ORIGINAL SIN, FREE WILL AND GRACE IN THE WORKS OF JEREMY TAYLOR

by

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Abstract

Taylor is an early example of a divine who wanted to find a way of remaining an orthodox Christian while rejecting the Augustinian doctrine of original sin. Taylor could not see how the term ‘sin’ could be correctly applied to anything but an individual’s freely-chosen acts. However, he recognised that the reduction of the Christian concept of sin to particular sins constituted the Pelagian heresy. He attempted to avoid it by placing the insight behind the traditional doctrine in the challenge posed to the will by a naturalised version of the Augustinian fallen state, which was nonetheless morally indifferent in itself. The insights and confusions in Taylor’s treatment of original sin and his anthropology, notably regarding the human will and its freedom, provide a fruitful basis for a more general consideration of the question of ‘orthodoxy’ concerning original sin and the classical Christian doctrine of man.

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Note on references and abbreviations: I have used the editorial divisions and numbering (including Roman numerals, or not etc.) of the editions I refer to. If referring to a single text for several pages, or giving a glancing reference, I have at times included the references in the text, rather than footnotes. I give a full reference for secondary literature in the first note for each work, and in the bibliography; then use the author's name and date of publication elsewhere.

I have given the volume number and page reference for citations from Taylor's works, and full bibliographical information in the bibliography. In the first note for each, I preface the reference with the title of the book they come from, and thereafter generally

abbreviate this to the initials of the title: thus, *Unum Necessarium*: UN; *Ductor Dubitantium*: DD; *Great Exemplar*: GE. I refer to sermons by title, volume and page number. Taylor's developed views concerning my subject are chiefly found in UN, published during the Interregnum (1657) and his great casuistical work, DD, published in the earliest years of the Restoration (1660-2); as well as several important sermons; the *Great Exemplar,* contains an earlier version.

I have either given the titles of Augustine's works in full in English (according to the translation I have used) or Latin, or used the Latin initials; the most common by far being: Conf.: *Confessiones: Confessions*; De Trin.: *De Trinitate: On the Trinity*; CD: *De Civitate Dei*: *The City of God*; DLA: *De Libero Arbitrio Voluntatis*: *On Free Choice of the Will*; DNC: *De Nuptiis et Concupiscentia*: *On Marriage and Concupiscence*; DNG: *De Natura et Gratia: On Nature and Grace.* For simplicity, the abbreviation of *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians* appears as ATLP.

Introduction

Jeremy Taylor (1613 - 1667) was a celebrated figure for many generations of Anglicans, especially among those for whom the term "Anglican" acquired a certain positive ideological content. Ultimately Taylor's reputation came to rest more on his literary talent, pastoral ideals and devotional writing, than his theology: the great Romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who arguably became one of the Church of England's greatest theological writers, called him "our Christian Mercury", and "this most eloquent of Divines: Had I said, of Men, Cicero would forgive me, and Demosthenes nod assent!"[1] Taylor's *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying* became ubiquitous manuals of piety among those who came to be known as 'high churchmen'; they were also influential for the Wesleys and the Methodist movement, and even in Evangelical circles.[2]

However, Taylor ought not to be neglected as a theologian. He is highly eclectic, and not always consistent: one of the characters in Newman's novel *Loss and Gain* says that "Bishop Taylor differed from himself".[3] But he made a significant contribution to the development of a distinctively 'Anglican' identity, which began in earnest with the Laudian divines of the seventeenth century.[4]

Above all, perhaps, Taylor displays a remarkable subtlety and sensitivity in

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1 *Aids to Reflection,* Routledge edition, p189.

2 Hughes, H. Trevor. "Jeremy Taylor and John Wesley." *London Quarterly and Holborn Review* 174 (1949): 296-304.

3 Oxford World's Classics edition, p 61-2. Taylor was a benchmark 'Anglican' divine for the Tractarians as well as the older high church tradition. Theirs was far from an uncritical appreciation, however; Taylor was regarded by Newman as one of the fathers of Latitudinarianism and was later excluded from the *Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology*.

4 Of particular interest in this respect is the bibliography Taylor that attaches to a letter to one Mr Graham, of Trinity College, Dublin, included in Heber's *Life*, in his complete edition of Taylor's works, vol 1 p lxxxviii: "Hee that would improve in the understanding of the doctrine of the church of England, so as to bee able to teach others, must bee careful to understand and bee very perfect in every part of, [the following works]." There follows a very extensive and interesting list, with Taylor's comments. It includes the Dutch Arminian "Episcopius, whose whole works are excellent, and containe the whole body of orthodox religion"; the reader, Heber comments, "will see from this where [Taylor] may have learned his doctrines respecting Original Sin." Taylor's attempts to minimise the traditional doctrine owe something to Episcopius; but his account contains many original aspects, which we shall consider in the following chapters.

relating the patristic learning and classical Christian orthodoxy in which he was steeped, with the startling new theories in politics and law, science and epistemology, which were making such an impact in his day, and in which Taylor had a voracious interest.[5] In particular, he draws on them to remarkable effect in his writings on the unlikely subject of original sin, and in his related account of the relationship between nature and grace.

I shall argue that Taylor tries to substitute for the traditional doctrine of original sin an account of human nature which answers to Augustinian anthropology, but which treats what were generally regarded as the effects of original sin, as natural. However, human nature is not thereby intrinsically corrupt, for Taylor: what St Augustine called 'ignorance', 'difficulty' and 'concupiscence', are both the conditions for human sin and failure, and, ironically, necessary for human freedom and moral responsibility, according to Taylor. The passions, which the Augustinian tradition held to be in a disordered state resulting from original sin, are seen by Taylor as natural, and good when engaged in the right context and degree. Taylor apparently thinks that he can avoid the heresy of Pelagianism by allowing that although sin is not irresistible, it is inevitable: inevitable, for every individual, but not in any given instance, we might say.

However, he tends to reduce 'original sin' to what Augustine thought of as its effects, in Adam's descendants; whereas Augustine actually thought that the evil will which led to the first sin, was replicated in Adam's descendants, not that their wills were simply tempted or overpowered by 'external' influences - a view, which, on Augustine's account, would reduce to 'Pelagianism' or 'Manicheanism', depending on whether the influence in question was resistible or not. This issue raises many important and

5 Taylor wrote to his friend John Evelyn from Ireland in 1659: "But Sir, I pray say something to me concerning the state of learning; how is any art or science likely to improve? What good bookes are lately publike? What learned men abroad or at home begin anew to fill the mouth of fame, in the places of the dead Salmasius, Vossius, Mocelin, Sirmond, Rigaltius, Des Cartes, Galileo, Peiresk, Petavius, and the excellent persons of yesterday?" Works vol 1 lxxxi. Which is an interesting list; notably Vossius, Descartes, Galileo, Peiresc, and Petavius.

interesting questions, both theological and philosophical, regarding the Augustinian doctrine of original sin, and its relationship to ideas about the will, its freedom, and the relationship between mind and body.

Chapter 1: Secularising the fallen state, and upholding free choice: Taylor in context

Taylor's response to and use of contemporary ideas in the context of original sin, free will, and nature and grace begins from his "Arminianism"; and in this respect some historical remarks of Newman on the Church of England are a good place to start. According to Newman, in "the sixteenth century [the Church of England] was Calvinist; in the first half of the seventeenth it was Arminian and quasi-Catholic; towards the close of that century and at the beginning of the next it was latitudinarian."[6] The Latitudinarian party "broke off from the quasi-Catholic party … in the reign of Charles I, and was fed and extended by the introduction into England of the principles of Grotius and the Arminians of Holland". Crude though these distinctions are, modern scholars generally agree with Newman that by the mid-1620s, an "Arminian" and even, to some extent, "quasi-Catholic" party began to challenge the hegemony of a broadly Calvinist ecclesiastical establishment in England. They were supported by and received the patronage of the new king, Charles I.[7]

The great Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius was an influential figure for many of these "anti-Calvinist" divines, long before the emergence of any identifiable "latitudinarian" party, on account of his interest in Christian reunion on the basis of a moderate, reformed

6 Newman, JH. *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, Everyman, JM Dent, London 1993, Appendix C, 'The Church of England', p400-1.

7 There is an extensive literature. See especially N. Tyacke, *Arminianism*, Oxford, Clarendon 1987, the book which shaped the current debate, and Tyacke's collection of essays, some in response to his critics, *Aspects of English Protestantism,* Manchester University Press 2001; Peter Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans?* HarperCollins 1988; Lake, *Lancelot Andrewes, John Buckeridge and Avant-Garde Conformity at the court of James I* in Linda Levy Peck ed., *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court* Cambridge 1991; Kenneth Fincham ed., *The Early Stuart Church 1603-1642*, Stanford 1993, especially the first three essays; Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake, eds., *Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England: Essays in Honour of Nicholas Tyacke*, Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2006; and Jean-Louis Quantin's fine recent study, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity,* Oxford University Press 2009.

episcopalianism, and his Arminian views on free will.[8] Grotius's views were congenial to English divines like John Overall and Lancelot Andrewes,[9] who began to develop an understanding of the English Church based on the idea of a return to the faith of the "primitive" and "undivided church", of the early centuries of the Fathers and the great councils which decided the Christological controversies, before the separation of east and west and the growth of various "corruptions" in both. Such a view relied heavily on historical scholarship, and Grotius's interest in probabilistic reasoning and ideas about certainty were of some importance in this respect.[10]

By "the principles of Grotius and the Arminians of Holland" Newman seems to have in mind precisely this sort of sceptical, probabilist approach to questions of certainty; in this case, religious and historical certainty: he goes on to say that "the philosophy of Locke … had an influence in the same direction"; and that Latitudinarian thought influenced the Whigs in politics, and gave birth to that "Liberal" party in the church which at one time claimed Newman's own allegiance, and later clashed bitterly with the Tractarians.[11]

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8 On this and what follows, see Hugh Trevor-Roper 1987, *Laudianism and Political Power* in *Catholics, Anglicans and Puritans,* London, Secker and Warburg 1987, p40ff; on Grotius esp. p52f and p98; and Tyacke 2001, *Arminianism and English Culture,* p223ff; and *Religious Controversy*, notably p290-1.

9 Tyacke 2001 p223; for Andrewes and Overall, see, for example, Tyacke's essay *Lancelot Andrewes and the Myth of Anglicanism,* in *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church c1560-1660,* Boydell Press, Woodbridge 2000, ed. P.Lake and M.Questier; and Anthony Milton's essay on Overall in Fincham and Lake ed. 2006. Richard Hooker's approach to the relationship between faith and reason was also very influential on divines with an optimistic, in a sense somewhat more 'Catholic' view of the capacities of human reason and will, and an interest in the authority of the ancient traditions of the church.

10 Trevor-Roper 1987 p52f and *The Great Tew Circle* in the same volume, esp. 210f; Tyacke 2001 p230f. Also Barbara Shapiro, *Probability and Certainty in Seventeenth Century England*, Princeton University Press 1983 p77f.

11 *Apologia* Appendix C, p401. Also p92f. In certain aspects of his thought, Taylor was a precursor of Locke: besides his interest in probabilistic reasoning, his ethics and ideas about natural law rely on pleasure and pain and divine sanction, based on the same sources as Locke; and ethics are central to religion in his thought, as they were for Locke. However, Taylor remained an ardent Royalist, being in this respect a precursor of Locke's Tory political opponents, as well as "quasi-Catholic" in many of his theological views, in a way that was hardly acceptable to Locke. See Lisa Sarasohn, *Gassendi's Ethics: Freedom in a Mechanistic Universe,* Cornell University Press 1996 p168ff on Gassendi (who as we shall see in this chapter perhaps influenced Taylor) as a precursor of Locke, and on the influence of 'Epicurean'

Reginald Heber, a 19th century Anglican bishop and first editor of Taylor's complete works, comments in his *Life* of Taylor that "Taylor was a reader and admirer of Grotius",[12] and there is considerable (though often implicit) evidence of the influence of Grotius and other Dutch Arminian writers, notably Vossius and Episcopius, in Taylor's work, chiefly in respect of probabilisitc reasoning and certainty, as well as original sin, grace and free will.[13] Although Taylor always remained an adherent of what Newman calls the "quasi-Catholic party" associated with Archbishop Laud and Charles I, at an early stage in his career he wrote a treatise advocating the Apostle's Creed as the sole condition for lay communion in the Church of England, and he displays considerable scepticism about the extent to which any doctrinal consensus can be drawn from the church Fathers; in these respects he can be seen as something of a proto-Latitudinarian, under the 'Socinianising' influence of Grotian probabilism.[14]

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pleasure/pain-based ethical theory on other English Arminians and Latitudinarians; and Shapiro 1983 p105 on the influence of such 'Epicurean' ethical theory in Restoration thought (Shapiro does not associate Epicureanism with this form of ethical theory; Sarasohn 1996 and Parkin [1999, see below] do): "Moral probabilism continued to be characteristic of casuistry [in England] in the early modern era … The casuist tradition [which, though probabilist, owed much to Thomism] survived the Reformation, [and] contributed not only to shaping English latitudinarianism but also to the style of calculating interest and advantage found in Restoration political and economic writing." Taylor was a leading exponent of probabilist casuistry in this tradition; which is not to be confused with the version caricatured by Pascal in the *Provincial Letters*: as Shapiro notes, "Jeremy Taylor roundly condemned [then-current Roman Catholic versions of probabilism] because it did not recognise that some opinions were more probably true than others." For Taylor's Epicureanism in respect of his ethics and his understanding of nature and free will, see below, this chapter. For Taylor's sceptical/probabilist and 'Epicurean' revision of the Thomist account of nature and grace, and its influence, notably on Butler and Newman, see ch.2, 4 and appendix to 4 below. For Taylor as casuist, see McAdoo, *The Structure of Caroline Moral Theology*, London 1949, and Slights, "Ingenius Piety: Anglican Casuistry of the XVIIth Century." *Harvard Theological Review* 63 (1970): 409-32.

12 Works vol. 1 p xlvi note t.

13 On the English influence of these writers, see Trevor-Roper 1987 p53,98,195. These writers drew on the Greek Fathers on original sin; as we shall see, besides emphasising the power of the will to co-operate with or resist grace, Taylor uses the Greek idea that mortality, but not concupiscence, derives from the fall, to sideline the fall. See ch4 below.

