual advancement in spiritual worth, or at least a disinterested real zeal to benefit others. The contented man, or the contented family, who have no ambition to make anyone else happier, to promote the good of their country or their neighborhood, or to improve themselves in moral excellence, excite in us neither admiration nor approval. We rightly ascribe this sort of contentment to mere unmanliness and want of spirit. The content which we approve is an ability to do cheerfully without what cannot be had, a just appreciation of the comparative value of different objects of desire, and a willing renunciation of the

less when incompatible with the greater. These, however, are excellences more natural to the character in proportion as it is actively engaged in the attempt to improve its own or some other lot. [Mill (1861), pg. 37]

None of us are born with an innate understanding of or Self-commitment to reciprocal Obligation to others in a Community. Rather, all this must be learned, through experience, not only in regard to *what*, *how*, and *when* but also in regard to *why* (Modality). If life is an apprenticeship for afterlife, this learning constitutes part of one's striving for Self-perfection (the 11th article of faith).

However, it takes no great powers of observation to see that *achievement* of Self-perfection can only come at the end of a *process* of striving for perfection. Human perfection, Kant tells us, is the completeness of a man in regard to his powers, capacity, and readiness to carry out all and any purposes [Kant (c. 1784-85) 27: 265-266]. He goes on to say,

> Perfection can be greater or less; one can be more perfect than another. But goodness is the property of making well and good use of all these perfections: So moral goodness subsists in the perfection of the will, not the capacities. Yet a good will needs the completeness and capacity of all powers to carry out everything willed by the will. So we could say that perfection is indirectly necessary to morality and to that extent belongs to it. [Kant (c. 1784-85) 27: 265-266.]

I assume you know, as I do, people who others call "a good person." Yet, I have never heard anyone called "a perfect person" other than in contexts of a few particular special circumstances (e.g., "a perfect friend to his friends"). It seems perfection – *entire* completeness – is an Ideal and not a state of being a human being ever achieves *in one lifetime*. Hence, the 5th article of faith: God values never-ending *striving* for perfection. Lack of perfection is not a moral transgression because failure to achieve what a person cannot achieve cannot be imputed to him as a transgression. But *striving* for perfection by striving to make oneself less *im*perfect *is* action every human being is capable of undertaking. One merely has to *choose* to do so. To so choose is to choose to strive to *make oneself fit* for divine Community. A newborn infant is not fit for divine Community because an infant does not even have any understanding of what a Community of *any* kind is. As all of us were at one time infants, it follows that one must undertake this striving if one is to *make oneself merit* membership in a divine Community.

Success in such an undertaking obviously differs in degree from person to person. Must we therefore suppose there is some cut-off point in achievement of perfection, on one side of which a person merits afterlife and on the other side of which he does not? Here is where consideration of the 7th article of faith is pertinent: God is a supreme and supremely sublime *benevolent* leader. The English word "benevolent" is derived from the Latin *bene* (well) *volent* (to wish), "well wishing." The Abrahamic religions generally attribute benevolence as a characteristic of God although their scriptural writings do not state this explicitly. Rather, benevolence as an attribution is strongly implied in many places. Islam refers to Allah as the Merciful. In Romans we have

> Or do you hold in contempt the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? [Romans 2:4].

Kind, benign, compassionate, and caring are all words used as synonyms for benevolent in English. Two words are said to be synonyms when they are used in such ways as to have the same or nearly the same meaning *in particular nuances of context*. All root meanings are practical, practical references actions, and all actions are actions in the particular. Hence, synonymous word usages are context dependent.

To say that as a leader God is well-wishing (benevolent) does not necessarily imply divine actions carry a guarantee of a welcome or beneficial outcome for an *individual*. A leader's action stimulates a state of tension in the follower, which is to say it produces in the follower feelings that go into his motivations for actions. Put another way, a leader's action produces a disturbance to an individual's state of equilibrium

resulting in some expression of behavior by that individual [Wells (2010), chap. 4]. Whether or not *that person's* action brings about an outcome beneficial to himself depends on *his* self-determination of action. To say God is a *sublimely* benevolent leader is to say that God's leader-actions are purposive for causing something to become greater, to increase, to be strengthened, or to be reinforced in some immeasurably great way. If divine purpose finds its expression in divine Community (the 9th article of faith), this "something" that is the objective of divine action is, logically, the constituting of divine Community. A human being cannot thwart divine purpose (the 8th article of faith) but by his choices he can advance or retard his *own* state of self-perfection. Moral philosopher Onora Nell wrote,

