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The Third Way: A Study of Economic Justice in the Writings of Karol Wojtyla (Pope John Paul II).

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THE THIRD WAY: A STUDY OF ECONOMIC JUSTICE IN THE WRITINGS OF KAROL WOJTYLA (POPE JOHN PAUL II)

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

In

The Department of Political Science

by

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B.A., Louisiana State University, 1983
M.A., Louisiana State University, 1987
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for M, G, C.

Il miglior fabbro.
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ABSTRACT

Pope John Paul II, born Karol Wojtyla, has written extensively about the human person and how that person acts in the world. Beginning with Wojtyla's doctoral dissertation presented at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas on the Catholic mystic St. John of the Cross and continuing through the most recent best seller, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, Christian personalism has pervaded Wojtyla's writings, encyclicals, and public utterances. Wojtyla's perspective on economic justice, as shaped by his Christian personalism, is the subject of this dissertation.

A systematic investigation of Wojtyla's theory of economic justice reveals a third way of economic life. Grounded in a particular interpretation of human nature influenced, as it is, by both the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and the twentieth century phenomenologist Max Scheler, Wojtyla moves towards proclaiming an economic reality based upon love (agape). Love will then form the basis for an ethical evaluation of economic behavior.

In the end, Wojtyla wishes to create a certain shared solidarity based upon a common human condition. In his discussion of economic justice he believes it is also possible to speak both of the universal transcendent reality that does not change and the relative demands of justice in the world.

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INTRODUCTION

Pope John Paul II, born Karol Wojtyla on May 18, 1920, in Wadowice, Poland, attempts to articulate a view of economic justice to a world he considers marked by needless human suffering. In an effort to ameliorate this situation, Wojtyla makes moral judgments concerning economic and social matters, especially "when the fundamental rights of the person or the salvation of souls requires it."¹ Wojtyla goes on to insist that the most influential economic theories of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (capitalism and communism) have increased economic and social disequilibrium, and debilitated human existence.²

As a Pole who experienced the oppression of World War II and the subsequent Communist takeover, Wojtyla survived to discuss the evils of modernity. He lived through Nazi totalitarianism, the expansion of Stalinist communism in Poland, and Edward Gierek's communist regime in Poland.


Each of these political experiences has contributed to Wojtyla's particular interpretation of a just political community. Wojtyla attributes this merging of realms of human activity to the extensive and comprehensive scientific and technological advancement of contemporary society. In fact, drawing upon these historical experiences, Wojtyla makes a powerful connection between economic justice and social justice. The link between these two ideas comes from Wojtyla's recognition that it is difficult, if not impossible, to address questions of social justice without considering economics.

While the development of economic activity and growth in production are meant to provide for the fulfillment of the human person, Wojtyla describes a situation contrary to that progressive idea. Accordingly, he advances the personalistic principle as a prescription for economic justice consistent with the true dignity and meaning of the human person. "So the development of my studies centered on man--on the human person--can ultimately be explained by my pastoral concern. And it is precisely from a pastoral point of view that, in Love and Responsibility, I formulated the concept of a personalistic principle."

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Wojtyla argues that human love can serve as an ethical basis for economic decisions.

Wojtyla approaches the question of economic justice from the perspective of both scholar and priest. Thus, he has experienced both the disinterested, objective philosophical approach that marks the academy and the passionate, pastoral approach characteristic of the priest. The combined effect of this treatment provides another contrast to traditional economists. Specifically, Wojtyla reveals a scholarly and priestly tradition that is concerned with the human person.

Wojtyla's educational background includes work at the gymnasium in Wadowice, at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow prior to the Nazi invasion and, later, at the Angelicum University in Rome. Upon completing his first doctoral degree at the Angelicum (writing his doctoral dissertation on the Spanish mystic, St. John of the Cross), Wojtyla returned to Poland in 1948 and began working as a parish priest in the village of Niegowic. During this time he began to prepare for his teaching thesis at Catholic University in Lublin. In 1953 he lectured at Catholic University and was appointed professor of moral theology. During the late 1950s, Wojtyla continued to study Western and Eastern European history, philosophy, theology, and language. While teaching at Lublin, he began an

investigation into twentieth-century European phenomenology, writing his second doctoral dissertation on the noted phenomenologist, Max Scheler. During this time, Wojtyla wrote numerous books and essays of philosophy, ethics, poetry, and critical journalism.

Wojtyla's ecclesiastical responsibilities expanded when he was named Titular Bishop of Ombi in 1958, Archbishop of Krakow in 1964, and Cardinal in 1967. As the second highest ecclesiastical official in Poland, he was chosen by John XXXIII to participate in the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). Between the time spent in Rome at the Council and his see in Krakow, Wojtyla began to travel. These travels included trips to Africa, North and South America, and Europe. On October 16, 1978, he was elected Supreme Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church, the 264th successor to Saint Peter.

Wojtyla's experience at Vatican II is of special interest in a discussion of his theory of economic justice. During those conferences, he acquired an internationalist perspective and began to comprehend the political influence and prophetic power of the Church as a

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Vatican Council II is considered the greatest religious event of the twentieth century. The council was opened by Pope John XXIII in St. Peter's Basilica, Rome, on Oct. 11, 1962. The Council was the most widely attended council in Church history. The Basilica accommodated the 2300 bishops and prelates. Provision was also made for representatives of the press, governmental ambassadors, and official attendants from other Christian Churches. Vatican Council II wrote and promulgated sixteen documents: four Constitutions, nine Decrees, and three Declarations.
world-wide institution. He also credits this time in his life as a "unique occasion for listening to others, but also for creative thinking." Wojtyla continues:

The Council was a great experience of the Church; it was--as we said at the time--the "seminary of the Holy Spirit." At the Council the Holy Spirit spoke to the Church in all its universality, which was reflected in the presence of bishops from the whole world and by the presence of representatives of many non-Catholic Churches and communities. . . . All of this [the special community] is closely linked to a new era in the history of humanity and in the history of the Church.9

Again drawing upon these experiences, Wojtyla developed a unique theory of economic justice that warrants attention for several reasons. First, the theory is grounded in a philosophy of the human person in the lived world.9 Wojtyla discusses what he believes to be objective and observable truths about the human person and economic reality. Indeed, these truths can be criticized and evaluated precisely because of his claims for objectivity. Wojtyla's most insistent appeal is based upon treating the human person as an existential being, responsive to the physical and emotional needs unique to the human condition, characterized in the modern world by alienation, violence, and expanding technology.

7 John Paul II, Crossing the Threshold of Hope, 148.
8 Ibid., 159-60.
9 Cf. Wojtyla, On The Possibility of Constructing Catholic Ethics on the Basis of the System of Max Scheler (Krakow, Poland: Jagiellonian University, 1953).
Second, because his economic theory has been relegated to a particular intellectual genre, labeled as "Catholic Social Doctrine," it has not been subjected to much discussion and criticism. In fact, secular economic theorists have virtually ignored the comprehensive nature of Wojtyla's economic plan.

Finally, disputes between various economists in favor of capitalism and those supporting socialism have arisen in the United States, Europe, and Asia. All have referred to John Paul's economic encyclicals to support their divergent opinions whenever it seems to support a particular point in their debate. Unfortunately, that debate neglects much of Wojtyla's early work and focuses instead upon piecemeal selections of various encyclicals. The result is often a skewed, politically motivated interpretation that both capitalists and socialists use to defend their social and economic agenda.

The goal of this dissertation, then, is to investigate the comprehensive and grand scheme Wojtyla believes appropriate for the human person in the realm of economic choice. The Wojtyla plan is a unique interpretation of economic justice. A review of his writings over the past fifty years reveals a concerted effort to promote a third

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way of economic life. Wojtyla writes, "In the words of Pope Pius XI, 'all economic life has become tragically hard, inexorable, and cruel.' Such is the social question, the existing state of economic life, as contrasted with the ideal."11 The following chapters of the dissertation elucidate Wojtyla's response to the social question: From the perspective of economics, how should the human person live?

To answer this question, it is necessary to examine the complete works of Karol Wojtyla. Even at the beginning of his professional career, Wojtyla's books, sermons, dissertations, and collections of poetry respond to the cultural, social, and economic dilemmas affecting the Polish people. His response to any controversial question regarding his flock is based upon a universal conception of human nature. Because of this shared aspect of the human condition, Wojtyla regards the distinguishing mark of humanity to be a common one. Accordingly, Wojtyla's vision of economic justice is applicable to both Poland and to the world. This notion of international, cross-cultural applicability is particularly fitting after Wojtyla became Pope John Paul II, ministering to an international constituency.

In brief, what is this third way? Wojtyla develops an economic plan that responds to truth, not ideology. Objective truth, for Wojtyla, is defined by the tenets of Christianity--revelation. He writes that "the reality of the People of God is rooted first of all in the reality revealed by God, who in a free act of love turns to mankind, to man in the world." But there is philosophical or rational grounding as well. For Wojtyla this involves, primarily, the Western philosophical tradition, including, perhaps most importantly, the works of St. Thomas Aquinas, and, most interestingly, the writings of Max Scheler.

In order to put forth Wojtyla's comprehensive economic vision, it is important to examine his writings on the subject as well as the seminal influences from which these writings draw sustenance. Nonetheless, these external theological and philosophical works must be considered, first and foremost, from the perspective of the Church. Moving outside the Church's eschatological, ontological, and soteriological interpretations obfuscates Wojtyla's economic plan. While Wojtyla willingly uses non-Christian sources, he returns to his faith again and again, insisting that Christian revelation is the best expression of truth. His economic and philosophic dialogue with the Western

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intellectual tradition always takes place in the context of a Christocentric eschatology.

Because Wojtyla's economic plan is intended to direct the human qua human, his philosophical anthropology is an appropriate beginning point. According to Wojtyla, attention to the human person as unique in creation, but with attributes or characteristics shared by all humans, implies that there is a universal economic response appropriate to all persons. Chapter I, then, is an examination of Wojtyla's view of human nature.

Max Scheler greatly influenced Wojtyla's view of the human being and was the subject of Wojtyla's second doctoral dissertation. Scheler concludes that the quality that distinguishes the human person from all other animate life is that the human being is a creature that yearns to know itself, other humans, and the ultimate ground of being. According to Wojtyla, if this highest created being, the human being, is to act informed by these yearnings, it must be motivated by righteousness and justice. This is a response to the divine essence inherent in the human species. It is Scheler's phenomenology that leads Wojtyla to examine the world in a distinctive manner. Thus, Chapter I compares and contrasts Wojtyla's and Scheler's writings on the "hierarchy of being."

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1 Karol Wojtyla, On the Possibility of Constructing Catholic Ethics on the Basis of the System of Max Scheler (Jagiellonian University, 1953).
Chapter II explores Wojtyla's theory of justice based upon his view of human nature. Wojtyla describes righteousness and justice as complex applications of Christian love. In defining love, Wojtyla relies upon at least three sources: Thomistic scholarship, the creation story (particularly the conceptualization of the Christian notion of Agape), and the writings of St. Augustine.1

Love becomes, for Wojtyla, the grounding for all political and economic activity. Indeed, one of Wojtyla's most important political notions, the idea of solidarity, is based upon his view of love. By examining these ideas, with Wojtyla's references to the notions of righteousness and justice, one begins to understand the third way.

Chapter II concludes with an analysis of the Book of Job to demonstrate Wojtyla's insistence that love not be misconstrued to denote a weak being. Wojtyla refers to Job as an example of righteousness and justice in the world, an economic and social vision grounded in the human person as an actor in the world, regardless of contingency. In the tradition of St. Thomas, activity is a natural condition of the human person--what is at stake is the moral content of action. According to Wojtyla, the story of Job illuminates

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the role of the human being in the world as in relation to the divine plan.

Understanding what the human being "is," how this creature can "act," and the role of love in human interaction lays the groundwork for Wojtyla's economic plan. Chapter III moves from a general view of justice, based on love, to a more particular view, based on the application of the general view to economics. Accordingly, each of the elements of Wojtyla's economic plan are identified and related to the ecclesiastical literature on economic justice. The most important sources for this plan are the Vatican II Documents and Wojtyla's writings on the application of the Documents to social and economic justice.

Chapter IV examines the means by which Wojtyla's economic prescription is promulgated. He speaks to the world as a prophet. Accordingly, the "prophetic stance" as social criticism is the subject of this chapter. Relying upon Wojtyla's references to Isaiah, among many others, Chapter IV describes the content and evaluates the effectiveness of the prophetic voice. If Wojtyla stopped short of promoting his economic plan to the nations of the world, the ideas would lack political content. He does not do that. Instead, he actively advances the third way as a primary way to achieving economic justice. Openly working without temporal power, Wojtyla relies upon the method of
the Christian prophets, encouraging others to consider an alternative to contemporary economic choices.

Chapter V evaluates and criticizes Wojtyla's economic theory and prophecy as it has been considered in different cultures and historical experiences. The final section, as a conclusion, looks at the possible political consequences of Wojtyla's economic plan in such diverse regions and cultures as Latin America and Eastern Europe. However, the American Catholic Bishops' letters on the U.S. economy are examined most closely to demonstrate the application of the third way to social policy. Ultimately, this final chapter responds to the question: What shape does the third way take in practice?
CHAPTER I

THE PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY OF KAROL WOJTYLA

..."man is more of a problem to himself at the present time than ever before in recorded history."¹

"The world in which we live is deeply scarred by sin and death. This world runs the risk of becoming an inhuman world."²

Popes have made social and economic statements throughout the two-thousand-year history of the Catholic Church. These messages expanded and took on new importance for the economic world as a whole beginning in the late nineteenth century, with Pope Leo XIII’s Encyclical Letter Rerum Novarum.³ John Paul II continued in this Catholic tradition, particularly by applying social doctrine influenced by Thomistic philosophy to social and economic problems unique to the late twentieth century.⁴


⁴See the Thomistic educational experience of Wojtyla as it is discussed in Chapter II, 35-40.
Pope John Paul II approaches economic justice from the traditional perspective, but also with a keen interest in phenomenology. "Max Scheler helped me to discover the specific experiencing which lies at the basis of the concept 'actus humanus'." This chapter explores the philosophical connection between these two thinkers in an effort to understand Wojtyla's theory of economic justice. Scheler's influence adds considerable insight into Wojtyla's philosophical anthropology, upon which his theory of economic justice is based. Indeed, Wojtyla acknowledges the influence of Max Scheler in his second doctoral dissertation.

The connection between Wojtyla and Scheler is explored by responding to two questions: What does man have in common with other living things? What makes him unique? Following the Aristotelian categories of substance; (1) sensible and perishable, (2) sensible and eternal, i.e., the heavenly bodies, and (3) non-sensible and eternal, both Scheler and Wojtyla survey the "structure of

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the biological-psychological world." Their respective analytical observations address both tangible and intangible entities. Scheler and Wojtyla develop a mode of differentiation—a method of analysis which distinguishes one classification of existence from another. Both move from a compact explanation of being (such as the naturalistic cosmological experience of Mesopotamian cultures) towards the view that existence itself is attuned to some conception of transcendence.

It is in the contemplation of transcendence, an effort directed towards understanding what is divine in the human person, that Scheler and Wojtyla come to the notion of differentiation. For both thinkers, the person is largely defined by the connection between creature and God creator. Operating within the context of the Western philosophical and theological tradition, Wojtyla argues for a particular definition of the human person. Starting with that definition, he can press for a certain political and economic order. The end result is Christocentric and soteriological in orientation, but the worldly manifestation, he believes, is human happiness and peace.

As a phenomenologist, Scheler encounters things, or phenomena of the world, at their face value; phenomena must

'Scheler, Man's Place In Nature., 9.

be judged on their own terms, as we experience them, without our being prejudiced towards a scientific theory or towards abstract philosophical concepts. Scheler looks beyond the phenomenon in experience towards an intellectual apprehension of essence. In fact, Scheler writes, "the capacity to separate essence from existence is the fundamental characteristic of the human spirit," to see the human being as a living and divine creature."

On the one hand, a human being is a biological entity of a particular sort, existing within a grand schema, and with apparently little to differentiate it from the other animals. On the other hand, a person also lives a distinctly unique existence, a divine existence, brought about through conscious objectification.

Scheler's hierarchy of being portrays three distinct levels of existence: non-reflective or vegetative; instinctual; and habitual or intelligent. Scheler places the human person at the third level of existence. Here there are four additional dimensions that denote human life: recognition, free will, world openness, and objectification of self in conscious thought. The four dimensions of the human being constitute the essence of spirit that is the differentiating mark attributed to human existence.

'Scheler, Man's Place In Nature, 93.'
The lowest form of psychic life is characterized by Scheler as a vital feeling devoid of consciousness, sensation, and representation.\textsuperscript{10} Things that exist under these circumstances "distinguish" between diverse stimuli only in varied responses to life-sustaining activity. Further, the vegetative level is unconscious and cannot interpret outside stimuli. Life at this level operates as a "totality" unto itself. As Scheler states, "they [the vegetative] do not have an inner life in any sense."\textsuperscript{11}

This first stage of life lacks reflective capacity. Because there is no capacity for sensory experience, instinct, association, or conditioned reflex, the essential nature of being at this level is that "they lack completely a turning back of life upon itself, even the most primitive capacity of reflection, or an ever-so-dim inner consciousness state."\textsuperscript{12} Any observable or predictable movement suggests an entelechy, of sorts, towards reproduction and death.

The second level of existence discussed by Scheler is instinct. Scheler considers instinct in terms of behavior—what can be seen and recorded—and thereby he avoids "psychological attributes" or the possibility of implying unconfirmed psychic attributes to the vegetative state. At

\textsuperscript{10} \textit{Ibid.}, 9-10.

\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Ibid.}, 9.

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Ibid.}, 11.
this level, "any mode of outward behavior is always expressing the inner state as well, for there is no inner state which does not express itself directly or indirectly in behavior."\textsuperscript{13}

Scheler further characterizes instinct as:

(1) responses serving the purpose of the entire organism, 
(2) acting with "rhythm" (emphasizing the non-mechanistic character of the being), (3) serving various stimuli that contribute to the continued life of the species, 
(4) demonstrably unique and hereditary, and (5) independent of discrete development.\textsuperscript{14}

At the instinctual level the being is complete from the outset and the analysis suggests that there is an evolving unpredictability with respect to stimuli, unlike the previous level of existence where vegetative existence "acts" with absolute predictability. Instinctual behavior lacks conscious reflection; but instinct is closely related to sensation, suggesting some discernment--an engagement with the environment at the very least. However, there is only as much knowledge as is necessary to complete a unique action. Nonetheless, the notion of the being's independence from nature arises, and it is this refined distinction known as intelligence that distinguishes the instinctive act from the knowing act. In fact, "two modes

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., 15.

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., 13-28.
of behavior—the habitual and the intelligent—are necessary to form the third type of psychic life."\textsuperscript{15}

Habit and intelligence, with an emphasis upon the latter, constitute the final level in Scheler's hierarchy of being. This third form of psychic life he calls the "essence of spirit," signifying that "man's place in nature" extends to the capacity for choice and intelligence. The human person is exceptional by virtue of the essence of spirit. Scheler does not believe that intelligence and choice reside exclusively within the domain of human beings, nor does he accept the notion that the creative possibilities of the human species are limited by the tools or the materials available to a specific generation. In both of these conceptions, the potential of spirit or the boundaries of creative materialism are limiting, as the human is accorded no "distinctive metaphysical or ontological status."\textsuperscript{16}

Scheler prefers to consider the human as a creature grandly singled out by a creator. He admits, however, the considerable complexity associated with understanding a creature distinguished by essence. He writes about the confusion regarding the meaning of spirit and life, briefly discussing conceptions of human existence that fail to distinguish adequately the unique character of the human

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., 21-22.

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., 35.
being. Human existence, he writes, is quite often misunderstood by those who advocate "naturalistic theories," specifically, mechanistic conceptions that reduce the spirit or mind to phenomena in the organism subject only to physical or chemical laws. The criticism involves the consideration of the human being as a machine. According to Scheler, the mechanistic understanding of the human being underestimates his creative and spiritual capacity. A second type of naturalistic theory, vitalism, overestimates the strength of life. Under this mistaken description of human nature, spirit is understood to be a development of instinct and circumstance created by experience--another philosophical diversion, Scheler argues, that confuses the true nature of the human being. Illustrating the problem with these naturalistic theories, Scheler writes,

Surveying the different versions of the vitalistic conception of man, we may distinguish three varieties. They differ according to whether (1) the food drives, (2) the reproductive and sexual instincts, or (3) the drive for power are chosen as the original and dominant system of drives."

In contradistinction to mechanistic and vitalistic approaches to human nature, Scheler offers an alternative conception where the human being is imbued with spirit. "What, then, is this spirit, this new crucial

"Ibid., 83."
In defining the final level of existence, he proposes four conscious dimensions, or movements, that clearly mark the essence of spirit: recognition, free will, world openness, and self-objectification. The notion of movements as descriptive concepts is appropriate because the human person is constantly experiencing periods of recognition, free will, world openness, and self-objectification. In fact, discussion of recognition, free will, world openness, and self-objectification for the purpose of analytical explanation requires the artifice of intellectual conceptualization. For the purposes of discussion, Scheler, quite literally, takes these dimensions or movements out of the context in which they are defined—life itself. His intention, it seems, is to ground the experience by naming it, all the while admitting the artificial conceptual problems associated with this enterprise.

The first dimension of the spirit recognizes spirit that exists beyond an infinite quantitative enlargement of intelligence and free choice. In short, Scheler calls upon human intelligence to recognize the ineffable. The idea of spirit "transcends what we call life in the most general sense." Spirit, understood correctly, evokes the ultimate recognition and, Scheler insists, turns one

"Ibid., 37.
"Ibid., 36.
towards the ultimate ground of being, to the first cause. Scheler identifies the Greek conception of Reason as a similar affirmation of spirit, but he considers spirit to be a more inclusive term, because it contains the concept of reason as well as intuition, instinct, and emotion. It should be noted that, by emotion, Scheler means emotional acts—kindness, love, remorse, reverence, wonder, bliss, and despair. These acts of the spirit appear ontologically in the "person."  

The second dimension of the spirit involves the human person's ability to choose. For Scheler, the attributes associated with free will are articulated in various expressions. He writes, "only in man does the capacity to isolate the drive from instinctive behavior and to separate the state of pleasure from functional enjoyment assume such monstrous forms that it is quite correct to say, man can be either more or less than an animal, but never an animal."  

Scheler emphasizes the power of free will as an act of choice in which the objective world may be rejected in what Scheler calls a reversal. This conscious act of defiance is a negation, or a "determination of the

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20Ibid., 30-42.
21Ibid., 29.
22Ibid., 37.
objective nature of things." Animals, Scheler writes, are limited to instinctual reactions that originate in the physiological condition of the nervous system: "animals only notice and grasp those things which fall into the secure boundaries of their environmental structure."

Spirit, the differentiating characteristic of the human person, altogether alters that relationship between the human being and the environment. As suggested earlier, the spirit enables the individual to objectify external reality and to oppose it. Scheler's depiction of this conscious activity is related in several "acts." First, "behavior is motivated by a complex of sensations and ideas raised to the status of an object. Second, the voluntary inhibition, or release, of a drive and of the corresponding reaction. The third act consists of a final and intrinsic change with regard to the objective nature of a thing."

Scheler next introduces an experience initiated by the reality of the human person and marked by recognition and free-will. This phenomenon he refers to as "world-openness." This phenomenon extends the mundane, interdependent existence, which characterizes the instinctual life of the animal in a limited environment, to an existence that is open. Here, the possibilities for the

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23 Ibid., 137.
24 Ibid., 38.
25 Ibid., 38-40.
human person are unlimited and categorically beyond
definition or imagination.

Scheler suggests that the human person is
differentiated from all other creation by the ability to
project consciousness beyond the confines of environmental
reactions. "Man, then, is a being that can exhibit, to an
unlimited degree, behavior which is open to the world. To
become human is to acquire this openness to the world by
virtue of the spirit."26

Scheler's fourth and final dimension of spirit that
marks the human person as unique among all known creatures
enables the self-conscious person existentially to
participate in the objectification project itself. The
person can, by virtue of self-conscious spirit, objectify
the environment (the world), as well as physiological and
psychic states. Only in the person "do we find the fully
developed categories of thing and substance."27

The notion that the human being is capable of
responding to objects verified by the senses and collecting
signals into an intellectual concept satisfies Scheler's
conception of a human being. A human hears, smells, feels,
sees, and tastes water and knows it to be water. In
addition, the human species maintains a priori categories
of space. This characterization of substance provides a

26Ibid., 39.

27Ibid., 43.
stable background independent of the person's movement within time and space. The previously mentioned notion of objectification is achieved via this characteristic. Scheler writes: "Only in man do we find the strange phenomenon that both spatial and temporal emptiness appears prior to, and is the basis of, all possible perceptions in the world of objects." 28

Because of the final dimension of spirit—self-objectification—all things of the world and all that is imaginable can be considered separate from what they are. Time and space as human ideas move from the inevitable reality, as experienced in the vegetative and instinctive realms, towards abstract intellectual concepts. "Thus man as a spiritual being is a being that surpasses himself in the world." 29 Human beings conceive of time and space quite apart from existential reality. Through reason and perception, individuals can move beyond existential reality to a world of unlimited possibility.

In summation, Scheler's ideas about the essence of spirit contained in the four dimensions (recognition, free-will, world openness, and self-objectification) place the human person in a unique category in creation. A human is the only being incapable of becoming an object to itself; the human person is actuality and knows itself through

28 Ibid., 45.
29 Ibid., 46.
activity. This activity leads back to the original principle of transcendence. The human being as spirit has come full circle into the awareness of transcendence.

In Karol Wojtyla's consideration of the human person, it is apparent from the start that he shapes his point of view from what he believes are right choices for the human person. Wojtyla dedicates considerable time investigating these "choices" and the human person who makes them. In this endeavor, the influence of Max Scheler's phenomenology is particularly important.

Wojtyla's hierarchy of being also originates within the phenomenological "world of things." In addition, both philosophers begin within the context of sensing experience. For Wojtyla these conditions exist in the world: thing as object, thing as subject, and thing as subject and object. The first condition contains a less specific application of Scheler's notions of the vegetative; the second involves the instinctive level of existence. The last condition, thing as subject and object, is that of the human person. This suffices to introduce Wojtyla's philosophical anthropology. Wojtyla

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expands upon what constitutes the person, relying heavily upon Scheler's "essence of spirit." A closer look at existence as object, as subject, and as subject and object both clarifies Wojtyla's philosophical anthropology and illustrates his reliance upon Scheler.

Turning first to existence as object, Wojtyla writes, "We usually regard as a thing an entity which is devoid not only of intelligence, but also of life; a thing is an inanimate object." Furthermore, "object is devoid of life and is therefore relegated to the realm of entity. A subject, on the other hand, is also a sensorial entity--an entity which exists and acts in a certain way," but is not solely limited to sensorial reality. Wojtyla organizes the collection of objects, things devoid of life, so that objects may be treated as everything that exists outside the subject. This presupposition supports the normative value of the subject above object by qualifying an object as inferior, since it lacks the independent characteristics associated with essence. Wojtyla maintains that the subject can act as object because human beings possess the ability to objectify themselves: "We must be clear from the start that every subject also exists as an object, an objective something or somebody."

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32 Ibid., 22.
33 Ibid., 21.
34 "Wojtyla, Love and Responsibility, 21."
It is the subject/object, the human, that Wojtyla sets apart from all other inorganic and organic entities. This distinction creates an immense chasm between human life and other things. It also illustrates the influence of Scheler by showing how the human being is capable of surpassing himself in the universe as objectified reality. The distinction, in effect, isolates the person as the evidential reality that will reveal the mystical and creative relationship between the person and God.

As Wojtyla attempts to make a clear distinction between the human person and all other created things, he moves from this somewhat general observation about the human as subject/object towards a more detailed description of the human person. He relies upon traditional Western philosophical and theological conceptualizations, buttressed by Scheler's phenomenological dimensions, to define human nature. The distinction between existence and essence is crucial in Wojtyla's philosophical anthropology, as it was for Scheler. Wojtyla describes a man or a woman as a creature that (1) recognizes in self a value-in-itself, (2) acknowledges an interior life, (3) participates in free-will, and (4) lives a faith that is related to personal structure and human dynamism.

Finally, Wojtyla concludes that, because of these attributes, the human person is more likened to an essence that combines the physical and spiritual components into a complete dynamic union. All these descriptive elements are
experiential and observable, demonstrating Wojtyla's insistence upon Schelerian phenomenology, and all depend upon the authority of the Western intellectual and spiritual tradition. In the end, Wojtyla's person is understood best as a soteriological phenomenon: "Union with God is realized in the vision of the Divine Being 'face to face' (I Cor 13:12), a vision called 'beatific' because it carries with it the ultimate attainment of man's aspiration to truth." 3

A more detailed examination of Wojtyla's subject/object begins with the examination of visible action and human potentiality. He refers to the person as, "recognition in self a value-in-it-self." Existence understood under this first characterization signifies for Wojtyla an inner self which is in-it-self of intrinsic value. A person compared to other objects or subjects, animate and inanimate, is plainly comprehended as superior. Furthermore, this being knows itself to be so. Wojtyla suggests that the person has "direct contact with the whole [external] world and is most intimately involved with it precisely because of its [the person's] inwardness, its interior life." 3 For Wojtyla, this is an advantage that


3 Wojtyla, Love and Responsibility, 23.
cannot be overestimated. In a sense, the human proclivity to ask, "Who am I?" is symptomatic of this interior life.

Wojtyla's depiction of what it means to be a human being is based on his conceptualization of the intrinsic value of human dignity. In short, to exist is to participate in the recognition of self as essence or spirit.” Wojtyla expands upon the inalienable consequences of human dignity, writing that the human is the only thing that cannot deny itself.

Because a human being—a person—possesses free will, he is his own master, sui juris as the Latin phrase has it. . . . The Latin of the philosophers defined in the assertion that personality is alteri incompermriabilis—not capable of transmission. . . . The incommunicable, the inalienable, in a person is intrinsic to that person's inner self. . . . I am, and I must be, independent in my actions. All human relations are posited on this fact. All true conceptions about education and culture begin from and return to this point."

Wojtyla, like Scheler, employs the concept of "person" when attempting to explain the dignity that is natural to a man or to a woman. He relies, as Scheler did, upon this concept to communicate a sense of fullness or completeness that the modern world circumvents. Wojtyla's early writings especially reflect this." In these first books,

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3Ibid.
Wojtyla considers the person as unique in the world, not through a physiological condition, but by the equally discernable fact of an essence. Because of this dignity, there are certain obligations, responsibilities, and rights, grounded in Wojtyla's interpretation of human nature.

At this point in the development of Wojtyla's view of human nature, his assessment of the human person as spirit is strikingly similar to Scheler's. Recognition of spirit evokes within the human person an acknowledgment of an interior life, the second characteristic associated with Wojtyla's philosophical anthropology. Wojtyla, like Scheler, believes that the attainment of knowledge enables the person to discern an internal divine essence. This recognition of divinity evokes a need to pay homage to God as the ultimate ground of being—a necessary link between the creature and the creator manifests itself. This is a link confirmed, for Wojtyla, in covenant theology and, especially, in the figure of Christ who is revealed truth and love:

Thus the reality of the People of God is rooted first of all in the reality revealed by God, who in a free act of love turns to mankind, to man in the world. The consciousness of the Church as the People of God presupposes awareness of creation,

“A detailed discussion of these obligations will follow in chapter II and III where the political implications of Wojtyla's philosophical anthropology lead to a discussion of righteousness and justice, which, in turn, lead to his economic theory."
salvation and redemption, and is based on such awareness.\footnote{41}

Accordingly, Wojtyla is convinced that the person is uniquely deserving of separate consideration from the "realm of objects." Separate consideration is warranted because the person recognizes himself or herself as a value-in-it-self and because the person acknowledges and participates in an interior reflective life.

Wojtyla's third characterization of the human person places these contemplative, internal realities within the context of action in the world. He argues that another mark of distinction regarding the person originates in free will, which expands Wojtyla's depiction of what differentiates the human person from other created things. The Schelerian notion of "openness" relates quite easily to Wojtyla's "Christian freedom." Both notions recognize the ineffable mystery of existence, understood as the combination of material and spiritual dimensions within the person. Wojtyla and Scheler suggest that, because of the divine element, individuals have the ability to escape instinctual behavior. Freedom, however, must be properly understood and applied; the associated implications lead directly into Wojtyla's economic plan. Freedom itself is worthy of some attention, if only because of its ontological implications. Simply positioning oneself

\footnote{Karol Wojtyla, Sources of Renewal: The implementation of the Second Vatican Council, 112.}
towards the ultimate ground of being, avoiding the limits of flesh, nature, and even reason, it is possible to consider the essence of the human person as a notion beyond sensorial constructions. "Openness" and "Christian freedom" introduce a consideration of the metaphysical conceptualization of the human person. In a sense, Wojtyla attempts to get at the truth about human existence. Wojtyla writes of this truth as a mystery, and therefore speculative, but also as something necessary for human dignity.