14 *On the Liberty of Prophesying,* Works vol. 5; on Taylor's un-Laudian scepticism about doctrinal consensus in the Fathers, perhaps influenced by Daille, see the discussion in Quantin 2009 pp 242f. Not many years before, Taylor wrote what Tyacke (2001, p283) calls "the most extreme defence of episcopacy" published during the period. However, Taylor's arguments noticeably rest on a historical case, not on arguments from tradition and the authority of the Fathers in themselves. (See the discussion of Taylor and Great Tew, this chapter, below.) Newman argued that "the principles of the Liberals do not even stop at deism", (*Apologia* p401) but he was himself much influenced by probabilistic reasoning, most notably in his *Grammar of Assent*, in which he boldly mounts a defence of Roman Catholic orthodoxy on certainty in

There was a tendency on the part of Arminian writers to mitigate the effects of original sin on human nature, certainly relative to the Calvinists who opposed "Arminianism" in both Holland and England, and to emphasise the power of human free will to co-operate with or reject divine grace. There is reason to suppose that is connected with the views of writers like Grotius on certainty. The emphasis on free will did not begin with Arminius, but is already to be found in Erasmus and Renaissance humanism. The position taken by Erasmus against Luther on the relationship between free will and grace is essentially the view later maintained by Arminian Protestants and Molinist Roman Catholics:

> In my opinion free will could have been established in such a way as to avoid that trust in our own merits and the other harmful consequences which Luther avoids … yet so as not to destroy the benefits which Luther admires. This I believe is achieved by the opinion of those who ascribe entirely to grace the impetus by which the mind is first aroused, and only in the succeeding process attribute something to human will in that it does not resist the grace of God. Since there are three parts to everything - beginning, continuation and completion - they ascribe the first and last to grace and allow that free will has an effect only in the continuation …
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> We will also try to illustrate what we are saying metaphorically. A human eye, however healthy, sees nothing in the dark … Just so the will, however free, can do nothing if grace withdraws itself from it; and even if it is in light a man with healthy eyes can close them so as not to be able to see, and turn them away so as no longer to see what he had been able to

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religious questions, using (amongst other things) a form of probabilistic argument, in an atmosphere still dominated by Scholasticism. Newman was mainly influenced in this by the Anglican Bishop Butler, a writer who combined 'latitudinarian' methods with 'high church' sympathies in the eighteenth century: *Apologia* p94; "Butler's doctrine that Probability is the guide of life, led me … to the question of the logical cogency of Faith, on which I have written so much." Taylor's views on the relationship between faith and reason influenced both Butler, and, in my view, Newman directly; this is of considerable interest in relation to original sin, as we shall see in the appendix to chapter 4. Taylor's account of faith and reason might be called a sort of sceptical and 'Epicurean' version of Richard Hooker's Scholastic account.

see.[15]

Scholars have noticed a connection between Grotius's views on certainty, and on free will; and that in this respect, he owes something to Erasmus.[16] This is also true of writers like Gassendi, as we shall see in this chapter.[17] The same connection is observable in Taylor's works. For example, we shall see in this chapter that Taylor is instinctively uncomfortable with traditional ideas about natural law, apparently partly because he thinks that demonstrable certainty in religious and ethical questions would deprive human beings of free choice, and of moral worth attaching to their choices.

However, in Taylor's work the Erasmian and Arminian mitigation of conventional views on original sin is balanced with a tendency to regard many aspects of the 'fallen' state as simply natural for human beings. The traditional doctrine of original sin is sidelined, but there is an attempt to emphasise what one might call the insights behind it, at least concerning what was traditionally held to be the corrupted condition consequent upon the fall.

In Taylor's work, this attempt arguably becomes more conscious and explicit than in other writers of a similar persuasion. Taylor, like other Arminians, has an appreciation of human capacities, for example, of reason and will, that is in one sense more positive

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15 Erasmus, *De Libero Arbitrio*, ed. Trinkaus, trans. Macardle and Miller, University of Toronto Press 1999 p79-80. There is an important comparison with the passage from Taylor quoted below, on free will and the effect of Adam's sin; and with Augustine on a good will in DLA 1.12, see ch.3. However, Erasmus is unclear as to whether the will must act on the impetus provided by grace, or whether this occurs smoothly and 'naturally' as a result of grace, and the will's positive action occurs only in resistance to grace.

16 Trevor-Roper 1987 p52 f and 192f , and Tyacke 2001 p230f.

17 See Sarasohn 1996, ch.1-2. See p24f for the influence of Epicurean ethical ideas derived from pleasure and pain on Erasmus. These ideas are useful to anti-Scholastic thinkers in that they do not rely on any natural teleology, or ideas of justice derived from natural proportion; compare my ch.5, below. Probabilistic reasoning (aiming for moral certainty, involving room for free choice based on the goodness or attractiveness, as well as the truthfulness of something, and rhetorical persuasion, rather than demonstrative reasoning issuing in absolute certainty) and Epicurean ethical theory allow for a certain contingency in the created order, in the minds of some writers, including Taylor.

than the traditional view, and in another sense more negative. For Taylor, reason is not corrupted by original sin; nor is the will; yet in contrast to the Scholastic tradition, he can say that

> reason is such a box of quicksilver that it abides no where; it dwells in no settled mansion; it is like a dove's neck or changeable taffata; it looks to me otherwise than to you who do not stand in the same light that I do … For some having (as Lucian calls it) weighed reasons in a pair of scales thought them so even, that they concluded no truth to be in the reasonings of men; or if there be, they knew not on which side it stood, and then it is as if it were not at all; these were the sceptics: and when Varro reckoned two hundred and eighty-eight opinions concerning the chiefest good or end of mankind, that were entertained by the wisest and the most learned part of mankind, it is not likely that these wise men should any more agree about the intricate ways and turnings that lead thither, when they could so little agree about the journey's end, which all agreed could have in it no variety, but must be one, and ought to stand fair in the eyes of all men, and to invite the industry of all mankind in the pursuit of it.[18]

Taylor makes use of sceptical thought to underline the natural limitations of human reason, traditionally ascribed, in their present form, to the effect of original sin. Likewise, free will was not lost as a result of Adam's fall; yet free will is insufficient by itself for salvation. In this respect Taylor is closer to Scholasticism, notably to its distinction between the natural and the supernatural:

> For when it is affirmed [by Taylor himself] that Adam's sin did not, could not, impair our liberty, but all that freedom of election which was concreated with his reason, and is

18 *Ductor Dubitatium* vol 1, Works vol 9 p293-4.

> essential to an understanding creature, did remain inviolate; there is no more to be said, but that after Adam's fall all that which was natural remained, and that what Adam could naturally do, all that he and we could do afterwards. But yet this contradicts not all those excellent discourses which the church makes of the necessity of grace … when I say that our will can do all that it ever could, I mean all that it could ever do naturally, but not all that is to be done supernaturally.[19]

Instead of appealing to the fall as an explanation of the need for grace, and the fallibility of reason, Taylor draws on the sceptical tradition, humanist ideas about a theoretical pre-civilised "state of nature", and the "new philosophy", which I shall argue all to some extent already represented a 'naturalised' version of the Augustinian fallen state in the writings of their Christian advocates, and combines them with a version of the Thomist distinction between the natural and the supernatural. The ongoing influence of the Platonist tradition is also found throughout Taylor's works, and plays an important role in the context of his ideas about human nature, sin and grace. According to Taylor, the present state of human nature is actually necessary for meaningful moral responsibility, yet it is also a state in which error and sin are inevitable.

1.1 Epicureanism, scepticism, Platonism, and naturalising the fallen state

In his diary entry for April 12th, 1656, John Evelyn records that "Mr Berkeley and Mr Robert Boyle (that excellent person and great virtuoso), Dr Taylor, and Dr Wilkins, dined with me at Sayes Court, when I presented Dr Wilkins with my rare burning-glass. In the afternoon, we all went to Colonel Blount's, to see his new-invented ploughs."

19 *Unum Necessarium*, Works vol. 7 p 315.

Among the members of this party, with their leisurely interest in burning-glasses and new designs of plough, are a variety of connections and contrasts, religious, intellectual and political, with a sometimes surprising bearing on our subject. Evelyn and Boyle in particular are celebrated figures in the history of England: Evelyn as a diarist and man of letters, and for his involvement with the Royal Society; and Boyle alongside Newton and Hooke, as one of the greatest scientific pioneers. In the history of ideas, John Wilkins, too, is a familiar name; he became the first president of the Royal Society, of which Evelyn and Boyle were fellow founder-members. Wilkins made a useful contribution to the epistemological basis of the work of the Society's *virtuosi*, and we shall have cause to touch upon this further, with reference to Taylor's theological writings. At this time, Taylor was sheltering with Evelyn after being released from a period of imprisonment by the Cromwellian regime.

Evelyn first mentions Taylor in the diary entry for 15th April, 1654, though they were already acquainted: "I went to London, to hear the famous Dr Jeremy Taylor (since Bishop of Down and Connor [after the Restoration]) at St Gregory's (near St Paul's) on Matt. vi.48, concerning evangelical perfection." The following year, on 18th March, Evelyn again travelled to London "on purpose to hear that excellent preacher, Dr Jeremy Taylor, on Matt xiv.17, showing what were the conditions of obtaining eternal life: also, concerning abatements for unavoidable infirmities, how cast upon the accounts of the cross. On 31st, I made a visit to Dr Jeremy Taylor, to confer with him about some spiritual matters, using him thenceforward as my ghostly father."

Taylor's connection with Evelyn, and the subject matter of the two sermons Evelyn travelled to London to hear, are significant for our purposes. Evelyn, like Taylor, was a devout supporter of both the Royalist cause, and the faith and order of the Church of England as interpreted and defended by those divines supported and promoted by

Archbishop Laud and King Charles I. He tells us that Taylor preached on the nature of "evangelical perfection", and on "unavoidable infirmities"; the question of how "unavoidable infirmities" relate to personal sin is an important and challenging issue for Taylor's discussion of original sin, and he was wrestling with this and the whole question of original sin at just this time.

At the time Evelyn heard Taylor preach and made him his spiritual director, Taylor was at work on a book that would create suspicion and hostility among friends and foes alike.[20] Evelyn, however, seems to have been sympathetic. Their correspondence reveals that Taylor discussed the work and the ensuing controversy with Evelyn, and Evelyn sent him comments on the manuscript (unfortunately lost).[21] A little under a month after the lunch party, on 6th May 1656, Evelyn "brought Monsieur le Franc, a young French Sorbonnist, a proselyte [a convert from Roman Catholicism to the Church of England], to converse with Dr Taylor; they fell to dispute on original sin, in Latin, upon a book newly published by the Doctor, who was much satisfied with the young man." This was the same book that Evelyn had "read over" for Taylor: entitled *Unum Necessarium: On the Doctrine and Practice of Repentance*, it caused considerable controversy, because in it, Taylor seemed to effectively deny the doctrine of original sin.

Taylor rejected this accusation: "the question is not whether there be any such thing as original sin; for it is certain and confessed on all hands almost. For my part, I cannot but confess that to be which I feel, and groan under, and by which all the world is miserable."[22] In his first attempt to explain himself after the reaction to his book, Taylor robustly defended his orthodoxy. "The article we all confess; but the manner of explicating it is not an 'apple of knowledge', but 'of contention'." In true Laudian style,

20 Heber, *Life*, Works vol 1 p xxxix f.
21 Ibid xlvi.
22 *Deus Justificatus* Works vol 7 p497.

he argues that his views are derived from "the first and best antiquity",[23] while admitting that "the doctrine of original sin, as I have explicated it, is taxed of singularity and novelty".

> I do confess and complain of it, that the usual affirmations of original sin are a popular error; yet I will make it appear that it is no catholic doctrine, and that it prevailed by prejudice, and accidental authorities; but after such prevailing, it was accused and reproved by the greatest and most judicious persons of Christendom.[24]

As these protestations suggest, when Taylor claimed to accept "original sin", he did not quite mean what most of his western Christian contemporaries meant by it. He claims to admit it insofar as the ante-Nicene Fathers admit it; but as we shall see, perhaps he did not admit it so far, at least in the usual sense of "original sin". Yet in the following passage, taken from a sermon, Taylor sounds as Augustinian as could be, allowing for an 'Arminian' assertion of the ability of the will to co-operate with or resist grace resembling that which we observed in Erasmus.

> The divine love must come upon us and snatch us from our imperfection, enlighten our understanding, move and stir our affections, open the gates of heaven, turn our nature into grace, entirely forgive our former prevarications, take us by the hand, and lead us along; and we only contribute our assent to it.[25]

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23 The united witness of antiquity being the test of the true Apostolic faith, according to the maxim of St Vincent of Lerins beloved of high Anglican controversialists; "quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab ominbus credendum": whatever is believed by all, everywhere, always.

24 *A Further Explication of the Doctrine of Original Sin*, in *Unum Necessarium*, Works vol. 7 p303. Compare Taylor's letter to Evelyn, Heber, *Life*, Works vol 1xlvi.

25 Sermon *On the Flesh and the Spirit*, Works vol.4 p120.

A careful reading of Taylor's published writings concerning original sin and related matters suggests that he believed the present state of human nature to be the *natural* condition of humanity, and not the consequence of original sin. He frequently describes it as the "state of nature", with all the resonances of the theoretical state of pre-civilised man used by legal and political theorists in Taylor's day, such as John Selden and Thomas Hobbes.[26] However, Taylor did not hold that human nature was thereby intrinsically imperfect or corrupt, *as nature*; he distinguishes between "nature" considered in itself, and in respect of its "supernatural" end, in language reminiscent of the Thomist tradition. But Taylor's concept of nature is a very different one from that associated with Scholasticism. We shall consider the content of Taylor's views on nature in more detail in the following chapters, notably 2, 4 and 5; in this chapter, we shall concentrate on the sources and context of those views.