> It was assumed that it could be discovered when an agent's maxim was appropriate to his situation or his act, or when the agent was acting on the basis of a mistaken means/ends judgment. But when we act we are not in that position. Once all reasonable care has been taken to avoid ignorance, bias, or self-deception, an agent can do nothing more to determine that his maxim does not match his situation. Once an agent has acted on his maxim attentively, he can do no more to ensure that his act lives up to his maxim. We cannot choose to succeed, but only to strive. Once he has taken due care to get his means/ends judgment right, he can do nothing further to ensure that they are right. Agents are not simultaneously their own spectators. In contexts of action they cannot go behind their own maxims and beliefs. We can make right decisions, but not guarantee right acts. [Nell (1975), pg. 127]

On a practical level, this describes the *best* that a human being can do in his determining of choices. If his means/ends judgment is mistaken under these conditions he can properly be said to have made **an innocent mistake**. Such a mistake, in relationship to human social morality, is a moral fault but it is *not* a moral crime. A supreme and supremely sublime benevolent leader *would not punish an innocent mistake* for doing so implies an ill-wishing spirit[6]. Deliberately choosing *not* to exercise the reasonable care Nell describes is a different matter – one with the potential for bringing into play the 10th article of faith.

For every path a person chooses to take, another path remains unchosen. For everything that comes to be along a chosen path, something else does not come to be. Robert Frost put it this way:

> Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
> And sorry I could not travel both
> And be one traveler, long I stood
> And looked down one as far as I could
> To where it bent in the undergrowth;
>
> Then took the other, as just as fair,
> And having perhaps the better claim,
> Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
> Though as for that, the passing there
> Had worn them really about the same,
>
> And both that morning equally lay
> In leaves no step had trodden black.
> Oh, I kept the first for another day!
> Yet knowing how way leads to way,
> I doubted if I should ever come back.
>
> I shall be telling this with a sigh
> Somewhere ages and ages hence:
> Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –
> I took the one less traveled by,
> And that has made all the difference. [Frost (1915)]

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[6] In this treatise, I do not use the word "spirit" in any ontological connotation. Rather, I use it to mean the inner principle of animation for a living being, e.g., "the living God" [Daniel 6:26].

But perfection is completeness. When by a leader's action of God one thing is forsaken that another may be, that circumstance does not mean the first can never come to be. The benevolence of God holds open the hope that a "traveler" *might* "pass that way again" in an afterlife, and then *make a different choice*, and still "be one traveler" who now chooses a "path" that advances rather than hinders his self-perfection. An innocent mistake can thusly be corrected; a person can thusly make himself more perfect; and by choosing then to do so *can come to serve in his own person the purpose of divine Community*. In such possibilities subsists the *sublime* benevolence of God.

Each person, through the power of freedom, sets his own course and can do so either toward his own perfection or away from it. The choices you make today are partially conditioned by past choices, both your own and those of other people, as well as by past events. At death, some persons have come closer to perfection, and some are more distant. Circumstances are as individual as choices, and this means different people are in need of different opportunities in afterlife. If God is a supremely benevolent leader and also the creator of human beings and the temporal universe we know in life, shall we say God is only capable of doing this *once*? To suppose so is logically inconsistent with God as a *supreme* divine leader because "supreme" means highest in degree or quality of authority. Authority, you will recall, means possession of the *Kraft* of causing something to become greater, to increase, to be strengthened, or to be reinforced in some way.

If afterlife is logically structured in stages there is the possibility in afterlife of opportunities to choose again and, this time, without facing a need to reconsider that which was chosen in life (or in an antecedent afterlife) because that which was chosen before is already fulfilled. Also possible are opportunities not merely missed but *never offered in life*. By stages of afterlife God keeps, as Frost put it, other paths "for another day."

Consider, for example, the tragedy in life of the death of an infant. While such a terrible event certainly sets its parents on paths different from what they would choose if their baby had not died, the baby never had *even an opportunity* in life to strive for *its own* perfection. Would a benevolent God choose to deny that baby its opportunity for all eternity? *Afterlife is a means by which those opportunities denied in life may yet be offered in a subsequent afterlife*.