The mystery of man: truth. The dignity proper to man, the dignity that is held out to him both as a gift and as something to be striven for, is inextricably bound up with the truth. Truthful thinking and truthful living are the indispensable and essential components of that dignity. Because of their dignity all human beings, inasmuch as they are person, have inherent in their nature a moral obligation to seek the truth, to adhere to the demands [of truth].

Accordingly, if one desires to be a person, he or she must break from the constraints imposed by the world and adhere to the truth. The first part of that truth involves recognizing the divine spark that distinguishes human life. That self-recognition is possible only when considered in the larger context of creator and creature. What the person will choose to do, how he or she will act, involves conscious negation of instinct and sensorial pleasure as life-ordering principles. Wojtyla encourages the person to

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speak out against the realm of the animal and to open the self towards God—the ultimate ground of being. In short, Wojtyla suggests that what a person chooses invariably shapes the level of dignity to which that person will ascend; but that all persons, regardless of their choices, inherently hold the dignity and value that define their existence.

Wojtyla recognizes the difficulty of choice within human existence as well as the ultimate mystery that will inevitably confront every individual. A life, according to Wojtyla, is like the verbum crucis, the language of the cross—the mystery of the incarnate Word, the mystery of human suffering.

Openness towards the Word will introduce the person to the possibility of transcendence. Wojtyla writes, "Scio enim quod redemptor meur vivit. The mystery of redemption infinitely surpasses the thought and the ways of men." The person must look within the suffering of his life and examine the effect of the experience in order to appreciate himself and, consequently, the whole history of man and of the world.

Because human beings possess the possibilities of spirit—apparent to Wojtyla because of their inherent value, their reflective life, and free-will—they have dominion over themselves. They are capable of expressing

"Ibid., 82, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."
an outward symbol of the inner self. They also have
dominion over the world of things. Wojtyla associates the
notion of dominion with responsibility, concluding that
"The whole world of created persons derives its
distinctness from and its natural superiority over the
world of things (non-persons) from a very particular
resemblance to God."

Wojtyla further exhibits Scheler’s influence by
embracing his concept of dominion. Both Scheler and
Wojtyla believe that external dominion, the power to
steward the things of the world, is infused by the inner
spirit. The person is capable, because of what constitutes
him, to choose and be responsible. Where previously free
will was considered as a speculative metaphysical concept,
it now takes on the character of dominion. As dominion and
the acts associated with it become evident in human
activity, responsibility emerges as a key ingredient of
free will. Wojtyla believes that action must be authentic,
or true to the character of the human person. That, he
continues, requires faith, which furthers the role of
spirit and transcendence as hallmarks of the human person.
Wojtyla writes about this faith, the fourth
colorization of his philosophical anthropology:

   Faith, as these words show, is not merely
   the response of the mind to an abstract
   truth. Even the statement, true though it
   is, that this response is dependent on the

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"Wojtyla, Love and Responsibility, 40."
will does not tell us everything about the nature of faith. The obedience of faith is not bound to any particular human faculty but relates to man's whole personal structure and spiritual dynamism."

Faith as a conscious act moves the whole person--body and soul--towards fuller realization of personal dignity and responsibility. Faith is grounded in the recognition of spirit as something more than either a psychological or a physiological being. In this regard, Wojtyla (once again like Scheler) criticizes Descartes, who divided substance into a thinking substance (mind) and an extended substance (matter)." Scheler and Wojtyla insist that a correct understanding of the person requires recognition of psychological and physiological components existing only as different methods of approaching a single unified subject--the person. Scheler writes, "Philosophers, medical men and natural scientists concerned with the mind-body problem converge more and more towards a unified conception."

Descartes, according to Scheler, tore the human being from it place, nature. Once removed from the falsities imposed by Descartes, the physiological and the psychic "processes of life are strictly identical in an ontological sense.""

"Wojtyla, Sources of Renewal, 20.

"Descartes argued that man alone consisted of the mutual interaction of these two substances.

"Scheler, Man's Place In Nature, 73.

"Ibid., 74.
An example of Wojtyla's attempt to overcome the dissection of matter from spirit is found in a comparison of Western and Eastern approaches to health. In the West, science is most preoccupied with the human body, neglecting the mind as a contributor to wellness. The approach is external and sterile, obviously one-sided. Eastern traditions suggest an internal psychic emphasis for healing, usually relegating external treatment to a secondary role. Scheler concludes "psychophysical life is one. This unity is a fact for all forms of life, including man."49 Wojtyla concurs, "When the Lord Jesus prays to the Father so that 'they may be one' (Jn 17:22), He places before us new horizons impervious to human reason and implies a similarity between the union of divine persons and the union of the children of God in truth and charity. This similarity shows how man, who is the only creature on earth that God wanted for His own sake, can fully discover himself only by the sincere giving of himself."50

Wojtyla relies upon Scheler's conception of "functional unity," the combined effect of body and spirit, when he emphasizes the wholeness of the person. At this juncture the person realizes his unique place in nature. Wojtyla insists upon recognizing the complete person as a totality of spiritual and physical, metaphysical and

49Scheler, *Man's Place In Nature*, 78.
50Pope John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 201.
mundane components. The person is of "particular richness and perfection in the manner of his being."

Because of this, utilitarian measures damage the concept of person. If the person is considered a means to an end, intellectually or physically, sin results. In fact, "anyone who treats a person as the means to an end does violence to the very essence of the other, to what constitutes its natural right." The possession of spirit, or the recognition of existence and essence, separates the human person from other forms of life. Spirit transcends the antithesis between body and soul by adhering to the synthesis found in Jesus Christ.

The conclusion that spirit or essence is the defining mark of all human beings is not popular. Both Scheler and Wojtyla are opposed by those who advocate some combination of mechanism and vitalism, and by the overwhelming influence of Descartes which, according to Wojtyla, formulates a disordered reality. Convinced he can change this, Wojtyla insists upon shaping an attitude of "human identity" that accepts the living situation of the person in the world and shares "fully in the aspirations which have as their end the true dignity of man."

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51 Wojtyla, Love and Responsibility, 23.

52 Wojtyla as quoted in Frossard, Be Not Afraid: Pope John Paul II Speak Out on his Life, his Beliefs, and his Inspiring Vision for Humanity, 149.

53 Wojtyla, Sources of Renewal, 280.
what the human person is—dignified, valuable-in-it-self, conscious, free, and faithful—Wojtyla believes individual and communal existence in the world can be positive and harmonious, despite the inevitable sufferings imposed by original sin. Simply put, the human being, conscious of self as person and spirit, is capable of satisfying the personal and communal ideal inherent in the human condition. According to Wojtyla, this means that each person may live in the world appropriately. Inevitably, as people live this experience, they "must also encounter the completely formal idea of an infinite absolute Being beyond this world," if only because of human imagination.

Turning away from this reality is, as Scheler and Wojtyla suggest, to negate "world-openness" or "Christian freedom." Omitting the totality of human existence, which includes both physical and metaphysical reality, minimizes the essence of spirit by relegating the person to the stimulus-response reality of animal and environment, or existence as an object or subject.

A final component of Scheler's and Wojtyla's depiction of human nature is their respective views of God and God's relationship with the human person. Wojtyla's writings about God evidence his debt to Western philosophy and theology. Since the time of the early Church, particularly the Letters of Paul and the Patristic Fathers, through the

"Ibid., 125."
medieval synthesis of Thomas Aquinas and in the *Documents of Vatican II*, God as an intellectual concept has been often considered in light of eschatology. This discussion is heightened when the relationship between God and the human person is the subject of debate. Wojtyla often refers to Christocentric eschatology. He writes, "Eschatology, as I have already mentioned, is profoundly anthropological, but in light of the New Testament, it is above all centered on Christ and the Holy Spirit, and it is also, in a certain sense, cosmic." For Wojtyla, a consideration of God often invites a consideration of the human person, and the emphasis is placed upon what that person may become in the end.

Regarding this Being and this same relationship (anthropology and theology), Scheler describes a "third reality," where God and Man exist in a mutually defining, active manner, each conscious of the other through the process of becoming the other. God is known to the human being precisely through the shared consequence of spirit. The human, at this moment of recognition, may either question and contemplate the wonder of Being, or create imagery and symbol to replicate a sense of this wonder. The first, according to Scheler, requires courage and has occurred infrequently throughout history and within few peoples. The second, "By means of the enormous surplus of

"Pope John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, "Does Eternal Life Exist?", 182."
fantasy which was his heritage in contrast to the animal, he [the human being] could then populate this sphere of being with imaginary figures in order to seek refuge in their power through cult and ritual." Formal religion is the result of this second metaphysical option—a system where the individual and, subsequently, society depend upon institutional structures of faith.

Scheler examines several religious ideas that have appeared within the Western experience to illustrate this point. These ideas are specifically related to the relationship between creator and creation. Here the notion of "covenant" is significant for Scheler. The covenant depicts a progressively advantaged relationship between God and a chosen people. The most weakened relationship, simply based on need, portrays the human being as a "slave of God," where obedience and prayer maintain the relationship. The "faithful servant" is a somewhat elevated relationship, dependent upon obedience and strength of character, attributes found lacking in the slave relationship. The relationship between God and humankind within the covenant is depicted as existing between a loving paternal figure and spiritual children.

"Scheler, Man's Place In Nature, 91.

"Indeed, Scheler further restricts this study to the stage of monotheism as developed in the Western world."
The relationship is mediated by the "Son" who relates the expectations of the "Father" to humanity."

Scheler rejects all of these conceptions on philosophical grounds and supports the mutually defining relationship mentioned earlier.

We must do so [reject] for the simple reason that we deny the basic presupposition of theism: a spiritual, personal God omnipotent in his spirituality. For us the basic relationship between man and the Ground of Being consists in the fact that this Ground comprehends and realizes itself directly in man, who, both as spirit and as life, is but a partial mode of the eternal spirit and drive."

Responding to Scheler's metaphysical conclusion, Wojtyla acknowledges that the human person is the only being capable of objectifying self into conscious images apart from physical matter and that this possibility permits a turning back of sorts upon the self. The soul may attempt to deny itself, the world, or God, according to Wojtyla; there are countless historical examples of such nihilism. But the power of the spirit is more correctly used in the negation of that sort of nihilism, turning instead towards Christian eschatology:

The truth which the Gospel teaches about God requires a certain change in focus with regard to eschatology. First of all, eschatology is not what will take place in the future, something happening only after earthly life is finished. Eschatology has already begun with the coming of Christ.


"Ibid., 92.
The ultimate eschatological event was His redemptive Death and His Resurrection. This is the beginning of 'a new heaven and a new earth' (cf. Rev 21:1). For everyone, life beyond death is connected with the affirmation: "I believe in the resurrection of the body," and then: "I believe in the forgiveness of sins and in life everlasting." This is Christocentric eschatology.40

Yet, openness is as important for Wojtyla as for Scheler. For Wojtyla, the Ultimate Ground of Being "Is." For Scheler, God is in the process of "Becoming." Thus, there is an interdependency between God and the human person; each knows of the other's existence through the attention of the other. Wojtyla writes, "the formation of what we call the attitude of human identity consists not only in accepting the situation of man in the modern world but we must discover conscience and the objective moral order to which the human conscience is subordinate."41 Accordingly, the relationship between creator and creation finds sustenance in objective truth--divine law.42

God and humankind may have defined their relationship in various covenants bound by the limits of human interpretation and societal expectations, but God is

40 John Paul II, Crossing the Threshold of Hope, "Does Eternal Life Exist?" 184-185.
41 Wojtyla, Sources of Renewal, 280.
ultimately limitless--God is the creator." The relationship Wojtyla describes does not, despite the immense chasm between creator and created, dispense with the dignity of each individual person. Wojtyla, like Scheler, speaks of an existence "as if the Creator entered into Himself, as if, creating, not only did He call things into existence from nothingness . . . but, as if, in a special way, He drew man from the mystery of His own Being." In fact, the relationship between God and humanity clearly demonstrates how the person is the only creature on Earth that God wished for His own sake.

When the Lord Jesus prays to the Father so that 'they may be one' (Jn 17:22), He places before us new horizons impervious to human reason and implies a similarity between the union of divine persons and the union of the children of God in truth and charity. This similarity shows how man, who is the only creature on the earth God wanted for His own sake, can fully discover himself only by the sincere giving of himself."

Wojtyla recognizes Godliness in the human person, and cites Psalm 82:6, which "says so: You are gods." This affirmation requires substantial courage, because it makes the human person overtly responsible for his actions in the world. The relationship between God and humanity

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*Cf. Genesis 1:1.


"John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 201.

*Ibid.* 400., see also Jn. 10:34.
illustrates a final connection between Wojtyla and Scheler with respect to their philosophical anthropologies, particularly their metaphysical considerations. Both Scheler and Wojtyla depict a unique relationship between creator and creature. Irrespective of the view that God "Is" for Wojtyla, as opposed to Scheler's notion of God as "Becoming," the relationship is an absolute mystery. The human person serves, quite literally, as a conduit through which God the creator manifests humanity and, simultaneously, the human creation manifests divinity. In short, the human person is superior precisely because objects and subjects do not contain within their respective substance the differentiating characteristic that constitutes the person. Recognition of that relationship is the recognition of God. This knowledge of God is written larger when the person considers others. Wojtyla continues,

The result of this cognitive process is the realization of the fundamental and essential difference: I am different. I am more different than I am similar [to nature]. The Bible description concludes: 'for the man there was not found a helper fit for him' (Gen. 2:20)."7

Scheler posits a truth which is dependent upon the human and the Ultimate Ground of Being, where neither is superior to the perspective of "becoming." Wojtyla sees God as the source of all knowledge and the ultimate end of

"Ibid., 402.
the human person. Nonetheless, the notion of "becoming," from the perspective of mystery or a maturing awareness, meets the requirements of Wojtyla and, to some extent, of Scheler. Ultimately, however, Wojtyla's fundamental doctrine is: "God the Father is the origin and purpose of all men." And only in the knowledge of this mystery is life meaningful: "It is He who is at the starting-point of our spiritual quest, He is its soul, He will be its goal."

While Scheler and Wojtyla reach different conclusions, it is important to note their similarities. First, the locus of self-realization is the human person. Without the experience brought about by the divine spark, the idea of God as an independent reality is problematic, and the recognition of the relationship between creator and creature can be realized as a phenomenological enterprise.

Scheler notes: "it [man] is the only place where the deification is accessible to us." Wojtyla supports this idea: "If God comes to man, He does so because in the human being He has prepared a dimension of expectation

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"Scheler, Man's Place In Nature, 93."
through which man can welcome God."71 The dignity of the human person is intensified by the inevitable experiences of living. As Jesus Christ existed in the human form, all persons share in the dignity of revealed truth.

A second similarity between Scheler and Wojtyla emerges when considering their respective remarks regarding the difficulties associated with metaphysical contemplation. Courage is significant, in fact necessary, for both philosophers. Scheler caustically remarks that metaphysics is not for the faint of heart, and if the fear of an incomplete God intimidates, so be it. He adds that needing protection from this insight is "for those who are weak."72 Wojtyla writes of the need for fortitude to overcome fear and physical danger: "The men who are capable of crossing the so-called barrier of fear, to bear witness to truth and justice, have then a special value. The virtue of fortitude proceeds hand in hand with the capacity of sacrificing oneself."73 In Scheler's case, courage is of the sort necessary to discover truths regardless of metaphysical or even cosmological consequences; in Wojtyla's case, courage involves bearing witness to revealed truth, which is unpopular and, quite often, subversive. Both contain the element of courage in

72Scheler, Man's Place In Nature, 94.
73Wojtyla, Talks of John Paul II, "Courage," 244.
the mystery, since both involve the unknowable and the ineffable.

One observation worth mentioning at the conclusion of this comparison is something Wojtyla wrote regarding Scheler's phenomenology. According to Wojtyla, Scheler fails to recognize that evil is more likely when truth is a relative idea. Wojtyla insists that action must be based upon revealed objective truths: "If Scheler does not see this fact [revealed truth which points out evil], then the concept of person is at stake, the concept of person that is emotionalistic. In view of this he [Scheler] puts into the question the experience itself."

What remains, even after this debate over evil, is a hyper-conscious creature who is unable to avoid the reality of his existence. In fact, Wojtyla would argue, consciousness leads human beings towards the recognition of their need for God. That human beings are capable of extending beyond the physical limits of the human body, searching for a divine Being, brings credit to human nature--the essence of spirit. While Scheler might be opposed to "faith" as a component of courage, preferring instead his notion of "world openness," his conclusion is similar.

But we must not wait for theoretical certainties before we commit ourselves. It

is the commitment of the person himself that opens up the possibility of "knowing this Being in itself."

In summary, Wojtyla believes that the human being transcends earthly reality and is accorded the possibility of insight into how he should order his private life and contribute to the order of the community. This is possible because the person is superior to all bodily things and recognizes "in himself a spiritual and immortal soul."

If the person is the primary creation with legitimate dominion over all other things, a social consequence inevitably arises. What is the connection between persons in light of this particular view of human nature? What type of order appropriately governs human relations?

Recalling that it is impossible for other persons to become utilitarian objects by virtue of their being subjects, and, maintaining the alteri incompemerniabilis (not capable of transmission) of the person, Wojtyla calls for the recognition of others grounded in the reality and dignity of their personhood. This relationship, understood by Wojtyla as Christian love, "is the fullest realization of the possibilities inherent in man. The potential inherent in the person is most fully actualized through love."

"Scheler, Man's Place In Nature, 95.


"Wojtyla, Love and Responsibility, 82.

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Wojtyla's philosophical anthropology simultaneously recognizes the worth of the individual person and the community, since the connection between the person and God also links the human family. This human link is manifest in the person's ability to love others. Any interaction between people, then, must be based upon love, which Wojtyla equates with "righteousness and justice." The exact meaning of these principles is the subject of the next chapter, but the following comments by Wojtyla suggest how important these principles are.

Man affirms himself most completely by giving of himself. This is the fulfillment of the commandment of love. This is also the full truth about man, a truth that Christ taught us by His life, and that the tradition of Christian morality, no less than the tradition of saints and of the many heroes of love of neighbor, took up and lived out in the course of history. If we deprive human freedom of this possibility, if man does not commit himself to becoming a gift for others, then this freedom can become dangerous. It will become freedom to do what I myself consider as good, what brings me a profit or pleasure, even a sublimated pleasure. If we cannot accept the prospect of giving ourselves as a gift, then the danger of a selfish freedom will always be present. Kant fought against this danger, and along the same line so did Max Scheler and so many after him who shared his ethics of values. But a complete expression of all this is already found in the Gospel. For this very reason, we can find in the Gospel a consistent declaration of all human rights, even those for various reasons can make us feel uneasy."

CHAPTER II

LOVE, RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND JUSTICE

By this will all men know you for my disciples, by the love you bear for one another.¹

I formulated the concept of a personalistic principle. This principle is an attempt to translate the commandment of love into the language of philosophical ethics.²

Karol Wojtyla places emphasis upon the "person" so as to insure that "a man is somebody--and this sets him apart from every other entity in the visible world, which as an object is always only something."³ Influenced by Scheler's phenomenology, the Western philosophical tradition, and the Doctors and mystics of the Church, Wojtyla considers the person the superlative creation. Convinced that human existence is extraordinary, Wojtyla suggests that "To be something created is to be something 'endowed' above all with existence and, together with existence, nature--which reflects different levels of

¹John, 13:35.
²John Paul II, Crossing the Threshold of Hope, "Human Rights," 201.
³Wojtyla, Love and Responsibility, 21.

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beings, differing degrees of perfection and good in the world."

In Wojtyla's philosophical anthropology, where the hierarchy of being establishes the preeminence of the person, each individual as a person is met with the challenge of acting in accordance with the dictates of this elevated stature. Righteousness is that quality of action. Justice is righteousness acting within the context of community. While a single person may act "justly," it is only in comparison with the just and unjust acts of others that the normative evaluation of an act is possible. Righteousness is an existential action directed towards the good, which operates within human nature properly understood; justice is the same experience acting within the body politic.

Human action, even action that is righteous and just, takes place in a world that is, according to Wojtyla, "deeply scared by sin and death," a place that "runs the risk of becoming an inhuman world." Despite these circumstances, Wojtyla believes that this same world is redeemed. Specifically, as God loved the world, saving it through the Incarnation, the human person must also seek to act in accordance with the new law of Christian love: namely, that all should "Love your enemies, bless them that

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'Wojtyla, Sign of Contradiction, 55.

'Andre Frossard, Be Not Afraid, 192.
curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

Righteousness and justice, then, are infused with the mystery of love. And love, Wojtyla insists, is necessary for any righteous action and a just political community.

Without the help of grace, men would not know how to discern the often narrow path between the cowardice which gives in to evil, and the violence which under the illusion of fighting evil only makes it worse. This is the path of charity, that is, of the love of God and of neighbor.

Further, Wojtyla believes that the commandment to love expands the person beyond purely personal concerns to inter-personal relationships. The loving act makes the teachings of Christ political or social, since this principle is intended to order the behavior of individuals as well as political communities. Wojtyla often writes of the potential redemptive power of love in the world.

A world in which a love more powerful than sin and death has been manifested. This love is always present in it and never ceases acting in it. Not only does it reveal the prospect of a fullness of life and goodness as the final end and meaning of the existence of man in God, but even in the world, this world, this love never ceases to transform the hearts and acts of man.

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"Matthew 5:44.


'Ibid., 193.
The commandment to love supports the personalistic norm that Wojtyla insists upon, since it is only within and through a person radically differentiated from other things--animate and inanimate--that love can find expression. Animals interact with like creatures instinctively and are incapable of love. Love is choice. Only human beings possess free will. Perhaps more importantly, the person is the only being linked directly to God in the spirit of love: "The person is a being for whom the only suitable dimension is love."

Accordingly, the characteristics accepted by Wojtyla as parts of the "person." are rightfully expressed upon only when the person acts within the context of love. Wojtyla considers this righteous action consistent with human dignity. He is not unaware of evil action or thought as part of the human condition. However, he insists that these are debilitating experiences--a misinterpretation of free will, which can be redirected by the individual. In short, while evil and the effects of evil are inevitable consequences of original sin, sin need not limit the possibilities within the individual or the community striving for justice. Indeed, sin does not limit the person because of the truth about him.

The dignity proper to man, the dignity that is held out to him both as a gift and as something to be striven for, is inextricably bound up with truth. Truthful thinking and

'John Paul II, Crossing the Threshold of Hope, 201.
In his book, *Sign of Contradiction*, Karol Wojtyla describes how truthful living are the indispensable and essential components of that dignity.10

One example used by Wojtyla to demonstrate love as the basis upon which righteousness and justice stand is the persecution and death of Father Kolbe. Kolbe was a Polish priest who, in the name of love, insisted upon justice and demonstrated his choice by saving others at his own expense. Wojtyla writes of this experience.

Auschwitz is the only place that has a threatening significance not only for our nation [Poland] but for the whole race. It is significant in the sheer scale of its horrifying contempt for the human person, the extent to which it witnessed the destruction of one human being by another. It is a place in which the command to love was replaced by the imperative of hatred. Is this any less true today? Has the liquidation of Auschwitz camp meant the disappearance of what it stood for? But God's Providence manifested itself at last, towards the end of that terrible time of travail of which Auschwitz has remained the ultimate symbol. The life and death of Maximillian Kolbe show the power of love victorious over hatred, and of the power of the human spirit to survive.11

Father Kolbe volunteered to take the place of a sick Jewish woman who could not stand during roll call. Placed in a small four by five foot box without food or water until his death a week later, he prayed aloud for the German soldiers as people of God worthy of love. Father Kolbe was beatified by Rome in 1979 with Pope John Paul II

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as the celebrant. Father Kolbe's actions, according to Wojtyla, dramatized the shocking reality often experienced by individuals, as well as the pain often incumbent upon those who choose righteousness in an evil world. But perhaps more importantly, Kolbe courageously challenged a political regime that sought to dehumanize, something Wojtyla views as a prominent characteristic of the contemporary political world.

As the relating of Father Kolbe's expression of will suggests, the route to righteousness and justice often requires human suffering. But if the qualities associated with the notion of a person are legitimate (as suggested in the philosophical anthropology of Wojtyla), then each person has the capacity to act righteously and, subsequently, in accordance with justice.

The whole world of created persons derives its distinctness from and its natural superiority over the world of things (non-persons) from a very particular resemblance to God. The commandment formulated in the New Testament, demanding love toward persons, is implicitly opposed to the principle of utilitarianism, which is unable to guarantee the love of one human, one person for another.12

Wojtyla intends for love to be the cause of the righteous act or, as it was described earlier, the basis upon which just action rests. In fact, Wojtyla believes only through loving one another is justice a political possibility. Claims of justice based on secular humanism,
egoism, and personalism are impracticable because these and any other utilitarian ordering principle obviate and marginalize the importance of love and the human person.

Wojtyla relies upon at least three sources to inform his notion of love. The first is the influence of Thomistic scholarship. Wojtyla is a product of Catholic education, in particular the Angelicum in Rome, where he studied under the direction of the French Dominican Pere Reginald Garrigou Lagrange, a renowned conservative Thomistic scholar. There can be little doubt of Wojtyla's familiarity with Thomistic philosophy.13

A second resource for Wojtyla's understanding of love is found in Genesis, or at least in his reading of that account. In discussing Genesis, Wojtyla confronts both theocentric and anthropocentric interpretations of human dignity. He attempts to re-evaluate these ideas, seeking a new dimension to the eternal question of the dignity of the human person. Taking into consideration contemporary humanity, Wojtyla attempts to combine Christianity and human experience formulating a new kind of personalism.14

In the writings of the creation story, Wojtyla also distinguishes between the Greek conception of Eros and the Christian notion of Agape.


14Cf. The Dignity of Man As A Person: Essays of the Christian Humanism of His Holiness John Paul II.
Finally, Wojtyla draws upon St. Augustine's life and writing including most especially *The Confessions*, and *The City of God*. As Augustine describes it, the earthly city, replete with both good and evil, exists as a necessary condition in which human conduct may be evaluated. Wojtyla's "Christian personalism," as this idea relates to action in the city of man, is the basis from which the Christian Church will inform secular society. In a sense, Augustine's valuation of how and the object of a human's love (himself or God) is the core of Wojtyla's theory of economic justice.

These three sources, informed by Wojtyla's phenomenological tendencies, lead him to a particular vision of love and provide the foundation for his theory of righteousness and justice. In turn, these vision of proper human action will eventually lead Wojtyla to a critical consideration of contemporary economic and political activity.

**The Thomistic Influence**

Wojtyla's awareness of Thomas' exegesis on love is apparent. References to love can be found in all of Wojtyla's writings prior to his becoming Pope, and throughout his papal decrees, encyclicals, and communications. The origins of such an important influence began during Wojtyla's formal education since Thomistic philosophical and theological orientation dominated the common textbooks used in Catholic seminaries from 1930
until at least 1958. The effect of this Thomistic influence upon Wojtyla is significant and, at times, bothersome especially with regard to Thomas' metaphysics. Wojtyla describes his encounter with Thomism in this way:

> From the beginning this was the obstacle (metaphysics). My literary education, centered in the humanities, absolutely did not prepare me for the scholastic thesis and formulas that the Manual set before me from start to finish. I had to beat a trail through thick briars of concepts, of analyses and axiom [sic], without even being able to identify the terrain over which I was making way.\(^1\)

Despite the metaphysical obstacle Wojtyla writes about, he obviously found much of Thomas helpful in refining what would become his view of human nature. It is, in fact, Thomas' philosophical anthropology and his understanding of love that Wojtyla continues to rely upon to justify the third way.

Considering Thomas' writings in general, Wojtyla writes "that homo Aristotelicus does not isolate the body and its role in the dynamic whole of both person and act."\(^2\) He continues, "it is most appropriate to fully

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\(^1\)George Williams, "Karol Wojtyla and Marxism," Catholicism and Politics in Communist Societies, Edited by Pedro Ramet (Duke University Press, 1990), 356-387. Wojtyla first encountered Thomism in Metafizyka a manual of metaphysics in the Neothomist, or transcendental Thomist, tradition of the school of Louvain, published in Lwow in 1924. The Author was the Reverend Professor Kazimierz Wais.

\(^2\)Wojtyla, Osoba i czyn (Person and Act), translated by the Society of St. Paul (Krakow: Polskie Towarzystwo Teologiczne, 1985), 249.
accept the view of the human reality, which we received from traditional philosophy (Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas)." 17 Wojtyla incorporates within his notion of person his "view of the human reality." He believes the person contains certain characteristics: intrinsic values and an interior life. How an individual is treated by another should be based upon their stature as person created in the image of the divine. In short, they should act in love because they were created from love.

Examples of this Thomistic influence on Wojtyla are overwhelming, but one which considers Thomas' doctrine on values, echoes many of Wojtyla's concerns about the human person, love, and Jesus Christ. Here Wojtyla, like Thomas, writes that in living the natural dignity of the person is obvious. What is also interesting is the hint of social responsibilities or obligations incumbent upon such existence.

Above all, Love is greater than sin, than weakness, than the vanity of creation; it is stronger than death; it is Love always ready to raise up and forgive; always ready to go to meet the prodigal son; always looking for "the reveling of the sons of God" who are called to the glory, that is to be revealed. This revelation of love is also described as charity; and in man's history this revelation of love and charity has taken a form and a name: that of Jesus Christ. 18

17Ibid., 319.

18Karol Wojtyla, Sign of Contradiction, 140.
Thomas Aquinas writes of love as if it were one of the primary means of knowing God, which, for Thomas, means it is fundamental to being human. Thomas asserts that "God is love," and that "the primary activation of any tendency whatever, will included, is love." Accordingly, love is properly understood as the causal principle of human action and reflection. It is the element of the person which is most like God, and because all persons, like God, have a will "[all] must also love."

Love is a means of defining oneself, but it is also vital to the relationship between the person and God. It appears that, for Thomas, knowing one's self is an insufficient experience. Knowing God will complete the human person and create happiness, as knowledge of God is knowledge of love. Thomas writes,

This light [the created light of God coming from understanding] makes the creature like God. The more such light there is in the mind, the more perfectly the mind sees God. And those who have the greater love have the more light. Greater love causes greater desire, and desire is itself in some way a predisposition making man fit to receive what he desires. So those who love more will see God more perfectly and be more blessed.

Love is also the force that creates good--divine or human--in the world. Thomas writes, "Grace makes the soul


20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., Vol. 3; 12, 2, 28.
like to God; and the persons of God are sent to dwell in 
the soul who by some gift of grace have been made like to 
those persons." The effect of love enables God to dwell 
in the world, in the form of Spirit, as human love manifest 
in right and just action.

If the creature and creator share love as a sign of 
connectedness, as Thomas argues, then the human person is 
not complete (using the language of Aristotle—happy) 
without love. Thomas proposes that the love felt by all 
persons is both natural and desirable. It joins the person 
to God and, subsequently, to fellow human beings. "With 
one and the same love of charity we love God, ourselves and 
our fellow men." He adds in support of this idea that

> Love can be thought of in two ways. It is 
on the one hand the content of a special 
injunction: Love the Lord your God and love 
your fellow man. But it is also the goal of 
all the commandments, and the manner in 
which all other virtuous acts should be done 
in pursuit of that goal."

Love, according to Thomas, defines the human person. 
It is a characteristic of the mystery of body and soul. 
Furthermore, no one can be without love and act appropriate 
to the human condition. Life without love is spiritual 
death. The source of love for Thomas is God and the person 
may know God as love, a love transferrable to other persons

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"Ibid., Vol. 7; 42, 4-5, 80.
"Ibid., Vol. 33; 17, 3-4, 344-345.
"Ibid., Vol. 29; 100, 10, 299.

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in the world. Thomas believed human reason capable of ascertaining that love is the only necessary basis for action in the world. It follows that loving acts result in a just community.