Taylor's understanding of "nature" is derived from some of the same ideas that influenced Evelyn, Wilkins and Boyle, as well as writers like Selden and Hobbes. On 12th May 1656, a few days after his visit to Taylor in the company of Monsieur le Franc, Evelyn's *Essay on Lucretius* was published. This was a translation of book 1 of Lucretius's poem *De Rerum Natura*, the most extensive statement of the Epicurean philosophy to survive from antiquity. Evelyn adds to this entry that "Little of the Epicurean philosophy was then known amongst us." The poor reception of this publication, partly due to the numerous errors made by the printer, discouraged Evelyn from pursuing the project any further; but Epicurean ideas were to play a significant role

26 Selden was an important influence on Taylor's views on nature and natural law, see editor's note Works vol.9 p279, and, for example, Jon Parkin, *Science, Religion and Politics in Restoration England* RHS/Boydell Press 1999 p64f. Taylor also seems to have been influenced by Hobbes, as we shall see in the final chapter. Evelyn knew Hobbes well: for example, 14th December 1655, "I visited Mr Hobbes, the famous philosopher of Malmesbury, with whom I had been long acquainted [in exile in] France."

in the work of some of the Royal Society's *virtuosi*, including Boyle.[27] The importance of Epicurean atomism for the early scientists of the Royal Academy, and those who influenced them abroad, such as the French priest and natural philosopher Pierre Gassendi, has been the subject of extensive research, and it is beyond the scope of this study to consider that in detail.[28] However, at certain points Epicurean ideas and their influence touch on our subject in important ways. It is clear from their correspondence that Evelyn discussed his work on Lucretius with Taylor; Lucretius was a controversial writer, due to his effective 'atheism' (the lack of divine intervention in the cosmos) and the association commonly made between Epicureanism and a crude hedonism. Taylor advised Evelyn to gloss his work with Christian explanations, but was far from hostile to the project.[29]

Although Evelyn's comment in the diary entry suggests that at the time Taylor wrote *Unum Necessarium*, their influence was limited, Epicurean ideas fit in with Taylor's existing views concerning free will, and the limitations on the power of human reason, as well as his understanding of nature; and they perhaps played a role in his later works. For example, early in March 1657, "Dr Rand, a learned physician" dedicated "his version of Gassendi's *Vita Peiriskii*" to Evelyn; later in the same month, "Dr Taylor

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27 See, for example, Sarasohn 1996 p172, and Parkin 1999, p150, on Gassendi and Boyle; Boyle "wrote to Samuel Hartlib [as early as] 1647 that 'Gassendes is a great favourite of mine.'"

28 There is an extensive bibliography. See, for example, Shapiro 1983 p39, Parkin 1999 p143f, and bibliography; Sarasohn 1996 p171f, and bibliography; notably Joy, Mayo, Westfall and Kargon (see my bibliography). Gassendi also seems to have influenced Hobbes; on the relationship between Hobbes and Gassendi and their ideas, see Parkin 1999 p146f, and two articles cited by Parkin; L. Sarasohn, 'Motion and morality: Pierre Gassendi, Thomas Hobbes and the mechanical world-view', Journal of the History of Ideas xlvi (1985), 363 - 80, and chapter 6 of her book (1996) p118f; and T. Sorrell, 'Seventeenth-century materialism: Gassendi and Hobbes', in G.H.R Parkinson ed., *The Renaissance of Seventeenth-Century Rationalism*, London 1993, 235-72. Parkin also discusses the relationship between Selden and Hobbes, and the influence of Selden on Taylor, p64f.

29 Taylor to Evelyn, 16th April 1656, in Heber, *Life*, Works vol 1 p li: "it is nothing but what may become the labours of a Christian gentleman, those things only abated which our evil age needes not; for which also I hope you either have by notes, or will by preface prepare a sufficient antidote". Parkin notes that it "is clear from Taylor's correspondence with Evelyn that Taylor did not regard Epicureanism as being necessarily harmful to Christianity", p150-1.

showed me his MSS of Cases of Conscience, or *Ductor Dubitantium*, now fitted for the Press." This is an important work in relation to Taylor's views on original sin, due to the sceptical understanding of nature and the probabilist reasoning it applies, and we shall encounter it frequently later.

Nicholas Tyacke, one of the leading scholars of the Arminianism or 'anti-Calvinism' integral to the Laudian movement, and to Taylor's own theological views, suggests that Epicurean ideas exercised a particular appeal for those with a religious and philosophical commitment to free will in this period. Tyacke writes that

> the atomists John Evelyn and Walter Charleton were each enthusiastic free-willers. Charleton … defended atomism in 1652 while refuting 'the doctrine of Calvin concerning absolute predestination', which he brackets with the 'fate of the Stoicks'. Similarly Evelyn, a member of the growing class of virtuosi, popularised atomism in his 1656 *Essay* on Lucretius, the follower of Epicurus, having already endorsed the extreme Arminianism of Jeremy Taylor - theologian and later bishop. Evelyn also translated works by the *libertins erudits* Francois de la Mothe le Vayer and Gabriel Naude.[30]

Charleton, like Evelyn and Taylor, held 'Laudian', as well as Arminian, views, and seems to have already come under the influence of Epicureanism, via Gassendi, by the early 1650s.[31] Gassendi, like Charleton and Evelyn, was an "enthusiastic free-willer", and Charleton adopted Gassendi's Christianised version of Epicurean ethics, based on the pursuit of higher pleasure and the avoidance of pain.[32] Very similar ideas are discernible in Taylor's works; we shall see in chapter 2 that Taylor also seeks to rehabilitate the role

30 Tyacke 2001, p232.
31 Sarasohn 1996 p173-5; Parkin 1999 p149f.
32 Parkin 1999, p144: "the summum bonum of Epicurean philosophy was a tranquillity characterised by freedom from pain and disturbance". Compare Erasmus in his dialogue *The Epicurean*.

of the passions in human life, not only in morals, but concerning the legitimate pleasures of what is natural for humans. Yet for Taylor the passions also remain the basis of the moral challenge for human reason and will traditionally held to result from original sin.

Tyacke summarises Epicurean teaching and its connection with English anti-determinist views as follows:

> The link between atomism and anti-determinism is provided by Epicurus, as can be seen most clearly from the writings of Charleton during the 1650s. Knowledge of Epicurean teaching derived from Lucretius' *de Rerum Natura* and the life of Epicurus, by Diogenes Laertius, which incorporates three of his letters and his maxims … According to Epicurus, 'the whole of being consists of bodies and space'. The smallest constituent parts of bodies are atoms, which are indestructible and 'in continual motion through all eternity'. Man's 'own actions are free, and it is to them that praise and blame naturally attach'. Lucretius explains the compatibility of physical causation with free will by the concept of the atomic swerve, which introduces an element of indeterminacy [into nature].[33]

In a fascinating study of Gassendi's thought, Lisa Sarasohn describes a link between the free movement of atoms, and the movements of the human passions:

> Maragaret Osler has pointed out that Gassendi believed the animal soul, which is the same as the *anima*, or irrational, vegetative and sensitive soul in human beings, is in 'constant motion'. The motion of the *anima* is the same as the motions of physical matter according to a passage in [Gassendi's] *Physics*:
>
> For when a boy runs to an apple offered to him … there must be a physical, a natural, power inside the boy by which he is directed or impelled towards the apple … the prime cause of motion in

33 Tyacke 2001, p232.

> natural things is the atoms, for they provide motion for all things when they move themselves through their own agency and in accord with the power they received from their author in the beginning; they are consequently the origin, and principle, and cause of all the motion that exists in nature.[34]

Atoms move continuously in an indeterminate, random way; the same is true of the "*anima*", the "irrational, vegetative and sensitive soul" which humans have in common with animals. The *anima* is attracted by various desirable objects, necessary or pleasurable for bodily life: these are naturally attractive, and draw the irrational impulses of the soul towards them without regard to moral considerations. According to Gassendi the rational soul, the *animus*, is able to choose to resist such impulses, according to its rational judgment concerning morality.[35]

Taylor does not give a systematic account of the structure of soul and body in the way that Gassendi does, nor is there any clear evidence of Gassendi's direct influence on Taylor; but Taylor's account of the sensitive, appetitive functions of human nature has much in common with Gassendi's idea that these incline freely towards their own objects, independently of rational judgement or any natural proportionality, quite naturally. We shall see that this contrasts with the traditional view that prior to the Fall of man, the "lower" features of human nature were under the perfect control of the rational will; indeed, for influential writers like St Augustine of Hippo and St Thomas Aquinas, they did not even exist except at the instigation of the rational will, even in a temperate proportion, in the pre-lapsarian state. This is not at all the case for Taylor, who, as we shall see in the next chapter, is sceptical about such a state of "original justice".

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34 Sarasohn 1996 p70-1.
35 Ibid.

Gassendi, Charleton and also Boyle share with Taylor an interest in a post-Aristotelian account of both nature, and the relationship between nature and grace.[36] As Jon Parkin observes, Taylor often displays a "sceptically voluntarist outlook and sometimes rather Hobbesian positions".[37] Taylor is sceptical about natural law and even natural theology; see below, ch.5. Just as for Taylor, for Boyle and Charleton this is a state of nature in which the 'natural appetite' does not necessarily 'follow the natural power', as the Scholastic maxim put it: human nature is effectively in the state the Scholastics identified as the result of original sin. (See ch.2, below.) Epicurean contingency, and the endlessly inclining state of the passions deriving from this, are important to this account; the contingency inherent in nature, and the lack of any intrinsic moral order, provides a necessary background for moral freedom. This also seems to be true for Gassendi. We shall consider this more carefully in the final chapter; Taylor's later views in particular do seem to have been influenced by Hobbes, and certainly by John Selden, but he puts the work of these thinkers to an original use, which to an extent is shared by Gassendi, Charleton and Boyle. As we shall see in chapters 2, 4 and 5, Taylor substitutes the 'humanist' idea of nature for the Scholastic one; for Taylor, nature is not teleological, and there was never, and could never be, any state of "original justice". There is, in essence, no difference between the 'fallen' and 'purely natural' states; grace always relates to nature thus understood in the same way. Nature understood in this sense is necessary for freedom of choice, and in order to be open to grace, for Taylor.

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36 See Parkin 1999 p149f; Boyle, *A Discourse of Things Above Reason* in *Selected Philosophical Papers of Robert Boyle*, ed. M.A. Screech, Manchester University Press 1979; and Charleton, *The Harmony of Natural and Positive Divine Laws*, London 1682. Parkin p150: "Boyle made it clear on many occasions that the radical distinction between God and man made it difficult to obtain information about the nature and intentions of the deity from a knowledge of nature. Boyle's fideist, and sceptical, approach to natural philosophy in many ways placed him closer to writers like Charleton and Hobbes than it did to Latitudinarians like Wallis and Wilkins."

37 Parkin 1999 p151.

As we observed in the introduction to this chapter, Taylor's naturalising approach to original sin also seems to have been influenced in this respect by the debate surrounding the problem of certainty and new ideas about the nature of reasoning; these ideas prevailed in the same context as Epicureanism. Again, a certain connection between scepticism and probabilisitc reasoning, and Arminianism is highlighted by Professor Tyacke:

> While in England the new mechanical philosophy of atomism was popularised by Arminians, it has also been argued that there exists an affinity between the mitigated scepticism of theologians like William Chillingworth, Laud's godson, and the scientific attitude of the Royal Society. Chillingworth's book *The Religion of Protestants [a sure way to salvation]*, published in 1638, explicitly draws on the ideas of Grotius that there are different levels of human certainty, in natural science as well as religion, and all less than absolute. Chillingworth himself rejected Calvinist determinism and was suspected of Socinianism.[38]

Taylor's account of original sin led him, too, to be suspected of Socinianism, that is, the denial of the divinity of Christ and the usual Christian understanding of the economy of salvation; an emphasis on moralism and good works at the expense of ideas about grace and the atonement.[39] Taylor strongly repudiated such accusations, though as we shall see they are comprehensible in the light of his soteriology, which emphasises good works over faith, which often led Calvinists in particular to accuse Arminians and Roman Catholics of Socinianism. In Taylor's case, his radical views on original sin intensified

38 Tyacke 2001 p232.

39 See Tyacke's account of controversies over Socinianism in the essay *Religious Controversy*, in Tyacke 2001 pp262-308; he briefly refers to accusations against Taylor, p290. Also Trevor-Roper on 'Socinianism' in the broader sense of reason in religious questions, in *The Great Tew Circle* in *Catholics, Anglicans and Puritans* London, Secker and Warburg 1987 p186f.

the force of the accusation.

Like Chillingworth, Taylor was much influenced by Grotius, who was accused of Socinianism, though he wrote against Socinus.[40] Grotius exercised a widespread influence in England at this time, especially on the circles in which Taylor moved. Hugh Trevor-Roper described Chillingworth as the "intellectual motor" of the Great Tew circle, "the group of young men … who lived together in a kind of continuing seminar or reading party at the Oxfordshire house of Lucius Cary, 2nd Viscount Falkland, in the 1630s".[41] Taylor was not a member of this circle, but he was well known to them, and they to him, and he shared many of their interests, including a strong emphasis on probabilistic reasoning.[42] The Great Tew circle included others besides Chillingworth for whom Grotius was a significant influence, in a variety of ways, and who in their turn exercised a powerful effect on Taylor's work, especially the lawyer John Selden. Hobbes, too, hovered on the fringes of Great Tew, and was much influenced by Grotius, though his views were far from Arminian. Another member of the Great Tew circle who made use of Grotian ideas was a divine of pronounced Laudian views, Henry Hammond, who wrote on the essentials of the Christian faith, distinguishing them from things of lesser or uncertain importance, in Grotian style, in a way reminiscent of Taylor's *Liberty of Prophesying*. Ironically, Hammond was commissioned by the king to write a refutation of Taylor's radical plea that the Apostle's creed should be the only condition of communion in the English church.

The influence of Chillingworth's "mitigated scepticism" on the Royal Society, and especially on John Wilkins, is discussed in detail in H. van Leeuwen's book, *The*

40 *de Satisfactione Christi*. See also Hans W. Blom, *Grotius and Socinianism*, in Muslow and Rohls eds., *Socinianism and Arminianism: Antitrinitarians, Calvinists, and cultural exchange in seventeenth century Europe*, Brill: Leiden 2005 pp121-147.

41 Trevor-Roper 1987 p166.

42 Taylor was acquainted with Lord Herbert of Cherbury, as well as the Great Tew circle. Heber, *Life*, Works vol 1 p xxxv. On Herbert, probabilism, Arminianism and atomism, see Tyacke 2001 p233.

Problem of Certainty in English Thought. Leeuwen identifies Chillingworth's Grotian probabilism and Francis Bacon's inductive empiricism as key influences on the Royal Society. Barbara Shapiro has contributed several important studies of the development of probabilistic reasoning, including an intellectual biography of Wilkins.[43] In her book *Probability and Certainty in Seventeenth-Century England*, Shapiro highlights various strands which contributed to the new probabilist epistemology; again, for Shapiro, Grotius and Chillingworth are of central importance. She argues that Grotius and his English followers were influenced by Pyrrhonian elements in Renaissance humanism, and notably by Erasmus, in both their interest in tolerance and Christian reunion, and free will:

> In his debate with Luther over freedom of the will, Erasmus not only introduced a line of thought which would emphasize religious peace over theological precision but also contributed to a new approach to religious knowledge and belief … While God's injunction that man follow a moral life was clear, theological questions, [for example, the extent of our free will,] were not fully knowable by men, whose capacity for knowledge was limited.[44]

Shapiro observes that Erasmus's position "perhaps owes something to late academic skepticism".[45] To some extent Erasmus seems to use scepticism to both defend man's natural capacities, especially free will, and to underline scepticism about them. In this he

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43 Wilkins can't be considered Laudian, nor even Arminian. He was, however, interested in natural religion and emphasised ethics over doctrine.