We know from grim experience that tragedies do happen in life. These present matters of what is called "the problem of evil," i.e., the question of how to reconcile the existence of evil with the idea of an omnipotent, omnibenevolent, and omniscient God. If afterlife is seriated this provides a way of resolving this paradox. If afterlife is constituted of different grades of Community, this provides for divers opportunities for people to choose to strive for their own individual perfection leading to successively more perfect and more all-inclusive Communities – the logic of which leads by induction to a dialectic consummation in an ultimate divine Community. An apprentice is a learner; upon completion of his apprenticeship he begins his life as a journeyman. A journeyman, in turn, can become a master. The metaphor is, I think, obvious. Striving for perfection carries the connotation of striving to really become your own master. In such a way is a means provided for a person to perfect his humanity in himself while also contributing to the perfection of humanity in Community. Thus this dialectic argument concludes: afterlife is seriated with grades of Community.

Still, important questions yet remain because this subsection's dialectic does not demonstrate that the theorem is congruent with the 4th article of faith (faith takes priority over belief). Indeed, it hasn't yet been shown to be not-contrary to it. There are other questions that must be asked and these lead to issues of theodicy and eschatology.

5b. Afterlife does not imply immediate reunion with God

The Abrahamic religions tend to speculate that after death a person comes into the immediate presence of God in some way or another and meets with his or her final destiny. In some doctrines this involves what is usually called one's final judgment ("judgment day") followed by reward for the faithful or punishment

for the wicked. Because, as discussed above, a state of final self-perfection is not achievable in one life-time, such a doctrine usually also logically requires ideas of repentance and forgiveness of sins. But the idea of repentance certainly carries no implication that a person, by repenting, achieves a state of self-perfection in one sudden step. The idea of forgiveness does seem to imply God is willing to tolerate a host of *im*perfect people who are, by some standard or norm of judgment, not lacking perfection in *too* great a degree.

In Christian theology, this in turn makes necessary the introduction of the idea of *grace*, i.e., the free *and unmerited* favor of God as manifested in the salvation of sinners and the bestowal of blessings. I do not find the idea of grace necessarily incongruous. After all, most parents bestow love and favor upon their babies even though a baby is incapable *by deed* of *meriting* parental grace. Even many strangers, who are not the baby's parents, show affection and grace to a baby. At the same time, though, I do wonder if a benevolent God would express *selective* favoritism. I think this is unlikely.

Belief is unquestioned holding-to-be-true but faith is holding-to-be-true from a subjectively sufficient ground with consciousness of doubt. I won't presume to speak for you, but, speaking for myself, if I were to suddenly find myself standing in front of God – especially if this meeting involved me being tried for my deeds and character in life – I would very certainly find my faith immediately replaced by belief. As the old saying goes, "seeing is believing."

I would also be immediately repentant of my moral shortcomings – not because I would be immediately enlightened but because to do otherwise would be, shall we say, *im*prudent. Many a criminal standing before a judge is sorry – not for his crime but only because he was caught. So it is that Abrahamic doctrines hold, for the most part, that repentance must come *before* you die else it is without merit. Even if one is repentant for something while still alive, if the *ground* for his repentance subsists in maxims of Duties to himself and not in those of reciprocal Duties then such repentance still holds no merit in regard to divine Community.

The speculation that after death a person comes into the immediate presence of God is incongruent with the 4th article of faith (faith takes priority over belief). It follows logically, then, that whatever the super-nature of afterlife might be, an immediate revelation of God to an unperfected person in circumstances as discussed in the previous subsection contradicts the dialectic inferences drawn above. It then logically follows that some other understanding of afterlife *Existenz* in supernature, different from speculation of immediate reunion with God, must be sought. The title of this subsection states the dialectic inference as an apodictic theorem of Critical theology but not as a sufficient theorem. We must examine in addition inferable properties of resurrection.

5c.   Afterlife requires bodily resurrection

All the Abrahamic religions hold to a doctrine of resurrection. Most of them further hold that resurrection involves or requires resurrection in bodily form, although there are different speculations regarding the nature or supernature of the body. Hinduism, Buddhism, and Chinese folk religions do not necessarily require the idea of resurrection nor specific speculations in regard to body because these are not made a part of doctrines of reincarnation, rebirth, or reunion with the Tao. The dialectic of this subsection has for its object the deduction of the theorem stated in the heading above.