Clearly, Thomas intended for all persons to love so that they might avoid death. But, he is equally convinced that action in the world can be a manifestation of loves. It is this love that will save the person from death, and make the world better: "We have this commandment from Christ: that whoever loves God must love his brother also. We love our fellowmen by reason of God."25

The Influence of the Creation Story

For Wojtyla, the creative act in Genesis revealing Adam and Eve to be "partners of the absolute" is further evidence of the transfiguring power of love.26 The Absolute who is creator determines the creation to be good.27 Wojtyla unites the idea of the good in creation with the redemptive power of Christian love. Agape, this redemptive power, enables the person to act as a participant in creation through the redemptive process by both liberating the human person from sin and instilling the courage necessary to confront the inevitable challenges which come to those who have the power to choose between

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good and evil. Wojtyla acknowledges the obligatory relationship between those who love.

For Wojtyla, love is the crucial element in the process of becoming humans, since love, or Agape, is the redemption of the person from sin into new life. Each person has the power to recognize the love inherent to his condition. Love, then, can order the political community by dictating what is appropriate for persons because of their created existence, and can initiate a positive response to this order if the community consciously acknowledges a loving authority.

At the moment of creation of "Adam-person," Wojtyla reasons that "From the text of Genesis 2:23 and from the whole context [of the books of the Old Testament] it is clearly seen that man was created as a particular value before God (God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good: Gen. 1:31)." Wojtyla adds:

The Human Body in its original masculinity and femininity according to the mystery of creation--as we know from the analysis of Genesis 2:23-25--is not only a source of fertility, that is, of procreation, but right from the beginning has a nuptial character: that is to say, it is capable of expressing the love with which the man-person becomes a gift, thus fulfilling the deep meaning of his being and his existence. In this peculiarity, the body is the expression of the spirit and is called, in the very mystery of creation, to exist in

"Karol Wojtyla, "Religijne przezywanie czystosci," Tydognik Powszechny, translated by the Society of St. Paul, 6 (1953)."
the communion of persons 'in the image of God.'

The human person is understood as a being placed in the created world and conceived as a person made according to the image of God. The human being is, therefore, an immanent and a transcendent creature. As immanent, the person participates in history. As transcendent, the person possesses the potential for spiritual life and divine destiny, an idea that is consistent with Wojtyla's philosophical anthropology. Both the immanent and the transcendent rely upon the other for actualization—a mysterious synthesis of sorts.

Wojtyla's interpretation of Genesis emphasizes the creation both "body" and "spirit." What is more, body and spirit possess a telos which is the true expression of the immanent and transcendent creature. Recalling the earlier discussion of philosophical anthropology, where Wojtyla notes "that every subject also exists as an object, an objective something or somebody," it is apparent that the inherent dignity of the person is closely associated with love. Love, then, is the most appropriate end of the human person; Wojtyla refers to this as the "intentionality of existence." Furthermore, the ideal dimension of the


human person, or the dynamization of human nature as Wojtyla understands it, suggests that there are appropriate actions for this condition. The body and spirit must participate in the world righteously and justly. "Intentions" of the body and spirit are possible only if love informs the action.

Wojtyla avoids the charge of dividing the person into two distinct parts by building his philosophical anthropology on a form of personalism that identifies and integrates the person's spiritual nature with his human nature. Existence, both spiritual and human, is expressed in reality as dynamization. Dynamization is the mystical connection between body and soul. Wojtyla comments:

Dynamization by the personal being must lie at the roots of the integration of humanness by the person. At any rate, considering this experiential cohesion of the whole human functioning with his existence, we are led to accept that it is human nature that constitutes the appropriate basis for the cohesion of the man subject--whatever kind of inner dynamist it has--with any of its dynamization; of course, nature as the basis of this dynamic cohesion really inheres in the subject, while the subject itself, having personal existence, is a person.  

A dilemma of sorts results. The human person, according to Wojtyla, lives in a world bound together in a material conception and, in fact, understands things as he views them, smells them, touches them, or experiences them.

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Wojtyla's phenomenological tendencies are most apparent at this point. This same person is also spirit, essence, or soul, and must, if he wishes to live authentically, look for the reality which is beyond the material. It is the reality Scheler describes as "world openness." It is the reality Wojtyla is thinking of when he writes about the Christocentric eschatology of the human person.

According to Wojtyla, the human being is, quite literally, caught between two realms, neither beast nor angel. Each person and all humanity ideally seek to understand this dilemma. Wojtyla, it seems, wishes to comfort the person, enabling that person to find a balance between immanent and transcendent reality--a place between the two realities of human experience, participating in the exterior perception of the world and yet not relying upon the senses and experience exclusively. Yet, it is essential that human beings examine the world and their existence in an "inner-reflective manner." This will lead, Wojtyla believes, to a realization that the proper mode of conduct within both realities is love:

In this way, the human body acquires a completely new meaning, which cannot be placed on the plane of the remaining "external" perception of the world. It expresses, in fact, the person in his ontological and existential concreteness, which is something more than the "individual," and therefore expresses the
personal human "self," which derives its exterior perception from within."

The two realms of being, angel and beast, are uniquely represented in Genesis: Spirit constitutes the pre-historical state, and body constitutes the historical dimension of the human being." Both states are grounded in immanent creation—the recognition of being coming from conscious reflection of existence in the world. The first is a state of innocence and results from the love of God in creating. The second is a state of fallen stature and results from the creation turning from love of the divine towards love of the world.

Man loses, in a way, the original certainty of the "image of God," expressed in his body. He also loses to some extent the sense of his right to participate in the perception of the world, which he enjoyed in the mystery of creation. This right had its foundation in man's inner self, in the fact that he himself participated in the divine vision of the world and of his humanity; which gave him peace and joy in living the truth and value of his own body, in all its simplicity, transmitted to him by the Creator: "God saw (that) it was very good (Gen. 1:31)."

For Wojtyla, this privation of love results in disorder within the human person and within the political

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community, not to mention in the relationship between God and humankind. This lack of love "creates a fundamental disquiet in the whole of human existence, not only in the prospect of death, but also on that which there depends the value and dignity themselves of the person and his ethical significance."\(^3\) Authentic existence under these unbalanced conditions becomes increasingly ambiguous once love is removed, because love is the personal and communal ordering principle. Wojtyla argues that love must serve as a guide for action within both dimensions of human reality (which in effect operate as one). The body, acting within human history in a fallen condition, may position itself towards God (who is love) by loving. This will, in turn, direct all persons to recognize the shared dignity of humanity. The spirit confirms the proper place of the human person as the highest level of creation when acting within the innocence of the creation brought about by love. Both aspects, immanent and transcendent, share the same reality, manifest, as it is, in the human person.

Because of the power of love as a guide for human conduct, Wojtyla argues for a positive interpretation of the human person based upon this principle. He means to have all legal or institutional settings attentive to the notion of love as the basis for proper human conduct. This

positive meaning of love comes, first of all, from God Himself:

Where there is joy, springing from the good, there is love--And only where there is love, is there the joy that comes from the good. The book of Genesis, right from its first chapters, reveals to us God who is Love (although this expression will be used much later by St. John). He is Love, because He rejoices in the good. Creation is, therefore, at the same time a real giving: where there is love, there is giving."

In identifying existence and love in the person, Wojtyla often refers to the Platonic doctrine of Eros, which has as its ultimate goal the final perfection of the human soul. For Plato this is a complicated process largely because a person’s nature is split between the spiritual and material world. The result is a constant tension "between the world of the senses and the senses of the world of Ideas." Wojtyla considers Plato's idea of perfection in this manner:

When man begins to have a presentiment of Ideas, thanks to contemplation of the objects existing in the world of the senses, he receives the impulse from Eros, that is, from the desire for pure Ideas. Eros, in fact, is the guiding of the "sensual" or "sensitive" man towards what is transcendent: the force that directs the soul towards the world of Ideas. Plato describes the stages of this influence of


"Ibid., 15.
Eros: The latter raises a man's soul from the beauty of a single body to that of all bodies, and so to the beauty of knowledge and finally to the very idea of Beauty."

Wojtyla views Plato's notion of Eros as another example of how "natural" love is to human beings. Plato, however, did not have the advantage of revealed truth and the role of Christ as the redeemer of the world. The Christian understanding of love is conceived as a supernatural power for redemption that focuses upon salvation via unmerited grace. The redemptive power of Christian love, Agape, brings the human person to a complete recognition of himself, to his fallen nature properly understood, and to a recognition of God as the ultimate ground of being, as the Creator who can save him:

It should be stressed here that love is the fullest realization of these potentialities with which man is endowed. (This potentiality from the Latin: potentia: possibility, ability, power) proper to a person is, to the fullest, actualized through love (actualize from Latin: actus: act, perfection). A person finds in love the fullness of his being, of his objective existence. Love means that particular action, that particular act, which expands to the fullest the existence of a person. It must be, of course, a true love. What is true love? True love is a love in which the real essence of love is being realized--love which turns towards the real (not just seeming) good in a real manner, i.e., in a manner which conforms to its nature."

"Ibid.

"Wojtyla, "The Intentional Act and the Human Act that is, Act and Experience," Analecta Husserliana, Vatican translation, 5 (1976), 170."
Thus, in the Christian doctrine, love is called Agape because it is a redemptive power for salvation which is intricately linked to truthful recognition or "self realization" of the human person.

Wojtyla infuses the notion of love with a meaning that directs human activity towards God and, simultaneously, relates love to all dimensions of human existence. For Wojtyla love is all encompassing; "love is the fullest realization of the possibilities inherent in man."^4^1

Wojtyla adds: "It [love] is a complex reality with many aspects. Let us take as our starting point the fact that love is always a mutual relationship between persons."^4^2 Love, therefore, at least as expressed within the world, is a political act involving other people. Individuals informed by love make decisions grounded in the vertical structure of authority that begins with God and ends with inanimate things. The treatment that each creation warrants is determined by its place in that hierarchy and clearly the human being warrants a special place in the hierarchy of being. Wojtyla argues that people can consider "the authoritative allocation of values"^4^3 as something more than "who gets what, when and

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how."

The ethic of love applied in the world is more apt to produce justice.

Love, however, is not realized without difficulty and, in fact, by choosing love people acting individually and in the context of the state must forgo the egocentric or anthropocentric orientations that dominate the modern human society. Wojtyla encourages individuals to detach themselves from egoism:

To love is, therefore, essentially to give oneself to others. Far from being an instinctive inclination, love is a conscious decision of the will to go towards others. To be able to love truly, it is necessary to detach oneself from many things and above all from oneself, to give gratuitously, to love to the end. This dispossession of oneself--a long and demanding task--is exhausting and exalting. It is the source of balance. It is the secret of happiness."

Sympathetic to the need for righteousness and justice in the world, Wojtyla advocates political and economic attention to the good based on love. He argues for the continued presence of the Church in every sphere of human creation on behalf of order and in the name of love. Implicitly, Wojtyla encourages love, as developed by the writings of Thomas, to be a proper force behind human institutions. In "marriage, the family, cultural, economic and political worlds and the international scene," Wojtyla


recommends that the Church serve as "guardian and protector of justice and peace. In all these fields we must always rediscover the law of gift [love]."

It is in the notion of love as gift that Wojtyla first discovers the mystery of God and authority. This mystery connects human creation to creator and, subsequently, links all of humanity in a covenant of love. "One cannot honor another person without blessing God his Creator. One cannot adore God without loving all men, his creatures." Once again the vertical dimension of reality accurately describes the order procured by love. Right conduct comes from God; love does as well. More importantly, persons act within this loving dynamic because they love; persons do what is right because they love.

Wojtyla writes that "Precisely for this reason, the world emerged from the hands of God the Creator and is itself structured on a basis of love." Wojtyla continues to compare the experience of love to that of "gift," a gift freely given and appropriate under all conditions. Love as gift is, therefore, the approach to comprehending oneself, others, political institutions, and God." Wisdom comes from the active pursuit of this idea,

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"Wojtyla, Sign of Contradiction, 58.


"Ibid., 55.


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realizing that ultimately the beatific vision defies human explanation: "Love, which itself is gift, uncreated gift, ineffable, communicating itself to men as grace, gives one the impression that one is receiving the gift of the world, but especially the gift of one's humanity."50 Love then attaches to the human person responsibility for the world.

He who is Gift will restore for ever to the world and to mankind the sense of receiving as gift everything there is: every created being, every material good, all the treasures of the heart and mind; and first and foremost the sense of receiving as gift one's humanity, one's dignity as a human person and—something incomparably superior—one's dignity as an adopted child of God Himself.51

The Augustinian Influence

Wojtyla's reading and interpretation of Augustine is problematic and highly selective. It appears throughout the writings of Wojtyla that he is not as pessimistic as Augustine with respect to human possibility though substantiating that in the writings of Wojtyla is difficult if not impossible because he does not conduct a systematic investigation of Augustine's writings. Yet, when Wojtyla discusses the issues of poverty, violence and corruption in the mundane world he clearly uses Augustine's vision of the human capacity for evil. On the other hand, when Wojtyla discusses social justice and personal righteousness, he seems to use a more optimistic interpretation of what the

50Wojtyla, Sign of Contradiction, 56.
51Ibid., 58.
individual and the political community can accomplish. This pattern is consistent with Wojtyla's operation of the Vatican. While aggressive in condemning economic and social oppression, a liberal position, Wojtyla has accomplished the most complete transformation of the Church hierarchy in the last two-hundred years. Effectively, Wojtyla has at his disposal an autocracy, and the last word comes from the Pope himself.⁵²

Despite the fact that Wojtyla's attitude towards human sin and the ability of the person to overcome sin is much more optimistic than Augustine's, the influence of this "Father of the Church," upon Wojtyla is important for two specific reasons. First, Augustine establishes the notion that the Church can inform secular society; second, Augustine bases his diagnosis of the condition of the City of Man upon what the human person loves the most.

Wojtyla's examination of the Augustinian notion of love leads him to consider the difficulties associated with living in the world--the city of man. The city of man provides all too many definitions of justice. These competing notions of justice are summed up by Augustine in his definition of the state as, "a multitude of rational creatures associated in a common agreement as to the things which it loves."⁵³


⁵³St. Augustine, The City of God, 19, 24.
Augustine clearly noted that true justice, the effect of love in the world, cannot be obtained in any other state except a Christian State. "No State is more perfectly established and preserved than on the foundations, and by the bond, of faith and of form concord, when the highest and truest good, namely God, is loved by all and men love each other in Him without dissimulation because they love one another for His sake." Augustine can say this because of his insistence upon the ethic of love, albeit a grace added ethic, as the primary characteristic of a Christian and, subsequently, a Christian State.

In a collection of Lenten sermons delivered to Pope Paul VI, Wojtyla writes about love within the city of man, suggesting that love will not only uplift the human person and redefine justice according to that virtue; it also causes recognition of Christian responsibility. In fact, Wojtyla continues, "the burdens tell us more about love than do the moments of ecstasy and spiritual elan." In short, love is not an easy principle to apply, but Augustine's state and the people that comprise it can be

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"Ibid., cf. 134, 5, 17.
"Wojtyla, Sign of Contradiction, 78.

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informed by higher principles. Foremost among these principles is Christian love.

Love can inform secular society: it is an ethic upon which action can be based. In fact, "Amor Dei usque ad contemptus sui (Love of God and contempt of self)," ensures that justice is an obtainable goal, as real a choice as any other governing paradigm existing in the world. Augustine argues, and Wojtyla agrees, that the "Rules of justice are immutable, in the book of that light which is called truth;" they are as apparent "as the impression of a ring [which] passes into the wax, yet does not leave the ring."

Following Augustine, Wojtyla advocates active participation in the city of man. He demonstrates this in a poem reflecting the sentiments of the Vatican II conferences notable for their active stance. In the poem Wojtyla illustrates and emphasizes that the way of the cross, the way of human suffering, instills the mandate for hope, possibility, and activity in the world. This excerpt concludes with the metaphor of the "cross" as a pastoral symbol. The cross represents the love of Jesus Christ. The floor is a metaphor for the Apostle Peter who first represented this love and authority in the Church.

Our feet meet the earth in this place; there are so many walls, so many colonnades,

"St. Augustine, The City of God."

"The Letters of St. Augustine, 14, 15, 21."
yet we are not lost. If we find meaning and oneness, it is the floor that guides us, it joins the spaces of this great edifice, and joins the spaces within us, who walk aware of our weakness and defeat. Peter, you are the floor, that others may walk over you (not knowing where they go). You guide their steps so that spaces can be one in their eyes, and from them thought is born. You want to serve their feet that pass as rock serves the hooves of sheep. The rock is a gigantic temple floor, the cross a pasture."

According to Wojtyla, the human person will find happiness when he or she loves the good, ultimately the good found in God. But this same happiness is also possible in the City of Man through existential recognition of human dignity which applies logically to all other persons. Jesus Christ, Wojtyla suggests, demonstrated this love. The apostles and the Church attempt to imitate this love. Through this effort the worldly city can become a more just place.

The development of economic activity and growth in production are meant to provide for the needs of human beings. Economic life is not meant solely to multiply goods produced and increase profit or power; it is ordered first of all to the service of persons, of the whole man, and of the entire human community. Economic activity, conducted according to its own proper methods, is to be exercised within the limits of the moral order, in keeping with

social justice so as to correspond to God's plan for man."

**The Ethic of Love**

In the context of the previously mentioned influences (Thomism, the creation story, Agape, Augustinianism), Wojtyla develops a comprehensive view of love and its relationship with righteousness and justice. Love or loving is the process through which the person can know himself, know God, and relate that knowledge to other persons. Love can create good in the world; love can, in fact, redeem a world scarred by original sin. Perhaps most importantly, at least as related to economic justice, love is an achievable ethic upon which human conduct can be grounded. Love guides the person first to seek righteousness; then to become involved in the search for justice. That search involves participation in the polity, just as love unites God with humanity vertically, it also unites the human family horizontally. The communal "language" of love is translated through the existential power of righteousness and may become justice. In short, individuals choose to do right for themselves and for others because they see in others the human dignity that they possess.

There will be no better world, no better arrangement of social life, unless preference is first given to the values of the human spirit. Remember this well, you

"Catechism of the Catholic Church. "Life In Christ," 2426:583."
who are justly longing for changes bringing a better and more just society, you who rightly oppose every kind of evil, of discrimination, of violence and of torture inflicted on human beings. Remember that the order that you desire is a moral order and you will not attain it in any way, if you do not give first place to all that constitutes the strength of the human spirit—justice, love and friendship.

The movement from a discussion of individual conceptions of righteousness towards the communal governing principle of justice comports with the natural state of the polis and is the qualitative act of love as expressed by the political community. Consistent with his philosophical anthropology, Wojtyla approaches the political community from the perspective of the natural supremacy accorded to the human person created "in the image of God." Operating within the context of this hierarchical setting and with special consideration given to free will, the person approaches righteousness. A natural equality assumed by the human family results, and this community will desire the same sense of righteousness acting within the whole--justice.

Wojtyla discusses the reality of this progression from individual righteousness to communal justice when he writes that "the reality of the People of God is, in God's design and realization, no less primary than the calling of an

"Wojtyla, The Whole Truth About Man: John Paul to University faculties and Students, 34.

individual human being, for each individual it is equally primary that he is a person and that he enters into communion with other men."" This recalls the connection between the individual and the political community first presented in the Western philosophical tradition by the Greeks; for Wojtyla, through the writings of Thomas and Aristotle. Greek life was essentially a communal one. The citizen was incapable of the good apart from the city. Concern over politics was, obviously, of paramount importance since a corrupted state insured that the citizens would be unable to lead the good life."

According to Plato, who identified four chief or cardinal virtues—wisdom, courage or fortitude, temperance, and justice—justice is a general virtue grounded in the philosophical notions of balance or harmony. " Plato considered justice from the perspective of the state, as justice is written here on a larger scale." The obvious implication of this observation is that the fundamentals of justice are the same for the individual and the state.


"Ibid., Book I, 354.
Aristotle was similarly emphatic about the importance of the community. Writing in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle considers justice as the aim to which all men seek. "What is "right" for a person is, therefore "right" for the community of all persons.

Wojtyla supports these sentiments by encouraging recognition of love as the phenomenon that animates law, politics, and economics, as well as subjective personal relationships, even the person's own private reflections. For Wojtyla, all actions taken by individuals or by political communities will be "right" when they are grounded in love.

The fundamental law of human perfection, and consequently of the transformation of the world, is the new commandment of love. He assures those who trust in the charity of God that the way of love is open to all men and that the effort to establish a universal brotherhood will not be in vain. This love is not something reserved for important matters, but must be exercised above all in the ordinary circumstances of daily life."

The appeal of justice in the political community is, therefore, found within the reality of individual righteousness manifest in the dignity of the human person. It follows that justice is the proper action of persons existing within a political community. Wojtyla insists


upon this just activity, referring to this idea when he writes that "faith without works is dead," adding, "it cannot consist merely of knowledge or the content of consciousness." \(^7\)

There exists a correlation between conscience as the interpersonal source of duty and the objective order of moral norms. The basic value of the norms lies in the truth of good, which is objectified in them, and not in duty itself, although the normative words used in the given cases accentuate duty, having recourse to such phrases as 'one should', 'one ought to', 'the obligation exists' and the like. The essence of normative opinions of morality or right is inherent all the more considerably in the truth of good, which is objectivized in them. Through this truth they obtain contact with the conscience, which to some extent transforms this truth into concrete and real obligation.\(^7\)

Justice is part of the truth that Wojtyla implores each person to pursue. Justice as a political activity exists to serve the properly ordered needs of persons within the state, attentive to the idea that each person is equal in love and the potential for righteousness. Individuals are not separate from each other. Rather, they need assistance in organizing and fulfilling independent needs and the demands of the community. In fact, Wojtyla argues against any purely independent need. He is concerned with the interdependence of commutative, distribute and legal justice. Commutative justice is the

\(^7\)Ibid., 206.

\(^7\)Wojtyla, *Osoba i czyn* (Person and Act)," translated by the Society of St. Paul, 199.
idea that exchanges among individuals should be in accordance with a strict respect for their rights. The goal of legal justice is met when the community receives what is fair from each citizen, whereas distributive justice relates what the community owes its citizens in proportion to their contributions and needs.

Because of the dependence of people upon one another, the notion of human dignity is predicated upon appropriate satisfaction of self and others. The personalistic norm, as Wojtyla describes it, depends upon "a feeling of deep esteem for 'what is in man,' for what man himself worked out in the depths of his spirit concerning the most profound and important problems of respecting everything that has been brought about in him by the Spirit which 'blows where he wills'".

If, as Wojtyla argues, the personalistic norm is the dynamic method capable of cultivating interpersonal relationships, then a form of economic justice that will consider the redistributive components of any political community must also conform to this norm. This suggests the importance of Wojtyla's theory of economic justice. The value of economic justice is also obvious in Wojtyla's references to existing socio-economic situations of the


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contemporary world since human dignity itself appears at risk in that world.

The man of today seems ever to be under threat from what he produces, that is to say from the result of his work of his hands and, even more so, of the work of his intellect and the tendencies of his will. All too soon, and often in an unforeseeable way, what this manifold activity of man yields is not only subjected to 'alienation', in the sense that it is simply taken away from the person who produces it, but rather it turns against man himself, at least in part, through the indirect consequences of its effects returning on himself. It is or can be directed against him. This seems to make up the main chapter of the drama of present day human existence in its broadest and universal dimension."

Wojtyla believes that the development of economic justice in the political community can derive from a Christian and phenomenological depiction of human nature that recognizes the potential for individual righteousness and communal justice. Economic justice, in this sense, is subject to the realities that define the human person. Awareness of economics in this regard, as an integral part of the person and the state, reconstitutes the discussion of economics as something more than supply and demand. Rather, economic paradigms are subject to the same natural laws that apply to individuals--friendship, freedom, justice, and love. Wojtyla writes, "We cannot afford forms of permissiveness that would lead directly to the trampling

of human rights, and also the complete destruction of values which are fundamental not only for the lives of individuals and families but for society itself."

The economic enterprise must meet the uniquely human concerns, cognizant of the inherent dignity of the person. Economics, as a legitimate human enterprise, according to Wojtyla, must be sensitive to the human person and seek justice in its application and its end. Persons should not engage in economic pursuit separate from the pursuit of the good. This strongly suggest an antipathy towards both laissez-faire and command economies. In particular, Wojtyla argues that redistribution as a consideration of particular justice must take into consideration what is fair--defined in the context of the personalistic norm. He adds that "from this awareness there ought to flow a different culture and a different civilization, different relationships in the production and distribution of material goods, a different understanding of value and super value." This difference is the third way, a


"Wojtyla, Sign of Contradiction, 58. "Value" is the worth deemed appropriate for a commodity by the market place. "Super Value" is the worth of that same commodity, for example, determined by the human work that created it and the meaning applied by the creative activity.
qualitatively superior method of achieving economic justice."

During the time that most of Wojtyla's ideas regarding economic justice were written, the two major economic theories of the modern world--capitalism and communism--placed extraordinary emphasis upon either the individual as an autonomous economic entity or upon the notion of the community as the basis for economic activity. Wojtyla finds, then and now, both ideas wanting. He distinguishes the third way from communism by insisting upon recognizing the human being as a person, a unique creature possessing spirit and the dignity associated with primacy in the world:

In a certain sense Communism as a system fell by itself. It fell as a consequence of its own mistakes and abuses. It proved to be a medicine more dangerous than the disease itself. It did not bring about true social reform, yet it did become a powerful threat and challenge to the entire world. But it fell by itself, because of its own inherent weakness."

The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines communism as:

"A system that subordinates the basic rights of individuals


"Crossing the Threshold of Hope, "Was God At Work in The Fall of Communism?", 132.
and of groups to the collective organization of production is contrary to human dignity." 77

The critique of capitalism begins with Wojtyla's concern with profit as a perverse, yet pervasive ethic: "A theory that makes profit the exclusive norm and ultimate end of economic activity is morally unacceptable." 79

Human production must also insist upon an economic fairness that attends to the good as well as to the advancement of individual persons. In addition, Wojtyla writes of the tendency for secularization in capitalist societies.

Man is responsible---man, ideologies, and philosophical systems. I would say the responsibility lies with the struggle against God, the systematic elimination of all that is Christian. This struggle has to a large degree dominated thought and life in the West for three centuries. 80

Wojtyla wishes to re-consider both realms of economic activity, individual and communal, incorporating the good of both, in a similar fashion to that of body and soul---as a dynamic union that will insure a proper ordering of human

77 Catechism of the Catholic Church. "Life In Christ," 2424, 582. The Catechism is particularly important to John Paul II since it represents the "constant reference point of my every pastoral action." (Fidei Depositum, Aspostolic Constitution). John Paul II convoked an extraordinary assembly of the Synod Of Bishops for the 20th anniversary of the close of the Council. John Paul II's expressed goal was to create a reference for the catechism compendiums that are prepared in various regions. This Catechism, then, is a valuable source for understanding much of John Paul II's liturgical and magisterial intentionality.

79 Ibid., 2423.

80 John Paul II, Crossing the Threshold of Hope, 133.
existence. Thus, Wojtyla insists upon a third way, an economic order based upon the proper positioning of the person in the hierarchy of being and subsequent recognition of that dignity with respect to all human beings. Attentive to the concerns of the person and the community, Wojtyla proposes economic justice grounded in the personalistic norm and attentive to the concerns of the person and the community. In other words, the third way is an idea whose seminal roots are in the person, but reaches maturation in the political community.

Criticism of Wojtyla's economic vision is often directed at the demanding ethic of love that is implicit in it, and, then, goes on to elaborate upon the practical impossibility of any human being acting exclusively within the context of love. The practicality of the third way is made even more problematic considering the contemporary influence of capitalism and communism. Wojtyla acknowledges this reality. Nevertheless, he relentlessly claims that capitalism and communism are philosophically and theologically flawed. These systems may prosper on their on terms, but the human person suffers untold misery in the process. This misery may not involve material

deprivation, although this is a real possibility; the suffering can just as easily be spiritual in nature.

The prospect of growing economic progress, and the chance of obtaining a greater share of the goods that modern society has to offer, will appear to you as an opportunity to achieve greater freedom. The more you possess—you may be tempted to think—the more you will feel liberated from every type of confinement. In order to make more money and to possess more, in order to eliminate effort and worry, you may be tempted to take moral shortcuts where honesty, truth and work are concerned. The progress of science and technology seems inevitable. You may be enticed to look toward the technological society for the answers to all your problems. Something else is needed: something that you will find only in Christ, for He alone is the measure and the scale that you must use to evaluate your own life. In Christ you will discover the true greatness of your own humanity.*2

Economic systems that fail to recognize the dynamic union of body and spirit, such as capitalism and socialism, will falsely determine a "place" for the person and the community outside what is appropriate.

Wojtyla often refers to various stories from the Bible to clarify his points. As a phenomenologist Wojtyla considers experience to be a very important component in defining ethics. As a paradigmatic demonstration of righteousness and justice, the story of Job is an insightful metaphor of the third way of economic justice.

*Wojtyla, The Whole Truth About Man: John Paul II to University Faculties and Students, 40-41.
The story is often referred to by Wojtyla in informal sermons and the public Wednesday audiences.¹

Job seeks to understand his life—a life righteously lived; and yet, he believes he is unjustly treated. The story tells of Jobs's quest to resolve this dilemma.

Wojtyla writes:

Is the God who allows all this [evil] still truly Love, as Saint John proclaims in his First Letter? Indeed, is He just with respect to His creatures? Doesn't He place too many burdens on the shoulders of individuals? Doesn't He leave man alone with these burdens, condemning him to a life without hope? So many incurably ill people in hospitals, so many handicapped children, so many human lives completely denied ordinary happiness on this earth, the happiness that comes from love, marriage, and family. All this adds up to a bleak picture, which has found expression in ancient and modern literature. Consider, for example, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Franz Kafka, Albert Camus, or the Old testament Book of Job.²

Dostoyevsky, Kafka, Camus, and Job express outrage at injustice; they demand an explanation for misery and pain. For Wojtyla, the story of Job relates the protagonist's effort to understand God and the order of the universe in the midst of human suffering. The story of Job is, perhaps, most effective in illustrating the difficulties


associated with an economic plan based upon love. The story is used here to clarify Wojtyla's ethic of love as an effective and realistic means of achieving a better, more just, economic environment. Ultimately, the question for Job and for Wojtyla is the same: is justice possible? An exegesis of the story so often a source of inspiration for Wojtyla, presents a unique response and a possible resolution to these questions.

Righteousness, Justice and the story of Job

There was once a man in the land of Uz called Job: a sound and honest man who feared God and shunned evil.15

Job is introduced as a man of unimpeachable righteousness. All of his actions are intended to glorify God. Job maintains the highest qualitative love for his creator and his fellow creatures; Job is, in fact, "This man was the most prosperous of all the Sons of the East."16

A conversation between Satan and God places Job in the middle of a divine wager. Assured that Job acts righteously because of love, God challenges Satan to visit upon Job the death of his children, the loss of wealth and stature, and, finally, personal sickness and pain. Satan is equally convinced that Job's righteous action is the result of his good fortune. "But Job is not God-fearing


"Ibid., 1:3.
for nothing, is he? Have you not put a wall round him and his house and all his domain?"" Job is unaware of the divine wager and, consequently, is incapable of prejudice towards either interpretation.

Because of the great calamities confronting him and the apparent inevitability of the situation, Job resigns himself to investigate his soul and to seek consolation from those friends who remain with him. "For seven days and seven nights they sat beside him on the ground, and none of them said a word to him; for they saw that his suffering was very great.""

After this time of contemplation, when Job reassesses his life and actions, he speaks. The statements he makes and the questions he asks confound the notions of righteousness and justice as guides for human conduct:

Why was I not still-born, or why did I not perish as I left the Womb? Why ere there knees to receive me, breasts for me to suck? . . . Why give light to one who does not see his way, whom God shuts in all alone?"

Job does not explicitly curse God for random injustice, but implicitly he rails against the divine plan. And, to curse any part of creation, particularly the self, that being which Wojtyla considers superior and "God-like," suggests that the whole of creation lacks attention and

"Ibid., 1:10.

"Ibid., 2:13.

"Ibid., 3:13-17.
right order. Job asks why those who suffer should be made to witness their suffering and be denied any hope of retribution: "Why give lift to those bitter of heart, who long for a death that never comes, and hunt for it more than for buried treasure?"

Relying on the doctrine of distributive justice—where each receives what he or she deserves—Eliphaz argues that Job is reaping the torment of unjust action. Eliphaz proclaims "I speak from experience: those who plough iniquity and sow disaster, reap just that." Eliphaz encourages Job to face his apparent sinfulness and accept the "justice" of God.

Blessed are those whom God corrects! Do not then scorn the lesson of Shaddai! For he who wounds is he who soothes the sore, and the hand that hurts is the hand that heals.