44 Shapiro 1983 p75. See also Trevor-Roper 1987 on the influence of Erasmus on Grotius and Great Tew, p186f, as above. As we have seen, the account of free will cautiously and modestly endorsed by Erasmus in his controversy with Luther is in many ways the classic statement of what would become the Arminian position, essentially that grace is a necessary but not a sufficient condition of an actively good will.

45 On the influence of scepticism, see Richard Popkin, *The History of Scepticism from Savonarola to Bayle*, Oxford 2003.

was followed not only by Grotius, but by Gassendi. As Lisa Sarasohn shows, for Gassendi, limited knowledge, though an imperfection, is necessary for free will: "For Gassendi the essence of free will is the ability to be [intellectually] indifferent, to be able to make mistakes. Error, therefore, which is an evil in itself, seems to be a good taken in the perspective of the whole man. Error is a positive and necessary part of man's being. This paradoxical reality is in fact God's gift to man. It is what makes human beings human, for if man were determined in the Cartesian sense, or in the Augustinian sense, or even in the Thomistic sense, either by natural light or by grace, he would cease to be human because a human must be free."[46]

Without the ability to make mistakes, human beings would not have genuinely free choice. The same is true for Taylor, though unlike Gassendi he emphasises the faculty of will as much as that of intellect:

> For in moral and spiritual things liberty and indetermination is weakness, and supposes a great infirmity of our reason, and a want of love. For if we understood all the degrees of amability in the service of God, and if we could love God as he deserves, we could not deliberate concerning his service, and we could not possibly choose or be in love with disobedience, we should have no liberty left, nothing concerning which we could deliberate; for there is no deliberation but when something is to be refused and something is to be preferred, which could not be but that we understand good little, and love it less. For the saints and angels in heaven and God himself love good and cannot choose evil, because to do so were imperfection and infelicity; and the devils and accursed souls hate all good ... but between these is the state of man in his pilgrimage, until he comes to a confirmation in one of the opposite terms. Liberty of will is like a magnetic needle toward

46 Sarasohn 1996, p97. See Sarasohn's account of the influence of Molinism on Gassendi, 1996 ch.4 p76f.

> the north, full of trembling and uncertainty till it be fixed in the beloved point: it wavers as long as it is free, and is at rest when it can choose no more ... our dignity and excellence supposes misery and is imperfection, but [is] the instrument and capacity of all duty and all virtue.[47]

If human intellect and will are not in some measure indifferent about what is perfectly true and good, then human beings have no real freedom regarding them, and therefore no real merit attaches to their choices. Yet there is a sense that the very ability to prefer and to choose evil to good, is an imperfection. Perfect happiness, for Taylor as much as for Augustine or Aquinas, whose ideas Taylor alludes to here in his reference to that higher freedom possessed by God himself and the saints in glory, resides in perfectly knowing and consequently loving, the good. But in order to attain to this state, we must have liberty of indifference during our earthly life. An inevitable consequence of the very possibility of indifference is error and sin: yet it is also "our dignity and excellence … the instrument and capacity of all duty and all virtue". The very state of liability to error and the need to control the passions, is one of limitation and inevitable sin, and yet a necessary condition for free choice. This is unlike the Pelagian view, in that for Taylor the conditions for freedom, the liability to sin, means the inevitability of it, due to imperfection. Taylor is strongly opposed to the idea that human beings are ever capable of altogether avoiding sin, even with the help of grace. As we shall see in chapter 3, this involves him in convoluted problems concerning the nature of sin and human freedom.

Therefore, we see that Taylor makes considerable use of probabilism in his account of original sin, since vital to his interest in both human freedom and in naturalising the ignorance belonging to the 'fallen' state, is the idea of indifference of

47 *Ductor Dubitantium* vol 2, Works vol 10 p552. Compare Gassendi, Sarasohn 1996 p69 on the saints in heaven.

intellect. Indifference of intellect and will are both the ground of human freedom, and of error and sin, for Taylor. In this context he also makes use of the Epicureanism gaining ground at this time in natural philosophy. Epicurus was a defender of free will and the importance of contingency in nature to allow for this; Epicurean ideas appeal to Taylor for this reason, and he regards the lack of any moral teleology in nature as a condition allowing for such freedom.

This concern for the possibility of indifferent choice is central to Taylor's whole appreciation of the natural order. He is sceptical about a natural law on precisely these grounds: human beings could have no freedom relative to an intrinsic natural law, because we would then love and do what we really know to be good. This leads Taylor to be sympathetic to the sceptical advocates of probabilism and the new philosophy. Taylor's scepticism about natural law, is reminiscent of Bacon's scepticism about Aristotelian natural philosophy:

> For all men talk of the law of nature, and all agree that there is such a material law which some way or other is of the highest obligation; but because there are no tables or digests of this law, men have not only differed about the number of them, and the instances themselves, but about the manner of drawing them forth, and making the observation: whereas if the law of nature were such a thing as it is supposed generally, these differences would be as strange and impossible as that men should disagree about what is black, or what is yellow, or that they should dispute concerning rules to signify when they desire, or when they hope, or when they love.[48]

48 Works vol 9, p279. Taylor seems to regard these perceptions as primitive, and this is reminiscent of Augustine, as well as Bacon: *Against the Sceptics* 3.11.26: 'When a man tastes something, he can swear in good faith that he knows that this is sweet to his palate … and no Greek sophism can deprive him of that knowledge'. Cited by JM Rist, *Augustine*, CUP 1994 p.54. Rist describes Augustine's views on the validity of such perceptions as follows, op. cit. p.56: 'I know what it is to know what is sweet to me and what is not. Yet this sort of appeal to awareness … is not an appeal to knowing something *about* what is sweet or to

Similarly, concerning the teleological order in nature identified by Aristotle and his successors, Bacon argued:

> There is a great difference between the illusions of the human mind and the ideas of the divine mind; that is, between what are no more than empty opinions and what we discover are the true prints and signatures made on the creation.[49]

Bacon rejects the a priori approach to the study of nature based on the scholastic categories originally established by Aristotle, and insists on an inductive, empirical approach. We must establish by observation and experiment how nature operates, and this only can be the basis for any claim to knowledge concerning it. This investigation begins from basic sense perceptions, of just the sort which Taylor alludes to in the passage just quoted:

> The notions of the lowliest species, man, dog, dove, and of the immediate perceptions of sense, hot, cold, white, black, do not much mislead, though, from the flux of matter and the conflict of things, they are sometimes confused; all the others that men have so far made use of are aberrations, not being drawn and abstracted from things in proper ways.[50]

Aristotle had held that all things move towards some end, and that motions can on this

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knowing or believing (propositionally) that this is sweet; it is a claim that being aware, having a *conscientia*, of seeming sweetness is a primitive' (original emphasis). Bacon could well have had Augustine's defence of sense perception against the sceptics in mind. The possible connection between Augustine and Bacon in terms of the relationship between scepticism, Platonism and original sin, is discussed to below. [The same idea is of interest in relation to Taylor's views on the intuitive, primitive data of the moral *conscientia* in ch.5; note the comparison with Augustine's ethical intuitionism there too.] Augustine also holds mathematical truths to be certain in *Against the Sceptics.*

49 *Novum Organon* bk 1 Aphorism 23.

50 Ibid Aphorism 16.

basis be classified as "natural" or "violent". Bacon rejects this as an artificial projection onto the order of nature unless it can be established by an empirical examination of those "appetites and inclinations and things by which all of the many effects and mutations that are evident in the works of nature and art are made up and brought about".[51] According to Bacon, in order to discover "the true prints and signatures made on the creation", in other words, the true character of the causal structure we believe we perceive in nature, we must examine "the principles, sources, causes and forms of motions, that is, the appetites and passions of every kind of matter", and the "collisions or impacts of motions, the restraints and resistances, the free passages and obstructions, the interchanges and mixtures, circuits and sequences, in short, the universal process of motions".[52] We must test the operations of the natural world as they appear to our perception, without any preconceptions or principles of interpretation drawn from pure reason.

Bacon's rejection of the Aristotelian cosmic order leaves only a mass of appetites, inclinations, events and happenings in the world of sense perception, that must be ordered and made sense of by observing and testing them to see what principles in fact govern them. Although Taylor never refers to Bacon by name, a scepticism analogous to that which Bacon displays concerning Aristotelian physics, appears in Taylor's resistance to the traditional idea of natural law. The moral and legal state of nature which Taylor draws from legal and political theorists like Selden and Hobbes, resembles the natural world as it first confronts the natural philosopher, for Bacon, as we shall see at more length in chapter 5.

> The right of nature or *jus naturae*, is no law, and the law of nature is no natural right. The

51 *Cogitationes* III.20/V.425.
52 Ibid III.20/V.426.

> right of nature is a perfect and universal liberty to do whatsoever can secure me or please me. For the appetites that are prime, original and natural, do design us towards their satisfaction, and were a continual torment, and in vain, if they were not in order to their rest, contentedness and perfection. Whatsoever we naturally desire, naturally we are permitted to.[53]

The natural order is not teleological: there are no principles from which to derive a natural law, the natural 'goods' that we seek after are an indication of a desire, and a negative right, no more. Taylor agrees with Hobbes, then, that natural philosophy doesn't reveal God's will to us; that is, there is no natural moral law derivable from natural teleology. In a sense this is 'Epicurean'.[54] Nevertheless, Hobbes came to a different conclusion from Taylor about the possibility of a natural law on the basis of this state, as we shall see in the final chapter.

The passions naturally incline freely and endlessly - continuously, like the swerve of the Epicurean atoms - in a similar way for Selden, Taylor and Hobbes, as for Bacon and Gassendi. They pull us their own way irrespective of moral considerations; but for Taylor, as for Gassendi, we have the power to choose against them. The passions are indifferent in themselves, not in an intrinsically corrupt state; and ironically Taylor's Hobbesian account of the passions leads to a more positive appreciation of them: see ch.2 below. The free passions, perhaps to be understood as a result of the atomic swerve, are necessary for freedom, like indifference of intellect and will: they provide a necessary neutral background for meaningful moral choice; a universe with an element of contingency, openness, which is not wholly causally determined, mechanistic, even at the physical level. This provides a context for real human freedom. (Hobbes, of course, in

53 Works vol.9 p279-80.
54 Compare Sarasohn 1996 p 149.

contrast, is a determinist, more in the tradition of Democritus.)

In response to an earlier generation of scholars who tended to portray Bacon as more influential for those of a "Puritan" persuasion, Tyacke notes that Bacon was influential in Taylor's circles: "Enthusiasm for the philosophy of Bacon was shared by many of the royalist gentry gathered in Oxford during the civil war, men like Justinian Isham and Sir Christopher Hatton … Isham was a committed defender of the English Prayer Book, while Hatton was a patron of the Arminian Jeremy Taylor. They were to become fellows of the Royal Society in 1663 … no particular religious or political group had a majority interest in Bacon."[55] Tyacke compares Hatton's household, among others, to Great Tew: "the circle around Viscount Falkland at Great Tew was only the most famous of similar groups throughout most of England. The households of Cavendish in Nottinghamshire [the Royalist patrons of Thomas Hobbes], Hatton in Northamptonshire, Paston in Norfolk, Sandys in Kent, and many more, all played comparable roles."[56]

So Taylor uses scepticism, probabilism and Epicureanism, Baconian natural philosophy and the state of nature theories of the humanist lawyers, and as we shall see, Platonism, to try to retain an orthodox anthropology but without original sin, and including free will and responsibility. The passions incline freely to their own objects, and are good or bad depending on the moral context. Human nature for Taylor is thus God's good creation, and at the same time involves the traditional moral challenges from ignorance and passion that Augustine thought were derived from original sin. This condition is even a morally-neutral background understood as necessary for free moral choices.

In an important paper, Peter Harrison has reminded us that the limitations on

55 Tyacke 2001 p256.
56 Tyacke 2001 p234.

human reason were traditionally held to be among the consequences of original sin, and that appeal was frequently made to this in the period we are dealing with.[57]

> The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries witnessed a renewed consciousness of the pervasive nature of original sin and of the severity of its effects. This was in no small measure the consequence of the Protestant Reformers' revival of the more severe Augustinian form of the doctrine. An integral part of this development was a renewed emphasis on the epistemological consequences of the Fall, again most prominent in Protestant writings. However, this mood was also felt in Catholic countries. The skepticism of Montaigne and disciples emphasized the vanity of the human condition, and in the seventeenth century Catholicism experienced its own resurgence of Augustinian anthropology with the rise of Jansenism. In addition, Renaissance humanism and Reformation biblicism had combined to bring a renewed emphasis on the literal or historical sense of the biblical text. As a consequence, the narrative of the Fall was widely viewed not as an allegorical tale but a historical truth of enduring significance.[58]

Prominent among the consequences of the fall was the disruptive and distracting influence of irrational passionate impulses, which we have already noted. The passions would have been under the perfect control of reason and will in the state of innocence.

> [It was commonly thought that] Adam's [perfect, or far more extensive than our post-lapsarian] knowledge of nature had been made possible through the maintenance of the proper hierarchical relations amongst the various faculties of the mind - the will, reason, and imagination - and of the mind-body relation - the passions and the senses. Adam's

57 Harrison, P. *Original Sin and the Problem of Knowledge in Early Modern Europe*, Journal of the History of Ideas - Volume 63, Number 2, April 2002, pp. 239-259.
58 Ibid p243.