The 11th article of faith (life is an apprenticeship for afterlife) is the basic premise for the theorem of bodily resurrection but this premise does not stand apart from the 5th article (God values never-ending striving for perfection) or from the 6th article (God values freedom). Resurrection, of course, follows directly from the article of faith in the *Dasein* of afterlife discussed in §1 of this chapter. If a person is to have *Existenz* of any kind in an afterlife – life after death – then clearly that person must in some sense *return* to life. Resurrection *means* "brought back to life." The premise of afterlife and that of resurrection are, in this sense, a formal tautology. But this tautology does not speak to whether resurrection does or

does not require *bodily* resurrection.

If life is an apprenticeship for afterlife, it logically follows from this that a resurrected person must retain the knowledge he gained during life *at least* insofar as this knowledge is pertinent for Community (9th article of faith: divine purpose finds its expression in divine Community). If this were not so, if the empirical knowledge a person gains during his lifetime is not retained at resurrection in an afterlife, then everything that person did to perfect himself, every moral maxim of reciprocal Obligation he gave to himself, and his every idea of Duty would all be lost at death. Without retention of pertinent experience life could in no way be regarded as an apprenticeship of any kind and human life would be rendered pointless and meaningless.

Furthermore, membership in Community is never unilateral. With imperfect human beings, not only must a person choose to commit himself to obligations that uphold a Community's social contract; the other members of the Community must choose *to accept him* into their civil association. Each new member must "bring something to the table" that makes others see his joining in their social union of benefit to the Community itself. The others must, in their turn, reciprocally obligate themselves to the new member in a beneficial *quid pro quo*. Plato wrote,

> The origin of the city then, said I, in my opinion is to be found in the fact that we do not severally suffice for our own needs, but each of us lacks many things. . . . As a result of this, then, one man calling in another for one service and another for another, we being in need of many things, gather many into one place of abode as associates and helpers. . . . And between one man and another there is an interchange of giving, if it so happens, and taking, because each supposes this to be better for himself. . . . Come, then, let us create a city from the beginning, in our theory. [Plato (c. 4th century BC), vol. V, Bk II, pp. 148-149]

A *craft* is the practice of some special art. An ***art*** is the disposition or modification of things by human skill to answer the purpose intended. Crafts provide the services and helps Plato refers to here. **Skill** is ability to practice a craft. It is not necessarily the case that a craft must refer to work and labor (as habits of common speech might lead one to presume). For example, a person possessing keener insight and understanding of deontological morality can help another person in perfecting *his* understanding of it. Communicating such a thing as this clearly and without misunderstanding or miscommunication is an art.

It follows that at resurrection a person must retain his knowledge of skills insofar as these skills are of value to participation in an afterlife Community. Clearly, chief among such skills are social skills although skills that are pertinent to coping with and meeting any challenges that might be posed in an afterlife environment would also be needed if the Community as a whole is to be able to continue to perfect its overall union.

By definition, the idea of afterlife is continuing *Dasein* of an essential part of a person's identity or stream of consciousness after the death of the physical body. The adjective "essential" means of, relating to, or constituting essence. **Essence** is the first inner ground of all that belongs to the possibility of a thing. How then are we to understand what is essential to the continuation of a human being's identity? Here there enters into consideration one of our earlier articles of faith, *viz.*, *every person makes himself the person he chooses to become*. That which is most essential to a person's identity are those *mental* structures (manifold of rules; manifold of concepts) he constructs during his life. However, these are tied inseparably and reciprocally, through the logical division of *psyche*, to a person's corporeal *Existenz* (*soma*). Root meanings of concepts are tied to motoregulatory expression; understanding of objects is tied to appearances in intuition arising through receptivity. *Psyche* is the organized structure of animating principles in **nous-soma** reciprocity reciprocally **uniting** phenomena of body with phenomena of mind [Wells (2009), chap. 4] as a ***real*** unity. Take this real union away and we are shorn of all understanding of what it means to be a person or have an identity. Shear this away and we could not logically speak of any divine Community at all, and that contradicts the 9th article of faith.

It follows from this that if resurrection did not involve at least *some* resurrection of body then all of the parts essential to a person's identity would be deprived of their bases and meaningful references. The theological theorem of this subsection follows from this immediately.