Job turns away from this advice, appealing to his friend's sense of loyalty and chastising those who fail to support him against all adversity. "And this is how you now treat me," Job laments. Imploring his friends to answer him and simultaneously challenging God to justify his actions, Job demands that he be shown where he has erred, "Come, I beg you, look at me: man to man, I shall

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not lie. Relent then, no harm is done; relent then, since
I am upright.""

In this predicament Job does not relinquish his spirit
nor does he accept guilt. Instead, Job insists upon
confronting justice and demanding righteous treatment."

That is why I cannot keep quiet: in my
anguish of spirit I shall speak, in my
bitterness of soul I shall complain. Why do
you choose me as your target? Why should I
be a burden to you?"

Job considers a novel idea: he wishes to bring God to
a court where justice can be done. Job is aware that
nothing can stand in the way of this Being, but demands
that God: "tell me what you case is against me."" The
stakes are raised from the explication of justice in the
world to a direct confrontation between man and God. In
short, God is called upon to defend His morality in the
world. Job, aware of God's power and unaware of the wager,
insists: "I mean to remonstrate with God.""

In his commentary on Job, Wojtyla, often considers the
dilemma of the protagonist, likening it to the basic
dilemma of human existence: God created man as rational
and free. Wojtyla continues, "thereby placing Himself

"Ibid., 6:29.


"Ibid., 10:2.

"Ibid., 13:3.
under man's judgment. The history of salvation is also the
history of man's continual judgment of God. Not only of
man's questions and doubts but of his actual judgment of
God [sic]. In part, the Old Testament book of Job is the
paradigm of this judgment."

How can one man demand such an explanation from God?
Job responds to the arrogant accusations made by his
friends by seizing the evidence at hand. He resumes his
discourse and defends his honor.

I swear by the living God who denies me
justice, by Shaddai who has filled me with
bitterness, that as long as a shred of life
is left in me, and the breath of God
breathes in my nostrils, my lips will never
speak evil nor my tongue utter any life.
Far from admitting you to be in the right, I
shall maintain my integrity to my dying day.
I take my stand in uprightness, I shall not
stir: in my heart if need not be ashamed of
my days.

God's answer to Job is hardly an answer at all. God
calls to Job out of the tempest: "Who is this, obscuring
my intentions with his ignorant words? Brace yourself like
a fighter; I am going to ask the questions, and you are to
inform me!"

Where were you when I laid the earth's
foundations? Tell me, since you are so well
informed. Who decided its dimensions, do
you know? Or who stretched the measuring
line across it? What supports its pillars
at their bases? Who laid its cornerstone to

"Wojtyla, Crossing the Threshold of Hope, 62. No
single commentary on Job exists, however references can be
found in all of Wojtyla's major works.

"Ibid., 27:2-6."
Throughout the discussion Job asks why misfortune happened to him, a man. God now offers this man the right to challenge the divine rule. The result is that the divine challenge of man is renewed, apparently because Job is only silenced but not convinced. Having contemplated divine activity, Job now knows the purposefulness of God. God has not justified Job, but He has come to him personally; the upholder of the universe cares for a lonely man so deeply that He offers him the fullness of communion. Job is not vindicated but has obtained a recognition of his innocence. Job has been accepted by God, and intimacy with Him makes vindication superfluous. The philosophical problem is not solved, but it is transfigured by the theological reality of the divine-human rapport. It is in this context that Job repents in "dust and ashes." 102

The story of Job as a metaphor for righteousness and justice in the world evokes Wojtyla's insistence upon the value of the human person and, simultaneously, the contingency of the human person. Just as Job declares his

101 Ibid., 38:2-11.

dignity before God as a person, Wojtyla insists upon Christian personalism. As Job engages body and spirit in a cosmic debate, Wojtyla advances the notion of dynamization. As Job falls to dust before the truth of creation, Wojtyla recognizes the contingency of human existence. How does a person act in this reality, in the world? For Wojtyla, the answer to the question is love:

The created world is not absolute. But the goodness of the created world--created contingent and thus non-necessary--shows us that the motive for creation is love.¹⁰³

Relating this loving reality specifically to the biblical story of Job and to the dilemma originally set forth--the notions of justice and free will--Wojtyla writes,

Given our present discussion, we must ask ourselves: could it have been different [the human condition]? Could God have justified Himself before human history, so full of suffering, without placing Christ's Cross at the center of that history? Obviously, one response could be that God does not need to justify Himself to man. It is enough the He is omnipotent. From this perspective everything He does or allows must be accepted. This is the position of the biblical Job. But God, who besides being Omnipotence is Wisdom and--to repeat once again--Love, desires to justify Himself to mankind. . . . No absolutely not! God is not someone who remains outside of the world.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³Wojtyla, Sign of Contradiction, 21.

¹⁰⁴John Paul II, Crossing the Threshold of Hope, 62.
Emphasis mine.
Despite Wojtyla's appeal for righteousness and justice in the world and in his use of the Job narrative, many questions remain unanswered. Is the third way a legitimate possibility, given the disparate conceptions of divine and mundane justice? What role does love play in achieving justice as a governing principle? Is justice, in fact, achievable?

Justice as an ideal and justice as a reality in the world suffers in degree and range. As in Plato's depiction of love as a universal idea, the pursuit of the good must be stable and abiding, the object of intelligence and sense. These requirements are fulfilled by the universal form. Job is equally convinced that his perception of justice pales in comparison to divine justice: "Do you really want to reverse my judgement, put me in the wrong and yourself in the right?"105 Job cowers in the dust and humbles himself, replying, "I was the man who misrepresented your intentions with my ignorant words."106 It seems that divine justice is something different than the justice for which Job appeals. Considering the element of evil in the world, is justice possible? What point is there in appealing to God for justice given these mitigating circumstances? Wojtyla responds:

God, on the other hand, is faithful to His Covenant. He has made it with humanity in

106Ibid., 42:3.
Jesus Christ. He cannot now withdraw from it, having decided once and for all that the destiny of man is eternal life and the Kingdom of Heaven. Will man surrender to the love of God, will he recognize his tragic mistake? Will the Prince of Darkness surrender, he who is "the father of lies" (Jn 8:44), who continually accuses the sons of men as once he accused Job (cf. Jb 1:9)? It is unlikely.107

Job does appeal to God for justice. Wojtyla points out, however, that Job protests without blasphemy, and it is this righteous dissent that results in a divine response. The answer is more theological than philosophical, but the nature of the human person as an agent of inquiry is introduced.

If divine justice is a world apart even for the righteous man, upon what grounds can Wojtyla argue for it as an economic guide? The story of Job offers at least a partial solution to this dilemma. Job does not sacrifice his "person" in the process of the debate. Job is not beaten into mindless submission; rather, he is shown that there is much more to the cosmos than he ever imagined. This, not the strength of the tempest, renews Job's trust in God and brings forth new faith.

By virtue of being, the human person cannot neglect or deny the possibility of participation within the universal or divine idea. To query the unknown, to revel in the magnitude of the cosmos, to seek the meaning of spirit: these things motivate the individual and, consequently, the

107 John Paul II, Crossing the Threshold of Hope. 133.
political community. If the human construction of a divine idea captures only a glimpse of the idea itself, does this mean the small piece that is available must be discarded too? In short, to deny justice because it appears to be problematic or relative and, in fact, occasionally insufficient or even unjust, may be misconstrued to the extent that the idea itself is no longer desirable.

Within the Catholic tradition in general and within Wojtyla's writings in particular lies a distinction between divine and human or mundane justice. Wojtyla maintains that the person receives dignity by a dynamic process that unifies his existence with love.

At times, human life seems to be too short for love. At other times, the situation is reversed: human love seems to be too short-lived in relation to human life—or, perhaps, too superficial. In any case, man has at his disposal some kind of existence and some kind of love: how can a sensible unity be made out of these? This wholeness cannot be one that is closed in itself. It has to be open in such a manner, that it is transmitted to other men, mirroring at the same time, the absolute Existence and Love—always mirroring it in some way or other.10

Aristotle considers this gap between the idea of justice and the practice of justice when he writes, "There are things which are always good in an unqualified sense, but which are not always good for a particular person."109


Thomas, writing under the Aristotelian influence, concurs:
"it [justice] is not about the entire matter of moral
virtue, but only about external actions and things, under a
certain special aspect of the object, in so far as one man
is related to another through them," maintaining a
difference between universal justice (divine justice) and
particular justice (human justice).110 Wojtyla
understands the difficulty of proposing justice informed by
love in this world. Nonetheless, he proposes it. Wojtyla
recommends the ethic of love as the one which can link the
abyss between the mundane and the divine, between creature
and creator:

The question, "Do you love me?" is the most
difficult question that one can ask. It is
as well if he who puts questions on love
knows the mystery of hearts, for that makes
it possible to reply as Peter replied. That
is how human love must reply. And the
Church. And the world, including the world
of to-day.111

Thus, each person is called upon to apply love as a
means to achieve justice. Love as Wojtyla defines it,
flowing from the personalistic norm, will eventually lead
to economic justice--albeit an imperfect economic justice.
Wojtyla advises each person to look towards love as the
activity in which the fullness of faith is revealed: "It

110St. Thomas Aquinas, The Political Ideas of St.
Thomas Aquinas, edited by Dino Bigongiari (New York:

111Andre Frossard and John Paul II, Be Not Afraid (New
is in love that the confident surrender to God acquires its proper character and this dimension of reciprocity starts with faith."\textsuperscript{112}

Does the difficulty associated with application of this ethic in the world minimize the appeal for righteousness and justice as a meaningful remedy for an unjust economic order? According to Wojtyla, it does not, and it does not precisely because of love:

Christ left us the commandment to love our neighbor. In this commandment, everything that concerns justice is also contained. There can be no love without justice. Love "surpasses" justice, but at the same time it finds its verification in justice.\textsuperscript{113}

Wojtyla believes the personalistic norm will win out over competing interpretations of human nature and human conduct, because love is natural to the person. If Wojtyla can turn individuals towards the things that are best in them, he believes that love will do the rest.

\textsuperscript{112}Ibid., 64.

\textsuperscript{113}Talks of John Paul II. "No Justice Without Love," 183.
CHAPTER III

THE THIRD WAY
KAROL WOJTYLA'S THEORY OF ECONOMIC JUSTICE

It is therefore quite clear that all Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of love, and by this holiness a more human manner of life is fostered also in earthly society.¹

As a young priest I learned to love human love. This has been one of the fundamental themes of my priesthood—my ministry in the pulpit, in the confessional, and also in my writing. If one loves human love, there naturally arises the need to commit oneself completely to the service of "fair love," because love is fair, it is beautiful.²

Karol Wojtyla proposes another way of organizing economic reality, which is neither capitalism nor communism. He suggests that love is the ethic upon which justice must stand and calls this loving plan the third way. Its textual source is the New Testament: "The Gospel is the fullest confirmation of all human rights."³ In fact, Wojtyla's third way challenges both capitalism and communism as effective plans, because both of these


²John Paul II, Crossing the Threshold of Hope, "Is There Really Hope In The Young?" 123.

³Ibid., 197.
economic systems fail to recognize the relationship among economic activity, growth in production, and the needs of the human person as defined by the Church.

The Church has rejected the totalitarian and atheistic ideologies associated in modern times with communism or socialism. She has likewise refused to accept, in the practice of capitalism, individualism and the absolute primacy of the law of the marketplace over human labor. Regulating the economy solely by centralized planning perverts the basis of social bonds; regulating it solely by the law of the marketplace fails social justice, for there are many human needs which cannot be satisfied by the market. Reasonable regulation of the marketplace and economic initiatives, in keeping with a just hierarchy of values and a view to the common good, is to be commended.4

Wojtyla criticizes capitalism, particularly as it is defined by the utilitarian movement of the middle to late 1700s, the writings of Adam Smith, as well as the liberal, social, and economic philosophy of John Stuart Mill. Capitalism, in this tradition, presupposes that individuals act in their own self interest, seeking pleasure and avoiding pain. Furthermore, the proper role of government is quite simple--do not interfere with the natural forces of the market.5 From this perspective, economic activity

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4 Catechism of the Catholic Church. "Life in Christ," IV. The Social Doctrine of the Church, 2425, 582.

becomes the center of humanity's concern, and the "laws" governing the economy replace the "laws" of God."

Movement towards the utilitarian measure of pleasure and pain as the criterion for making ethical decisions demonstrates the modern shift away from a theocentric decision making calculus. Wojtyla, attentive to both the influence of phenomenology and the Thomistic tradition, interprets these economic laws associated with capitalism as human law. Human law "is not of itself the rule of things, but the principles impressed on it by nature are general rules and measures of all things relating to human conduct."

Wojtyla believes that the person and, subsequently, the community, would be better served by heeding immutable truths. Divine Law, the guide for Wojtyla's personalistic norm, comes from God, "in order, therefore, that man may know without any doubt what he ought to do and what he ought to avoid." It is apparent from the start that Wojtyla finds much lacking in any

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Wojtyla writes that the visible world, in and of itself, cannot offer a scientific basis for an atheistic interpretation of reality. Instead, honest reflection does find sufficient elements in the world to arrive at the knowledge of God (*Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, 198).


economic plan where utility replaces God as the seminal idea.

For Wojtyla, if the goal is economic justice illumined by the revelation of Jesus Christ, then communism and socialism are equally unsatisfactory economic choices. Recalling that the oppressive Communist regime in Poland is the government under which Wojtyla spent the majority of his life, it is, at first, tempting to interpret his views on this sort of political order to a unique personal history. Wojtyla insists that is not the case, that the arguments against communism are motivated by his concern for the human person:

But having arrived at this point [an open confrontation with the Polish Communist Party], I must say that my concern for "the acting person" did not arise from the disputes with Marxism, or, at least, not as a direct response to those disputes. . . . I was always more fascinated by man. . . . [by people] who asked me questions, not so much about the existence of God, but rather about how to live, how to face and resolve problems of love and marriage, not to mention problems related to work.10

The economic and social system of Poland prior to the fall of the Communist regime, grounded in the writings of Karl Marx and V. I. Lenin, was based upon materialism and the role of the collective as the primary power that shaped the face of humanity. According to Wojtyla, communism "subordinates the basic rights of individuals and of groups

10 John Paul II, Crossing the Threshold of Hope, 200.
to the collective organization of production," and that "is contrary to human dignity."1

The third way, Wojtyla's economic plan, is shaped by his particular view of human nature. He calls the application of this philosophical anthropology the personalistic norm: "This principle is an attempt to translate the commandment of love into the language of philosophical ethics."12 The plan, then, must be compatible with this notion, the personalistic norm, since, for Wojtyla, all human activity is predicated upon the just treatment of individuals as creatures of God.

Wojtyla believes that the third way is part of a comprehensive view of Christian justice, and neither communism nor capitalism possess the Christian interpretation of love, which is crucial to just relationships between people. Because of this fundamental flaw, and because communism and capitalism are both based on egregious misconceptions of what constitutes a human person, Wojtyla believes that they are wrong, not only as means of distribution, but as ordering principles altogether. In short, they skew the person towards base and visceral social and economic activity; they predispose the person to deny his higher nature.

11Catechism of the Catholic Church, "The Social Doctrine of the Church," 2424, 582.
12John Paul II, Crossing the Threshold of Hope, 201.
Justice in general and economic justice in particular, as Wojtyla views them, operate within the context of a higher law that is transcendent, or Natural. Natural Law, according to the teaching of the Church, is God's eternal law made accessible to human reason; Natural Law is found primarily in the teachings of Jesus Christ. St. Thomas Aquinas, the Church's expert on natural law, is important in this context because it is in the Thomistic tradition that Wojtyla finds a plan which he believes to be a right and a proper guide for economic action. Wojtyla writes of Thomas's influence: "Saint Thomas celebrates all the richness of complexity of each created being, and especially the human being." A specific reference to Thomas relates exactly the plan Wojtyla is recommending when he discusses economic justice:

The plan by which God, as ruler of the universe, governs all things, is a law in the true sense. This distinctive sharing in the eternal law we call the natural law, the law we have in us by nature. For the light of natural reason by which we tell good from evil (the law that is in us by nature) is itself an imprint of God's light in us."

Wojtyla believes that the Church comprehends this objective order, that "light in us," and, through interpretation of divine scripture and revelation, relates it to the world through the institutional Curia upon the

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1"Ibid., 31.

authority of the apostolic succession. Accordingly, a delineation of the third way begins with an exegesis of the official writings of the Church in the modern age, buttressed by Wojtyla's writings on the implementation of The Documents of Vatican II\textsuperscript{15} in Poland. These major sources, together with numerous other philosophical and economic references, provide a more coherent depiction of Wojtyla's third way.

\textbf{The Documents of Vatican II}

As the most modern reference for questions relating to economic justice, The Documents are unquestionably the primary source for an inquiry of this sort. They are of particular interest in understanding Wojtyla's intellectual maturation, and subsequently, they play a vital role in illuminating his view of economic justice. Throughout the 1960s and the 1970s, Wojtyla was involved in the development and implementation of The Documents.\textsuperscript{16} In 1972, Sources of Renewal specifically addressed Polish concerns over implementation of the Second Vatican Council, especially on matters of ecclesiastical governance and doctrine. The text relates a point-by-point explanation of the Church's message to a Polish audience. It is in Sources of Renewal that Wojtyla expresses his belief and confidence regarding the changes facing the Church, changes

\textsuperscript{15}Hereafter referred to as The Documents.

primarily brought about by growing populations, developing modes of production, increased technology, and inequalities of wealth among the people of the earth. Wojtyla acknowledges that the "primary object of the Council, it will be recalled, was to bring the Church up to date and point the way to the union of Christians."17

From an economic perspective, Wojtyla approaches The Documents as a source that can direct the attention of the Church towards the whole "body." Economic life is clearly a part of that body. Wojtyla advocates a movement away from the rigid hierarchical structure of the Church, which betrays a clerical approach, towards "a new concept of the Church as a body in which everyone is responsible for the mission of the Church," maintaining, nonetheless, the magisterium or teaching authority of the Church.18

The emphasis placed upon each person is consistent with Wojtyla's view of human nature: Each person contains the ability to recognize truth and relate that truth to his or her particular person and to the community at large, consistent with their talents, abilities, and with the Church as a guide:19

In the Church there is diversity of ministry but unity of mission. To the


18Oram, The People's Pope, 98.

apostles and their successors Christ has entrusted the office of teaching, sanctifying and governing in his name and by his power. But the laity are made to share in the priestly, prophetic and kingly office of Christ; they have therefore, in the Church and in the world, their own assignment in the mission of the whole People of God.20

Finally, The Documents contain the most detailed description of Wojtyla's economic third way, despite the fact that they are the official documents of the Church. Wojtyla responds to the laity in the traditional manner of the Church. All religious commentaries, following this pattern, clarify or accentuate details from the corpus, rather than attempt a revision independent of the standing dogma of the Curia. Wojtyla responds in a similar manner, and he seems to do so enthusiastically.

In the exegesis of the sixteen documents,21 it is necessary to acknowledge Wojtyla's appeal for a particular economic order based upon a general conception of justice.22 This general view of justice is grounded in


21 In addition to Wojtyla's specific commentary on The Documents, the Catechism of the Catholic Church supplies the most authoritative interpretation of the effect of the Council. Wojtyla was instrumental in insuring that a contemporary catechism be made available to the laity. This most recent international publication is quite literally, the Council revisited.

22 See Chapter II above for clarification of "Righteousness and Justice" as the operating definition for "justice."
Thomistic natural law. The "Council will clarify these problems [current trends in the world, the meaning of individual and collective endeavor, and the destiny of nature and men] in the light of the Gospel and will furnish mankind with the saving resources which the Church has received from its founder under the prompting of the Holy Spirit."  

It is also necessary to address the controversy involved in attributing the text of The Documents to Wojtyla. As the official Church documents on a myriad of spiritual, social, political, and economic issues, The Documents are subject to the scrutiny of the Curia, the magisterium, and the presiding Pope. However, Wojtyla, conscious of a "special debt" contracted by the bishops as heirs to the Apostolic authority, insists that these documents "contain that which the Spirit said to the Church at a particular historical moment." Wojtyla considers

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2The term curia means the center of government of the Roman Catholic Church and includes all administrative groups together with the personnel. The Roman Curia is thus the entire body of officially organized agencies who assist the pope in government and administration of the Church. All units of the Curia exercise only delegated authority and are subject to the pope, and they can initiate no action of importance without consulting the pope. The Magisterium of the Church is the power given by Christ to the Church by which the Church teaches authoritatively the revealed truth of the Scripture and holds forth the truth of tradition for salvation.

2Wojtyla, Sources of Renewal: The Implementation of the Second Vatican Council, 10.
himself to be one of those who heard and heeded that call. Most importantly, Wojtyla is now the person who leads the institution which teaches from that text.

Despite difficulties associated with the communal authorship, *The Documents* are the definitive voice of the third way. Wojtyla claims "ownership" over these documents, as he, in combination with the other bishops, wrote them." An analysis of the documents reveals just how closely the message contained within them comports with Wojtyla's philosophical anthropology and subsequent economic theory. Wojtyla's personal reflection upon the *Documents* and the *Catechism* is, perhaps, the strongest reason for a consideration of these texts:

The Spirit who spoke through the Second Vatican Council did not speak in vain. The experience of these years allows us to glimpse the possibility of a new openness toward God's truth, a truth the Church must preach "in season and out of season" (cf. 2 Tm 4:2). Every minister of the Gospel must be thankful and feel constantly indebted to the Holy Spirit for the gift of the Council. It will take many years and many generations to pay off this debt."

**The Third Way: Introduction of the Idea**

The third way begins with Wojtyla's philosophical anthropology, which culminates in the dynamic relationship between the human person and the ultimate Ground of Being. According to Wojtyla, any discussion of economic justice

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"Ibid., i-9.

originates in this dynamization which "must lie at the roots of the integration of humanness by the person." To compromise the dignity of man and the divinity of God obscures any hope for authentic economic justice. The constitutive elements of the economic plan include the person, the family, the community, and salvation. In The Documents and in Wojtyla's commentary, these elements are singled out time and time again.

As with any discussion involving Wojtyla, it is necessary to recognize that his economic vision is a Christian one. The economies of the world, as is all creation, are considered within the context of a vertical dimension of reality. Authority and life itself emanate from God at the height of this construction. Organic matter, simple substance void of soul or essence, comprises the lowest level of creation. The human person is somewhere in between, neither an angel nor a beast. Existence within this vertical construction does not minimize the human person, although the notion is troubling for secular humanists since it does recognize something more important than humanity. In fact, Wojtyla, precisely because of the structure of the world and the truth that flows from it, believes the elements of the third way are natural and, therefore, will correspond to the economic needs of the person.

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"Wojtyla, Osoba i czyn (Person and Act), translated by the Vatican State, 106."
God is the sovereign master of his plan. But to carry it out he also makes use of his creature's cooperations. This use is not a sign of weakness, but rather a token of almighty God's greatness and goodness. For God grants his creatures not only their existence, but also the dignity of acting on their own, of being causes and principles of each other, and thus cooperating in the accomplishment of his plan.  

So, while Wojtyla's economic plan is readily identified as a Christian plan, he also believes that it is a reality that all men and women, regardless of their particular religious beliefs, can recognize as truthful. "From the beginning, Christian Revelation has viewed the spiritual history of man as including, in some way, all religions, thereby demonstrating the unity of humankind with regard to the eternal and ultimate destiny of man."  

Thus, the third way, even the element of salvation, which is vital to Wojtyla's Christocentric eschatology, is not limited to Christian people or to a Christian nation. Wojtyla suggests that all people share in the God-ordered intention of the world, so he begins, once again, with the human person.  

The Council presents this solution teaching us that man is called to realize the dignity of his own person and that the basis of this

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3 Pope John Paul II, Crossing The Threshold of Hope, "Why So Many Religions?" 78.
vocation must be sought in his very nature, that is to say in the work of creation.  

Wojtyla and the Church attempt to initiate the discussion of economics and the person by describing the confusion apparent in the world. Wojtyla believes that a large part of this disorientation results from a host of misguided priorities: materialism, individualism, and forced collectivism, to cite a few. By pointing out contradictions associated with contemporary economic ideas, Wojtyla begins paving the way for an alternative economic plan: "Men are today troubled and perplexed by questions about current trends in the world, about their place and their role in the universe."  

The alternative found in The Documents seeks to advance the human person by emphasizing the natural hierarchy of being. Wojtyla concurs: "It is man, therefore, who is the key to this discussion, man considered whole and entire, with body and soul, heart and conscience, mind and will."  

The third way demands an approach to the modern economic predicaments based upon a Christian conception of human nature. The text of Vatican II, and Wojtyla's commentary, treat the human person as the starting point

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3Ibid.
for any deliberation of economic issues. Perhaps more importantly, economic correctives of any sort that do not recognize the personalistic norm, a Christian ethic, will inevitably cause further injustice and, perhaps, deliberately misinform. To counter critics who advance the notion of accumulation—capital, assets, or power—mindless of the person whose work results in these things, Wojtyla is unrelenting in his criticism. Responding specifically to those, from Stalin to Donald Trump, who ask, "Are not we better off?", The Documents describe the reality of a world increasing in productivity and technology without a similar elevation of the human person.

Industrialization is on the increase and has raised some nations to a position of influence, while it radically transfigures ideas and social practices hallowed by centuries. Urbanization too is on the increase. On the whole, the bonds uniting man to his fellows multiply without ceasing, and "socialization" creates yet other bonds, without, however, a corresponding personal development, and truly personal relationships (personalization). 3

Wojtyla responds to the effects of industrialization by writing that "it [the Church] embraces the world as the universal created reality, at the center of which man has been placed by God: this reality, including man, must be renewed once and for all in Christ." 4 Renewal, according

3"Vatican Council II, "Changes In the Social Order," (Gaudium et Spee), 6:907.

4Wojtyla, Sources of Renewal: The Implementation of the Second Vatican Council, 185.
to Wojtyla, involves careful attention to the priorities established by Jesus Christ and to the teachings of the Church. Wojtyla intends to inform the competing means of distribution and allocation of things with the same sense of renewal or scrutiny. He examines the various economies of the world not from the perspective of cost efficiency, opportunity costs, and supply and demand, but primarily from the perspective of institutions that deal with human beings. In short, Wojtyla's evaluation is a qualitative one:

In the sphere of economics and social life, too, the dignity and entire vocation of the human person as well as the welfare of society as a whole have to be respected and fostered; for man is the source, the focus and the end of all economic and social life.3

Once the human person is established as the ultimate expression of God's majesty in the world, it is possible to consider the remaining components of Wojtyla's third way; since without recognizing the value inherent to human existence, valuing any other "commodity" is meaningless. Each of the elements that constitute the third way (person, family, community, salvation) is connected to the other, perhaps each even animates or fills the other; but without love as a nucleus serving as the link between the elements,

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behavior or attention to any or all of the elements can become skewed.

As Wojtyla sees it, social engineering of any sort, even those plans that rely upon admirable humanistic principles, will fail because God as the ultimate ground of being, the Being of first cause, is not considered. When God is not part of the plan, the human person as creature made in the image of God will not have intrinsic value beyond immediate gratification or utility. If the philosophical anthropology of the person neglects the possibility for participation in the divine, the family will hold no particular or blessed place in the creation of human society, because neither human beings nor the most basic familial relationships are seen as sacred. If the family is relegated to an aspect of self-preservation or self-actualization or some other socio-political principle, then the community will lack the template for meaningful governance and appropriate socialization. If the person, the family, and the community fail to aim for the excellence appropriate to their condition, Wojtyla's Christocentric eschatology or salvation is meaningless.

Several conceptual concerns deserve attention at this point: First, God functions as a creative and creating force in the world as the historical Jesus Christ and in the mandate of the New Testament; second, just as God possesses a spiritual and a physical dimension (the Holy Trinity), so does the person, family, community, and
salvation contain a mundane and transcendent reality; third, none of these elements supersede the others except as static intellectual ideas. Each of the elements, as The Documents and Wojtyla portray them, "acts" in human society "equally."

Wojtyla's insistence upon phenomenology as the understanding of a thing or an idea as experienced comes into play when considering the mundane reality of the world and the transcendent reality of God. Consider the element God/Love. For Wojtyla this reality moves the soul towards salvation, but not without affecting the world, the realm of subject/object: "the Council sets us upon the track of the Father's eternal designs, a plan inspired by love."37 To further clarify the importance of the connection between material and spiritual reality, Wojtyla's dynamization, consider each of the following elements.

God exists as mystery; God also exists as the Incarnation. Both realities are accessible to humanity. Both realities are loving ones.

The concept of the Creator and the work of creation involves in some measure the fatherhood of God and his 'hidden design', the plan which is full of wisdom and is the fruit of the Creator's goodness and benevolence. The work of creation was prompted by love. Human reason is capable of knowing God, the principle of all that exists, by the 'natural light', but it is clear that knowledge of the Creator and the work of creation already involves God's

revelation of himself: without this the human mind could not fathom the 'hidden design', i.e., the eternal plan of creation, or comprehend its motives."

Each individual is a spiritual being and an organic being, participating in the mundane realm of human experience and in the divine realm or transcendence. The union of the two realities is known as "Wojtyla's person." The neglect of either--soul or body--is deleterious to the notion of person. Admittedly, the soul is the superior part of the person. Yet a complete anthropology requires an existential component, namely, a mandate to love. The Church refers to this as charity; Wojtyla considers it a Christian duty. Charity in human activity evokes respect for the person. The person is considered above utilitarian calculation or thought of profit. "It [charity] does not make use of man, but serves his humanity."

The family operates in a similar fashion. A proper consideration of family includes the idea of the Holy Family as example, and the corresponding physical reality, or parent and child. These two realities cooperate, if only by emulation, in the family unit. Love will infuse members of the family with the notion of a self-contained, loving community, a notion that eventually extends to the larger collective:

"Ibid., 46-7

"Ibid., 285.
The mission of being the primary vital cell of society has been given to the family by God himself. This mission will be accomplished if the family, by the mutual affection of its members and by family prayer, presents itself as a domestic sanctuary of the Church.40

The state, if properly ordered, will similarly respond to an ideal, the notion of community or the mysticum corpus, because the people in this union love. The result appears in the official policy of the state, and the institutions become sensitive to human needs. Here the collective good or the state, as envisioned and practiced, can be found.

Man resembles God not only because of the spiritual nature of his immortal soul but also by reason of his social nature, if by this we understand the fact that 'he cannot fully realize himself except in an act of pure self-giving'. In this way 'union and charity' is the ultimate expression of the community of individuals. This union merits the name communion, which signifies more than community. The Latin word communio denotes a relationship between persons that is proper to them alone; and it indicates that they do to one another, giving and receiving within that mutual relationship.41

All four elements of the third way are understood by Wojtyla as affected by "The full dimension of obedience of Christ [that] is determined by the Word and by Love."42 It is Christ, according to Wojtyla, who demonstrates true

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40Ibid., 295.
41Ibid., 61.
42Ibid., 83.
love in the absolute obedience of the cross and in response to the disobedience of humanity." Love, as a transcendent and mundane idea, has been demonstrated to be the activity most appropriate for guiding human behavior and connecting the various elements—the person, family, community, and salvation—together. Without love manifest in the example of Christ, the process of differentiation, or the notion that created persons derive their distinctness and superiority from a particular resemblance to God, is impossible."

According to Wojtyla, God, the human person, the family, and community all naturally love. In loving they seek the good in this world and salvation in the next, satisfying the needs and expectations of the complete person. The ultimate end for the person is outside the world. A closer examination of these elements as they appear in The Documents of the Second Vatican Council and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, a text specifically prepared following the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council under the direction of Pope John Paul II, confirms the crucial role the person, the family, the community and salvation play in the development of a comprehensive economic plan.

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"Cf. Ibid.

"For a detailed discussion of this matter see Chapter I, pp. 20-25 above."
The First Element: The Person

"Self," or the notion of the individual person as an entity possessing free will and spirituality that is alteri incomperriciabilis, is the hallmark of Wojtyla's philosophical anthropology, and the first element of the third way. The Documents conclude that "Man as sharing in the light of the divine mind, rightly affirms that by his intellect he surpasses the world of mere things." The self is positioned either to accept this natural position and engage the social responsibility associated with it or to deny it (the truth about the self), other persons, and God. The Documents wholeheartedly advocate the former position, for "In his fatherly care for all of us, God desired that all men should form one family and deal with each other in the spirit of brotherhood." A just community, then, is impossible when members fail to act in accord with what they are.

That the condition of the person is predicated upon the self-recognition of an inherent dignity is, however, not enough in the application of the third way as an economic plan. It is incumbent upon the political community to ensure an environment in which the individual may prosper and pursue the good. "The well-being of


society requires absolutely that individuals and groups be free to exercise initiative." There must be liberty and order for the third way to operate effectively.