> virtual omniscience was thus the result of his faculties cooperating in the fashion in which their maker had originally intended. For this reason, psychological analyses of the Fall focused upon the breakdown of the proper harmonious relations which had once existed amongst these various faculties … In much the same way that Adam had lost his dominion over the beasts, so too, in the inner world of the soul, reason had lost its control of the passions, which rebelled against their rightful master. The Fall was thus supposed to have wrought havoc with the internal harmony of the human being, resulting not merely in a moral fall, but in a fall from knowledge and the ability to discover truth. Original sin, in short, consisted in both a propensity for moral wrongdoing and an inability to recognize truth.[59]

Harrison points out that Bacon considered his inductive method as necessary due to the effects of original sin:

> Francis Bacon had famously observed in his Novum Organum (1620) that the human dominion over nature which Adam had lost at the Fall could be restored in some measure by the sciences: "For man by the fall fell at the same time from this state of innocency and from his dominion over creation." The moral losses of the human race were to be restored in some measure by "religion and faith"; Adam's lost knowledge, and the dominion which it made possible, by "arts and sciences." Bacon's vision of a reconstructed knowledge of nature during the period which he regarded (somewhat prematurely) as "the last times" clearly played an important role in legitimizing the goals and methods of the new natural philosophy. Indeed the program of the Royal Society of London from its inception in 1660 explicitly relied upon a Baconian rhetoric of the restoration of that human knowledge and dominion over nature which Adam had once enjoyed.[60]

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59 Ibid p242-3.
60 Harrison 2002, p240.

Taylor and Bacon's views are reminiscent of Augustine on the fallen world as one of sin and scepticism; as well as of Plato, for whom the effects of passion on reason and knowledge clouded moral judgement, and even understanding of purely intellectual questions.[61] Coleridge idiosyncratically regarded Bacon as a Platonist on these grounds. Taylor was much influenced by Platonism, as we shall see in chapters 2, 3 and 4; he was a friend of the Cambridge Platonist Henry More, though they were of different churchmanship and politics. Parkin observes the influence of Platonism on Selden,[62] as well as on Joseph Glanvill,[63] friend and collaborator of Taylor's chaplain George Rust, who preached at Taylor's funeral. The influence of passion on the mind leads to a failure of clear and distinct intuitive knowledge, so a need for sceptical empiricism; but ethics remain ultimately based on intuition. This is similarly true of Origen (see Taylor making use of Origen on conscience, ch.5 p251 below) - Parkin notes his influence on Glanvill - and Augustine following Plato, in a way surprisingly reminiscent of Selden and Bacon.

There is undoubtedly some truth to the idea that there was a "renewed emphasis on the epistemological consequences of the fall" due to the "more severe form of the doctrine" of original sin preached by the Reformers and the Jansenists. However, important qualifications must be made to this. The English and Dutch Arminians seem to have been more enthusiastic sceptics than their Calvinist opponents; partly due to their interest in free will, and perhaps also partly due precisely to the fact that they emphasised the integrity of human nature, notwithstanding original sin. There was a certain need, in

61 For Augustine, man possessed intuitive knowledge before the fall; see Aquinas on this, ch2 below. For Plato, the rational soul unencumbered by the body would possess it. On the effect of the body on knowledge, see, for example *Phaedo* 64b-65c.

62 1999 p63. Selden is most influenced by Platonism in precisely the areas where he influenced Taylor; sse ch.5 below, p249.

63 1999 p121. Also Glanvill and Rust, ed. Henry More, *Two Choice and Useful Treatises* London 1682.

terms of traditional Christian anthropology, to emphasise natural limitations on human powers, if one mitigated their corruption. Certainly in Taylor's case, as we shall see at some length in the following chapters, there is an attempt to retain traditional spirituality and soteriology while sidelining the doctrine of original sin; and he goes about this partly by making use of sceptical ideas about the natural limitations of human capacities. His voluntarism and scepticism, and ideas about the non-teleological character of nature, and the indifferency of intellect and will, seem to substitute for the traditional doctrine of original sin.

The Socinian accusation against the Arminians reflects the fact that they were both more positive about human reason, and to some extent more sceptical about how much it could prove (notably in matters of faith). In the Catholic context, Montaigne doesn't seem to directly emphasise original sin in the way that Jansenist-inclined Pascal did in response to him; though the other great French sceptic Pierre Charron does, as Harrison observes.[64] Susan James points out that Pascal thinks of the condition they describe as *proof* of original sin.[65] It might be possible to see Renaissance and later scepticism, and possibly the voluntarism of some thinkers besides Taylor, with its concomitant scepticism about the capacity of man to understand the ways of God, as a way of maintaining orthodox views on man's 'fallen' state without reference to original sin.

Moreover, the rationalist philosophers, who Harrison sees as more Thomist and Catholic in their positive account of the possibilities of human reason, are closer to the Jansenists in that they are arguably more deterministic;[66] while Gassendi, sceptical and an

64 2002 p243.

65 *Passion and Action: the Emotions in Seventeenth Century Philosophy*, OUP 1997 p238. Compare Newman, *Apologia* p276. (Compare Pascal on love and knowledge, James 1997 p234f, with Taylor on conscience, ch.5 below, and Taylor and Newman on assent and faith, appendix to ch.4 and ch5 below.)

66 See Sarasohn 1996 p86f on Descartes and determinism; though Descartes is not really more

empiricist, is a Molinist. Like Taylor Gassendi doesn't emphasise original sin, and scepticism and natural ignorance, along with his voluntarism, seem to substitute for it in a way. Gassendi is quite Socratic or Stoic, to the extent that he sees sin as error.

However, it seems likely that Bacon's empiricism was influenced by the more radical lapsarian views of the Reformers; the same might be said of Hobbes, who might be called a sort of secularised Calvinist. But in the end all these writers are heavily influenced by the Augustinian tradition; the difference is one of emphasis and degree: "those who have defined original sin as a lack of original justice which ought to be in man, although in these words they have comprehended all the substance, still they have not sufficiently expressed the force of it. For our nature is not merely empty and destitute, but it is so fecund of every kind of evil that it cannot be inactive."[67]

Although Arminians and Catholics had a more positive anthropology, then, and a more positive appreciation of reason's powers - natural powers were damaged, rather than devastated - scepticism both contributes to and limits the scope of these powers. Certainly, most would have remained very suspicious of the idea that the fall could be entirely overcome, even in matters of natural reason, just as it is never wholly overcome in moral matters, despite grace and the sacraments: [Hooker. Aug: forgive us our trespasses.] Ironically, despite the different emphases regarding original sin, like the Erasmian/Grotian tradition Bacon's sceptical view of human capacities manifests itself in quite an optimistic way: his inductive methods are supposed to enable man to some extent to recover Adam's lost dominion.

Taylor is sceptical about the possibilities of human reason, as we see in the case of natural law; yet we shall see him reject the usual view of the fall and its effects, in

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Jansenist, simply more Thomist, in this respect, bizarrely enough; but the point is the same. Also, recall the Jansenist interest in the purely rational discipline of logic.

67 Calvin, *Inst*. II.1.9.

chapters 2 and 4. While Taylor agrees that ignorance and passionate impulse constitute a moral challenge for human beings, in accordance with orthodox Christian tradition, he also thinks that the present human state is a natural one, and not the result of Adam's fall. We shall see that what Augustine referred to as "ignorance" and "difficulty", are for Taylor part of the natural human condition; and that on his account, it can even be said that ignorance, and even the difficulty created by the free play of the passions, "concupiscence", are necessary for there to be meaningful moral choice.

The Erasmian tradition, as we might call it, influenced Grotius and the Dutch Arminians, and Grotius's English followers like Taylor, many of whom were also Arminian and Laudian. It has something in common with French Catholic (and Arminian Hugenot) *libertin* thought, which probably also owed something to Erasmus. Both are characterised by a more positive, and indeed Catholic, emphasis on the goodness, rather than the corruption, of human nature, and free will; yet also by a proportioned scepticism about human capacities, that to some extent does the work of the traditional doctrine of original sin. Both use scepticism to mitigate the corruption of nature, yet at the same time to emphasise nature's inadequacies; free will itself, in the sense of liberty of indifference, is necessary for moral worth and merit, but is a kind of limitation, even imperfection. In England, more radical Protestant views on human corruption probably influenced Bacon and the cynical view of human nature found in Hobbes; yet both Bacon, in the field of natural philosophy, and Hobbes, concerning the foundations of morality and law and the political order, have a reasonably optimistic assessment of what can be achieved despite the non-teleological, chaotic nature of reality; and in Hobbes's case, of the goodness of natural passions, despite a cynical view of man driven by these (Taylor and Hobbes on the passions, in ch.2 and 5 below).

Taylor draws on these ideas for precisely these reasons: to minimise and even

dispense with the traditional doctrine of original sin, and yet uphold what Taylor considers to be the very real insight behind it, and balance that with the doctrine of the goodness of the natural, of the creation. To a greater extent than other Arminians, Taylor does not assume that the present state of human nature is the result of the fall. In Taylor we find an ‘Arminian’ account of the relationship between grace and free will, but certainly not the usual account of how human nature got into its present ‘fallen’ state. Instead, we find a creative use of contemporary ideas, and the nature/grace, natural/supernatural distinction found in traditional Scholastic thought. Taylor accepts this distinction, but his concept of ‘nature’ owes more to patristic and Platonist analysis, humanist states of nature and Epicurean atomism than it owes to Scholasticism. The state in which we find human nature is its natural one, not a corrupted one deriving from original sin; but nature is still in need of grace.

We shall see in the next chapter that this implies there was no state of “original justice” in which, as according to the Scholastic maxim, the “natural appetite follows the natural power”; but the natural condition is not intrinsically, in itself, an evil state: the passions and appetites of man tend to their proper objects, requiring restraint and order where the moral law is superinduced.

Chapter 2: Taylor's Augustinian anthropology without the Fall

Jeremy Taylor's anthropology represents a post-Aristotelian, humanist reflection on Augustinian and Scholastic ideas about human nature. However, Taylor differs sharply from both Augustine and the Scholastics in that he no longer believes in two temporally successive, separate and distinct states of human nature, one that of primal innocence before the fall, 'man as he was created', in which human nature, created good in itself, was sustained in moral virtue by grace; and the other the disordered state resulting from the fall, in which human nature, although still good in itself, as created by God, must be rescued by grace from its own rebellious will and unruly passions. Instead, Taylor makes a theoretical distinction between these two states as aspects of the same condition. He derives this account from reflection on patristic and Scholastic accounts of human nature understood in the context of more recent analysis.

For Aquinas man created in grace desired "as he ought to desire, and what he ought to desire". According to the Aristotelian definition adopted and put to Christian use by Aquinas, "Perfection of moral virtue does not wholly take away the passions, but regulates them; for the temperate man desires as he ought to desire, and what he ought to desire, as stated in Nic. Ethic. III.11". (ST 1a1ae q95 art2 ad 3.) For Aristotle, and for Aquinas regarding man in his fallen state, temperance is an acquired virtue; but in the state of human nature as it was originally created, Aquinas thinks that temperance came naturally to man; though this state of "original justice" was preserved by supernatural means, by divine grace. In this state the passions did not need to be regulated and restrained by a virtuous will in the way that they do in the fallen state, because they were instigated and directed wholly by reason, and in proportion to its judgements: "in the

state of innocence the inferior appetite was wholly subject to reason: so that in that state the passions of the soul existed only as consequent upon the judgment of reason".[68] This relationship between reason and the passions in the state of innocence was maintained by the grace in which the first human beings were created: since "the loss of grace dissolved the obedience of the flesh to the soul, we may gather that the inferior powers were subjected to the soul through grace existing therein" (1a1ae q95 art1 Ans). The balanced and temperate state of man's first creation was lost as a result of the deprivation of grace consequent upon the first sin, and now an important feature of the moral life involves human beings struggling to subordinate their passions to their rational wills.

Aquinas derives his account of how "the obedience of the flesh to the soul" was lost as a result of original sin from Augustine, whom he cites in this article [CD 14.10].[69] According to Augustine, the human passions did not incline to their objects independently of reason and will before the fall. In regarding appetites, desires and feelings outside the control of reason as a moral problem for human beings, Augustine stands in the Platonist tradition; the Stoics and Peripatetics, in different ways, concurred.[70] Augustine congratulates the Platonists for coming close to the Christian view:

> the Platonists, who approached the truth more nearly than other philosophers, acknowledged that anger and lust are perverted elements in a man's character, or soul, on the ground that they are disturbed and undisciplined emotions leading to acts which

68 ST 1a1ae q95 art2. This would seem to be an application of the principle that the natural appetite must follow the natural power; though this condition is only maintained by grace, and as we shall see, Aquinas does not in any case invariably accept the principle: the rational creature has a natural desire for perfect beatitude, which is an end unattainable by its natural powers alone. Again, as we shall see, Taylor thinks that a creature whose essence includes a naturally insatiable appetite, cannot ever have been in an original state where appetitive temperance came naturally, even one maintained by grace, which always relates to nature in the same way, according to Taylor.

69 Though they perhaps have slightly different views about whether fallen human nature is just nature deprived of grace, or nature actually disordered or damaged.

70 For the Stoics, passions were the result of a form of intellectual error, not the cause of it, as for the Platonists and Peripatetics.

> wisdom forbids, and therefore they need the control of intelligence and reason. This third rational division of the soul is located by them in a kind of citadel, to rule the other elements, so that with the rational element in command and the others subordinate, justice may be preserved in the relation between all the parts of man's soul.[71]

Augustine follows the classic tripartite division of the soul described by Plato in book 4 of the *Republic* and the *Timaeus.* We may compare Gassendi's account cited in the previous chapter. However, unlike the Platonists, Augustine thinks that in the state in which human nature was first created, the due order, the "justice" between the various parts of the soul, came naturally:

> But in paradise before man's sin these elements [anger, lust etc] did not exist in their perverted state. For then they were not set in motion, in defiance of a right will, to pursue any course which made it necessary to hold them back with the guiding reins, so to speak, of reason.
>
> The situation now is that these passions are set in motion in this fashion, and are brought under control by those who live disciplined, just and devout lives, sometimes with comparative ease, sometimes with difficulty. But this control entails coercion and struggle, and the situation does not represent a state of health in accordance with nature, but an enfeebled condition arising from guilt.[72]

According to Augustine the existence of appetites and feelings outside the control of reason is a fault in the perfect order of creation, and could not have been a feature of human nature as it was originally created, because it leads to "acts which wisdom

71 CD XIV.19
72 CD XIV.19.

forbids", and involves "coercion and struggle", rather than a serene and tranquil state in which the rational soul entirely determines behaviour. Although they thought of this condition as representing a moral challenge for human beings, non-Christian Platonists saw it as natural: at any rate, it either originated prior to the embodiment of the soul, or was a result of that embodiment; it was *not* a corruption of the embodied condition introduced after that condition came into being.[73] Augustine regards it as a disruption brought about by an act of the highest, rational part of the soul; as we shall see in chapter 3, an act of what Augustine calls "will".