However, this theorem is strictly limited in applicability. It pertains to *and only to* what is essential to a person's identity *as a person*. Obviously not every part of your body (*soma*) is essential to who you are. Go to the barbershop and have your hair cut; this does not change who you are. Clip your fingernails; this does not change who you are. Grow from infancy to old age; your *physical* growth does not determine who you make yourself become. Biological cells undergo what is called "cell death" and are replaced without you so much as even noticing that this process goes on all the time from the day you are born to the day that you die.

There is a fundamental consequence to this. Although bodily resurrection is necessary for afterlife, this **does not mean** that the body is resurrected *as it was in life*. The necessity is bound to the *essence* of the person *as* a person. The starting point of theology, its highest article of faith, is: God exists. But immediately after this article is the one that could fairly be called the penultimate article of faith: God created human beings and the temporal universe, and did so for some purpose. Afterlife is a *re*-creation of the person by the agency of God, and a person's corporeal *Existenz* in afterlife need only be such as to effect the continuation of his person in such a way that this re-creation continues to serve God's purpose.

We have no article of faith to serve as a premise for deducing a detailed supernature of this *Existenz*. Because every person makes himself the person he chooses to become, there is no reason to think that the very same "rules of re-creation" apply universally to every person. One may use simile and metaphor to imagine what afterlife *Existenz* might be. One might even hope for some particular form of *Existenz*. But this can never be made a part of the Critical doctrine of theology. Just as the *Dasein* of afterlife is noumenal, so too *Existenz* in afterlife is noumenal – beyond the horizon of our possible experiences.

Some things can be deduced about it, however. Faith takes priority over belief (4th article of faith) and so if afterlife is seriated with grades of Community (theorem of subsection 5a), the supernature of afterlife *Existenz* necessarily must be such that faith continues to be prioritized over belief. To hold otherwise is to contradict the premise that a person's process of self-perfection is governable by free choices grounded in reciprocal (social) Duties. This is because if the need for faith is overthrown by knowledge *revealed* in afterlife then one's choices thereafter become wholly grounded in Duties to Self (cf. subsection 5b). God values freedom (6th article of faith) and so would not create an afterlife contrary to human freedom.

5d. People's afterlives are individualized by merit and virtue

It was pointed out previously that different people achieve different levels of progress toward Self-perfection in their lives. The ideal of being perfect means being entirely complete. This ideal is a goal of human judgmentation [Wells (2009), chap. 12]. In a disturbed state of non-equilibrium a human being is aware of *lack* of perfection and his Self-determination is oriented to act to negate this lack. Equilibrium, however, does not imply achievement of either metaphysical perfection[7] or physical perfection[8]; it merely implies a condition under which the person is unaware of an immediate lack of perfection. Objectively valid human *understanding* of perfection can only be a practical understanding. Kant wrote,

> All perfection seems to subsist in the harmonization of a thing with freedom, hence in expedience, general usefulness, etc. Since all things properly in empirical understanding are only that which they are taken to be in way of relationship to the law of sensibility, the practical perfection of objects of experience is a congruence with the law of the senses . . .; it is so to speak the outer side of perfection [Kant (c. 1773-79) 15: 309].

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[7] Metaphysical perfection means completeness with regard to the highest degree of Reality.
[8] Physical perfection means complete sufficiency of empirical representations.

Human *ideas* of perfection are speculative logical extensions of concepts taking such harmonization deep into the realm of the noumenal. What these remote concepts share as a common mark is a notion of universal law. As Kant put it,

> Perfection overall subsists in congruence with universal laws. [Kant (1753-59) 16: 135]

In the context of a person acting to make himself more perfect, *ideals* of perfection are representations of moral Objects. Assessments and judgments of moral perfection involve ideas of a person's *merits* and *virtues* which are understood in terms of deontological moral laws. The contemplation of moral law as *divine* precept is properly called religion [Kant (1776-95) 18: 515]. Although one's understanding of moral ideas must be deontological (not grounded in or deduced from an ontology-centered metaphysic), *ideals* of moral perfection still must be *concretely* understood in terms of Objects because an ideal is an Object that exhibits in its representation *in concreto* the most perfect instantiation of an idea.