The freedom associated with the third way should not be confused with the classic liberal interpretation of liberty where, ultimately, individual autonomy precludes interference of any sort. Instead, the third way stipulates the need for a free society characterized by objective notions of the good defined by the Church, as interpreter of Natural Law.

In availing of any freedom men must respect the moral principle of person and social responsibility: in exercising their rights individuals and social groups are bound by the moral law to have regard for the rights of others, their own duties to others and the common good of all. All men must be treated with justice and humanity.

Liberty of thought and action, according to this plan, permits the person to develop an advanced state of consciousness— a refined sense of what it means to live and act in a world aware of an extra-mundane spirituality. As an economic plan, specific action supporting this intellectual recognition is vital. Without just action in the economic realm in particular, the third way is nothing


"Vatican Council II, "Declaration on Religious Liberty," (Dignitatis Humanae), 7:805.
more than idealism--another intellectual notion lacking substantive contact or connectedness to the truth.

Acting in the world, the individual may pursue various social and economic opportunities that are most appropriate to his particular attributes. Creative work is a response to those attributes. Each person should follow those talents and vocations for his own fulfillment as a person and for the greater glory of God. "The revelation of the vocation of truth of man is linked to the revelation of God. Man's vocation is to make God manifest by acting in conformity with his creation 'in the image and likeness of God.'" 30

Considering the person from this perspective (diverse talents and aptitudes) avoids linking the third way with liberation theology. Wojtyla eschews the artificial leveling of society as he simultaneously criticizes unfettered capitalism. The notion of freedom, as envisioned by Wojtyla, encourages individual action from the perspective of authentic individualism. Human value is secured through the recognition of dynamization, which is only possible within the context of the political community where the combined sentiments of proper order--natural law--are secured.

On first glance, Wojtyla seems to take from capitalism and socialism their respective better points. Upon further

30Catechism of the Catholic Church, "Life In Christ," 2085, 506.
examination, however, a return to the seminal principles of the plan (God, love, and the person) demonstrates the uniqueness of this economic proposal. Each person, as a proper creature of divine spirit,

ought to have ready access to all that is necessary for living a genuinely human life: For example, food, clothing, housing, the right freely to choose work, to his good name, to respect, to proper knowledge, the right to act according to the dictates of conscience and to safeguard his privacy, and the rightful freedom even in matters of religion.51

Social and economic conditions or rights, such as those advocated by Wojtyla's third way, reestablish the moral rights of the person as the paramount concern for a just economic system. Wojtyla is presenting neither cooled-off capitalism nor warmed-over socialism. Unlike a secular rights theory of economic justice based upon secular humanism, where "right" is understood through the apprehension of reason, the third way includes the value of the person as fundamental to just action. Wojtyla believes that this inclusion places the third way on solid ground, superior to any other economic plan. Wojtyla claims qualitative moral superiority for the third way and supports the claim with his insistence upon the notion that the person is created in the image of God.52

51 "Vatican Council II, "Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World" (Gaudium et Spes), 26:927.

52 Ibid., "Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World" (Gaudium et Spes), "Man as the Image of God," Chapter 1, 12:913.
It follows that a just social community or state must reflect this reality [justice] and provide favorable conditions where moral living is a possibility. A state may respond to this challenge, creating conditions favorable to the human person, by making law that is in accord with God’s law. The natural law, the Creator’s very good work, provides the solid foundation on which man can build the structure of moral rules to guide his choice. It also provides the indispensable moral foundation for building the human community. Finally, it provides the necessary basis for the civil law with which it is connected.*3

For Wojtyla this observation, moral human right, is an objective one defined by various Thomistic influences (specifically divine law), the influence of Scheler, and the teaching authority of the Magisterium.*4 In short, as far as Wojtyla is concerned, God wants economic justice this way. It is "right" for anyone willing to look at things as they exist and reason things out. It is made discernible to humanity through revelation and the edification and clarification of the ecclesiastic tradition and the experience of the pilgrim Church.

While Wojtyla begins an analysis of economic justice with a discussion of the person, he insists on a reciprocal relationship between the individual and the political community. Individuals have a responsibility to the political community, and the political community has an

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*3 Catechism of the Catholic Church, "Life In Christ," 1959, 475.

obligation to ensure liberty and order. The idea of order as one of the major benefits of civil society originates in the writings of Augustine. It is, therefore, one of the oldest and most influential ideas in the history of the Catholic Church. The proper relationship between the individual and the community is that the person achieve economic and social stability through authentic individual freedom (activity directed towards the good) and be confident of a stable and moral civil authority.

This heavenly city then, while it sojourns on earth, calls citizens out of all nations, and gathers together a society of pilgrims of all languages, not scrupling about diversities in the manners, laws, and institutions whereby earthly peace is secured and maintained, but recognizing that, however various these are, they all tend to one and the same end of earthly peace.”

The Second Element: The Family

The family is second only to the notion of person as the most vital human creation. Beginning with the publication of Love and Responsibility and extending to Crossing the Threshold of Hope, Wojtyla contributes to the extensive ecclesiastical dialogue on the family as the most basic political unit.

As an economic element, the needs of the family are similar to those of the individual. According to Vatican II, "every man has the right to possess a

sufficient amount of the earth's good for himself and his family." However, the family is more than an efficient mechanism for the distribution of food or affection. For Wojtyla, its origin is ancient and divine, and it extends as a moral institution as Jesus recalled the force of the "commandment of God," to honor father and mother. Furthermore, "Respecting this commandment provides, along with spiritual fruits, temporal fruits of peace and prosperity. Conversely, failure to observe it brings great harm to communities and to individuals."

The Documents describe the family as an economic unit that should be accorded a "sufficient" basis upon which particular talents expand and, in turn, contribute to the familial good. Each family, therefore, acts as a unique collection of persons and sentiments, accepting the responsibility of existence in different ways, as a parent or child. Responsibility within the context of the family becomes increasingly apparent, and it should always be loving.

As the reciprocity between individuals and the state suggests shared commitments to a common goal, the family

"Cf. Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16.
"Catechism of the Catholic Church, "Life In Christ," 2200, 531.
experiences similar reciprocity, including various roles typically associated with family. Accordingly, "father," "mother," and "child" participate uniquely with different contributions and demands and yet co-exist collectively as a single unit." In fact, failure to attend to each other as father, mother, or child, in the form of support and recognition, causes the requisite parts that constitute family to malfunction. Alternatively, when commitments emanating from father, mother, or child contribute to the common goal or right order, the effect of the union is a "privileged community," or "a communion of persons, a sign and image of the communion of the Father and Son in the Holy Spirit."41

The family, however, cannot exist as it should without the assistance of political institutions. The reality of the family as an economic unit worthy of special recognition, political and economic protection, and spiritual attention is clearly important in the tradition of the Church:

The Creator of all made the married state the beginning and foundation of human society: by his grace he has made of it too a great mystery in Christ and in the Church (cf. Eph. 5:32), and so the apostolate of married persons and of families has a

"Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2205, 532.
special importance for both Church and civil society."42

Similar emphasis is found in the Catechism: "The importance of the family for the life and well-being of society entails a particular responsibility for society to support and strengthen marriage and the family."43 It is apparent that Wojtyla and the Church call upon civil authority to acknowledge the grave duty incumbent upon the state regarding the family: "to acknowledge the true nature of marriage and the family, to protect and foster them, to safeguard public morality, and promote domestic prosperity."44

The family as a political and economic element is, however, not the only beneficiary of the various legal and moral preferences given by the state. The state itself receives benefits as well, primarily because the family is the nexus between individual persons and the community. It is where persons are initiated into civil society--a more just society if the family is accorded attention and protection. "The family is the community in which, from childhood, one can learn moral values, begin to honor God,


"Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2210, 533.

"Ibid."
and make good use of freedom. Family life is an initiation into life in society."*

A further reading of The Documents suggests that both individuals and states familiar with the creative capabilities of holy matrimony and the civic initiation taking place within this union should see to the maintenance of family. Moreover, familial dynamics are consistent with those principles that stress the dignity of the persons since each individual is a being unique in creation and independent from all other beings. The family, then, as an idea and as a political union, reinforces Wojtyla's appeal for a just economy based upon individual moral rights. And, as the "primary vital cell of society," the protection of family as a legal and economic entity is equally important to the community or the state.

Wojtyla insists that a reconsideration of economics outside the boundaries of capitalism and socialism is impossible when familial rights are devalued, since it is within the confines of family that human dignity is shared and translated to subsequent generations. The Council writes to ensure the legal standing of the family in the nations of the world, imploring that "men of good will should see that these rights [marriage, procreation,  

"Ibid., "Life in Christ," 2207, 533.

"Ibid."

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education] are perfectly safeguarded in civil legislation."\(^7\)

Freedom and order, both vital to the implementation of the third way, are reaffirmed in familial love. Freedom is possible only when the participants in the community (individual and familial) accept the responsibilities associated with their position. Families, as with the individuals that comprise them, understand and perform these responsibilities because, the Council argues, they are natural to them and because the catechism of the Church teachings habituates members into an appreciation of their sacredness and value.

Love reappears, as it does throughout this economic plan, to enliven the family and coordinate free activity within it. According to Vatican II, once the state has accepted the legal responsibility associated with the protection, freedom, and continuance of family, each individual within this unit, particularly each spouse, is able peaceably to fulfill a loving obligation as a person:

> It is therefore the duty of parents to create a family atmosphere inspired by love and devotion to God and their fellow-men which will promote an integrated, personal and social education of their children. The family is therefore the principal school of the social virtues which are necessary to every society. Finally, it is through the family that they are gradually initiated into association with their fellow-men in

\(^{Vatican Council II., 779.}\)
civil life and as members of the people of God."

Love is the basis of the relationship between the ultimate Ground of Being and the human person; love is the differentiating expression that arouses in the individual recognition of the good; love is the only appropriate dynamic within the family; and, finally, love is the impetus for participation within civil society. The Documents record that "the best way to fulfil one's obligations of justice and love is to contribute to the common good according to one's means and the needs of others." The third element of Wojtyla's economic plan, the community, is the locus of the common good.

The Third Element: The Community

For Wojtyla, the most influential sources for a notion of community and its economic implications are the writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas. Thomas wrote of the analogy between the mystical body of the Church and the human person's physical body, and, by implication, the family and community as well. This ancient idea is not unique to Thomas, but it is, nonetheless, particularly important to

"Ibid.


"Wojtyla, Sources of Renewal, 81, 94, 212-13, 249, 392-3.

Wojtyla and the Council, because Thomism experienced a strong resurgence at the urging of Leo XIII in the late nineteenth century. Leo XIII encouraged using Thomism as a philosophical resource for dealing with the problems associated with modernity and the unique difficulties arising in contemporary states. One of the major points under reconsideration involved the inclusion of the lordship of Christ as head for the body.7

Leo XIII believed that the Church must confront modernity and the unique social and political dilemmas associated with changing economies, technology, and traditional governing institutions. For the first time in the history of the Church, the community, the modern state, as a spiritual and economic institution, received considerable attention. This focus given to social and economic concerns occurred within the context of a general evaluation of the world and of the Church, beginning in the late nineteenth century and continuing to the Council. This self-critical position involved a reemergence of Thomistic philosophy as a guide for the Church and the world. As Wojtyla describes that time, "In the sphere of economics, in which scientific discoveries and their practical application come together, new structures for the production of consumer goods had progressively taken shape.

A new form of property had appeared—capital; and a new form of labor—labor for wages.”

Leo XIII, the pope who began this critical examination, insisted that social, political, and economic forces must be reformulated within one and the same framework. Much like the mysticum corpus, the body politic was intricately connected. It is from this perspective that the notion of the mysticum corpus, or the community, must be considered. The world community as a mystical body, inter-connected and dependent upon other parts, demonstrates the mystery that connects Christians, in fact all humanity, with the Creator and with each other.

Alasdair MacIntyre writes that "when in the ancient world justice was extended beyond the boundaries of the polis, it was always as a requirement of theology." MacIntyre's observation holds true here. Wojtyla, aided by his predecessors, continues to push the limits of justice to include modern concepts of the market, capital, labor, wages, and dwindling natural resources. Wojtyla makes this appeal for justice on behalf of all people. He suggests that, within the tradition of St. Thomas, the Church can find a means of economic justice where each contributes and receives because of what he is—a human person.


Wojtyla is obviously dissatisfied with the distributive and commutative aspects of capitalism and socialism. In the tradition of Aquinas, distributive justice is satisfied when each receives his due in accordance to his worth; commutative justice is satisfied when restitution is made and the penalties are proportional to the offense committed. The third way will afford the community the ability to facilitate this sort of justice on a mass scale. It is a special community, based upon the ethic of love. For Wojtyla, the mystery that forms it is the same mystery that has maintained it over the centuries: "Christ being its head, and its different members having different functions in the whole."  

The body of the Church is made up of men from every period of world history, and in each period some members do not yet have grace whilst others already do. The analogy of a body applies to any group in which there are a diversity of tasks and activities organized for one goal.

The Documents extend the metaphor of the mysticum corpus and encourage its application in the modern world. Appropriately then, an analysis of the state as the formal application of community in Wojtyla's third way begins, once again, with a consideration of these documents:


*Cf. Vatican II.*, "Decree on Ecumenism (*Unitatis Redintegratio*), 452-563."
Hence it is that the People of God is not only an assembly of various peoples, but in itself is made up of different ranks. This diversity among its members is either by reason of the duties or it is due to their condition and manner of life."

The idea of community that Wojtyla advances is composed of discernible qualitative and quantitative differences. There is even tacit recognition of non-believers as a constituent component. Citizens of any political community maintain a sense of inter-connectedness despite their heterogeneity, despite any utilitarian need. The notion of community exists precisely because its members share a common creator and essence. As in the person, where free will makes any choice problematic, the actual operation of the community is a constant struggle. Sin and the fallen nature of humanity make order difficult, arguably impossible. And yet, for Wojtyla, the way of the cross is the only legitimate option because of the transcendent quality of the person."

The members of the community, like the person and the family, must recognize their appropriate end.

The "how," regarding the maintenance of community, is particularly troubling in contemporary society. With the reemergence of nationalism and ethnocentrism, the notion of

"Ibid., "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church" (Lumen Gentium), 13:365.


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a community maintained by shared recognition of a creator is arguably a difficult one to imagine. Community, such as the one described by Wojtyla, is especially problematic since the authority upon which it is grounded is mystery and free will. Nonetheless, if the elements of the third way are necessary to a vision of economic justice and reasonable approximations of Natural Law, then the third way of organizing economic reality will emulate the mystical body and, in fact, assist in its maintenance.

This is the reason why this sacred Synod [Vatican II], in proclaiming the noble destiny of man and affirming an element of the divine in them [sic], offers to cooperate unreservedly with mankind in fostering a sense of brotherhood to correspond to this destiny of theirs. The Church is not motivated by an earthly ambition, but is interested in one thing only--to carry on the work of Christ under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, for he came into the world to bear witness to the truth, to save and not to judge, to serve and not to be served.'0

The Church, then, will attend to the tradition established by Jesus. An important part of that tradition necessarily involves the political community. As within each person and between members of the family, there are responsibilities for both citizens and the state within the context of Wojtyla's third way. The foremost concern for both involves a call for cooperation. Once again, Wojtyla appeals to human rationality in an effort to force a

"Vatican Council II., "Pastoral Constitution On The Church in the Modern World" (Gaudium et Spes), 3:905."
reconsideration of dynamization—a mystical unity that all things share with God. In this sense, both the citizens who are aware of the personalistic norm and the state that is collectively "conscious" of shared brotherhood must act in a responsible manner. To do otherwise is to offend Natural Law; to do otherwise is sinful.

In this spirit Wojtyla reminds political and economic leaders of their primary duties regarding economic justice. Indeed, in an uncharacteristic fashion, the Catechism of the Catholic Church raises the sort of specific issues with which the world's leaders are to be concerned. As has been emphasized already, leaders are to ensure the right of economic initiative; the right to individual freedom and private property; the security to work and produce and enjoy the fruit of labor. In addition, leaders must oversee and direct the exercise of human rights; they should see that access to employment and to the professions is open; they should establish a just wage; and, finally, they should provide recourse for workers to strike.1

Wojtyla insists that affluent communities or states have a greater responsibility to the people of God than do those communities which are poorer--economically or spiritually.2 The fundamental reality regarding the notion of community, as The Documents portray it, insists


that no person can neglect the community, and the community cannot turn away from any person, because of the particular transcendent connection of each with the ultimate Ground of Being:

It [cooperation] should contribute to a just appreciation of the dignity of the human person, to the promotion of the blessings of peace, the application of the Gospel principles to social life, and the advancement of the arts and sciences in a truly Christian spirit.*3

The community as a collective power is the only element within the third way capable of incorporating a comprehensive economic plan that responds appropriately to the dignity of the human person. Only in the community are wealth and power at sufficient levels to enable political and economic policy to mediate circumstances inconsistent with the third way. However, the state does not act alone in this capacity. Regarding human rights in particular, "primary responsibility in this area belongs not to the state but to individuals and to the various groups and associations which make up society."** Peoples of different ranks organize, maintain, and discipline the state so that it is empowered to fulfill the real needs of the People of God.

Man is now offered the possibility to free most of the human race from the curse of ignorance: it is, therefore, one of the


"Ibid."
duties most appropriate to our times, above all for Christians, to work untiringly for fundamental decisions to be taken in economic and political affairs, on the national as well as the international level, which will ensure the recognition and implementation everywhere of the right of every man to human and civil culture in harmony with the dignity of the human person."

In short, the responsibilities of the state resemble those that exist between persons within the state: they differ only in scope and influence. Public and private activity consistent with the third way do not differ because of the interdependent relationships between persons, families, and the communities. There is, theoretically, a common call for the advancement of human existence. Existence as a private individual, as a family member, and as a citizen should have common goals. The Council continues, "Through his dealing with others, through mutual service, and through fraternal dialogue, man develops all his talents and becomes able to rise to his destiny."

The person, the family, and the community contribute to the maintenance of the world through their active pursuit of the good. This telos advances the physical well-being of people, but ultimately their spiritual well-being is Wojtyla's concern.

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The Fourth Element: Salvation

Thomas suggests that humans possess all that is necessary to seek the good if they so desire. "But the only properly human actions are those that mark a man out as a man, differing from creatures that lack reason in being master of what he does." Thomas continues to argue that among many different goals accessible to individuals and political communities there is one ultimate goal, since "you can't have endless ends." In addition, no person can serve more than two masters. The result is that "God is the ultimate goal of all."

Man's highest activity engages his highest power with its highest object. Man's intelligence is his highest power, and its highest object the good that is God, an object of contemplative not practical intelligence. So happiness is above all the activity of contemplating the things of God.

By advancing the common good, political communities advance the ultimate good--salvation--and it is towards this good that all mundane activity is directed.

The influence and significance of salvation as a crucial element in the third way is evidenced in The Documents.

"St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, "Human life has a goal," 171.
"Ibid., 173.
"Ibid., 174.
"Ibid., 3:5, 177.
Christ is the light of humanity; and it is, accordingly, the heart-felt desire of this sacred Council, being gathered together in the Holy Spirit, that, by proclaiming his Gospel to every creature, it may bring to all men the light of Christ which shines out visibly from the Church. The condition of the modern world lends greater urgency to this duty of the Church; for, while men of the present day are drawn ever more closely together by social, technical and cultural bonds, it still remains for them to achieve full unity in Christ."

Salvation as a necessary element of the third way is similarly considered by Wojtyla in his early writings on the implementation of Vatican II.

Eternal life is the fruit of the saving mission of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and of the Holy Spirit, which implants in man's immortal soul the grace of divine sonship as a pledge of inheritance. According to Revelation and to the immutable doctrine of the Church there is a close link between sanctifying grace--i.e. sonship by divine adoption, and the resemblance to Christ that this implies--and the beatific vision of God 'as he truly is'. This beatific vision is founded in the supernatural likeness of man to God, thanks to which he is to 'appear' with Christ in glory. External life is the final fulfillment of man's vocation, toward which his spiritual nature tends under the influence of grace."

Then, human life is particularly blessed because this lived experience enables a person to achieve salvation. In this final element of the third way, the Church acts as the primary guide and authority. The Documents insist upon the

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"Vatican Council II, "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, (Lumen Gentium), 1:350.

"Wojtyla, Sources of Renewal: The Implementation of the Second Vatican Council, 180."
idea that "Christ did not bequeath to the Church a mission in the political, economic, or social order: the purpose he assigned to it was a religious one." However, just as the person may not claim the personalistic norm and the subsequent moral rights incumbent upon that norm without attention to the responsibilities associated with existence (righteousness, justice, love), the Church may not claim a religious norm without working for civil responsibility. In addition, considerable historical example supports the connection between a religious norm and civil responsibility, not the least of which is the philosophical influence of Augustine's civitas Dei.

The Augustinian tradition formulated a community wherein the human person finds personal salvation in the context of civil peace. The Church, acting under this influence, has long established the pattern of informing secular society at all levels--religious, social, political, and economic." The Documents suggest a similar role for the Church in the world: "this religious mission can be the source of commitment, direction, and vigor to establish and consolidate the community of men according to the law of God."


"Ibid."
The very fact that salvation is placed into this plan alongside the person, the family, and the community reveals Wojtyla's interest in the relationship between the concerns and choices associated with this world and how these choices affect eternal life. The Church as a spiritual institution must to see to the latter. The Church as an earthly institution has an equally compelling reason to address the former. Yet, the dilemma between things of this world and things of the next remains. It is a dilemma that Wojtyla believes is resolvable. Wojtyla believes that "Man is free therefore responsible."

Significantly, the Council also reminds us of the universal call to holiness in the Church. This vocation is universal and concerns each of the baptized, every Christian. It is always very personal, connected to work, to one's profession. It is an account rendered of the talents each person has received—whether one has made good or bad use of them."

The conflict between choosing this world or the next is resolved, for Wojtyla, in living as a Christian. Attentive to the elements of the third way, each person may find fulfillment in the work place, at home, and within himself.

The issue over what role the Church will play in secular affairs eventually comes around to the final element, that of salvation. In the Catholic context, the

"John Paul II, Crossing the Threshold of Hope, 180."

"Ibid."
desire for salvation leads individuals and, therefore, families and states, to be concerned with matters of righteousness and justice in their everyday affairs. Salvation from this perspective is intensely mundane. As part of the third way, consistent with a vertical dimension of reality and the anthropological principle, salvation is a transcendent reality. Like all previously mentioned elements, salvation involves a mysterious combination of soul and body.

Wojtyla's third way, then, is a worldly mandate with a salvific teleology; it is a Christocentric eschatology. The Documents serve to encourage each of the acting components of this economic plan (person, family, state) to "make the most of the present time, and with patience await the future glory." That salvation exists as the end or goal does not permit any person, family, or community to ignore pressing social and economic concerns.

All that goes to make up the temporal order: personal and family values, culture, economic interests, the trades and professions, institutions of the political community, international relations, and so on, as well as their gradual development—all of these are not merely helps to man's last end; they possess a value of their own, placed in them by God, whether considered individually or as parts of the integral temporal structure."


"Ibid., "Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People," (Apostolicam Acurositatem), 7:774.
In the Thomistic tradition, Wojtyla relies upon a proper balance when considering this world or the next. Thomas writes, "In human affairs too it is the head of a community who directs it towards the general good. In both ways [willing and achieving] the movement of our will belongs properly to God."\textsuperscript{100} According to Thomas, God is at work in all human creaturely activity occurring in the world where "God maintains them [human beings], applies them to their actions, and is the goal of all activity."\textsuperscript{101}

That balance is not something we can objectively measure by a proportion between things; it must be determined by reason taking into account the man himself. The balance of justice is an external matter, matching external things to external people; though this external balance is discovered by reason, so that justice retains the character of a moral virtue.\textsuperscript{102}

The Documents also extol the benefits of balance when considering the problems of the world versus the problem of securing salvation. As in Thomas, the resolution for this dilemma is found in human activity.


\textsuperscript{101}\textit{Ibid.}, 156.

Individual and collective activity, that monumental effort of man through the centuries to improve the circumstances of the world, presents no problem to believers: considered in itself, it corresponds to the plan of God. Man was created in God's image and was commanded to conquer the earth with all it contains and to rule the world in justice and holiness: he was to acknowledge God as maker of all things and relate himself and the totality of creation to him, so that through the dominion of all things by man the name of God would be majestic in all the earth.\textsuperscript{103}

The implications of the idea of balance are significant in understanding Wojtyla's third way. Balance is another way of expressing the connection between God and the person; it is a crucial component for authentic human life. Simply put, if this connection exists—if the person, if the family, and if the state are attentive to God's law, attentive to the needs of this world and the next—all efforts made towards achieving economic and social justice translate into activity that secures salvation. By seeking salvation, the various components of the third way unite in seeking justice because both the spiritual and the material work together towards shaping a natural end.

Critics of Wojtyla and the Church charge that both meddle in secular politics. This criticism goes on to suggest that the Church and the ecclesiastical leadership are, quite literally, inciting subversive political

activity. Wojtyla disagrees. In fact, his activism in the economic arena has increased over the years of his pontificate. The world, marked by excessive materialism and individualism, is, for Wojtyla, clearly out of balance and in dire need of spiritual and material direction. The third way advances the notion of dynamization as a necessary principle towards achieving and maintaining that direction. In other words, the world must learn to love again. And, the Church, more than any other institution or government (precisely because of the unique teaching role associated with it) must advance love as an alternative to current economic systems. Is this possible? Wojtyla believes that it is, and with the help of the Church, humanity will establish "the proper scale of values on the temporal order." \[104\]

Finally, because of what is at stake—the salvation of humanity—Wojtyla does not believe that the Church risks losing the spiritual dimension of the civitas Dei. It is the task of the Church to warn each person that it would profit him nothing if he should gain the things of the world and forfeit himself—the essence of spirit—in the process. \[105\] Accordingly, the connection between God and the person is necessary for the proper ordering of self,

\[104\] Ibid.

family, community; all these elements assist in advancing humankind towards salvation.

As a social, economic, political, and spiritual interpretation of Christian life, the third way challenges each person to evaluate and confront existing systems of justice according to what they attribute to the human person. A just system will, according to Wojtyla, address the material and the spiritual, body and soul, creature and creator. From the perspective of the personalistic norm, each level of society, from the most simple and singular to the most complex community, responds to what Scheler called "world-openness." According to Wojtyla, if economic reality fails to meet the requirements of the personalistic norm where "person" is the measure, that reality is a false one: The Documents support that notion, clearly suggesting that current economic constructions fail miserably in that regard.

In no other age has mankind enjoyed such an abundance of wealth, resources and economic well-being; and yet a huge proportion of the people of the world is plagued by hunger and extreme need while countless numbers are totally illiterate. At no time have men had such a keen sense of freedom, only to be faced by new forms of slavery in living and thinking. There is on the one hand a lively feeling of unity and of compelling solidarity, of mutual dependence, and on the other a lamentable cleavage of bitterly opposing camps. There is lastly a painstaking search for a better material world, without a parallel spiritual advancement.10

10Ibid., 4:906.
These serious failures are even more damaging when considered in the light of the elements of the third way. Modern perceptions of individuality, unauthentic familial relationships, intrusive and fragmented communities, and, most importantly, the potential for damnation raise the stakes from simple advocacy of a "new" economic system to questions of life and death.

To fulfill the requirements of justice and equity every effort must be made to put an end as soon as possible to immense economic inequalities which exist in the world and increase from day to day, linked with individual and social discrimination, provided, of course that the rights of the individuals and the character of each people are not disturbed. Furthermore, no one, especially public authorities, should treat them [persons] simply as mere tools of production, but as a person; they should facilitate them in having their families with them and in obtaining decent housing conditions, and they should endeavor to integrate them into the social life of the country or area.107

Wojtyla believes that the Church must advance the third way because the dominant economic systems, capitalism and socialism, are incapable or unwilling to secure authentic justice, primarily because these systems fail to examine reality and name it as it presents itself.108 In addition, the Church is not bound by the various debilitating effects of nationalism, ideology, or other

107Ibid., "An End to Excessive Economic and Social Differences," 66:972.

forms of modern tribalism. Wojtyla believes the Church is unique because of a shared human condition. "It [Church] is at once the sign and the safeguard of the transcendental dimension of the human person."\(^{109}\) The Church is, therefore, uniquely qualified and politically capable of forwarding the third way to the world community.

In summation, Wojtyla's economic plan, the third way, is comprised of four elements: person, family, community, and salvation. These elements operate within the context of mundane reality, and yet participate in transcendence. They are interconnected; each affects the other to the extent that altering or removing any one element, for any reason at all, inflicts immeasurable damage upon the others. Ultimately, for Wojtyla, individuals or states that tamper with these elements run the risk of altering the precarious balance that defines human existence. This economic plan is, then, about more than distribution, supply and demand, and allocation of scarce resources. For Wojtyla, the third way is about eternal life.

Two important issues remain at this point. First, how does Wojtyla intend to convince individuals around the world that this plan is worthy of consideration? Second, what are the critical implications of the economic policy emanating from the third way? The approach used by Wojtyla and the Church to answer the first question is one of the

methods by which the Church historically defines herself: the prophetic voice.

The pages that follow make it clear that he is a Pope who is impatient in his apostolic zeal; a shepherd to whom the usual paths always seem insufficient; who looks for every means to spread the Good News to men; who--evangelically--wants to shout from the rooftops today crowded with television antennae that there is hope, that it has been confirmed, that it is offer[ed] to whoever want[s] to accept it.\(^{110}\)

Wojtyla implores the world to, "Quaerite Dominum dum inveneri potest. Invocate eum, dum prope est" (Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near).\(^{111}\) The power of the third way is Wojtyla's power as the messenger—the power of the prophetic voice. The latter question will be addressed in the final chapter.

\(^{110}\)Vittorio Messori, "Introduction," John Paul II, Crossing the Threshold of Hope, VII.

\(^{111}\)Wojtyla, The Whole Truth About Man, Seek the Lord, for He Is Near!" 283; also see, Isaiah. 55:6.
CHAPTER IV
QUAERITE DOMINUM: THE PROPHETIC STANCE

They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.¹

This is the most profound truth about man [that he transcends himself]. Christ is the first to know this truth. He truly knows "that which is in every man (cf. Jn 2:24). With His Gospel He has touched the intimate truth of man. He has touched it first of all with His Cross. Pilate, who, pointing to the Nazarene crowed with thorns after His Scourging, said, "Behold the man!" (Jn 19:5), did not realize that he was proclaiming an essential truth, expressing that which always and everywhere remains the heart of evangelization.²

Karol Wojtyla exhorts the world community to move in the direction of economic justice according to the tenets of the third way. He attempts to implement the third way by consistently using the power of the prophetic voice--the notion that "the message by nature intends to awaken and arouse, to call the people of God back from their perverse ways."³ Wojtyla is a social critic much like the Old Testament prophets.

¹John 9:17.


Several issues complicate reading a message as prophetic and understanding the messenger of social criticism as a prophet. First, who is the target of the social criticism? In the Western tradition there are two notions of the prophetic, and Wojtyla uses them both: (1) judgment of individuals and (2) judgment against communities. Wojtyla calls into question individual conduct and evaluates the official actions of a nation or a people. The Church has long claimed the power of the prophetic voice as a means to achieve an evangelical end, and Wojtyla's persuasiveness and his mass popular appeal is linked to the Christian personalism that marks his papacy. The issue of to whom Wojtyla speaks and the effectiveness of this criticism is considered in the first part of this chapter.

A second issue involves the role of priest and prophet, both of which Wojtyla must assume. As prophet, he judges and admonishes political individuals and societies, identifying distortions and perversions. The influence of the prophetic tradition can easily be found in Wojtyla's written comments, extensive travels, and public speeches on economic and social issues. Wojtyla is also charged with protecting the faith and the pilgrim church. The apostolic
succession ensures his particular connection to this priestly responsibility.4

The roles of "priest and prophet" are both complementary and conflictual. An examination of the priestly and the prophetic explains how these two notions assist Wojtyla in speaking out for the third way. The priest has access to the institutional and formal power of the Holy See; but it is the prophet that lends divine authority to that worldly power. Because the Catholic Church acknowledges that these two concepts are necessary components of the papacy, and because they flow from the effects of priest and prophet respectively, it is essential to flesh these ideas out in a discussion of Wojtyla's economic appeal.