Augustine regards this present state of human nature as a corruption, due to his distinctively Christian understanding of the body and lower parts of the soul as God's good creation. Non-Christian Platonists tended to account for the 'disordered' traits of human nature on the basis of a principle of formlessness and disorder which represented the 'furthest remove', so to put it, from the First Principle; the inevitable final term of the generation of all being from the over-flowing "generosity" of the One, which brings the cosmos into being without diminishing the One or affecting its immutability.[74] They called this final term "matter"; the material universe, including the human body and lower parts of the soul, [*sarx*], was constituted from matter, which required form and order from higher, intellectually-endowed realities, which imposed it through their contemplation of the unity and perfection of the First.

Augustine on the other hand thinks that the created order exists at the will of God, who saw that all he had made was good; so the disordered state of human nature cannot be the result of any intrinsic principle, because this would be a flaw in the perfect form and order that the good God bestowed upon the world he created. Augustine does not

73 For example, Plotinus, Enn. I.8.4.
74 Specifically in these terms, again, Plotinus, I.8, IV.8, V.

reject the notion of "matter", but he thinks that God bestowed perfect form and order on matter, when he created matter in its various forms.[75] For the Platonists, matter is the final term, tending to formlessness and not-being, of an eternal generation, requiring souls which are involved in matter to impose form upon it; the unquiet passions are the result of matter's intrinsic formlessness, and can be formed by virtue, discipline, 'ascent' back to the intelligible realm. For Augustine, God gave matter perfect form, so that, as Aquinas puts it, "in the state of innocence the temperate man desired as he ought to desire". That perfect form and order has now been lost, and human nature requires grace to assist it in the struggle.

Augustine was preoccupied with the problem of the origin of the 'disorder' inherent in human nature and the moral evil which he associated with it from his earliest days as a Christian; indeed, according to his portrayal in the *Confessions*, it was, at least implicitly, an abiding concern throughout his life, and was one reason he was drawn to the Manichean sect for some years. The solution he eventually reached, based on scripture and earlier Christian writers, and partly reflecting well-established Christian views, is expounded in its mature form in book 13 of the *City of God*, as well as in numerous other texts:

> For after their disobedience to God's instructions, the first human beings were deprived of God's favour … The soul, in fact, rejoiced in its own freedom to act perversely and disdained to be God's servant; so it was deprived of the obedient service which its body had at first rendered … This then was the time when the flesh began to "lust in opposition to the spirit", which is the conflict that attends us from our birth. We bring with us, at our

75 *Confessions* XII.4. The soul's turn away from the Good and towards formlessness at the Fall unleashes the disorder in human nature: this is referred to the condition of the individual, *Conf.* XII.10. However, unlike the Platonists, the soul's turn is not caused by matter, according to Augustine; see ch.3 below.

> birth, the beginning of our death, and with the vitiation of our nature our body is the scene of death's assault, or rather of his victory, as the result of that first disobedience. God created man aright, for God is the author of natures, though he is certainly not responsible for their defects. But man was willingly perverted and justly condemned, and so begot perverted and condemned offspring. For we were all in that one man, seeing that we all *were* that one man.[76]

For Augustine, then, sin does not simply have its origin in irrational passions; for the disorder of the passions, had its origin in the first sin. Indeed, as we shall see, even in the fallen state, very often, behind inordinate passions, lies volition.[77] However, for the Platonists, the disorder of the passions is the result of 'matter'. Augustine, using the scriptural term "flesh" also familiar to the Platonic tradition [*sarks*], reprimands the Platonists for holding "that the flesh is the cause of every kind of moral failing, on the ground that the bad behaviour of the soul is due to the influence of the flesh. But this contention shows a failure to consider man's nature carefully and in its entirety" (CD XIV.3). It is true that in the fallen state "the corruptible body weighs down the soul, and the earthly habitation depresses the mind as it meditates on many questions", as scripture says (Wisdom 9.5). But the Catholic belief ("our belief")[78] is that the "corruption of the body, which weighs down the soul, is not the cause of the first sin, but its punishment. And it was not the corruptible flesh that made the soul sinful, but the sinful soul that made the flesh corruptible" (Ibid). The origin of the disagreement between the rational soul and the passions lies in sinful volition, not in the influence of the "flesh" on the will; and sinful volition retains a certain priority in the fallen state, as we shall see in chapter 3.

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76 CD XIII.13-14.

77 In a similar way to that in which for the Stoics, behind evil passions, lay intellectual error.

78 As opposed to that of the Platonists, or of the Manicheans; or the Pelagians, who, as we shall see in ch.4, are implicitly targeted here.

However, as we shall also see in chapter 3, volition has two basic meanings for Augustine, which are in tension, and this affects his account of the relationship between the rational soul and the passions.

Augustine says that "Virgil is apparently expounding Platonic teaching in glorious poetry when he says [in Aeneid 6.730ff; Augustine seems also to have Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* in mind here] … that the body is to be taken as the source of all four of the most familiar disturbances of the mind: desire and fear, joy and grief, which may be called the origins of all sins and moral failings." Augustine argues that neither the "disturbances" in themselves, nor the sins that often result from them, are simply due to embodiment, or even to the corruption of the flesh consequent upon original sin. He observes that although the "corruption of the flesh results in some incitements to wrongdoing and in actual vicious longings … we must not attribute to the flesh all the faults of a wicked life", because this would absolve the Devil from those faults, "since he has no flesh". Nor are "desire and fear, joy and grief" necessarily a bad thing, a view which Augustine ascribes to Stoic teaching. For Augustine, such a view is incompatible with several important points of Christian faith and morals:

> Scripture subjects the mind to God for his direction and assistance, and subjects the passions to the mind for their restraint and control so that they may be turned into the instruments of justice. In fact, in our discipline, the question is not *whether* the devout soul is angry, but *why;* not whether it is afraid, but what is the object of its fear … how much more honourable would it have been in the Stoic … to have been 'disturbed' by compassion … Far more creditable, more humane, and more in harmony with the feelings of true religion was the sentiment expressed in Cicero's praise of Caeser, 'Of all your

virtues, none was more admirable, none more attractive, than your compassion.'[79]

However, Augustine has some difficulty with this issue. On the one hand, he denies that *apatheia* is the moral ideal for Christians, and asserts the validity of rightly-orientated feelings, insisting that to lack feelings at all, would be inhuman, and incompatible with Christian ethics and anthropology.[80] On the other hand, Augustine is uncomfortable with all passions and feelings that arise independently of the judgement of reason, and the determination of the will on the basis of this. Indeed, there are some appetites or passions which, in Augustine's view, seem not to have existed in paradise at all, at least not in anything like their present state, even in proportion to rational judgement, and at the behest of the will. For Aquinas, passions were possible in the state of innocence, but only at the instigation of the will, in a due proportion. But Augustine often seems to suggest that even this was not the case. Augustine's typical example is sexual desire:

if there had been no sin, marriage would have been worthy of the happiness of paradise, and would have given birth to children to be loved, and yet would not have given rise to any lust to be ashamed of; but, as it is, we have no example to show how this could have come about. Yet that does not mean that it should seem incredible that the one part of the

79 CD IX.5.

80 See also CD XIV.9, and the first section of ch.3 below. Stephen Gaukroger says that traditional disputes about the passions in the seventeenth century "revolved around a basic polarity between what can broadly be termed Stoic and Augustinian conceptions of the passions. The Stoics treated the passions as false judgements, and following an already strong tradition of intellectualist ethics in Greek thought, they identified virtue and knowledge. On this conception, regulating the passions was tantamount to ridding oneself of [them]. On Augustine's conception, on the other hand, the moral worth of the passions must be seen above all in terms of the will, and there can be both virtuous and vicious ones. These cannot be assessed by reference to some criterion of rationality, but must rather be judged in terms of the act of will from which they arise." *The Soft Underbelly of Reason: The Passions in the Seventeenth Century*, Routledge 1998 p6. Precisely what Augustine means by will in this context is of great importance regarding what can be considered a 'good' or 'bad' passion, as we shall in in this chapter, chapter 3 and especially chapter 4. A good will is always directed towards the truth, for Augustine, so rationality is not altogether lacking as a criterion of the moral worth of the passions.

> body could have been subject to the will, without the familiar lust, seeing that so many other parts are now in subjection to it. We move our hands and feet to perform their special functions, when we so will..[81]

Apparently, then, the movement of the genitals would have occurred in the same way that we can move our hands and feet: at the behest of the will, without any appetite or feeling being involved at all. Feeling is bad in itself, for Augustine, in this context:

> Now surely any friend of wisdom and holy joys who lives a married life, but knows, in the words of the Apostle's warning, "how to possess his bodily instrument in holiness and honour, not in the sickness of desire, like the Gentiles who have no knowledge of God" - surely such a man would prefer, if possible, to beget children without lust of this kind. For then the parts created for this task would be the servants of his mind, even in their function of procreation, just as the other members are its servants in the various tasks to which they are assigned. They would begin their activity at the bidding of the will, instead of being stirred up by the ferment of lust.[82]

Augustine does not consider the possibility that sexual desire might ever be in accord with a good will; exactly what Augustine means by a good will, and how it affects the passions, will be of the greatest importance to our discussion in chapters 3 and 4.

At any rate, Christ, according to Augustine, was of such good will and in such perfect control of his own nature, that he decided what he was going to feel where

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81 In this respect Aquinas diverges from Augustine, and is more 'Aristotelian' than 'Platonist': all the natural inclinations of human nature existed, but the mean came naturally, perhaps at the deliberate behest of the will.

82 CD XIV.16. Also *Against Julian* IV.14.72.

feelings were appropriate;[83] otherwise, he, too, would have been subject to that very inward contradiction, of which St Paul so bitterly complains, and which, in Augustine's view, was brought about by the first sin. And what was true of Christ, also seems to have been true of Adam in the state of innocence (CD XIV.10).

Jeremy Taylor denies that either Christ's passions, or Adam's before his fall, were in a different state from ours, which at the time was a highly controversial view, and inevitably attracted the accusation of Pelagianism, or even Socinianism. Taylor follows Augustine in referring to the general state of the passions in their present, irrational form as "concupiscence":

> if concupiscence, which is in every man's nature, be a sin, it is certain Christ had no concupiscence or natural desires, for He had no sin. But if He had no concupiscence or desires, how He should be a man, or how capable of law, or how He should serve God with choice, where there could be no *potentia ad oppositum*, I think will be very hard to be understood.[84]

Taylor certainly does not deny the sinlessness (or the divinity) of Christ; instead, he denies the intrinsic sinfulness of concupiscence. So did Augustine, in itself; but Augustine also held it to be the result of original sin, as we have seen, and that even the regenerate inevitably sinned at least venially from time to time as a consequence of it. Concupiscence is not sin; but people with concupiscence, inevitably sin, at least venially, even after baptism.[85] Christ was exempt from original sin and its effects. For Taylor,

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83 CD XIV.9; compare Adam and Eve before the fall, in XIV.10 and elsewhere.

84 Works vol. 7 p334. Compare Julian of Eclanum on the same point.

85 For example, *Against Julian* II.10.33. Julian thought that Augustine saw concupiscence as

Christ is not exempt from "concupiscence, or natural desires"; this is because for Taylor, concupiscence is not the result of original sin.

The effects of concupiscence as a natural phenomenon are not wholly avoidable for Taylor, any more than they are for man in the fallen state according to Augustine; Taylor, like Augustine, exempts Christ, on the grounds that he had exceptional moral insight and strength due to his divinity, though he is fully human, and tempted. As far as ordinary humans go, Taylor has some important questions to answer: if concupiscence is wholly resistible, then his view does indeed reduce to Pelagianism; if not, then he seems to be in no better position that his Calvinist opponents: if someone could not have done otherwise, then the question arises of whether their action can be called a sin, or attributed to their responsibility. We shall consider this question in detail in chapter 3; Taylor's answer, such as it is, seems to be that sin is unavoidable in every given instance, but not absolutely; and that we *become* responsible, as we attain the age of reason, for a natural condition which inclines us to certain things that are sinful or not depending on the moral context.

In contrast to the Augustinian account, according to Taylor, there never was a time when the human passions were instigated wholly by and in proportion to reason. (As we shall see in chapter 3, in a way this represents a reversion to the older Platonist view, though not to every aspect of it, of course). Taylor's rejection of a primeval loss of "original justice" does not mean that he rejects Aquinas's assertion that "perfection of moral virtue ... regulates [the passions according to reason, so that] the temperate man desires as he ought to desire, and what he ought to desire". St Thomas says that "all the

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intrinsically sinful, as we shall see in chapter 4. Some of Taylor's interlocutors seem to have thought that human beings were naturally sinful for precisely this reason, and not only the Calvinist ones. But Augustine did not hold this; see ch.3 below. In DNG 36 Augustine allows that grace might make it possible to avoid sinning at all, but expresses scepticism about whether this has ever actually happened, except perhaps in the case of the Virgin Mary.

inclinations of ... the concupiscible and irascible faculties, insofar as they are ruled by reason, belong to the natural law"[86]. We shall see in chapter 5 that Taylor disagrees with St Thomas about the existence of a natural law in the prescriptive and proscriptive sense; but for Aquinas, something can belong to the natural law in a negative way, simply insofar as it belongs to human nature. A natural feature of what it is to be a human being, cannot in itself be entirely contrary to the moral law.[87] This is Aquinas's meaning here, and to this extent Taylor agrees with him. The inclinations of the irascible and concupiscible faculties are natural aspects of human nature, and insofar as they are ruled by reason, they are morally acceptable. However, Taylor differs from Aquinas in that by ruled by reason, he always means guided and controlled by reason, whereas Aquinas thinks that in the state of innocence, the passions were instigated by the rational will in a due proportion.