A meritorious person is a person whose action has the quality of merit and who consistently exhibits virtue in his attention to his Duties. Virtue is an individual's constant disposition (unwavering attention) to carry out his duties. Individual levels of achievement in degree of self-perfection, as this is pertinent to the idea of a divine Community, are gradable; and such a gradation can be regarded as a measure of an person's meriting of membership in more perfect or less perfect afterlife Communities in accordance with the theorem of section 5a. Religious doctrines which speculate that a person passes directly from life to an afterlife in "paradise" seem to under-appreciate the effort and self-development it takes to *merit* member-ship in a paradisiacal afterlife Community[9] and therefore must rely totally upon the idea of grace for its possibility. Personally, I do not see seriations of afterlife in paradisiacal terms.

As the phenomenon and challenge of mini-Communities teaches us in life, humankind divides itself into communal memberships cooperative within themselves, indifferent with respect to some others, and antagonistic in relationship with still others. The choices you make today are partly determining of the circumstances you will face tomorrow and of the maxims of Duty you make and commit yourself to fulfilling. So it is that by his choices a person can embark upon a path unaware that it might bring him to a place and situation where his perfection of merit for divine Community becomes arrested by circumstances *not entirely of his own making*. Afterlife, seriated and graded, provides a means by which the individual's circumstances can be *reset* and he can be released from arrest by past decisions. Because of this relief, he can build again in better situations conducive to self-advancement in merit and virtue. Emerson wrote,

> One man's justice is another's injustice; one man's beauty, another's ugliness; one man's wisdom, another's folly, as one beholds the same objects from a higher point of view. One man thinks justice consists in paying debts, and has no measure in his abhorrence of another who is very remiss in this duty and makes the creditor wait tediously. But that second man has his own way of looking at things; asks himself, which debt must I pay first, the debt to the rich, or the debt to the poor? the debt of money, or the debt of thought to mankind, of genius to nature? . . . For me, commerce is of trivial import; love, faith, truth of character, the aspiration of man, these are sacred . . . Let me live onward: you shall find that, though slower, the progress of my character will liquidate all these debts without injustice to higher claims. [Emerson (1841), pg. 153]

If human beings are a reflection of God (3rd article of faith), then human communities and Community are reflections of the state of communal progress toward perfection. How can or should signs of such communal progress be read? This treatise takes up that question in the next chapter. In this chapter we look more closely at what the individual faces *as* an individual striving to perfect himself by degree and in his progression of character to "liquidate all his debts without injustice to higher claims."

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[9] In religion, paradise is imagined to be a place of exceptional happiness and delight, contentment, peace, prosperity, luxury, and fulfillment. This image seems to neglect, ignore or not-need continuing *striving* for perfection.

The 5th article of faith (God values never-ending striving for perfection) implies that a person's quest for self-perfection resumes in afterlife from the point of his achievement of it in life and under conditions that are favorable to his becoming cognizant of where he is lacking in its achievement. The latter qualification follows from the benevolence of divine leadership (7th article of faith). If a person is unaware of a personal imperfection he cannot reasonably be expected to address it. But if divine purpose is expressed in divine Community and fulfilled by humanity overall (9th article of faith), perfecting in afterlife aims at individual self-perfection in co-relationship to Community and co-relationship with others. This pertains to what Kant called transcendental perfection, i.e., completeness of the whole and mutual harmony and connection of the whole [Kant (1783b) 29: 936-937].

There are two aspects in this: perfecting oneself; and beneficially aiding others' efforts of self-perfection consistent with respect for their civil liberty. In the first aspect, a person acts as a learner inasmuch as he strives to acquire knowledge of his own lacks of perfection and to construct maxims for correcting his own shortcomings. Here one can perhaps hear an echo of a saying attributed to Socrates:

> And what do you suppose a man must know to know himself, his own name merely? Or must he consider what sort of creature he is for human use and get to know his own powers? . . . Is it not clear too that through self-knowledge men come to much good, and through self-deception to much harm? [Xenophon (aft. 371 BC), pp. 286-287]

In the second aspect, a person can be said to act as a teacher. An innocent mistake is not a moral crime but it can constitute a moral fault to be redressed. But to assume a teaching role in matters of morality, a would-be teacher must have first looked at his own limitations and adequately redressed them in himself as Matthew 7:5 teaches.