A third issue involves the prophetic message itself: what does Wojtyla say? The encyclical letters Laborem Exercens and Centesimus Annus are employed as primary sources for understanding the content of the prophetic message. These two encyclicals are vital in any consideration of the Church's position on economic and

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‘Apostolic Succession is marked by (1) lawful, valid ordination conferred on bishops of the church; (2) the giving over or delegating directly the powers entrusted to the Apostles of ordaining, ruling, and teaching, given to the Apostles by Christ; (3) the historic and scriptural truth that the Apostles did confer this power on others; (4) the intrinsic truth that the Church in all ages could not have preserved its identity and unity as intended by Christ unless there were a giving over of such powers to others who would carry on the work of Christ's Church; (5) the pope, who is the successor of St. Peter in Rome.
social justice. The letters combined with the secondary literature about these encyclicals and Wojtyla's homilies and speeches, are used as further textual evidence to evaluate the idea that Wojtyla utilizes the power of the prophetic voice to propose and implement the third way.°

It is Wojtyla's treatment of these three issues—who is the audience, why should anyone listen, and the tension between the priestly and the prophetic—that shape his message on economic justice. In particular, the encyclicals consistently reveal that while Wojtyla's concern is with political communities and their particular version of economic justice, he directs his appeal to each individual as a citizen of the City of God. Wojtyla aims to convert one person at a time. His approach to personal conversion is synonymous with his Christian philosophy, that which he calls the personalistic norm."

*Alternative Interpretations within the Prophetic Tradition*

Wojtyla operates within the context of the Judeo-Christian prophetic tradition. The prophet of this tradition is marked by three distinguishing characteristics: (1) the word of God has come forth through a person, the prophet, and has been passed on by


For a detailed discussion of this matter see Chapter I, pp 3-7.
persons; (2) the preservation and transmission of these words is of no less vital significance than the utterance of this word; (3) those who transmit the prophetic utterance play an important and necessary role in the origin of the tradition found in the prophetic books of Hebrew Scripture.

An examination of biblical prophetic utterances, such as Isaiah, for example, reveals two primary forms which are typical of the distinguishing characteristics of the Judeo-Christian tradition: the prophetic judgment speech to individuals, and the announcement of judgment against political societies. The former, typically contains a commissioning of the messenger, a summons to hear or introduction, an accusation, and an announcement: "Here we are able to assume that these words were spoken to the accused face-to-face and were committed to writing so exactly that they confront us today as they were spoken." Announcing a judgment against a group or political community is a further development of the announcement of


'Claus Westermann, Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech, 130.

'Ibid., 143.
judgment against the individual. The structure is clearly similar, only now the "horizon" is extended. However, the point where the prophet engages the listener involves either a single person or a collection of persons acting as one. The prophet and the utterance is, therefore, considerably different in this circumstance. As to how this idea affects the judgment speech to a group,

The single distinction is that these speeches are directed to the nation, Israel, or to organic groups within this nation, members of the body politic. It is through a change of the addressee that the horizon of the prophetic judgment-speech is broadened; since the accusation is directed to a majority, a "corporate personality," it usually includes a large number of transgressions--the accusation can only be made when a number of these deeds have accumulated.10

In both individual and collective prophetic forms an important feature is the transmission itself. Do those who receive the message understand it as the messenger or prophet intends? In retrospect, judgments of this sort have been a surprisingly successful means of communication.

The prophetic tradition exhibits the elements of the message-transmission procedure with astonishing clarity throughout its entire history. The prophets ave designated themselves as messengers of God and were understood as such by those to whom they brought their messages. Prophecy must then be understood from the viewpoint of the message-transmission procedure.11

10Ibid., 169-170.

11Ibid., 11.
One way that Wojtyla insures the reception of his message is to repeat fundamental principles. The four elements of the third way (person, family, community, salvation) appear throughout most of his public speeches and writings. Wojtyla, in fact, begins most discussions the same way. This is particularly true with any discussion of economic justice, or social justice in general. There is a preponderance of textual evidence to support this consistency. Wojtyla always initiates discussion with a particular view of human nature.

In addition to the idea that the meaning of the message can be damaged in the transmission of that message, there is the contributing effect of the modern world to consider. The Church puts forth the notion that technology and mass media complicate the prophetic appeal (the transmission of a message) even more. It is becoming harder and harder for individuals to listen carefully to anything. Part of this is attributed to declining oral traditions, particularly within the developed nations, that minimize the power of oral messages that rely upon the bringing of insight as words to individuals or a nation by a living person "upon whose dependable retention of and repetition of the words alone rested the possibility of sending a message."  


\[\text{\textsuperscript{13}}\text{Ibid., 105.}\]
Wojtyla recognizes these difficulties and responds to them, aggressively seeking out the modern person as well as the modern manner of communication with which that person is familiar. Updating Vatican Radio and making the Vatican Library accessible on the Internet are two examples.

Wojtyla seeks to incorporate "clarity of principles, the conformity and the agreement between the principle taught by the Church, and that by which the conscience informs action," the ingredients of a prophetic and moral force.

How important is it that this prophetic message be received? Wojtyla writes that "The Council stresses that man's essential dignity is inextricably bound up with Christ's message, his Gospel, which acts like leaven, either causing a stronger awareness of that dignity or else awakening a need to seek and attain it." Since Wojtyla insists that Christ's message of salvation and the mandate to love is "inextricably" bound to the proper conceptualization of human dignity, it follows that he will attempt to speak to individuals first. Wojtyla speaks to the person to get to the community, because it is only in the context of individual conversion that a truly committed plan of action can take place. He goes on to suggest that each single person must recognize the truth about himself,

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12 Wojtyla, Sign of Contradiction, 118.
by himself; the truth is that he is both body and soul. How is this conversion accomplished? Wojtyla believes it is grace and the prophet that cause the person to look within. Once the process of honest self-evaluation begins Wojtyla relies upon the Socratic directive: look and see if this is not the case.

How does Wojtyla respond to the issues: the problem of message/transmission; the proliferation of technology, resulting in an overabundance of information in the modern era; and the challenge of recognizing the duality of human nature? The judgment speech directed towards individuals comports most effectively with his prophetic style. The literature suggests that this particular style, that directed towards individuals, is considerably older and more persuasive than the communal appeal. It appears that Wojtyla not only "matches" the individual judgment style best, given his insistence upon the notion that the person is paramount to any philosophical or theological discussion, but this style is also more likely to be heard. Wojtyla's use of the individual judgment speech is an existential appeal that prophetically proclaims to each

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1 Cf. Plato *Georgias*, 495; *Republic*, 350.

person that the Church "looks to you with expectation and hope." [*]

Open to the social dimensions of man, you do not conceal your determination to change radically the social structures that you consider unjust. You say, rightly, that it is impossible to be happy when you see a multitude of brothers who lack the minimum required for a life worthy of man. You also say that it is not right that some people should waste what is lacking on the table of others. You are resolved to construct a just, free and prosperous society. [*]

Exactly what does Wojtyla say to individuals regarding economics? As a prophet for the third way, he directs, cajoles, and instructs, presenting a system composed of various elements which, when considered as a comprehensive economic plan, may bring balance and happiness to individual human life. Wojtyla is a teacher who does not hesitate to employ stern remonstrance or brotherly love in whatever proportions he believes appropriate. The power of the message and Wojtyla's ability to appeal to diverse individuals originates in this sophisticated and artful use of philosophy and theology which appeals to the inherent rationality and spiritual dynamism of the human person. He argues, for example, that "Christ is He who accepted the whole of the reality of human dying. And for that very reason He is the One who made a radical change in the way


[**] "Ibid., 300."
of understanding life. " Here, Wojtyla's message demonstrates the appeal necessary to persuade a person to listen by referencing death, a common fear and concern. He then connects that first personal appeal to a "radical" change in thinking. Simply put, Wojtyla argues that the benefit of living justly is to gain eternal salvation, and moreover effectually prescribes a new way a living as a community of men and women. He repeatedly suggests that "the cross became for us the supreme chair of truth of God and of man. We must be pupils--no matter what our age is--of this chair: Then we will understand that the cross is also the cradle of the new man." 

Pleading to each person that they may save their life, and thereby live in a just community, Wojtyla's message is both urgent and forceful. The effect of this prophetic insistence is predicated, as suggested earlier, in the individual person. Consistent with the elements of the third way, Wojtyla builds upon the notion of individual salvation, attempting to demonstrate that such an experience initiates a relationship with God and with others.

The prophet's judgment speech and the response are enlivened with love--the universal idea which is God. Wojtyla writes, "The call [Christ's] is effective because

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"Wojtyla, The Whole Truth About Man: John Paul II to University Faculties and Students, 121.

"Ibid."
it is accompanied by a gift of the Holy Spirit, that is by grace, which constitutes the real foundation of man's sanctification." By speaking prophetically to each person, Wojtyla attempts to turn us towards God. It is this act, he believes, that places the person in the correct relationship with every other person. This prophetic speech form, the judgment speech directed towards individuals, leads to and supports Wojtyla's insistence upon a Christocentric eschatology.

Part of the difficulty in Wojtyla's use of prophecy to further his economic plan involves the problematic effect of his taking a prophetic stance in a pietistic manner. As Pope, Wojtyla, John Paul II, must balance the roles of prophet and priest without minimizing either prophetic imagination or the "debt of gratitude which the whole Church owes to [the past] this great Pope [Leo XIII]." How can a pope, even this Pope who insists upon an openly prophetic mission, claim to be both a prophet and a successor to St. Peter?

The Prophet and the Priest

To allay to some degree your fears, which seem to arise from a profound faith, I would suggest a reading of Saint Augustine, who often repeated: "Vobis sum episcopus, vobiscum christianus" (I am a bishop for you, I am a Christian with you). On further

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22Wojtyla, Sources of Renewal: The Implementation of the Second Vatican Council, 192.

23John Paul II, Encyclical Letter (Centesimus Annus), 24.
reflection, *christianus* has far greater significance than *episcopus*, even if the subject is the Bishop of Rome.*4

As priest, Wojtyla is keeper of the magisterium of the Church, understood as the power given by Christ to the Church, by which the Church teaches authoritatively the revealed truth of the Scripture and holds forth the truth of tradition for salvation. The handing down of the teachings of Christ and the doctrine of the Apostles, are on the one hand, a part of institutional tradition and canon law. On the other, they are a spiritual tradition, the mystical and spiritual church, claimed by the bishops of the Church to which they, in Christ's name and assisted by the Holy Spirit, may legitimately demand obedience.

Wojtyla acts as both prophet and priest, acknowledging that the entire episcopate teaches with infallible authority in testimony to Christ by virtue of canon law and prophetic revelation. What the Church says, then, is conserving and liberating.

Theoretically, the apparently contradictory effects of the priestly and prophetic traditions are resolved by the consolidation of these powers in the papacy. The pope, then, may translate a method of worship, for example, and it must be accepted with an absolute assent of faith.2 5

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2 4 0ne of the historic purposes of Vatican II was to give a clear and final answer to the question of the primacy of the Pope in the Church. This was initiated in
It is priestly authority and prophetic power that formulate the basis of papal power. Consider the following observations made by Wojtyla regarding this issue: the significance of an institutional and priestly tradition:

Have no fear when people call me the "Vicar of Christ," when they say to me "Holy Father," or "Your Holiness," or use titles similar to these, which seem even inimical to the Gospel. These expressions, nevertheless, have evolved out of a long tradition, becoming part of common usage. One must not be afraid of these words either. Even after the Resurrection, Christ confirmed Peter's mission. He said meaningfully: "Feed my lambs; Tend my sheep" (Jn 21:15-16).²

Here Wojtyla addresses the prophetic and revelatory components of the papacy:

Against this background [the crucifixion], a historical background, expressions such as "Supreme Pontiff," "Your Holiness," and "Holy Father" are of little importance. What is important originates in the Death and Resurrection of Christ. What is

Vatican I. The issue was: The primatial power of the pope as the successor of St. Peter is a primacy of jurisdiction; an ordinary jurisdictional power, a power connected with office itself as an essential and constitutive element; an immediate, ordinary jurisdictional since this was given to him by Christ; an immediate, ordinary jurisdiction that is episcopal; an ordinary, immediate, episcopal, jurisdictional power that is full, that is, no ecclesiastical power exists that is not included in the primacy; an ordinary, immediate, episcopal, full, jurisdictional power that is universal, without limit as to time, place, person, or subject; an ordinary, immediate, episcopal, full, universal jurisdictional power that is supreme, that is there is no higher authority in the Church, not even an ecumenical council.

²Pope John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope.*, 6-8.
important is that which comes from the power of the Holy Spirit."

So, while an obvious conserving component can be found within this priestly tradition, it does not necessarily restrict Wojtylā from a prophetic tradition. Prophecy is, theoretically, as meaningful to the magisterium of the Catholic Church as the revelatory tradition and teachings of Christ and the Apostles.

Prophecy is the process within the context of revelation whereby a message of God is proclaimed. The prophet differs from the priest, who is identified with worship and the conveying of a doctrinal message, but prophetic judgment and priestly worship are inseparable as part of Catholic religious experience and history. Christ is the prophet who is also the priest. Wojtylā writes of Christ completing the work of all former prophets. Accordingly, the powerful prophetic revelation of the New Testament and the authority of the institutional priesthood fulfills the Messianic ideal. Wojtylā argues that it requires both to communicate a message involving such mystery. He recognizes, however, the difficulties of such a faith: "Is it any wonder that even those who believe in


"Ibid., 9.
one God, of whom Abraham was a witness, find it difficult to have faith in a crucified God?"

The previous chapter revealed a pattern within Wojtyla's writings and public statements on economic justice that stress the message of salvation along with an ethical discussion of economic life. The most obvious example of this is Wojtyla's argument for the adoption of the ethic of love as a guiding truth upon which the human person can ground his action. Suggesting that the people of the world adopt a particular interpretation of the person, the family, and the community is a difficult task. Including the notion of salvation as a requisite consideration for economic justice makes Wojtyla's third way an more difficult to present. Such a story requires considerable authority and power to be accepted.

Priestly authority and prophetic power give Wojtyla both an institutional pulpit and mystical aura for his message. Specifically because of the authority of his position and power of his message, Wojtyla can discuss the most private and controversial of issues without necessarily becoming an enemy or outsider to his audience. In fact, Wojtyla does just that on a daily basis, claiming to understand something about that which the human being

"John Paul II, Crossing the Threshold of Hope, 10.

"See Chapter II above.
is, how that human being should act and, subsequently, what
the human being may come to be.

As prophet, Wojtyla uses the power of the spirit to
show the way. He connects this spirit laden voice to human
will, calling it "Christian freedom." In short, the
prophet can assist others in bridging the chasm between the
known world of sensory reality and the desire of the soul
for something other. Wojtyla writes of this need and,
tacitly, of the prophet's role in meeting this need:

The world sorely needed a criterion of power
that would be radically "other," a
manifestation of a different hierarchy of
values, in order that the men of those days
and the men of today--even the most critical
and suspicious of them--might come to
believe in the truth of love.\textsuperscript{31}

Wojtyla often uses the power of the prophetic voice
found in the Prophet Isaiah to demonstrate prophetic power.
He refers to Isaiah as one of the greatest prophets of the
Judeo-Christian tradition and often cites the "St. Paul of
the Old Testament" in his salvific message.\textsuperscript{32}

At this point, a brief examination of Isaiah helps in
understanding Wojtyla's prophetic form in his encyclicals.
This digression is warranted for two reasons: first,
Wojtyla repeatedly cites the Saint Paul of the Old
Testament in speeches and writings.\textsuperscript{33} Second, the Book of

\textsuperscript{31} Wojtyla, \textit{Sign of Contradiction}, 51.


\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Ibid.}, 283-346.
Isaiah parallels Wojtyla's prophetic oratory with a depiction of social critique, pain, and political imagination grounded in divine law:

Isaiah's concern for the divine law cannot be stressed too strongly. It is society's attitude to this law which determines whether its relationship to God is in good order. For Isaiah, the administration of justice displays most clearly man's attitude to God; and this explains why his predictions are full of references to a Jerusalem with irreproachable judges and an anointed one who is a guarantor of justice. In his eyes, the divine law is the greatest saving blessing.3

An examination of these notions confirms Wojtyla's insistence that the world cannot manifest perfection, but persons can recognize the effect of suffering that brings hope.

Issues of the authorship of the Book of Isaiah are unimportant for Wojtyla since it, like all other sacred scripture, is "a letter from God to his creatures."3 In addition Dei verbum declares: "The divinely revealed realities, which are contained and presented in the text of sacred Scripture, have been written down under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit . . . they have God as their author, and have been handed on as such to the Church

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3Gerhard Von Rad, Translated by D. M. G. Stalker, Old Testament Theology: The Theology of Israel's Prophetic Traditions, 149.

3Blessed Gregory X's (1271-1276) often cited interpretation of the Canon of the Scripture. It has come to mean the rule or standard of interpretation.
herself."3 As pope, Wojtyla has reaffirmed this interpretive stance: "In Sacred Scripture, God speaks to man in a human way. In order to interpret Scripture correctly Wojtyla believes "the reader must be attentive to what the human authors truly wanted to affirm and to what God wanted to reveal to us by their words."37

Walter Brueggemann proposes a similar reading of Isaiah by suggesting a dynamic relationship between the commonly recognized division of the text, namely, First Isaiah 1-39 (eighth century), Second Isaiah 40-55 (sixth century), and Third Isaiah 56-66 (probably the fifth century).38 Brueggemann contends that "the beginning of all social transformation begins in social criticism. Death will come to a society so deeply organized against reality, against God's sovereignty. The judgment anticipated by the prophet is not supernatural. It comes in the very fabric of social experience. For that reason we may speak of social criticism as a mode of prophetic judgment."39


37 Catechism of the Catholic Church, Article 3, III, 109, p 32.


39 Ibid., 93.
The first thirty-nine chapters of Isaiah tell the story of a world filled with immoral and idolatrous men and women. The people of the covenant have sinned; the nation of Judah has sinned; surrounding states and, in fact, the whole of the world have fallen into disrepute. Isaiah's social critique is similar to Wojtyla's criticism of the modern world; individual sinfulness resulting from a myriad of causes—ignorance, neglect, or denial—brings the condition of the world, of each State, of each person, into sharp relief:

Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it. For the indignation of the LORD is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to slaughter.

The Isaiah story emphasizes first the failure of his countrymen. Each has neglected personal responsibility to the covenant—a contract between Yahweh and the Hebrew people delineating a relationship of choseness for the people who, in turn, act in accordance with the Law. Isaiah describes the current state of being as a disease, which corrupts consciousness and shrouds personal commitments to Yahweh. Isaiah tells of "a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters." Public piety is insufficient. Indeed,

"Isaiah, 34:1-2, 681.

"Ibid., 1:4, 659."
dead ritual characterizes the people. The sin of the people is largely a sin against the proper role of the human person. Selfishness, or love directed towards slavish ends, frustrates human happiness. For Wojtyla, Isaiah awakens the process of differentiation and in so doing enlivens the mystery of faith.

Hopeful that repentance may deliver a people from dissolute sinfulness, Isaiah appeals for each to turn towards Yahweh. Judgment may be avoided, and Isaiah's call to proclaim God's message is repeated in the basic theme of this book, which is also found in Isaiah's name: "Salvation is of the Lord."\(^4\)

As the forthcoming analysis of Wojtyla's encyclical reveals, the prophecies of condemnation do not stop at the individual person, although they certainly begin on the personal level. Similar to Isaiah's, Wojtyla's prophetic admonitions move from discrete examinations of individuals towards the critique of political communities:4

\begin{quote}
Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible."
\end{quote}

\(^4\)Ibid., 656.

\(^4\)Ibid., 13-33, 668-681.

\(^4\)Ibid., 13:9 and 11, 668.
Isaiah is insistent upon the reciprocal relationship between the human person and the political community.** Yet, true to the form and content of the judgment speech to individuals, both Wojtyla and the prophet Isaiah consider the systemic characteristics of any political community as exaggerated versions of individual human character.**

One example involving capitalistic states illustrates this connection between the person and the larger society. Wojtyla's comments reveal a connection between hyper-individualism and personal autonomy within the political community that "then becomes self-love carried to the point of contempt for God and neighbor, a self-love which leads to an unbridled affirmation of self-interest and which refuses to be limited by any demand of justice."**

Eric Voegelin referred to the connectedness between the polis and the soul as the anthropological principle.** Wojtyla argues for a similar relationship existing between the community and the human person. The previously mentioned disorder found in capitalistic states predicated upon a distorted application of self-love illustrates

**Cf. Karol Wojtyla, Pilgrimage of Peace: The Collected Speeches of John Paul II In Ireland and the United States.


Wojtyla's reliance upon the anthropological principle. Communist regimes, Wojtyla argues, have also been forced to recognize that inconsistencies between official state policy and human nature can result in institutional collapse. Wojtyla addresses this idea specifically when he writes that under communism individuals lose "the ability to control their own destiny." He witnessed this while living in Poland, and was particularly struck by the communist government's efforts to destroy historical memory and centuries old culture.

Between the prophet's social criticism, and the hope that is offered in that message should the person turn to the truth of existence, lies suffering. Understanding pathos is important to Wojtyla, not only because of the ubiquitous nature of this phenomenon, but also because of what it offers the human person and, subsequently, the community. As mentioned earlier, Wojtyla insists upon the way of the cross, the way of suffering, as the truth of existence. What exactly does that mean? Walter Brueggemann, again, helps to answer that question.

Brueggemann relates human suffering, as addressed in Second Isaiah, to "the voice of a pastoral poet who profoundly acknowledges the pain and grief of his community which has reflected deeply upon and lived through the

"Wojtyla, Talks of John Paul II, 27."
social criticism of Isaiah." The implication made here is as powerful as that suggested earlier by Wojtyla and Isaiah himself. Simply put, there is a felt need for embracing of the pain of the community. Furthermore, only by embracing and acknowledging pathos can the individual move through it, on to hope and possibility. Brueggemann points to Romans 5:3 as evidence of Paul imparting this key insight of the human condition: "Suffering... produces hope."  

We speak readily about Second Isaiah and 'the suffering servant' being the high point of Israel's faith. But that point is not reached from the outside. It is reached by the remarkable insight that suffering which seemed to be only punishment turns out to be vocation, that once the cover of ideology has been broken as it was in the words of Isaiah, or in the events of 587, suffering need not be shunned but can be received as a way to live that opens the future.  

If Wojtyla is able prophetically to turn the human person towards this existential truth, he is just as likely to turn human beings towards the remaining elements of the third way. But, as Brueggemann and Isaiah suggest, this is impossible unless there is first a critique, a social criticism, that clarifies exactly how the world has failed to uphold the covenant. Once that is accomplished, the experiences of the 'suffering servant' can bring the person

50 Brueggemann, "Unity and Dynamic in the Isaiah Tradition," 95.
51 Ibid.
52 Ibid., 97-8.
back to the "old story" that now has "resilient and surprising power." In fact, identification with suffering has a liberating effect in that it frees the imagination to hope. Wojtyla believes in the liberated imagination. He writes about this passage to true freedom through suffering in great detail in his dissertation on the mystic, St. John of the Cross, in particular the chapters on the "dark night of the soul."

Similarly, the prophet Isaiah informs the people that despite certain wickedness, hope and salvation is possible. The possibility requires a proper ordering of things. The relationship between each person and God as creature and creator must be set right. Because of Christian freedom this is a terrible and challenging reality. Wojtyla, nonetheless, believes it is obtainable. "Have no fear! Do not be afraid of God's mystery; do not be afraid of His love; and do not be afraid of man's weakness or of his grandeur!"

Having expressed the hopefulness of a loving God, Isaiah goes on to describe the faithfulness of God to his covenant. Isaiah insists that God will preserve a remnant of true believers and fulfill the promise of salvation and

"Ibid.


deliverance through the Messiah: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Consistent with the third way, Wojtyla also concludes salvation is the proper eschatological end of the human person.

Can man you ask, be sure that he loves? Can he be sure that his will is rooted in good, in the economy of salvation and grace? He can be sure that God wants him to love truly. He can be sure that God will not refuse him his grace, that he desires his salvation. In other words, in the great drama of existence, man, placed between good and evil, can be assured that God wants good to triumph in him, and, through him, in the world. Christ is the surest guarantee of this divine will to save."

Isaiah and Wojtyla both employ the prophetic voice as a means of individual conversion, recognizing the correlation between personal experience and the communal experience. They both point out the particular failings of the individual, but move towards hope. Finally, to secure a better way, to call people towards truth, Isaiah and Wojtyla advance the idea of salvation.

For Wojtyla as Isaiah, hope lies in the ontological nature of the human person. If the being can be stirred to concern himself with what he is, that same person may begin to order and act within the context of that truth as he

"Isaiah 9:6, 665.

'ST Froussard and John Paul II, Be Not Afraid, 131.
interacts with others. In effect, because of attention towards first principles, the individual begins to understand what he is not and if, as Wojtyla believes, the personalistic norm and the Incarnation are true, then a new economic movement is possible. "Man is free and therefore responsible (emphasis mine). His is a personal and social responsibility, a responsibility before God, a responsibility which is his greatness."

It is the prophet that is to bring the human person to the truth. Wojtyla, in fact, describes this process as the pursuit of truth." An exegesis of the Wojtyla's encyclical letters reveals a personal attempt to get at that truth. Wojtyla seeks a means of securing the truth, which is ultimately salvation, all the while directing attention towards economic and social justice in the world. It is the same message that Wojtyla has written about throughout his lifetime.

Wojtyla's/John Paul II's Encyclicals as Prophecy

Examples of Wojtyla's prophetic appeal are evident in his papal encyclicals. These letters are decidedly unique and, in the pattern established early by this Pope, plainly personal. Contrary to the tradition of papal encyclicals, Wojtyla writes in the first person singular, taking direct

"John Paul II, Crossing the Threshold of Hope, "Does Eternal Life Exist?", 180.

"Wojtyla, Sign of Contradiction, 118.
responsibility for the text, reaching beyond the sterile and professional first person plural style of the magisterium.

The message in the text is obviously Wojtyla's. The familiar presentation of ideas, the pattern of presentation, the directness, and the specific word choice all belong to a well documented literary past. These markers appear early in his career and continue to this very day. Once again, this is a considerable change from when it was difficult to determine authorship between the pope and the curia. In fact, reading Wojtyla's current encyclical letters is much like listening to his public speeches, reading his class lectures or homilies from years past. Finally, these encyclicals, specifically those that deal with any policy or plan affecting the human person, always begin with a discussion or elaboration of Wojtyla's philosophical anthropology. There is no doubt that Wojtyla is talking about the personal norm.

As prophetic messages, these encyclicals fall within the tradition of the judgment speech to individuals. The arguments for the third way are grounded in an individual appeal for righteousness and justice based upon Christian


"The term curia is used in the Church to mean the center of government and includes all administrative groups together with the personnel."
love. The encyclicals are overtly political because they attempt to direct both the individual and community towards a preferential social order.

The examples employed to demonstrate Wojtyla's effectiveness in carrying out a prophetic appeal are those encyclicals that directly address economic issues. What follows is an analysis of these elements as they appear in Centesimus Annus. This encyclical collects and organizes Wojtyla's literary and scholarly contributions on economic justice made over a period of fifty years. The encyclical on work and social justice is written by Wojtyla on the hundredth anniversary of Leo XIII's ground-breaking analysis of modern economic and social realities, Rerum Novarum.

Wojtyla begins promoting the elements of the third way by suggesting that the Church, as the objective moral guide for humanity, offers freedom to the world community through this plan. The encyclical calls for a systematic evaluation of each person and of various economic distributive plans, particularly liberalism and communism.

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2John Paul II, Encyclical Letter (Centesimus Annus), 1991. This particular encyclical is the single most important source for understanding Wojtyla's economic plan. Although all of Wojtyla's papal encyclicals reference different elements of the third way, especially the human person, Centesimus Annus contains a comprehensive treatments of the person, the family, the state, and salvation.

3Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter (Rerum Novarum), 1891.
Wojtyla writes to all people who search for a "new and authentic theory and praxis of liberation":

The Church offers not only her social doctrine and, in general, her teaching about the human person redeemed in Christ, but also her concrete commitment and material assistance in the struggle against marginalization and suffering.*

Wojtyla writes that the purpose of *Centesimus Annus* is threefold: first, to discover anew the richness of the fundamental principles formulated for dealing with the condition of workers; second, to consider the "new things" (social and economic) that characterize the final decade of this century; and, finally, to "look to the future" towards the third millennium of the Christian era.* He turns to the tradition established by the individual judgment speech to empower this message. The individual appeal ensures each person that it is for individual care and individual defense that the Church investigates "new things" in the "one hundredth year" anniversary.*

As a document that attempts to relate the universal notion of justice to citizens of the twentieth century, *Centesimus Annus* has much to say about economic life. Wojtyla is quick to point out, however, that while economic issues may dominate the discussion of justice, "economic


activity is indeed but one sector in a great variety of human activities.⁷ According to Wojtyla, overemphasizing the role of economic value as a measure of success is the problem. Both capitalism and communism are grounded in the idea of material worth; Wojtyla offers an alternative prophetic appeal equal, he believes, to the power imposed by these two economic systems. He believes this appeal is not only necessary for a better civil society, it is mandatory if souls are to be saved. Once again, Wojtyla is speaking as a prophet. With a prophetic salvific message in mind, Wojtyla addresses the means of production and distribution as they are understood in the twentieth century.

Wojtyla faults capitalism and communism for promulgating an unbalanced conceptualization of the human person. Reiterating the dissonance between the most influential economic plans of the twentieth century and the human person, Wojtyla addresses one of the problems associated with the message-transmission procedure and the overwhelming amount of information available to contemporary society. Consistent with the prophetic tradition in which he stands, Wojtyla believes that the essential elements of the third way must be stated and re-stated in a consistent manner. He concludes that both capitalism and socialism are moral failures in that they,

⁷Ibid., 46.
respectively, neglect the principle of solidarity and the principle of subsidiarity."

The power of the prophetic speech to individuals is most apparent in Wojtyla's discussion of solidarity and subsidiarity. Wojtyla recognizes the reality and power of liberal democracy. It is impossible to overstate the power and attraction freedom has, especially for those who have been politically and economically repressed. Wojtyla's own experience in Poland provides ample evidence of his personal knowledge. Wojtyla is aware that liberal democracy, in the words of Francis Fukuyama, is experiencing "an unabashed victory." The trouble with this victory, as Wojtyla sees it, is the elevation of a civil theology void of Christocentric morality.

The notions "solidarity" and "subsidiarity" translate into recognizable prophetic appeals, specifically the individual judgment speech. Wojtyla believes that the effect of these principles corresponds to human nature and, because his appeal is a natural one, individuals will respond to it.

For Wojtyla solidarity is a deep political reality existing within the human person. Solidarity is an aspect of the human as a naturally social creature. While the person must have the liberty to act within the context of

"Ibid., Introduction, 24.

his human dignity, he also needs others and the support of the community, understood primarily as security. Wojtyla intends for the principle of solidarity to imply the direct defense of the weakest parties in a civil society, promoting a collective conscience and consciousness. The principle of solidarity literally places limits on the autonomy of the parties who will determine working conditions, wages, health care, or any other social or economic condition, forcing these powers to recognize and help the poor and the uneducated. Solidarity is community.

The State must [also] contribute directly and according to the principle of solidarity, by defending the weakest, by placing certain limits on the autonomy of officials and by ensuring in every case the necessary minimum support for the unemployed worker.70

The principle of subsidiarity, for Wojtyla, suggests that a community of a higher order should not interfere in the internal life of a community of a lower order, depriving, so to speak, the latter of its functions. Freedom is necessary for the third way, as it is necessary for salvation. Wojtyla supports this natural impulse, appealing to the individual's instinctive desire for liberty. Here is localized freedom at work.

Regarding the principle of subsidiarity, while autonomy is protected, it also allows for the rewards of talent and hard work, but Wojtyla is quick to point out the

70Ibid.
needs of the less fortunate. Indeed, the most successful have an obligation to the lower social and economic orders. Part of this help involves coordination of low level economic activity with those activities of the rest of society, always with a view to the common good.

The State must contribute to the achievement of these goals [authentic culture of work] both directly and indirectly. Indirectly and according to the principle of subsidiarity, by creating favorable conditions for the free exercise of economic activity, which will lead to abundant opportunities for employment and sources of wealth.7

In his prophetic appeal, Wojtyla illustrates once again how far from the mark he believes capitalism and communism have moved. Both embrace confused conceptions of human nature. Perhaps most importantly for Wojtyla, they neglect the redemptive elements of human value and transcendence.