The existing relationship between reason and the passions is the natural relationship, according to Taylor, in the context of mortal life, and not an undesirable necessity created by original sin:

> But I consider, that by "concupiscence" must be meant either the first inclination [of the passions] to their object; or the proper acts of election, which are the second acts of concupiscence. If the first inclinations be meant, then certainly that cannot be a sin, which is natural, and which is necessary. For I consider that concupiscence and natural desires are like hunger, which, while it is natural and necessary, is not for the destruction but conservation of man; when it goes beyond the limits of nature, it is violent and is a

86 ST 1a2ae q94 art 2 reply to obj. 2.

87 Self-preservation, sexual intercourse, education of offspring, belong, as Aquinas puts it, to the *ius naturale*, the "right" of nature. As we shall see in chapter 5, Taylor distinguishes between *ius* and *lex* as negative right, and positive precept respectively; Aquinas accepted both a negative and positive right.

disease.[88]

For Taylor there is a motion of the passions which is both natural and independent of rational judgement, and it plays a necessary and potentially positive role in earthly existence. This can only be called "concupiscence" in Augustine's sense of something wrong and undesirable when it occurs in a morally illicit context, and more especially when it is encouraged to excess by the will. The fact that we have it, however, is in itself morally neutral, and in the right ethical context, passions in themselves are morally acceptable. Taylor takes issue with Augustine's suggestion that sexual desire did not exist at all, at least in anything like its present form, before the fall:

> [W]hen [natural desires] are taken for the natural propensity to their proper object, [they] are so far from being a sin, that they are instruments of felicity for this duration; and when they grow towards being irregular, they may if we please grow instruments of felicity in order to the other duration, because they may serve a virtue by being restrained … to desire that which all men desire, is no more a sin than to desire to be happy is a sin: 'desire' is no more a sin than joy or sorrow is: neither can it be fancied why one passion more than another can be in its whole nature criminal: either all or none are so; when any of them grows irregular or inordinate, joy is as bad as desire, and fear as bad as either.[89]

For Taylor, the passions are not in an intrinsically corrupt or disordered condition; they are even "instruments of felicity for this duration". The state of original justice, as described by Augustine and developed by Aquinas and others, was one in which, in

88 Letter to Bp Warner, Works vol. 7 p564. Nature is not teleological, however; what is "natural" for the passions is assessed on the basis of the overall human good, given the sort of creatures we are; and even then this requires confirmation by revelation, for Taylor, as we shall see in chapter 5.

89 Works vol.7 p564.

effect, according to the Aristotelian/Scholastic maxim, 'the natural appetite followed the natural power'. Notwithstanding his assertions about the goodness of the passions when they incline in accordance with "nature", and their irregularity when they grow "inordinate", Taylor is in fact sceptical of any natural proportionality or teleology regarding the passions.[90] As we shall see in chapter 5, the measure of inordinacy, the extent to which the passions require restraint, can only be judged according to probabilistic reasoning and the moral principles contained in divine revelation, not according to any intrinsic natural order or principle. The passions and appetites of human nature know no natural proportion in themselves, even one maintained by the influence of grace; they simply incline blindly to their own proper objects, and it is up to reason and will to direct and habituate them to virtue. Grace always relates to nature in the same way, for Taylor: it assists the rational mind to form the nature and character of the whole man according to virtue, rather than only working this way in the redemption of 'fallen' humanity. The conflict between the "flesh and the spirit", says Taylor, "comes by reason of the laws which God made after He made our nature; He brought us laws to check our nature, to cross and displease, that by doing so we may prefer God before ourselves".[91]

> That in some things our nature is cross to the divine commandment, is not always imputable to us, because our natures were before the commandment; and God hath therefore commanded us to do violence to our nature, that by such preternatural contentions we should offer to God a service that costs us something. But that in some things we are inclined otherwise than we are suffered to act, is so far from offending God, that it is the

90 Compare Works vol. 2 p12. Taylor's concept of irregularity or inordinacy or excess in the passions is not based on Scholastic ideas of a natural proportion, but seems to owe more to Plato and Epicurus, in that it is a more intuitive conception; for example, *Timaeus* 87c4-6: "all that is good is beautiful and what is beautiful is … well proportioned". Compare Augustine on intuitive knowledge of justice, with Aquinas on the just as drawn from natural mathematical proportion: see ch.5 below.

91 UN, Works vol 7 p335.

> opportunity of serving Him by which we can most endear him. To be inclined to that whither nature bends, is of itself indifferent, but to love, to entertain, to act our inclinations, when the commandment is put between, that is the sin; and therefore if we resist them, and master them, that is our obedience.[92]

For Taylor, "our nature is not contrary to virtue, but the instances of some virtues are made to come cross our nature."[93] One of the chief causes of the "universal iniquity of the world" identified by St Paul in Romans 2, is not an intrinsic corruption of human nature derived from Adam, but

> because our nature is so hard put to it in many instances; not because nature is originally corrupted, but because God's laws command such things which are a restraint to the indifferent and otherwise lawful inclinations of nature. I instance in the matters of temperance, abstinence, patience, humility, self-denial, and mortification. But more particularly thus; - A man is naturally inclined to desire the company of a woman whom he fancies. This is naturally no sin: for the natural desire was put into us by God, and therefore could not be evil. But then God as an instance and trial of our obedience, put fetters upon the indefinite desire, and determined us to one woman; which provision was enough to satisfy our need, but not all our possibility. This therefore he left as a reserve, that by obeying God in the so reasonable restraint of our natural desire, we might give Him something of our own … our unwillingness and averseness came by occasion of the law coming cross upon our nature; not because our nature is contrary to God, but because God was pleased to superinduce some commandments contrary to our nature … because we are forbidden to do some things which naturally we desire to do and love, therefore our nature

92 Ibid.
93 Works vol 1, p118

> is hard put to it; and this is the true state of the difficulty.[94]

Taylor is directly engaging the traditional Augustinian view of the state of the passions, by way of Augustine's own typical example: the present state of human sexual desire.

> For while it is true that the carnal desire dwelling in the genital organs is made good use of by married chastity, still it has its involuntary motions which show that either it could not have been present at all in paradise before sin, or if it did exist there that it was not such as would ever resist the will. But now our experience of it is that it *fights against the law of the mind* (Rom.7.23), and even when it is not required for procreation it goads us on to copulation; if we give in it is sated by sinning, if we do not give in it is curbed by refusal; both situations which no one can doubt were foreign to paradise before sin. After all, the probity of that state would not do anything unbecoming, and the felicity of that state would not suffer anything unsatisfying.[95]

In contrast, according to Taylor, human beings can be said to possess an "indefinite desire" naturally. These passages indicate Taylor's voluntarism and divine command ethics, which we shall consider further in chapter 5; however, there is a more subtle dimension to his view. Our naturally "indefinite desire" can be not only restrained in accordance with the commandment, but also directed in such a way as to be engaged and integrated with, and contribute to, a higher fulfilment of human nature. A more positive understanding of marriage often surfaces in Taylor's works than the restricted, lawful outlet for natural passions suggested by the passages above (which Augustine would have

94 UN, Works vol. 7 p277.
95 de Trin. XIII.5.23.

held to constitute a lustful use of marriage). Moreover, this understanding contributes to a more subtle and integrated account of the relationship between human passions and the intellectual faculty, the rational soul, than simply the distinction between reason and willpower on the one hand, and passion or desire on the other, suggested by Taylor's anthropology so far, which is suggestive of a rather crude mind-body dualism. We shall consider this further in chapter 3.

In the preface to a comparatively early work on the life of Christ, Taylor argues that God gave to man "two first appetites of nature", which are related to one another; the first, "to be like God, and the first natural instrument of it, love," from which "descend all the first obligations of religion"; and the second, "to beget another like himself":

> This appetite God only made regular [by the institution of marriage]. He gave to man a woman for a wife, for the companion of his sorrows, for the instrument of multiplication; and yet provided him but of one, and intimated he should have no more: which we do not only know by an after revelation, the holy Jesus having declared it to have been God's purpose; but Adam himself understood it, as appears by his first discourses at the entertainment of his new bride. And although there were permissions afterward of polygamy … certainly the multiplication of wives is contrarient to that design of love and endearment which God intended at first between man and wife … And amongst them that have many wives, the relation and necessitude is trifling and loose, and they are all equally contemptible; because the mind entertains no loves or union where the object is multiplied and the act unfixed and distracted. So that this having a great commodity in order to man's great end, that is, of living well and happily, seems to be intended by God in the nature of things and instruments natural and reasonable towards man's end; and therefore to be a law,

> if not natural, yet at least positive and superinduced at first in order to man's proper end.[96]

Marriage, according to Taylor, is a fitting part of "man's great end" or "proper end" in this life, "that is, of living well, and happily";[97] an end which is conceived on what we might see as a more 'Epicurean' than 'Aristotelian' model: that is, probabilistically derived from what happens to be good, according to the appetites and inclinations we happen to have, rather than on a teleological model. But marriage is also a certain natural analogue of the spiritual life, and indeed an image of that relationship between the human soul and God which, this time following the Augustinian tradition, Taylor holds to be the true and ultimate human end:

> Single life makes men in one instance to be like angels, but marriage in very many things makes the chaste pair to be like Christ. 'This is a great mystery', but it is the symbolical and sacramental representation of the greatest mysteries of our religion. Christ descended from His Father's bosom, and contracted His divinity with flesh and blood, and married our nature, and we became a church, the spouse of the Bridegroom, which He cleansed with His blood, and gave her His holy spirit for a dowry, and heaven for a jointure, begetting children unto God by the gospel.[98]

Christ took our nature, says Taylor, "at last to make it partaker of a beatifical resurrection"; "by means of His holy humanity it was taken up into the cabinet of the

96 Preface to the *Great Exemplar*, Works vol 2 p8-9.

97 Compare Erasmus, *The Epicurean* and *On the Goodness of Marriage*: see also MacCulloch, D. *Reformation: Europe's house divided 1490-1700*, Allen Lane, London 2003 on Erasmus and his influence in this respect, chapter 16, *Love and Sex: Moving On* p647f.

98 *Marriage Ring* sermon, Works vol 4 p212. Also in an Erasmian, and Platonist, vein, friendship, too, is a certain temporal image for Taylor: *Discourse of Friendship*, Works vol.1.

mysterious Trinity".[99]

For Taylor, even our temporal end - which, as indicated by the fact that loving personal relationships are part of it and exemplify it, is not static, but, like our ultimate end, dynamic - cannot be derived by reason from a teleological order in nature; it can only be probably assessed, on the basis of what seems to contribute to human fulfilment and flourishing, and is confirmed by revelation. "Matrimonial chastity could not have been a law before Eve was created; yet our nature was perfect before."[100] For Taylor, human nature has various natural inclinations, but they do not indicate any teleological order: in themselves, they only indicate "a natural appetite or inclination", they do not imply any intrinsic 'ought' regarding behaviour, moral or otherwise, merely a desire for satisfaction: for example,

> that a thing is common to men and beasts is no indication of a law of nature, but only of a common necessity, instinct or inclination respectively.[101]

A general consideration of what best contributes to human well-being will persuasively, but not finally or demonstratively, indicate that our natural inclinations are best pursued in certain ways and within certain temperate limits, for Taylor; but confirmation of this can only come from divine revelation. We shall consider this question of revelation and moral obligation further in chapter 5.

Taylor partly thinks this because he does not think our natural good, or natural end, could exhaust all our possibility: one can never say, this is a perfectly flourishing, good or happy man, except of one beyond the life of time and chance, who enjoys the

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99 GE, Works vol 2 p52.
100 Works vol 9 p281.
101 Ibid. p283.

vision of God. Our final end, which is naturally desired, is nevertheless unknown to us in this life, without revelation:

> Our nature is too weak in order to our duty and final interest, that at first it cannot move one step towards God unless God by His preventing grace puts into it a new possibility. [Homer quote:] "there is nothing that creeps upon the earth, nothing that ever God made, weaker than man;" for God fitted horses and mules with strength, bees and pismires with sagacity, harts and hares with swiftness, birds with feathers and a light airy body; and they all know their times, and are fitted for their work, and regularly acquire the proper end of their creation; but man, that was designed to an immortal duration and the fruition of God forever, knows not how to obtain it; he is made upright to look up to heaven, but he knows no more how to purchase it than to climb it.[102]

This is not to say that man is created imperfect or inadequate regarding his natural life; only regarding his eternal destiny, which is, for Taylor as according to the Scholastic maxim, naturally desired, but only supernaturally attained. In one sense, for natural life, that is, our natural end*s* considered in themselves rather than from a moral point of view, we are as well fitted as horses, pismires, harts or bees. We have various natural ends, which are not teleological, but merely those we happen to have. But human consciousness gives us a capacity for a higher, transcendent end, yet one which necessarily cannot be obtained by any natural means. Human nature is sufficient for natural life but it carries within itself a higher intrinsic possibility; it is not 'closed', that is to say, it has a capacity beyond what it does or can do in nature, but which need not be fulfilled; man is sufficient in his natural life, but by virtue of consciousness, human

102 Sermon X, *The Flesh and the Spirit*, Works vol 4 p119. Compare Hooker, *Laws* bk I ch..IX.4.

beings are creatures for whom there is a certain ontological excess, and even, as we might say, a spiritual entropy, without the higher end provided by the supernatural order.

On these grounds, then, Taylor is suspicious of the Augustinian view that in the state of innocence, human beings could not have suffered "anything unsatisfying": the only perfectly satisfying end, so to speak, is the Beatific Vision. Taylor cannot reconcile a temporal state of "original justice" with Augustine's assertion that "our hearts are restless, until they rest in Thee". And indeed the capacity for the vision of God, is reflected in the endlessness, the lack of any intrinsic natural proportion, in our appetites, both physical and mental. For Taylor, the "indefinite desire" characteristic of what Aquinas called "the inferior appetite" is an image at the physical level, one might say, of the indeterminate desire that characterises man's intellectual and spiritual nature, a desire that can only rest in the infinite, in the eternal contemplation of God (or, in a loving personal relation with God). A creature whose desire is for the infinite, cannot be a creature of naturally temperate appetites, of any sort; in a creature made up of an intimate (and intricate) union of body and soul, spiritual appetite must have its physical analogue. St Thomas plainly stated that a creature of infinite appetite cannot be perfectly satisfied by anything except the infinite:

> It is impossible for any created good to constitute man's happiness. For happiness is the perfect good, which lulls the appetite altogether; else it would not be the last end, if something yet remained to be desired. Now the object of the will, i.e. of man's appetite, is the universal good; just as the object of the intellect is the universal true. Hence it is evident that naught can lull man's will, save the universal good. This is to be found, not in any creature, but in God alone; because every creature has goodness by participation. Wherefore God alone can satisfy the will of man, according to the words of Psalm 102.5:

> "Who satisfieth thy desire with good things." Therefore God alone constitutes man's [final, ultimate] happiness.[103]

For Taylor, St Thomas and St Augustine must be wrong about an earthly state of perfect temperance on their own principles. No created thing, and no imperfect access to the uncreated, either, could satisfy the human soul. Perfect happiness lies is the intuitive vision of the perfect good; and as Aquinas says this was not perfectly available to man even before his sin:

> since in the Divine Essence is beatitude itself, the intellect of a man who sees the Divine Essence has the same relation to God as a man has to beatitude. Now it is clear that man cannot willingly be turned away from beatitude, since naturally and necessarily he desires it, and shuns unhappiness. Wherefore no one who sees the Essence of God can willingly turn away from God, which means to sin. Hence all who see God through His Essence are so firmly established in the love of God, that for eternity they can never sin. Therefore, as Adam did sin, it is clear that he did not see God through His Essence.[104]

Therefore, without the beatific vision, Taylor does not think that man can be thought of as ever in a state where he does not suffer "anything unsatisfying". Indeed, had he ever been so, he would never have sinned. For Augustine, as Aquinas observes in the passage just quoted, without the beatific vision, man was able to love himself better than God: the absence of an intuitive vision of God was a necessary condition of the possibility of sin, and for Taylor it is equally the necessary condition of freedom of choice regarding the final good: as we saw him argue in chapter 1,

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103 ST 1a2ae q1 art.8.
104 ST 1a1ae q94 art.1.