Because God is not to be seen as a ruler but instead as a benevolent leader (7th article of faith), to teach is not to force or compel but to *persuade*. Mill held that

> the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinions of others, to do so would be wise or even right. These are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, or entreating him, but not for compelling him or visiting him with any evil in case he do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him must be calculated to produce evil to someone else. [Mill (1859), pg. 8]

Upon this maxim all ideas of tolerance are built. The 7th century sage Ali ibn Abi Talib said,

> God's generosity allows even corruptors of his religion and transgressors against his creatures to enter his garden. [Ali (7th cent.), 1.198, pg. 14]

Yet everyone who would enter this garden must first find his own way to it. If he chooses not to seek it he also unchooses himself for divine Community (10th article of faith). Emerson wrote,

> No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature. . . . I cannot consent to pay for a privilege where I have an intrinsic right. Few and mean as my gifts may be, I actually am, and do not need for my own assurance or the assurance of my fellows any secondary testimony. What I must do is all that concerns me; not what people think. This rule, equally arduous in actual and in intellectual life, may serve for the whole distinction between greatness and meanness. [Emerson (1841b), pp. 26-27]

Proverbs such as these are congruent with the 6th article of faith (God values freedom).

Yet, by the freedom of his own choices, a person can run unwittingly into difficulties and situations

from which he becomes eventually unable to extricate himself. As Ali also said,

> Many a person strives to attain a thing that will harm him. [Ali (7th cent.), 10.54, pg. 126]

No human being can thwart divine purpose (8th article of faith), but if God is a supremely sublime benevolent leader it would be inconsistent with divine benevolence if innocent mistakes for which the individual is not fully culpable were uncorrectable and morally fatal. Afterlives are opportunities for a person to redeem himself. A sinner is a person whose personality habitually conflicts with divine Community; to redeem is to extricate from or help to overcome something detrimental. By the grace of afterlife a person is given the choice to free himself from consequences of his own innocent mistakes that led him to make his personality habitually contrary to divine Community.

Afterlife also offers *first* opportunities to those whose opportunities were cut short, through *no* fault of their own, by early death. The same can be applied in a wider sense to all of us. It is shortsighted to call an early death a cutting off of future promise because when the backdrop for all events and happenings is eternity, "never" is a very long time and years are insignificant. As it says in Ecclesiastes,

> To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under the heavens [Ecclesiastes 3:1]

Stages of afterlife are like seasons and what withers in one autumn can blossom in the next spring.

5e. There is no hellish afterlife

I use the term "hell" to mean any hypothetical form of afterlife where *Existenz* is regarded as punishment, retraining by divine revelation, or merely neutral never-ending continuation of *Existenz* without purpose. If divine purpose finds its expression in divine Community (9th article of faith) then a hellish afterlife for beings possessing free will has no purpose and contradicts the 6th article of faith (God values freedom) and the 7th article of faith (God is a supremely sublime benevolent leader).

Many religions, particularly those that posit some form of continuation of personal *Existenz* for *every* person, are almost compelled doctrinally, as a consequence of this hypothesis, to further posit logical divisions of afterlife in terms of paradisiacal, punitive, neutral, and/or re-educational manners of *Existenz* continuation. The ancient Greek idea of Hades is an example of neutral afterlife, as is the idea of Limbo in Christianity. Dante described Limbo in the following way:

> Here, for as much as hearing could discover, there was no outcry louder than the sighs that caused the everlasting air to tremble. The sighs arose from sorrow without torments, out of the crowds – the many multitudes – of infants and of women and of men.
>
> The kindly master said: "Do you not ask who are these spirits whom you see before you? I'd have you know before you go ahead, they did not sin; and yet, though they have merits, that's not enough because they lacked baptism, the portal of the faith that you embrace. And if they lived before Christianity, they did not worship God in fitting ways; and of such spirits I myself am one. For these defects, and for no other evil, we now are lost and punished just with this: we have no hope and yet we live in longing." [Dante (c. 1319-21), pp. 31, 33]

Ideas such as that of Purgatory in Christianity are ideas of an intermediate, re-educational division of afterlife during which persons ultimately "destined" for paradisiacal afterlife are "purified" and so made ready or meritorious of this reward. Other major divisions of religion likewise have their logical or practical equivalents of this idea. As for the paradisiacal and punitive logical divisions, I think it is likely most people have heard enough about "Heaven" and "Hell" to require no explanation from me here.