At the heart of every culture lies the attitude a person takes to the greatest mystery: the mystery of God. Different cultures are basically different ways of facing the question of the meaning of personal existence. When this question is eliminated, the culture and moral life of nations are corrupted.7

It is clear in the encyclicals that Wojtyla judges individuals and, subsequently, modern states in regard to how they treat the human person. His judgement insists

71John Paul II, Encyclical Letter (Centesimus Annus), 40.
72Ibid., 34.
that the inherent dignity of the human person be a fundamental component of the laws, institutions, and informal moral codes of a community. When that does not occur, the political order is flawed. The flawed order has the potential to produce human beings devoid of crucial characteristics that make them fully human. Wojtyla turns to the question of work to demonstrate this malformation in a concrete and objective manner. Human productive or creative work is a meaningful part of the living situation of any person. The third way offers an alternative definition of work that Wojtyla believes is necessary for human happiness. The most striking component added to a discussion of work is the notion of salvation.

Wojtyla makes his point by pointing to work as it is understood in a capitalistic economy. Under capitalism, he argues, the worker is motivated by ambition. Accumulation of wealth with no other end save accumulation itself exacerbates the potential for selfishness and sin in the worker. The result is greed, cultural isolation, and unjust economic practices:

The danger of treating work as a special kind of "merchandise," or as an impersonal "force" needed for production (the expression "work force" is, in fact, in common use) always exists, especially when the whole way of looking at the question of economics is marked by the premises of materialistic economism.  

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Socialism, "understood as the ideology of scientific socialism and communism, which professes to act as the spokesman for the working class and the worldwide proletariat," is equally unfit to authentically embrace the notion of work or the worker himself." Attentive to a socialist tradition that deludes individuals and communities into a false consciousness, Wojtyla criticizes the optimism of Rousseau and others who argued that "Man was/is born free, and everywhere he is in chains." He writes that "incalculable damage is inevitably done [by socialism] throughout the economic process, not only economic damage but first and foremost damage to man." It is a lack of freedom that causes Wojtyla to criticize socialism. That, and the incalculable loss of individual human potential, cause him great concern.

Neither capitalism nor socialism possess a conception of work consistent with Wojtyla's personalistic norm. Where the personalistic norm manifest in Christian love fails, there is no possibility for justice. Indeed, where any economic system fails to encourage the development of the fullest human potential, justice cannot exist. If this

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"Ibid., 27.


"Pope John Paul II, Encyclical Letter (Laborem Exercens), 38."
were not the case, Wojtyla argues, the desperate economic conditions that mark the twentieth century would simply not be. As it is, Wojtyla focuses upon a prophetic message of love in an effort to awaken people to their potential and each political community to an appropriate sense of responsibility for the citizen.

Wojtyla seeks justice in the world, writing that "love for others, and in the first place love of the poor, in whom the Church sees Christ himself, is made concrete in the promotion of justice." Communal justice, demonstrating a proper conception of human dignity, Wojtyla's "dynamization," ensures the value of the human person.

It is a strict duty of justice and truth not to allow fundamental human needs to remain unsatisfied, and not to allow those burdened by such needs to perish. Even prior to the logic of a fair exchange of goods and the forms of justice appropriate to it, there exists something which is due to the person because he is a person, by reason of his lofty dignity.

The prophetic implications of Wojtyla's message suggest that through the continued neglect of the personalistic norm, economic and social injustice and suffering will continue to increase. He believes that because of the allure for self-enrichment or power the


"Ibid., Chapter IV, "Private Property And The Universal Destination Of Material Goods," 49.
Church must respond to her duty "to speak out on work from the viewpoint of its human value and of the moral order to which it belongs, and she sees this as one of her important tasks within the service that she renders to the evangelical message as a whole." Once again the notion of salvation, the final element of the third way, informs and, in a sense, concludes this prophetic message. For Wojtyla, any discussion of economic justice, in human work for example, is also a discussion of salvation.

One final look at the four elements confirms the consistency of his economic plan over time. Regarding the question of economic justice, these encyclicals are the most current textual sources for analyzing Wojtyla's third way. The political content and import are more apparent in these letters, not only because of Wojtyla's repeated use of prophetic judgment as a directing device, but also because of the authority and temporal power of the Vatican City State.

In these documents Wojtyla restates his primary idea: "this human person is the primary route that the Church must travel in fulfilling her mission, the way traced out by Christ himself." Failure to accept this reality and to attribute to the people the justice appropriate to their

"Ibid., Elements for a Spirituality of Work, 56.

"Ibid., Chapter VI, "The Person Is The Way Of The Church," 75.
condition, increases sin in the world and discourages the potential for political order.

When man does not recognize in himself and in others the value and grandeur of the human person, he effectively deprives himself of the possibility of benefitting from his humanity and of entering into that relationship of solidarity and communion with others for which God created him.  

As a prophetic appeal for Wojtyla's third way, Centessimus Annus extends the existential recognition of the personalistic norm to include responsibility of promoting and defending this idea in the world. In the prophetic tradition, Wojtyla moves towards a judgment against political societies, calling upon these communities to join the "movement for the defense of the human person, and the safeguarding of human dignity."  

Recalling Wojtyla's economic plan, which includes person, family, civil society, and salvation, it is apparent in these encyclicals that each element is inextricably connected with each other and with Christian love. Wojtyla suggests that love, which is God, connects these elements and, at the center of all "lies the attitude a person takes to the greatest mystery: the mystery of God."  

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"Ibid., Chapter IV, "Private Property And The Universal Destination Of Material Goods," 58.


Regarding the family, Wojtyla argues, "wages should be sufficient to enable him [the worker] to support himself, his wife and his children."*4 Wojtyla intends for the person to have the opportunity to conduct himself "naturally," without the fear of unwarranted economic deprivation. The family is the second element of the third way, and it is the "fundamental structure" by which the person participates in authentic "human ecology."*5

Wojtyla writes,

The first and fundamental structure for "human ecology" is the family, in which someone receives his first formative ideas about truth and goodness, and learns what it means to love and to be loved, and thus what it actually means to be a person.*

Wojtyla recalls the primary nurturing role of the family, understood as a "family founded on marriage."*7 As such, he echoes observations made regarding this social institution twenty years earlier.*8 As demonstrated initially in Love and Responsibility and, then revisited later in the encyclicals, Wojtyla argues for a multi-dimensional person, a being that is conscious of individual


*In Centesimus Annus, Wojtyla defines "human ecology" as the balance of social structures, educational institutions, and environment conditions.


*Ibid.

*Cf. Wojtyla, Love and Responsibility.
liberty and attentive to the responsibility associated with freedom. Simply put, there are certain truths from which a person is unable to escape. This world-openness correlates to decisions and choices made in the world. One example is found in marriage and in the family.

Augustine's maxim "Love and do what you will," does not obviate familial or personal responsibility, particularly considering Wojtyla's definition of "love." One scholar writing with Wojtyla considers,

Many Christians are ready to confront the Holy Father with St. Augustine's famous words, which takes [sic] the place of moral teaching and sometimes even civil law for many a person. But many people turn Augustine's remark upside down and, because they do as they wish, imagine that they love.*9

Wojtyla then turns towards a critique of the state, hoping, it seems, to advance the third way by pointing out shortcomings of contemporary political institutions. In fact, the majority of the text in Centesimus Annus deals with the third element of Wojtyla's economic plan. It is within the state, in the context of community, that the person and the family find themselves, and hopefully fulfill their social dimension. It is in the state, since that institution is responsible for the distribution of scarce resources, that Wojtyla's economic plan becomes overtly political.

"Frossard, Be Not Afraid, 131."
It cannot be overemphasized that each element of Wojtyla's economic plan is connected—each element is a manifestation of the personalistic norm. Wojtyla encourages all states to comply with this same reality. The Pope calls upon those in authority to evaluate laws and institutions from this perspective, arguing for the "legitimate autonomy of the democratic order." The state has the temporal power to inhibit or encourage salvation. Wojtyla feels the Church has a responsibility to contribute "to the political order—[and recommend] her vision of the dignity of the person revealed in all its fullness in the mystery of the Incarnate Word."

Wojtyla further suggests that the state ensure certain rights, therefore providing for the person a solid foundation from which to satisfy personal and familial needs and the time to respond to the demands of the community. He cites the "right to life," the "right to develop," the "right to live," and the "right to freedom," as examples of the necessary rights protected by the state. The state must also encourage and lawfully establish religious freedom, "understood as the right to

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91 Ibid.

live in the truth of one's faith and in conformity with one's transcendent dignity as a person.""

With political rights ensured by the state, Wojtyla also recommends specific economic obligations that the state must fulfill. He writes of the role of the state in the economic sector, insisting that this component of civil society also adhere to Christian principles. The state must not function as a contradiction—one pursuing a public good, fundamentally understood as Christian and, simultaneously, seeking private economic advantage void of any moral content. The state acting as the formal expression of individuals must attempt to ensure solidarity or friendship. The state is the person writ large; just as the differentiated existence of the personalistic norm posits a normative positioning of free will cognizant of the creator, the state must reflect a similar disposition.

In order to overcome today's widespread individualistic mentality, what is required is a concrete commitment to solidarity and charity, beginning in the family with the mutual support of husband and wife and the care which the different generations give to one another."

How is this proper ordering done? First, Wojtyla believes the state must "guarantee individual freedom and private property as well as a stable currency and efficient

"Ibid.

"Ibid., 49:70.
public services." The principle at work here is subsidiarity, the idea that different levels within the community contribute to the others without offense or unnecessary interference. It is imperative that the person live and work in an environment where support comes from sources close at hand. Here, Wojtyla addresses the problem of economic paternalism. Governmental paternalism inhibits the autonomy of individuals. A secure environment permits each person to enjoy labor and to work with confidence knowing that each day brings a predictable and reliable expectation of safety and security.

Second, the state should "oversee and direct the exercise of human rights in the economic sector." He notes that the primary responsibility of ensuring human rights belongs to institutions (formal and informal) within the state. But, according to Wojtyla, a government with absolute control is likely to restrict liberty and economic ingenuity. The state should correctly assume the position most appropriate to its power, creating situations and stabilizing economic conditions that encourage or stimulate business activity—solidarity in practice.

Acting within the context of solidarity, the state has the right, indeed the responsibility, to intervene in the market to correct what it perceives as economic injustice

"Ibid.

"Ibid., 68."
or pernicious activity. Wojtyla considers this right to act necessary for achieving order and economic stability. The state may intervene to discourage monopolies or oligarchies, and to exercise a "substitute function," the notion that the state may perform certain tasks normally provided by the private sector when social sectors or business systems are too weak or are just getting under way, and are not equal to the task at hand." The state must recognize that because it has the right to intervene and to substitute in certain cases, it must, whenever possible, refrain from offending the principle of subsidiarity. This idea ensures that the internal life of various levels within civic order are able to maintain their autonomy.

The emphasis placed upon the state in Centesimus Annus ensures that this component of the third way does not escape the criticism and prophetic consequences advanced by Christian personalism. In short, because the citizens within the state love, the state's activity is loving. All of the characteristics, positive and negative, associated with the human person manifest themselves in the community. Accordingly, political leaders and citizens alike must look for the inevitable weaknesses found in human nature and address them. Failure to perceive the notion of the state as something more than an arbitrary collection of persons

"Cf. Ibid."
will result in economic and political conditions which do not support Wojtyla's Christocentric eschatology. There is a spiritual component to the state, and it must act accordingly. Economic reality is personalistic reality, and a disruption of this truth inherent to human existence will, ultimately, enliven the potential for damnation.

A person is alienated if he refuses to transcend himself and to live the experience of self-giving and of the formation of an authentic human community oriented toward his final destiny, which is God. A society is alienated if its forms of social organization, production and consumption make it more difficult to offer this gift of self and to establish this solidarity between people."

So, as Wojtyla's third way culminates in salvation, so does the prophetic appeal found within the text of Centesimus Annus. What will happen if the world neglects this idea? Wojtyla believes it leads to nothing less than personal, familial, and communal disorder in the world, and death and damnation in the next. There is, however, a viable alternative. Wojtyla believes and speaks of it prophetically, calling for nations to act on behalf of what is just. More pointedly, each person is similarly called. When nations and individuals respond in the manner prescribed by Wojtyla, the human need for salvation that results from this sort of activity will set them free."

"Ibid., 40:59.

Wojtyla as priest and prophet for the Church will not stop in the evangelization of the truth of salvation. Perhaps most importantly, Wojtyla believes in the hope and creative potential of each individual. As a defender of that dignity, Wojtyla writes that the Church can never abandon humanity—"this human person is the primary route that the Church must travel in fulfilling her mission, the way traced out by Christ himself, the way that leads invariably through the mystery of the Incarnation and the Redemption." Salvation is the mystery upon which Wojtyla concludes his prophetic appeal:

Therefore, in order that the demands of justice may be met, and attempts to achieve this goal may succeed, what is needed is the gift of grace, a gift which comes from God. Grace, in cooperation with human freedom, constitutes that mysterious presence of God in history which is Providence.101

100 Ibid., "The Person Is The Way Of The Church," 53:75.
101 Ibid., 59:80.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

Officially, John Paul II works and teaches alone. Inside the Church his authority is unquestioned. There is no public response from Wojtyla to his challengers and any private exchange is inaccessible to scholars. Critics of the third way operate in a unique environment. As an article in the New Yorker puts it, "The Pope is in a dialogue with no one." The hierarchical nature of the Church ensures his authority. "This loyal submission of the will and intellect must be given, in a special way, to the authentic teaching authority of the Roman Pontiff, even when he does not speak ex cathedra." When considering faith or morals, the pope proclaims absolutely: "For that reason his definitions are rightly said to be irreformable by their very nature and not by reason of the assent of the Church; and as a consequence they are in no way in need of the approval of others, and do not admit of appeal to any other tribunal."

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1 The New Yorker, November 1995, 22.
3 Ibid. Emphasis mine., 380.

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Wojtyla's autonomy and the institutional setting in which it exists make a critical appraisal of his economic pronouncements extraordinarily difficult. Indeed, the reaction to the third way within the Catholic tradition, most especially among the laity, can be characterized as confused and neglectful. Citizens of developed nations are particularly distant from the recognition that capitalism often contradicts Catholicism. Wojtyla's economic message is without doubt heard by millions of Catholics, but there is reason to believe that its impact is negligible when these people act in the marketplace.

John Paul II's trouble in this regard begins with the monumental task he has set for himself: placing "spiritual hands" around "earthly hammers." The reality is that some within the Catholic corpus mysticum question certain moral and spiritual assumptions that Wojtyla considers non-negotiable. The most obvious example involves Wojtyla's insistence upon the personalistic norm and, subsequently, a Christocentric eschatological perspective. Wojtyla and the third way rely upon natural law, a particular philosophical anthropology which includes notions of original sin and freedom, divine grace and love, reason, and an inclination towards communal living. These moral assumptions, and others that constitute Catholic dogma, are fundamental to the logic and naturalness of the third way. Because of his

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role as the high priest of the Church, Wojtyla cannot waver from these basic assumptions. In fact, "truthful living," as Wojtyla describes it, is grounded in these assumptions—assumptions that he would prefer to consider as objective realities. Again, many Catholics respectfully disagree.

If Catholics react to the third way with a sense of confusion or neglect, how probable is it that the rest of the world would view John Paul II's economic plan and the assumptions on which it is grounded with any degree of seriousness? Clearly, from the non-Catholic and non-Christian perspectives, papal claims of priestly power are either absurd or unbelievable. Vittorio Messori, who interviewed John Paul II in the recent best-seller Crossing the Threshold of Hope, put the matter quite nicely when he said to Wojtyla: "confronted with you [the Pope]—as with each of your predecessors and successors—one must wager, as Pascal said, that you are either the mysterious living proof of the Creator of the universe or the central protagonist of a millennial Illusion."*

Yet, while he is a priest, and the leader of one of the world's largest religions, John Paul also assumes the mantle of prophet, a social critic, one who seeks to universalize the perennial questions of existence and who calls the world to justice and righteousness. The attention of the world to this prophetic voice is surely limited by the priestly context in which it is uttered, but it is also limited by the ambiguity of that voice. Quite

*John Paul II, Crossing the Threshold of Hope, 4.

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often, the criticism of Wojtyla's economic plan is directed at the ambiguous language and concepts employed to establish and explain this it, to say nothing of the basis of its prophetic appeal. The dramatic differences between recommendations made by Latin American Bishops and Bishops in Eastern Europe are evidence of this problem. The issue of interpretation is significant: the third way can take different forms in different cultures. Thus, confusion over exactly what is implied by economic justice often evokes claims of ambiguity, contradiction and irrelevance.

These contradictions and the limitations adversely affect the reception and subsequent application of the third way by both Catholics and formal political communities outside the Catholic tradition. Anyone who seeks a universal economic doctrine within the context of Wojtyla's writing on economic justice will be disappointed. Furthermore, any strictly rational, technical examination of the third way will find the plan wanting. Perhaps this is why Wojtyla's plan has been marginalized by most secular economic theorists.7 But this observation may say as much about the contemporary state of the world as it does about the plan's viability.

7See for example, The Moral Nation, edited by Bruce Nichols and Gil Loescher (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995); George Parkin Grant, Technology and Justice (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994); Born of the Poor: The Latin American Church since Medellin (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995); Catholic Social Thought and the New World Order, edited by Oliver F. Williams, C.S.C. and John W. Houck (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995).
Nevertheless, a critical appraisal of Wojtyla's economic utterances is both possible and necessary. That appraisal begins within the tradition and focuses on the theological and philosophical grounding that Wojtyla provides for his economic plan. Inevitably, it must move outside the Catholic tradition and confront the secular world's apperception of a Catholic prophet. Then, it will necessarily proceed to specific interpretations and appraisal of the economics within the plan.

**Theological and Philosophical Criticism**

Two perspectives constitute the theological and philosophical criticism that is directed towards Wojtyla's economic plan. The first perspective centers on the relationship between faith and works and the corresponding roles of sin and grace in the liturgy of the Church. The second involves the debate between Christian and secular humanists.

The question of the superiority of either faith and the contemplative life or work and the active life centers on sin. Sin is the consequence of the fall of the first man and woman. The consequences of this first sin are death, concupiscence or the rebellion of the person's lower appetites against reason and will, along with a darkening of the intellect. In the Church there are two not altogether complementary conceptions of sin, the Augustinian and the Thomistic. Critics of Wojtyla argue
that he neglects the Augustinian in favor of the Thomistic. What is at stake in the debate is exactly how a person can and should act in the world.

Augustine, the "Father" of the doctrine of original sin, focuses upon a depiction of the human person as "so deeply enmeshed in sin that his only hope of salvation is forgiving and redeeming grace that appeared in Jesus Christ." Sin is a fundamental characteristic of the human condition, attributable to Adam the first man. Removal from that sinful condition requires an act of unmerited love brought by God. Any identification of love and grace with human action is an illusion that clouds the meaning of grace; Augustine clearly rejects any identification of grace with works. "Between bondage and freedom, between sin and grace there is no middle ground, i.e., no natural dynamic of grace inclining man to the good."10

In this predicament, is a person free to act? Augustine distinguishes between true freedom, libertas, coming from the love of God, and freedom of choice, liberum arbitrium, linked to the voluntary nature of choice. Because of Adam's sin, no person is capable of freely

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1For a history of the doctrine of original sin particularly in the Roman Catholic tradition, see: G.M. Lukken, Original Sin in the Roman Liturgy (Leiden: Brill, 1973).


10Ibid., 15.
loving and serving God. But as a being of self-love, the person does retain freedom of choice. Each person sins willingly; each person is bound to sin. Augustine speaks of this as the bondage of the free will.

The reality that is intended by these seemingly paradoxical statements can also be described in terms of the two opposite roots of human activity. Although man sins voluntarily and in that sense freely, this free will does not provide a base outside the sinful direction of man's being but is taken within this directedness. Hence, this active, misdirected free will provides no platform from which to redirect man's life. [emphasis added]

The Augustinian account of sin leaves the person without the possibility of choosing God unless chosen by God. Pessimism regarding the sinful person is Augustine's penultimate word. His last word, that some will experience everlasting life, is nonetheless guarded since salvation is arrived at by grace.

The political effect of Augustine's doctrine of original sin is evident in the monastic pattern of living that pervaded the middle ages. Monasticism, characterized by asceticism and a life of self-denial, was encouraged by the Church as a way to perfect individuals in the love of God. The "golden age" of monasticism dates from the tenth through the thirteenth century. Not until Thomas Aquinas (d. 1275), or perhaps St. Anselm (d. 1109), did monasticism

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12Ernie Gross, This Day In Religion (New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 1990), 352.

13Vandervelde, Original Sin, 18.
as an idea face critical assessment from the Mendicant Orders.¹⁴ The controversy was over the highest form of life: prayer or activity in the world. Certainly Aquinas' departure from the Benedictine Monastery to the Dominican Order cannot be over estimated here, nor can his writings on the benefit of work, particularly "preaching and teaching."¹⁵ Nonetheless, Augustine's influence was still felt, particularly following the Reformation and, of course, throughout the Protestant tradition.

Wojtyla's insistence upon work as a hallmark of the individual and the community directly confronts Augustine's pessimistic and pietistic world view. How can Wojtyla proclaim a third way when the person is so burdened by sin?¹⁶ Talk of solidarity and subsidiarity is lost on those who embrace the Augustinian "stance toward life, a

¹⁴Mendicant orders include the "begging friars" or those who divested themselves of all earthly goods and supported themselves by appealing to the charity of alms. This development in the religious life was begun officially by St. Francis of Assisi (1181 to 1226) and St. Dominic of old Castile (1170 to 1221). Thomas Aquinas choose to leave the Benedictine's and follow more closely what he believed was the model established by Christ. That model included poverty and action in the world.

¹⁵St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, 2:2, q 188, art. 6, 7, 8.

¹⁶For an interesting discussion of the relative merits of the faith vs. work perspective see the following: Julius H. Rubin, Religious Melancholy and Protestant Experience in America (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond, 1700-1900, edited by Mark A. Noll, David W. Bebington and George A. Ralyk (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).
grieving over the loss of God's love, and an obsession with the spiritual itinerary of conversion."17

The religious melancholiac desired, above all else, to foster, through godly living and the practice of piety, an inward devotional life marked by a warm, personal relationship with God.18

From the Augustinian perspective, Wojtyla asks too much of human beings and of government. All are bound by sin and most are incapable of doing anything about it. The few, the chosen, are saved by God's predetermined grace. Government can do nothing more than create order. Altering God's plan for humanity is beyond the scope of human possibility. In this environment, it is argued, the Church should focus upon returning to the faith symbolized in the liturgy.

John Kobler, one of those critics concerned with Wojtyla's pre-occupation with the world, asks: "When was the last time you read an encyclical or major papal statement on the Liturgy?"19 He continues by suggesting that however meaningful the liturgy is to Catholics, John Paul II has failed to elevate it in official communication. The liturgical worship of the Church is made up of the sacrifice of the Mass, the Sacraments, the Divine Office,


18Ibid. Emphasis mine.

and the sacramentals. Kobler writes: "The postconciliar concerns of John Paul II have been doctrinal and moral issues, the Blessed Mother, suffering, the family, work, world peace, technology, economics, the rights of man, and a new Christian anthropology."\(^{20}\) Wojtyla insists that experience dictates the hierarchical order of things, including what constitutes human nature. Obviously the world as experienced by a person is crucial to that person's understanding of himself. However, Kobler concludes, the Pope is too highly involved and focused upon practical resolution of problems in the world, and thereby neglects human spirituality.

Kobler argues that Wojtyla should use the weapons of traditional theology, focusing upon the liturgy and the ritual of the Church, in his evangelical quest. Busy pursuing social justice in various United Nations Conferences, Wojtyla is competing with secularists on their own terms. As Kobler sees it, the world and the human person in it have not changed. Only through grace communicated in divine worship and the sacraments can a person be persuaded to live as a Christian.

The alternative to lonely self-perfection is presented by Thomas Aquinas who introduces an interpretation of original sin that softens the Augustinian insistence upon pietism and, instead of connecting sin with concupiscence, defines it as the absence of justice. Aquinas alters our understanding of sin in several ways: First, the emphasis

\(^{20}\)Ibid.
of the doctrine of original sin shifts from enslavement to sin and the need for redeeming grace to the reality of supernatural grace and the negative effects of its loss upon the human person. Aquinas characterizes human desire as the need for grace, a need that cannot be filled by things of the world. Second, sin is understood as a disorder of human nature. Third, and this is the clearest break with Augustine, original sin is itself understood as wholly negative—a condition of privation.

The Augustinian emphasis on original sin obviates all conceptions of original justice.

When Adam rebelled against God, the supernatural gift of grace was withdrawn and the interior harmony of his nature was lost. Consequently, the nature that he passes on lacks its original internal harmony as well as its supernatural submission to God. This is the condition of original sin in which all men are born.

Original sin prevents the person from seeking a proper end, the virtuous life. Obviously Thomas views the effect of sin as a considerable one, and the shift from Augustine is significant, particularly when considering the results of human action in history. The Thomistic view emphasizes the notion that human nature lost its "harmony" in the fall. Grace reestablishes the connection between God and the person by healing human nature. The person is put back together. Once healed, although this condition is admittedly precarious, a person is capable of acting in

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Ibid., 30.
genuine freedom, the libertas that Augustine wrote about. Newly liberated, the person sees more clearly the dissonance between himself and the world. One important part of mediating that dissonance involves good works. Wojtyla clearly believes that it is incumbent upon every Christian to act justly. Moreover, he believes that we ought to be concerned with the consequences of our actions. Wojtyla characterizes this relationship between human potentiality and actuality as a fearful place in one sense.

From the Holy Scriptures we also know that this fear--the origin of wisdom--has nothing in common with the fear of a slave. It is filial fear, not servile fear! Christ wants us to have fear of all that is an offense against God. He wants this because He has come into the world in order to set men free for freedom. Man is set free through love, because love is the source par excellence of all that is good. Every sign of servile fear vanishes before the awesome power of the All-powerful and All-Present One. Its place is taken by filial concern, in order that God's will be done on earth.3

While sensitive to the Augustinian tradition and the self-perfection ideal that characterized the medieval Church, Wojtyla is strongly inclined towards the Mendicants' point of view. For Wojtyla, the Thomistic view emphasizing, as it does, the need for action in the world satisfies the example made by Jesus Christ. It is apparent, however, that Wojtyla vacillates between the Augustinian and the Thomistic view of sin. Thomas Aquinas resolves a similar dilemma in his consideration of the "overflowing" effect of prayer: Piety and prayer is

3Wojtyla, Crossing the Threshold of Hope, 226-7.
important in that it brings the person to action and, then, back again to prayer. 24

Despite Wojtyla's intellectual leaning towards the Thomistic view of sin and action, there are those who believe that Wojtyla is not aggressive enough in addressing the problems of the world. There is nothing more instructive of this ambiguity than Wojtyla's stormy relations with liberation theology. Some of the most aggressive criticism of Wojtyla comes from contemporary liberation theologians. And while Wojtyla may be sympathetic to the plight of the worker, he is not supportive of liberation theology. The attraction of Wojtyla's thought to liberation theologians can be explained in good part to his sympathy towards the worker. Indeed, Wojtyla considers himself to be a worker.

As you know, I, too, have been a worker: for a short period of my life, during the last world conflict I, too, had direct experience of factory work. I know, therefore, what the commitment of daily toil in the employment of others means. I know how heavy and monotonous it is; I know the needs of the workers and their just demands and legitimate aspirations. And I know how necessary it is that work should never be alienating and frustrating, but should always correspond to man's superior spiritual dignity. 25

Wojtyla's opposition to liberation theology involves its proximity to Marxism and the issue of salvation. For the liberation theologian, salvation is secondary to


immediate mundane justice. The principal tendencies of liberation theology are economic and a political, explained in a manner that would reunite religion and politics. One noteworthy commentator and observer of liberation theology characterizes the movement in this manner:

Liberation is a term which expresses a new posture in Latin America. Among more elite people today, what we have called a new awareness of Latin American reality is making headway. They believe that there can be authentic development for Latin America only if there is liberation from the domination exercised by the greatest capitalist countries, especially the most powerful, the United States of America. This liberation also implies a confrontation with these groups' natural allies, their compatriots who control national power structure. It is becoming more evident that Latin America will not emerge from their present status except by means of a profound transformation, a social revolution."

As a way of resolving many social and economic problems, liberation theology starts with those who are overwhelmed by poverty and incapable of experiencing freedom. Father Guitierrez's remarks at the Catholic Theological Association's meeting are typical:

Theology must come from the poor. The Church needs the poor's reflection. They know death on an intimate level no intellectual can know. The starting point of liberation theology is commitment to the poor, the "non-person". Its ideas come from the victim. Commitment to the poor is the very place for spiritual experience. In


27 Gustavo Guitierrez, 88.
commitment to the poor, one encounters God."

Liberation Theology, then, seeks two essential, seemingly competing, goals: eternal salvation and worldly economic justice. By improving the lot of the poor the human family will become more Christian. Recognizing intrinsic human value is the first step in gaining economic justice for all people regardless of social circumstances. God is liberated from elite manipulation; the people of God are as well.

Liberation theology has an economic and a political mission. "Here, then, the newly proclaimed critical function of the Church is to be found. The function most characteristic of religion is to align itself on the side of the poor, explaining why they are dependent and what they must do about it."29

What appears to bother Wojtyla most about liberation theologians is their active, even radical interpretations of Catholic social doctrine. Nonetheless, liberation theologians continue to rely upon conceptions of Christian personalism to justify their political positions, and Wojtyla is, subsequently, put into a difficult position—a position made more problematic by the Marxist elements of liberation theology. Much of the rhetoric of liberation theologians prior to its politicization is strikingly similar to Wojtyla's personalistic norm. Gutierrez puts it

28Schall, Liberation Theology in Latin America, 36-7.

29Ibid., 39.
this way: "It is impossible to situate ourselves in the situation of the non-person and not carry forward a conflictive struggle. The project of crafting a new and different society includes the creation of new human persons as well, who must be progressively liberated from whatever enslaves them."  

Wojtyla's emphasis upon the Thomistic view of sin leads him to become concerned with justice in the mundane world. It was logical for the liberation theologians to be excited about the prospect of a Pope who preached their version of the gospel. Yet, when confronted with liberation theology and its humanist tendencies, as Wojtyla was when travelling in Latin America in 1983, he retreats to an Augustinian emphasis on the sinfulness of human beings and the limits of human action.

The second theological and philosophical controversy in which Wojtyla finds himself involves the debate between Christian and secular humanists. Since the 19th century, Christian philosophers were accused of depriving human nature of its unique value and dignity.  

The accusation is based on the theocentricism of Christian doctrine: "If God is the ultimate purpose of all created beings, human beings included, then man is deprived of any specific value and dignity of his humanism, and equating Christianity with

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30 Paul E. Sigmund, Liberation Theology at the Crossroads: Democracy or Revolution (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 67; from Gustavo Gutierrez, Power of the Poor, 192.

31 Andrew N. Woznicki, The Dignity of Man as a Person (New Britain: Mariel Publications, 1990), 113.
humanism is simply a contradiction in terms." Secular humanists have an interesting point. After all, where the human person is not the subject and object under consideration, the focus of attention moves beyond what concerns the person, subject, towards the object, God. The preoccupation with the God enters into human culture and becomes objectified in religious practice. Karl Marx recognizes this process and argues against it. "Philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it."13

Wojtyla would disagree with the notion that creature and Creator must be considered separately. Instead, he insists upon dynamism to explain that relationship.14 Wojtyla argues that human beings are in a permanent state of experiencing existence and God is fundamental to understanding the experience and explaining existence. For Wojtyla, awareness of self brings an awareness of God and, subsequently, an overflowing desire to act. For some, Wojtyla is dangerously close to secular humanism. Critics argue that Wojtyla exacerbates the distinctions between humanism and Christianity because he emphasizes the phenomenological world.15 Christianity is fundamentally

13Ibid.


15For a detailed explanation of dynamism, see chapter one, 28-31 above.

about the next life. Secular humanism is about the material world. As we have seen, Wojtyła believes Christianity is not limited to the former. In fact he employs human experience as a tool to articulate what the human person is. In the process, his critics claim, he asks too much of human beings and the world.  

Debates over the development of humanism show that ancient thinkers believed that people were superior to animals, evidenced in their depiction of the tragic nature and the heroic character of the person. The fatalistic determinism of the ancient world was replaced with the Christian notion of divine grace. Under the Christian influence, the person is viewed as a being in tension between natural and supernatural forces, the battle between the City of God and the City of Man. The Protestant Reformation solidified the Augustinian tradition of original sin and grace. It was the Protestant reformers, namely Luther and Calvin, who would establish "grace without freedom." Maritain writes of this radical division of grace and freedom:

Calvinism is the best known illustration of grace without freedom. And we are still in the presence of the same antinomy: man is bound down, annihilated under despotic decrees. But the predestined one is sure of his salvation. Thus he is ready to confront anything here below and then conduct himself as the elect of God on earth; his imperialist demands will be limitless; and

"Ibid., 37.