It is beyond doubt that these ideas have been and are effective to at least some extent in motivating some people to moderate their natural liberty of action to be more consistent with expectations and norms

of their society, i.e., to have a "moralizing" influence on their behaviors. But such behavioral moderation is in practice the result of an individual's maxims of prudence (Duty to self) and impels no behavioral moderation grounded in tenets of reciprocal Duty. It is the latter Relation of Duty, and not the former, that establishes all true foundations of civil – as well as divine – Community. If I ground my actions prudently then I do not ground them in a tenet of doing (or not doing) something *because I hold the action itself as civically the right thing to do*. Indeed, one can regard the purpose of apprenticeship of life (and, as well, of the journeyman's on-going lessons of perfecting in stages of afterlife *Existenz*) as being, at least in part, an effort to come to a full understanding of "why right *is* right" and "why sin *is* sin."

To regard afterlife *Existenz* in terms of punishments and rewards is to regard God as a ruler rather than as a supreme and supremely sublime leader (7th article of faith). These ideas are analogies modeled not on an understanding of God but, rather, on the behaviors of ancient kings and despots who subjugated people by force or the threat of force. As Rousseau wrote,

> Let us admit that force does not create right, and that we are obliged to obey only legitimate powers. [Rousseau (1762), pg. 6]

Mill likened kings and oligarchs to vultures and harpies, bluntly writing,

> To prevent the weaker members of the community from being preyed upon by innumerable vultures it was needful that there should be an animal of prey stronger than the rest, commissioned to keep them down. But as the king of the vultures would be no less bent upon preying upon the flock than any of the minor harpies, it was indispensable to be in a perpetual attitude of defense against his beak and claws. [Mill (1859), pp. 1-2]

Would a god with such a character be *worthy* of receiving worship and love from those over whom he ruled? To be feared is not to be loved or admired. *Devotion* means ardent love or affection. I don't presume to speak for you, but, for myself, I could find no devotion for such a god.

There is no article numbered among the Critical articles of faith premising afterlife of some kind for *every* person. Does this mean that *some* persons will never know an afterlife? To say so is problematic. In the time before psychology was a science, Kant presumed that all people have a conscience – and, if so, this at least opens the door to speculating that every person might choose, if not in life then in afterlife, to develop and strive to perfect tenets of Obligation and Duty fitting for membership in divine Community. But, on the other hand, perhaps he might not; perhaps instead he would choose to make for himself even more radical antisocial maxims and so *unchoose* himself for membership (10th article of faith). In such a case, divine purpose might be better served by God simply not bestowing the re-creation of an individual implicit in the idea of afterlife.

Furthermore, modern psychology and neuroscience gives us reason to doubt Kant's presumption that every person has what could properly be called a conscience in any context of civil Community[10]. Findings to date are by no means decisive, nor has scientific consensus about this question been achieved, but there is sufficient empirical evidence to cast considerable reasonable doubt on Kant's presumption.

Whichever way or ways all of this eventually resolves, what remains is that hellish *Existenz* in afterlife contradicts the Critical articles of faith. It serves no comprehensible divine purpose and the history of these ideas is wrapped up with analogies of *human* passions or tenets of vengeance. But, as a lesson in Deuteronomy teaches,

> For Jehovah judges his people, and he repents himself for his servants when he sees their power is gone and there is none shut up or left. [Deuteronomy 32:36]

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[10] see Yu *et al*. (2014) and the references cited in it.

In this literal translation, the Hebrew text translated here as "repents himself" carries the connotation of having pity for the person who is judged [Strong (1890)]. This is not the connotation of a vengeful deity judging a person whose self-constructed determinations forming his moral code no longer leave him with the power to commit himself to membership in a divine Community. It is infinitely more compassionate to simply let that person cease to be rather than condemning him to everlasting torment. Islamic authors frequently open their works with a phrase that translates to English as, "In the name of God, the lord of mercy, the giver of mercy." This characterization of God is wholly congruent with Deuteronomy 32:36.

The uncertainty left lingering – whether or not some people who unchoose themselves will simply come to non-*Existenz* at some stage of seriated afterlife – does not threaten even if it impels some people to prudent caution as a prelude to a person's construction of tenets of reciprocal Obligation and ideas of reciprocal duties. In this way, human freedom is not devalued and every person is left free to *make himself* the person *he* chooses to become.

6. Prologue to Chapter 13

This chapter still leaves questions of what constructive rhyme or reason there might be in the goals or ideals of supernatural afterlife. Questions of this sort make up the topic of our next chapter.

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