"Woznicki, The Dignity of Man as a Person, 117.
material prosperity will seem to him a duty of the state.\textsuperscript{13}

Freedom and grace so distinctly separated lead to the undermining of confidence in Christian humanism. In essence, if the person's condition, however that is defined, is determined, how meaningful is any human effort to address political or economic issues? Notions of a call to some sense of collective responsibility are futile.

Wojtyla attempts to combine theocentric and anthropocentric approaches to understanding the human person, perhaps in the process creating a third way. He does this by basing Christian humanism on human experience, finding the divine in that experience. As we have seen, this is what he calls Christian personalism. Wojtyla turns to Scheler's anthropology to find in his personalism the transcendence he believes to be so important.\textsuperscript{19}

It is over Wojtyla's treatment of experience that conservative Catholic thinkers express concern about philosophical theory known as existential personalism.\textsuperscript{40} According to Wojtyla and Scheler, the person is the source of all values, in the sense that by experience he will come to know values. While Wojtyla believes that experiences are turned more towards essence than existence, Staab and


\textsuperscript{19}Consider Chapter Two above.

others are uncomfortable with Wojtyla's "phenomenological tendencies." They believe he advances an anthropocentric humanism despite protestations to the contrary.

In conclusion with respect to the philosophical and theological criticism, it is clear that Wojtyla embraces the Thomistic view of sin and the accompanying notions of the active life. Equally apparent is that the active life is framed by a unique conception of life. These perspectives on Wojtyla's part towards action in the world do create difficulties. As we have seen, his relationship with liberation theologians reveals his problems with interpreters. Just as his critics on the right accuse him of coming dangerously close to secular humanism. The fact that Wojtyla steers between these poles suggests that he is aware of these criticisms, even if he does not answer them fully. Yet another source of criticism involves those primarily concerned with the economic impact of the third way.

The Economic Interpretations

There have been two critical appreciations of Wojtyla's third way in economic terms. Both are sensitive to how the economic encyclicals can be interpreted. One

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claims that Wojtyla is a "whiggish liberal;"\(^2\) the other argues that he is a "social democrat."\(^3\)

Michael Novak argues that *Centesimus Annus* expresses John Paul II's support of capitalism largely because any alternative is morally unacceptable. "'Democracy,' Winston Churchill once said, 'is a bad system of government, except when compared to all the others.' Much the same might be said of capitalism. It is not a system much celebrated by poets, philosophers, or priests. From time to time, it has seemed romantic to the young; but not very often."\(^4\)

Novak finds support for his efficacy of capitalism in Wojtyla's third way and takes direct aim at those who interpret it as a utopian economic vision. "Many people in


this world seem not to be satisfied except by utopian thinking."" Advocating American prudential thought, Novak delineates the only economic possibilities he believes are available to human society: socialism or capitalism. Novak interprets Wojtyla's economic third way as clear support for the capitalistic system, and refuses to concede to the socialist tendencies often included within the same documents. For Novak it is not that capitalism is a perfect economic system. That is precisely his point. In an imperfect world there will be imperfect economic systems. Nevertheless, he argues, capitalism is morally superior:

My own field of inquiry is theology and philosophy. From the perspective of these fields, I would not want it to be thought that any system is the Kingdom of God on earth. Capitalism isn't. Democracy isn't. The two combined are not. The best that can be said for them (and it is quite enough) is that, in combination, capitalism, democracy, and pluralism are more protective of the rights, opportunities, and conscience of all citizens than any known alternative."

Novak relies upon what he calls "powerful evidence" to demonstrate the moral superiority of capitalism. Capitalism "makes it possible for the vast majority of the poor to break out of the prison of poverty."'' Capitalism also encourages individual responsibility by encouraging personal economic initiative. The result is greater opportunity for all and a general elevation of the middle

"Ibid."

"Ibid., 26."

"Ibid."
class. Novak believes that capitalism is the only economic system that is necessary for the success of democracy, and it is because individual freedom is highly regarded and legally protected. He criticizes the Church and Wojtyla because they veer away from promoting individual freedom and rights, moving towards supporting communal solidarity.

Wojtyla is faced with a double task on the economic front. On the one hand he elevates the notion of free will, an essential ingredient in the third way. Civil liberties ensure individual freedom and protect economic rights. On the other, he insists upon the communal responsibility of the removal of poverty, and this has been achieved largely through the formal institutional apparatus of governments. Eradicating the scandal of poverty requires strong intervention by powerful institutions. A powerful multinational organization like the Catholic Church has to take into consideration extremely diverse social presuppositions in accomplishing this double task. Accordingly, Wojtyla and the top governing bodies of the Church can only issue abstract directives. This leaves the issues of interpretation open to critics like Novak who advocate the liberal economic side.

I am skeptical [of Marxian socialism] because, as logic dictates and as my eyes can see, the effort to impose "human" and "organic" values upon the whole of society is inevitably authoritarian, and, when extended to the life of the spirit, totalitarian. It is so because individuals
do not all share the same values or desire the same things." 

The fear of authoritarian power of any sort pushes Novak to "delink social justice from an uncritical reliance on the blind leviathan of the state and link it, instead, to the concrete intelligence operative in individuals and their free association within the 'civic forum.'"

Novak's defense of liberal capitalism flies in the face of Wojtyla's emphasis upon community and his criticism of "American culture," especially materialism. Novak insists that "culture" and "liberalism" are separate issues: "there is all too little resistance to both the modernist project and the adversary culture." The Church's criticism of American social culture should not be interpreted as an alignment with socialists, or in America the "cultural elite."

Thus, with John Paul II, most people seem to understand that their best protection from torture, tyranny, and other forms of political oppression derives from living under institutions that are (a) subject to the consent of the governed, (b) protective of minority rights, (c) designed around internal sets of checks and balances.

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'Ibid., 219.
Building up a strong system of morals that work within economic sectors is only possible where a free polity exists. Human rights, Novak believes, are not protected by "words on parchment." It is the habits of free men and women that create a just world. That is only possible in a liberal capitalist democracy. Novak concludes his argument by referring to Centesimus Annus. There is equivocation in his analysis, but only as a recognition that political and economic liberty will not fulfill human moral and spiritual longing.

If Pope John Paul II in Centesimus Annus did not give two cheers for democracy and capitalism, he did give at least one cheer. From a church that has passed through many bad systems in history, and whose main business is eternal life, one cheer for any worldly system is quite a lot. For in Christian eyes, no worldly system deserves three cheers. All are flawed."

As the democratic socialists see it, Wojtyla does not go far enough in supporting "true" Christian living. Their criticism suggests that the third way is not Christian or Communitarian enough. They read Sollicitudo Rei Socialis and Centesimus Annus as appeals for Christian socialism.

Development must not be understood solely in economic terms, but in a way that is fully human. It is not only the question of raising all peoples to the level currently enjoyed by the richest countries, but rather of building up a more decent life through united labor, of concretely enhancing every individual's dignity and creativity, as well as his capacity to respond to his personal vocation, and thus to God's call."

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"Ibid., 222-3.

"John Paul II, Encyclical Letter (Centesimus Annus), 41."
This excerpt highlights the thrust of what the socialists believe Wojtyla is about when it comes to economic justice. Each person has a right, given by God, to economic initiative. How can a propertyless worker exercise effective economic initiative? "A job and career point out the fundamental dimensions of work, namely, work is a means to self-preservation and familial support as well as psychological development. But these dimensions by themselves fail to capture the full meaning of human work." From this perspective there are greater goods than simply economic goods. The human family must share in the goods of the earth. If work is not connected to this conception of community, a truth beyond the grasp of the individual, work becomes utilitarian, self-interested. "In other words it [work] fails to be human.""

Concilar constitutions and subsequent papal pronouncements do not in principle exclude the expropriation of goods in certain cases. And yet, social democrats continue to see private property as the most essential material prerequisite for the self-realization of the individual. But, they argue that private property should be held in accordance with the common good."


"Ibid., 112.


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The "blessedness of poverty" is an old Catholic principle. The pastoral constitution itself requires the Christian to conduct himself privately and socially according to the Sermon on the Mount. Wojtyla has specifically expanded the Leonine concept of the dignity of work. One of the fundamental components of the third way, the person, involves the "pre-eminence of the subjective meaning of work over the objective one. The basis for determining the value of human work is not primarily the kind of work being done [objective meaning], but the fact that the one who is doing it is a person [subjective meaning]."

Socialists are encouraged by reading Wojtyla's encyclicals on economic justice. They are particularly pleased with the emphasis placed upon the state as the controlling political entity with the greatest moral responsibility. First, they assert a new role for the Church as a global advocate for equitable world distribution and social solidarity. Second, adopting language from the Latin American bishops, John Paul II refers to the Church's "love for preference for the poor." Third, in Sollicitudo rei socialis, John Paul II insists that the Church around the world has an obligation to sell "superfluous church ornaments and costly furnishings" when

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"Cf. Ibid., 333.


people are in need of "food, drink, clothing and shelter."*4

Advocates for a socialist interpretation of Wojtyla's third way also discuss the "fantasy freedom" created in the French and American Revolution.*2 Here, the economic advantages Novak describes as greatly advancing social justice are seen as nothing more than tawdry self-interest. The political revolutions of Western Europe and America are "intellectually sterile on the important truth that freedom is far more dependent on the moral and ethical order in social and economic life. It [the Enlightenment] did nothing to further economic and social justice."*3

Obviously, Wojtyla's third way is ambiguous. The message lends itself to various interpretations. That is one of the chief difficulties of coming to terms with Wojtyla's third way. After all, liberals, social democrats and liberation theologians all claim some parts of Wojtyla's plan. Much like the notion of "majestic vagueness" associated with the U.S. Constitution, the third way is openly dependent upon political and social circumstances for its full explanation. Accordingly, it is difficult to assess except as a comprehensive, rather ambiguous plan that leads to an equally ambiguous end. This may not be as much a contradiction as it may seem. Because the plan itself is open to interpretation does not

*Ibid., 151.


*Ibid., 139.
eliminate the reality of fundamental principles and a universal goal. The principles are found in Christian moral teaching; the immediate end found in this world is justice; the ultimate telos is eternal salvation. Perhaps this is the reason that it is open ended.

Amidst the confusion of the plan, Wojtyla accomplishes something quite extraordinary. He accurately depicts a unique predicament of human existence: the human person is neither a god nor a senseless substance. Since human beings are not gods, there is no universally applicable prescription for understanding and defining truth. Yet, because we are more than a senseless substance, we seek to know the truth on our own terms, in our own way, according to our own capacities. It is only appropriate, then, that an economic plan appreciate this natural condition as well as diverse cultures and living experiences, all the while moving towards universality. From this perspective, it is apparent that Wojtyla seeks to advance justice in this world and salvation in the next.

The ambiguity in interpretation and application of Wojtyla's third way is most evident in the dramatic differences between recommendations made by Bishops in Eastern Europe and the United States. A comparison of these perspectives is also one way of confronting the criticism of those who argue that the third way is too ambiguous for any real applicability. What follows, then, is a brief inquiry into the general impact of the third way on the thought and policy of the Eastern European Bishops,
and in the pronouncements of the American Catholic Bishops as they attempt to influence economic policy in the United States. These examples provide some further substance to combat the notion that Wojtyla's third way is exclusively Catholic, Christian, and ambiguous to the point of idealism.

The Third Way in Eastern Europe and the United States

Wojtyla does not implicitly endorse any particular interpretation of the third way. In fact, he has pointedly criticized certain economic interpretations of the third way in Eastern Europe and the United States." The examples only illustrate how the plan has been used to shape economic policy in diverse cultures. They are not indicative of Wojtyla's support for a particular interpretation.

Eastern Europe: The Polish Experience

Therefore, while the position of 'rigid' capitalism must undergo continual revision, in order to be reformed from the point of view of human rights, both human rights in the widest sense and those linked with man's work, it must be stated that, from the same point of view, these many deeply desired reforms cannot be achieved by a priori elimination of private ownership of the means of production."

Because of special historical circumstances, supporters of the Polish Solidarity movement experienced the effects of the third way in a unique manner. The


"John Paul II, Encyclical Letter (Laborem Exercens), 14:36."
character of contemporary Poland contributes to that interpretation. The mass movement of the Solidarity that surfaced in the summer of 1980 quintessentially embodied three dimensions of Polish society: "Ethnic homogeneity, the long association with a democratic tradition, and the influence of the powerful Roman Catholic Church."

Solidarity means several things to Poles. First, it means to carry the burden of another person; no single human is an island to himself. Second, solidarity is not an artificial imposition brought about by institutional power and authoritarian control. It is a virtue, an expression of human good will. Third, solidarity does not need an enemy to survive and grow. None are excluded because of political opinions, or because they choose to fight against the movement known as solidarnosc. Finally, "For all of us the goal is that the truth means always the truth; and justice, justice."

Solidarity is not, however, simply a humanistic movement. It is grounded in theism, and actively involved in politics and economics. The solidarity movement establishes personal freedom in the context of the community. To achieve this goal, the Marxist government of Poland was attacked by those supporting the Solidarity Movement. The goal of the solidarity movement is explained


by understanding how important the notions of freedom and community are for the Polish people.

Let us put together the major thoughts. Conscience is the foundation of solidarity, and the stimulus for its development is the cry for help from someone wounded by another human being. Solidarity establishes specific, interpersonal bonds; one person joins with another to tend to the one who needs care. I am with you, you are with me, we are together—for him. We—for him [emphasis mine].

The solidarity movement in Poland, then, began to find itself in open defiance to communism; based, in part, on Wojtyla's personalistic norm. Whereas Marxist socialism as practiced in Poland suggested that the starting point of any political or economic order is the relationship of human beings to the material effects of the earth, the solidarity movement wished to put human relations first. In the former, the most obvious economic effect was the abolition of private property and the institution of an authority that determined distributive justice. In the latter, a Christian ethic was applied:

Christianity proclaims that one should begin differently; one must start by putting in order the relationship of one human being to another, by introducing the harmony of love. Subjective reality comes before what is objective. Justice is the fruit of love."

The solidarity movement begins as a reaction to the distorted social and economic experience imposed by the Communists upon the Polish people. The imposition was viewed by the Catholic Church in Poland as a perverse human

"Ibid., 9.

"Ibid., 49. Emphasis mine.
experience. To counter the government, the Church relied upon age old conceptions of private property and Christian freedom. The Church continually implored that leadership: "Let Poland Be Poland." Together with the Church, under the leadership of Stefan Cardinal Wyzynski and Karol Cardinal Wojtyla, that request was understood to include a return to the concept of basic human dignity. Human dignity, as understood by the people of Poland, is Wojtyla's personalistic principle.

The influence of the third way and of Wojtyla as the person and voice behind the theory were clearly evident to all who witnessed the transformation of Poland. In fact, on the gate of the Gdansk shipyard a portrait of John Paul II was prominently displayed. One scholar writing on the movement considers this an integral part of what constituted the Solidarity Movement:

> Whatever we might say about the popes, one thing is certain; the popes know what history is. They know what truly lasts in history and what passes away like the grass in autumn. The popes have a duty to remind us of what is indestructible, so that people and nations might tie their fates with what

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"Let Poland Be Poland" is a line from lyrics written by Jan Pietrzak. The song became important during the formative period of the Solidarity Movement (1980-81) and is considered to be the Solidarity anthem.

"Redemptor Hominis or The Redeemer of Mankind was the first encyclical of Pope John Paul II, issued on March 4, 1979. Its leading theme is the dignity of each human being as the child of God. Polish citizens believe that the name and idea of "Solidarity" itself had been inspired by the appeal for acting together contained in the encyclical.

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lasts. A pope's vantage point of the world is a special one. No one in the world looks at the history of the world from a point of view like that of the pope. No one has yet looked at Poland from this point of view and in such a way as did John Paul II. All knew, "He is with us."

In Poland, the third way becomes a symbol of freedom, particularly in and against the excesses of Marxists socialism. Significantly, it did not become an apology for capitalism. Freedom in Solidarity was interpersonal and communal.

There is another example that brings the third way into even sharper relief, as far as application to economic realities is concerned. This case involves the United States and the American Catholic Bishops.

Economic Justice and the United States

The American Catholic Bishops have heartily embraced the third way and have attempted to articulate this message in specific social policies in the United States. It is difficult to determine the success of the bishops since almost every textual resource offers a different response. There is, however, one point of agreement, and that is that the American Bishops are active participants at all levels where special interest groups have access to the governmental process.

There is not a single question or piece of legislation dealing with social and economic justice, from the most

"Tischner, The Spirit of Solidarity, 90.

basic levels of the legislative process to the amicus curia briefs before the Supreme Court, where the official position of the Catholic Church is not represented. And, if newsworthiness is any measure of relevance to a particular special interest group, the American Bishops and John Paul II are equal to the unique challenges associated with a pluralistic government.

When the National Conference of Catholic Bishops published the first draft of their pastoral letter on the U.S. economy in November 1984, "it generated a storm of controversy that has yet to abate. Supporters and detractors alike recognized immediately that it would play an important role in the public debate on economic life in the United States."7

In the letter, the bishops point out three dimensions of basic justice: The first, commutative justice, dictates the following "Fundamental fairness in all agreements and exchanges between individuals or private social groups."7 The second, distributive justice, requires "that the allocation of income, wealth and power in society be evaluated in light of its effects on persons whose basic material needs are unmet."7 The third, general social


"Ibid."
justice, insures "that persons have an obligation to be active and productive participants in the life of society and that society has a duty to enable them to participate in this way." Obviously, Wojtyla's notions of subsidiarity and solidarity, so important to economic liberation in Latin American and Poland, are part of the American Bishop's application of the third way from the very start."

The bishops apply Wojtyla's vision to specific economic issues that are before the Congress, the Courts, the President of the United States, and various local and state governments. They pointedly refer to four economic issues that they consider important enough to follow through various governmental processes: employment, poverty, food and agriculture, and the role of the United States in the world economy.

The bishops address the human need filled through gainful employment: "Human work has a special dignity and is a key to achieving justice in society." The bishops argue for a coordination between fiscal and monetary policies that moves government policy towards the primary goal of full employment. They recognize some of the problems of attaining their goal, namely, economic and social realities ranging from rural to urban population

"Ibid.

"Ibid., See introduction and conclusion.

"National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Economic Justice for All: Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy, 47."
shifts, increased technology, and increased competition, all of which exacerbate the problem of finding a job, but they insist that the U.S. government, working with an engaged and informed population, can ameliorate many of these problems.

The bishops suggest a specific plan to create economic well being. Combined with the coordination of fiscal and monetary policies (federal spending, taxation and interest-rate policies) the U.S. government should do the following: (1) see that inflation is checked by effective and efficient macro management of the economy; (2) expand job training and apprenticeship programs; (3) fund direct job-creation programs for long-term unemployed citizens; (4) enable greater flexibility in job sharing; (5) flex time; (6) reduce the length of the work week; (7) limit the abuse of overtime; (8) end the overuse of part-time employees; (8) improve job placement services in general.11

All social and economic policy before the Congress and the various state legislatures, where issues concerning employment are under consideration, is evaluated by the bishops in terms of these specific goals. The bishops' legislative staff monitors the legislative process, then compares the policy to a template of sorts, working through the various issues to determine if the policy is supportive of the general Church position. The staff, acting in their role as a registered lobby, engage legislators, labor

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11Rasmussen et al., The Catholic Bishops and the Economy, 147.
unions, educational institutions, lay people, and religious in the same manner any interest group does. The Church attempts to influence the legislation so that it conforms to the goal of full employment. It does this not only because of the tangible and material benefits of employment, but also because "Every day he [an individual] remains unemployed, society seems to say: Who needs your talent? Who needs your initiative? Who needs you?"  

The American Bishops promote the advantages of full employment because of the first element of Wojtyla's third way. The person is vital to any comprehensive interpretation of reality. The bishops recognize the importance of the personalistic norm and lobby to ensure that the notion is applied to economic policy in the United States.

Regarding the second issue, poverty, the bishops are equally aggressive. The grounding for their anti-poverty stance also responds to the personalistic principle. Put simply, human decency is quite often impossible when a person exists in a state of chronic poverty. Another complicating issue involving poverty in general is the disequilibrium of wealth in the United States. And while the bishops, in line with Church teaching, do not impose absolute equality or devalue the personalistic priority of subsidiarity (the idea that individual initiative is important to economic stability), they see a "natural consequence" emanating from this unnatural distribution.

"Ibid., x."
The political power needed to change the status quo is entrenched within the elites who are reluctant to advance authentic economic restructuring.

The bishops propose a number of measures to address the negative effects of capitalism. First, they wish to continue the pursuit of full employment and the previously cited fiscal policies necessary to realize that goal. Second, the bishops wish to engage solidarity and subsidiarity, and avoid "paternalistic programs that do too much for and too little with the poor." To accomplish this the bishops encourage the following: employment at just and equal wages; self-help projects, cooperative housing and shared responsibility in home ownership; no taxes for those who fall below the poverty line; and improved public education. The bishops also propose strengthening the family unit through laws that assist daycare, family health issues, job security for working mothers, and programs to decrease divorce rates and teenage pregnancy.

The bishops, when discussing poverty, also address the unique problems of the welfare system in the United States. They are particularly struck by the repressive nature of a system that punishes individuals who make attempts to move away from debilitating circumstances. The loss of Medicaid benefits for poor men and women who marry and file jointly, no matter the salary level achieved, is one perversion of a system that should encourage responsibility but instead

"Catholic Bishops, 51."
promotes dependence. The bishops believe that welfare should lift the person above the poverty level, that paying an individual or family to be impoverished does nothing to improve the situation or the person. They also criticize the uneven distribution of welfare benefits because of different allocations made by the states, and they are particularly struck by any attack on the family unit. One example cited involves punishing married couples who make less than a single parent by making Aid To Dependent Children inaccessible to them, therefore, tacitly encouraging single parenthood.

The American Catholic Bishops clearly support individual and commutative justice. They strongly advocate protection of individual rights, however, they are also concerned with distributive justice. Accordingly, they move from the individual to mediating the distance, particularly the economic distance, between elites and workers.

The third issue, food and agriculture, is important to the bishops because of the shift away from small family farms and the ensuing difficulties for wage earners, the community, and a certain "way of life." Their letter calls for a tripartite approach to this issue; (1) protect the owner-operator farm; (2) protect farming as valuable work; (3) use natural resources in ways that do not damage or deplete them." The bishops address farmers and those who

"Ibid., 187.
deal with farm related policy, as well as related rural business:

The ever-present temptation to individualism and greed must be countered by a determined movement toward solidarity. It is not necessary for every farmer to be in competition against every other farmer."

Like Wojtyla, the American Bishops argue for a lifestyle that enables the person to recognize more easily his place in creation. Obsessive materialism, or viewing the wage as the value of the person, obscure the chances that a person can feel attached to a high position in the hierarchy of being. The bishops propose an economic reality that offers a counter balance to the over-active urbanization and the shift in demographic populations that marks life in the U.S.

Here, once again, the elements of the third way find specific reference. The bishops advance the ideas of the human person, the family, and the community as real alternatives to consumerism and general "dis-ease" in a polity that, they believe, is quickly advancing towards extreme secularism.

Finally, the bishops address the reality of power, economic and military, in the world community. America, they argue, must lead, and any discussion of the United States' economy must also include a discussion of the role of this nation in international affairs." The bishops cite five ways that the United States should address

"Ibid.

"Cf. Catholic Bishops, 57."
foreign affairs. The United States should "promote public policies that increase the ability of poor nations and marginalized people to participate in the global economy." The United States should (1) increase foreign aid in proportion to the GNP, (2) reevaluate trade to ensure that third world countries are treated equitably, (3) cancel or re-schedule debts to those countries that can no longer afford them, (4) provide direct foreign investment by private industry as well as public infusions of capital, technology and managerial expertise to developing countries; and (5) teach developing countries self-reliance. To accomplish these goals, the bishops point to what they consider distorted spending on national defense, and they press for a greater concern with the economic welfare of the citizenry.

In summation, the Catholic American Bishops find the United States doing much that is good and right. But at the same time, a great deal more could be done to support further the person, the family, the community, and personal salvation. What they point out as problems are, they believe, the next steps to be taken by a nation so blessed and so productive. To those who recognize the plan as praiseworthy and yet not economically feasible, the bishops respond, "[the issue] is not whether the United States can

"Ibid."
provide the necessary funds to meet our social needs, but whether we have the political will to do so."

The difficulty associated with applying the third way to a capitalistic culture is related to Wojtyla's insistence that his economic plan responds to both transcendent and immanent concerns. This demand causes a rift between those who advocate salvation and disregard secular demands for justice, and those who seek immediate justice. In the United States where individualism and autonomy are aligned with life itself, Wojtyla's insistence upon two realities is problematic. And despite his insistence that a Christocentric eschatology successfully resolves this problem, there is often more dissonance than consonance in how the particulars work out. Ultimately it comes down to this: Wojtyla believes the third way is about immanent justice, however elusive, and transcendent salvation. Both objectives find a place within the understanding of the personalism. Once again, Wojtyla's insistence may be beside the point, since the ambiguity in meaning and application associated with the elements of the third way certainly affect how the world views the plan and this Pope.

"National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Economic Pastoral, 60.


The bishops remark on the political will of the U.S. Government and its people gets to the heart of what Wojtyla envisions as the prophetic voice for the third way and leads to the final element of his plan and the ambiguous conclusion of this dissertation--salvation.

A Christian Culture

In presenting a conclusion to Wojtyla's economic theory, the notions discussed earlier regarding the ambiguity of his economic plan require a reconsideration of the essential predicament between eternal salvation and mundane justice. After all, the objective realities upon which the elements rely (the divinity of Jesus Christ, natural law, soul, salvation) are, in a philosophical sense, mysteries themselves. The apparent contradiction between objectivity and mystery is intentional. For Wojtyla, the truth is, even if that same truth is incomprehensible. Wojtyla does not adhere to an intellectual stance that demands a cessation of questioning. He understands and encourages rational and disinterested discussion over these elements and the plan as a whole, even the fundamental assumptions--the truth--that support the third way. Evidence of this can be found in Wojtyla's directive to Catholic universities:

A Catholic University, therefore, is a place of research, where scholars scrutinize reality with the methods proper to each academic discipline, and so contribute to the treasury of human knowledge. This research provides an effective witness, especially necessary today, to the Church's
belief in the intrinsic value of knowledge and research."

Because Wojtyla encourages deliberation, the idea of the third way itself, along with any real world effects are open to continuing scrutiny. Wojtyla believes that there are certain things that human beings can change, choices they make can quite literally alter the status quo. Humans can change economics. Where the individual has the will to impose upon himself certain standards of behavior, that is where that same individual and, by implication, all people, may effect change.

Wojtyla believes that Christianity can play an extraordinary role in shaping human culture. He stresses that the human ability to choose and to act in the world, thereby influencing and changing the world, stems from human culture, regarded as:

one of those terms which are most intimately connected with man, and which define his existence, and in a sense point to his very essence. Man makes culture, needs culture, and through culture creates himself. Culture consists of a set of facts, through which man expresses himself more than through anything else. He expresses himself to himself and to others. All works of culture which last longer than man's life are witnesses to him. It is a testimony to spiritual life, and to the human spirit which lives not only on the account of mastering all matter, but lives in itself by ideals accessible to him alone, and only for him meaningful. He lives through truth, goodness and beauty--and outwardly expresses its own spiritual life and objectivizes it.

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in his deeds. Man then, as a maker of culture gives witness to their very humanness."

What is this Christian culture with which Wojtyla concludes his theory for economic justice? It is not a call for homogeneity, or cultural "sameness" in any regard. The diverse ethnic and national identities contained within the Church community, along with an evaluation of Christianity and its role in the making of culture, ensures this. In fact, there can never be in Christian doctrine any specific or ideal vision of the world or of a social entity: "To expect [that] leads to ontological heresy, according to which, that which is particular in the realm of human life can be limited to that which is general and universally bound forever, and therefore what is particular would, in fact, be that which is general and can be expressed in norms."*3 Wojtyla's prescription for the economic failings of the world involves a search for justice consistent with the dignity of the human person, an ambiguous endeavor.

In the end, Wojtyla returns to the mystery of existence that initiated the anthropological question. It is easy to understand why Max Scheler's notion of "world openness" would attract Wojtyla so early in his career. Scheler is reacting to the same reality that the Catholic Church has known for two millennia: there is no adequate

*3Wojtyla, Sign of Contradiction, 128.

"Wojtyla, The Dignity of Man as a Person: Essays on the Christian Humanism of His Holiness John Paul II, 73.
and exclusive vision of Christian reality. If there is no absolute Christian culture, can there be a Christian economic plan? An affirmative response to that question is possible only when the plan is, itself, filled with the same sort of world openness. That is why Wojtyla insists upon including salvation as a crucial element in his third way. That is why this economic plan is quite capable of functioning in any cultural context, and why the third way can be reformed to meet the demands of a unique experience, even over the objections of this Pope. That is why most claims of hypocrisy are more likely efforts to incorporate this Pope and the Catholic Church into supporting a particular culture, or welfare plan, or statement regarding population control. In the Pastoral "Constitution of the Church in the Modern World," the following ideas are presented which illustrate this point:

Living in various circumstances during the course of time, the Church, too, has used in her preaching the discoveries of different cultures to spread and explain the message of Christ to all nations, to probe it and more and more deeply understand it, and to give it better expression in liturgical celebrations and in the life of the diversified community of the faithful. But, at the same time, this Church, sent to all peoples of every time and place, is not bound exclusively and indissolubly to any race or nation, nor to any particular way of life or customary pattern of living, ancient or recent. Faithful to her own tradition and, at the same time conscious of her universal mission, she can enter into communion with various cultural modes, to her own enrichment and theirs too."

Wojtyla wishes to create a certain shared solidarity based upon a common human condition. He insists upon the alteri incompmerniabilis, the intrinsic condition of existence, that is the base of human solidarity and proper economic behavior. The problem is that the world is now more than ever before conflicted between the mystery of human teleology, salvation, and the reality in which we live. Wojtyla believes that: "It is the drama of man who is deprived of an essential dimension of his being, namely his search for the infinite." He believes it is possible to speak both of the universal transcendent reality that does not change and the relative demands of justice in the world, which may require different understandings of that immutable transcendent reality.

Is this dissonance between the reality of contemporary society and human nature a condition that can be corrected? The response to that question lies in the mystery of revelation, but Wojtyla believes it can be addressed. Exactly how that happens gets to the heart of Wojtyla's and the Church's vision for the world. Time and time again Wojtyla's economic writings expose a Christocentric eschatology. The Incarnation can fill the void originated by original sin and exacerbated by human folly.

God entered the history of humanity and, as a man, became an actor in that history, one of the thousands of millions of human beings but at the same time unique! Through the Incarnation, God gave human life the dimension that he intended man to have from

"John Paul II, Encyclical Letter (Redemptor Hominis), 71.
the first beginning: he has granted the dimension definitively—in the way that is peculiar to him alone, in keeping with his eternal love and mercy, with the full freedom of God—and he has granted it also with the bounty that enables us, in considering the original sin and the whole history of the sins of humanity, and in considering the errors of the human intellect, will and heart, to repeat with amazement the words of the sacred liturgy: "O happy fault which gained us so great a redeemer!"

Wojtyla believes that modernity is particularly in need of the Incarnation. Contemporary society, and the people in it, have succumbed to technological progress: "The man of today seems ever to be under threat from what he produces, that is to say from the result of the work of his hands and, even more so, of the work of his intellect and the tendencies of his will." Only when the road to God is reclaimed will the pessimism and the economic brutality so evident across the world recede. And, according to Wojtyla, the only way to overcome these self-willed obstacles is first to restore and then to protect "the fundamental equality and the dignity of man."

Thus, we are brought full circle. As Wojtyla's philosophical anthropology and Christian personalism initiated an ethical evaluation of economic behavior, so now does the inclusion of that economic plan into a Christocentric eschatological culture bring us back to

"Ibid., 72.

"Ibid.

personalism. It is impossible to attempt a synthesis of Wojtyla's writings on economic justice without coming to terms with the personalistic norm. The idea itself defies precise conceptualization, except to insist upon its ambiguity and the resulting quest for truth in experience.

Nonetheless, Wojtyla tirelessly encourages all of humanity to embark upon this quest. He claims from the start of his pontificate in the address Urbi et Orbi (to the city and to the world), "Be not afraid!" He enforces this notion in a book written sixteen years later: "Of what should we not be afraid? We should not fear the truth about ourselves."

"John Paul II, Crossing the Threshold of Hope, "The Pope, A Scandal and a Mystery," 5."
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