> in moral and spiritual things liberty and indetermination is weakness, and supposes a great infirmity of our reason, and a want of love. For if we understood all the degrees of amability in the service of God, and if we could love God as he deserves, we could not deliberate concerning his service, and we could not possibly choose or be in love with disobedience, we should have no liberty left, nothing concerning which we could deliberate; for there is no deliberation but when something is to be refused and something is to be preferred, which could not be but that we understand good little, and love it less. For the saints and angels in heaven and God himself love good and cannot choose evil, because to do so were imperfection and infelicity; and the devils and accursed souls hate all good ... but between these is the state of man in his pilgrimage, until he comes to a confirmation in one of the opposite terms. Liberty of will is like a magnetic needle toward the north, full of trembling and uncertainty till it be fixed in the beloved point: it wavers as long as it is free, and is at rest when it can choose no more ... our dignity and excellence supposes misery and is imperfection, but [is] the instrument and capacity of all duty and all virtue.[105]

Taylor also thinks this implies that without the intuitive vision of God, our highest good, we have a certain *natural* tendency to love ourselves best of all,[106] and consequently to wander after other things: finite temporality, and its concomitant mutability, notably for embodied creatures, are sufficient to account for this tendency, and do not require the fall as an explanation of its origin.

> the grace of God eases the malignity [of our "strange propensity to evil"], but it cannot be

105 *Ductor Dubitantium* vol 2, Works vol 10 p552.

106 Possibly Augustine agrees, and thinks of this as the explanation for the fall: Adam had enough grace to avoid sin in any given instance, but was at least very likely to fall eventually. See ch.3 note 126 below, and Rist 1994 on this, p104-8.

> cured but by glory: that is, this freedom of delight, or perfect unabated election of evil, which is consequent to the evil manners of the world, although it be lessened by the intermedial state of grace, yet it is not cured until it be changed into its quite contrary; but as it is in heaven, all that is happy, and glorious, and free, yet can choose nothing but the love of God and excellent things, because God fills all the capacities of saints, and there is nothing without Him that hath any degrees of amability: so in the state of nature, of flesh and blood; there is so much ignorance of spiritual excellencies, and so much proportion to sensual objects … that as men naturally know no good but to please a wild, undetermined infinite appetite, so they will nothing else …[107]

In a thoroughly Augustinian manner, there is a certain spiritual 'entropy', on the part of the human will, if it is not rejoicing in the possession of the highest good obtained; and since in this life the final good *cannot* be had, yet the finite self possesses the capacity for it, the will's entropic, and, inevitably, greedy, "rebellious" tendencies, are in some measure natural to it.[108]

Taylor follows his great English predecessor Richard Hooker in this respect. Hooker remains heavily influenced by Scholasticism, whereas Taylor tends philosophically to 'Epicurean' and 'Platonist' views, but they share an overall structure

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107 Sermon *Of the Flesh and the Spirit* Works vol.4 p124. This is clearly a condition that is partly the result simply of temporality and embodiment, for Taylor, and not just "the evil manners of the world"; as we shall see further in the next two chapters. "Perfect unabated election of evil" is an exaggeration, as we shall see in the next chapter; at any rate, in any given instance. Taylor constantly asserts that human beings possess liberty of indifference.

108 Taylor essentially thinks that the natural state of man under grace is that of fallen man under grace in CD XI.12, and the state of Adam in innocence in the same chapter is incoherent. We shall take up this theme again in chapter 4. Compare John Burnaby, *Amor Dei*, London 1938 p37: "Change is the rule of temporal existence, changelessness is the quality of the eternal, the limit towards which the creature may approximate." And p179: "Where the Greeks had thought of mortality and immortality, where the scholastics were to think of nature and super-nature, Augustine thinks of change and the changeless." See many passages of the *Confessions*, notably in books 7 and 12; and de Trin. IV.4, cited in my chapter 4 below. Aquinas implicitly attempts to answer the objection that 'original justice' is incompatible with the endless desire of the changeable soul for the changeless, when he claims that the relationship of man in innocence to beatitude was "to a state of further good hoped for": but in the light of our present discussion this is not a very convincing answer.

that owes much to Augustinianism and Thomism. In Scholastic mode, Hooker argues that

> that which man doth desire with reference to a further end, the same he desireth in such measure as is unto that end convenient; but what he coveteth as good in itself, towards that his desire is ever infinite. So that unless the last good of all, which is desired altogether for itself, be also infinite, we do evil in making it our end.[109]

For Taylor, human beings naturally tend to an endless desire for temporal and material things, an endless search for satisfaction amidst the goods of this world; they do not desire goods simply "in such measure as is unto [whatever] end convenient". This is a misdirected reflection of their capacity for God: as Hooker says, "Capable we are of God both by understanding and will: by understanding, as He is that sovereign Truth which comprehendeth the riches of all wisdom; by will, as He is that sea of Goodness whereof whoso tasteth shall thirst no more.

> As the will doth now work upon that object by desire, which is as it were a motion towards the end as yet unobtained; so likewise upon the same hereafter received it shall work also by love. "Appetitus inhiantis fit amor fruentis," saith St Augustine: "The longing disposition of them that thirst is changed into the sweet affection of them that taste and are replenished."

A certain endless seeking for satisfaction characterises the human will in the 'state of our pilgrimage', according to Taylor; human beings have a natural tendency, then, to pursue individual satisfaction. But in reality, for Hooker and Taylor as for Augustine, this

109 This, and all of the following, *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* I.XI.4.

perpetuates our ontological dissatisfaction. As Hooker says, "we now love the thing that is good, but good especially in respect of benefit unto us"; in fact, human beings are made to "love the thing that is good, only or principally for the goodness … in itself"; and the pursuit of what is good in itself, for its own sake, will *also* provide the soul with "joy, peace and delight".[110]

An instructive comparison can be made between Taylor's version of Augustinian anthropology concerning desire, and that of Taylor's contemporary, the great materialist philosopher and political theorist Thomas Hobbes, whose influence is discernible in Taylor's later writings:

> [T]he Felicity of this life, consisteth not in the repose of a mind satisfied. For there is no such *Finis ultimus*, (utmost aim,) nor *Summum Bonum*, (greatest Good,) as is spoken of in the Books of the old Morall Philosophers. Nor can a man any more live, whose desires are at an end, than he, whose senses and imagination are at a stand. Felicity is a continuall progresse of the desire, from one object to another; the attaining of the former, being still but the way to the later. The cause whereof is, That the object of man's desire, is not to enjoy once onely, and for one instant of time; but to assure forever, the way of his future desire. And therefore the voluntary actions, and inclinations of all men, tend, not onely to the procuring, but also to the assuring of a contented life; and differ onely in the way: which ariseth partly from the diversity of passions, in divers men; and partly from the difference of the knowledge, or opinion each one has of the causes, which produce the effect desired.
>
> So that in the first place, I put for a generall inclination of all mankind, a perpetuall and restlesse desire of Power after power, that ceaseth onely in Death. And the cause of this, is

110 Compare Kant's similar, but far colder, appreciation of the relationship between happiness and a good will that acts for the sake of what is good independently of any relation: "moral happiness". For Taylor, as for Hooker and Augustine, virtue is its own reward in a rather stronger way.

> not alwayes that a man hopes for a more intensive delight, than he has already attained to; or that he cannot be content with a moderate power: but because he cannot assure the power and means to live well, which he hath present, without the acquisition of more.[111]

In contrast to Augustine, Aquinas, Hooker and Taylor, Hobbes is a materialist: he denies any distinction between the mental and the physical. However, in other respects, there is a similarity. For Hobbes, the "felicity of this life" cannot consist "in the repose of a mind satisfied", without any excess desire. Without continual desire, all motion would cease. Hobbes is setting out a sort of sceptical Aristotelianism without any prime mover. (We shall see Grotius do something similar in chapter 5. Again, one is reminded of the endless motion of the Epicurean atoms.) But nor can it on the Augustinian account, according to Taylor: in this life we are ontologically dissatisfied, and the blessed in heaven are in a state of continual bliss. For both Taylor and Hobbes, the pre-lapsarian state of man is inconceivable on this account; something very like a naturalised version of the Augustinian fallen state is the natural human condition. (We shall see further how much Taylor's thinking about human nature is influenced by the sort of 'humanist', anti-Scholastic thinking characteristic of Hobbes, concerning the "state of nature" in chapter 5.)

Again, along with Hobbes, Taylor does not see this as an intrinsically negative or evil state. In a study of the influence of Epicureanism on early modern thought, Catherine Wilson argues that for Hobbes, "the felicity of heaven is as unknown as it is remote … 'the word of the Schoole-men *Beatifical Vision* is unintelligible.' He appealed to the universal aspiration to be active in the world and at the same time secure in one's enjoyments. Co-operative lives of building and making are unconditionally good …

111 Leviathan ch.11. Augustine and Aquinas might have thought Hobbes too sanguine about the human capacity to be content with a "moderate power".

Hobbes's recognition that all humans, not merely a dissipated few, desire 'Ease and sensuall delight', that delight is intrinsically related to vitality, and that this desire along with the desire to be free from pain is the only possible ground for political authority, is unprecedented."[112] Taylor often displays a similarly positive view of natural life, though he disagrees of course about the beatific vision: "It is lawful when a man needs meat to choose the pleasanter, even merely for their pleasures; that is because they are pleasant, besides that they are useful; this is as lawful as to smell a rose, or to lie in feathers, or change the posture of our body in bed for ease, or to hear music, or to walk in gardens rather than the highways; and God hath given us leave to be delighted in those things which He made to that purpose, that we may also be delighted in Him that gives them."[113] For Taylor, there is a temperate love of worldly things that constitutes our natural felicity, without prejudice to the fact the "our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee"; indeed, as we have seen in the case of marriage and friendship, this can, for Taylor, be a temporal image of heaven.

Hobbes gives an account of the passions as in a sort of naturalised Augustinian fallen condition; but they are not thereby intrinsically bad, in fact their fulfilment is exactly what human felicity involves (and for Hobbes the state exists to guarantee the peace that allows this). In the same way, for Taylor, the passions are "instruments of felicity for this duration", when directed to an object in a morally permissible context and degree, or when integrated with a higher love. Taylor approves of pleasure, but thinks it is

112 *Epicureanism at the origins of modernity*, Clarendon 2008, p191. The only possible ground for political authority, because only submission to a common power can guarantee the state in which human life can flourish: "In [the state of nature], there is no place for Industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no Culture of the Earth; no Navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by Sea; no commodious Building; no Instrument of moving, and removing such things as require much force; no Knowledge of the face of the Earth; no account of Time; no Arts; no Letters; no Society; and which is worst of all, continuall feare, and danger of violent death; And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short." Lev.13. For Taylor the passions are not subject only to a restraint based on what is necessary for social peace; but nor are they for Hobbes, in fact: Lev. Ch.15, p109 in Tuck's Cambridge edition.

113 Works vol 4 p202, sermon XVI "House of Feasting".

destructive unless temperate; he draws on Augustine's account of love of temporal goods in the *Confessions*, though he thinks Augustine too negative on natural goods.[114]

So, in Taylor we find a positive appreciation of the passions, and he is more like Aquinas than Augustine in this respect; but Taylor is more positive about the freely inclining state of the passions than either, and regards it as natural. In a way this is a reversion to the Platonist view concerning the passions: AE Taylor compared Plato's account of the spirited and appetitive parts of the soul in book 4 of the *Republic* with the very passage of Hobbes on human desire quoted above:

> So the reason ought to rule, having the wisdom and foresight to act for the whole, and the spirit ought to obey and support it. … And this concord between them is effected, as we said, by a combination of intellectual and physical training, which tunes up the reason by a training in rational argument and higher studies, and tones down and soothes the element of 'spirit' by harmony and rhythm. … When these two elements have been so brought up, and trained and educated to their proper function, they must be put in charge of appetite, which forms the greater part of each man's make-up and is naturally insatiable. They must prevent it taking its fill of the so-called physical pleasures, for otherwise it will get too large and strong to mind its own business and will try to subject and control the other elements, which it has no right to do, and so wreck the life of all of them.[115]

Taylor's views are influenced by Platonist, as well as 'Epicurean' ideas: again, we are reminded of Gassendi's account of the free movement of the *anima* in chapter 1. Taylor is more 'Epicurean' in his positive appreciation of the passions, with Hobbes, compared with the Platonist tradition (or, still more, than the Stoic). For Taylor, the natural good

114 Ibid Works vol 4 p186; *Confessions* X.31.
115 *Rep* 441e-442b, trans. Lee. See A.E. Taylor, *Plato*, University Paperback 1960 p120.

includes the passions, but the passions in morally illicit contexts are still the moral problem Augustine saw them as; though their present state is natural, and not the result of original sin.

Chapter 3: Will, free will and the nature of 'original sin': Augustine, Taylor and Coleridge's Kantian critique

We have seen in chapter 2 that Taylor's anthropology makes subtle use of the Augustinian tradition concerning the natural desire for God: and that this capacity for the infinite (in both its 'mental' and 'physical' aspects) becomes precisely the problem when unfixed (which is its prior natural state) or misdirected. Human beings are necessarily in this state; in a state where the 'natural appetite followed the natural power', they would lack such a capacity.

In this chapter we shall see how Taylor draws extensively on Augustine's account of the activity of the fallen will and passions in this context, as well as on Augustine's Platonist and earlier patristic sources, and the problems this raises for him, concerning freedom and responsibility; notably, those pointed out by Coleridge in an important discussion of the nature and importance of the doctrine of original sin in Christianity, which he begins from a discussion of Taylor on the topic.

A. Augustine and Taylor on the will and original sin

3.1 Augustine on the will and sin

We have seen Taylor describe two "first great appetites" of man: to be "like God, and to beget another like himself". They are connected; Taylor's account is based on the Platonic account of love found in the *Symposium* and other texts, and in later Neoplatonist exegesis of them, which was often made use of by patristic writers; this text

and the interpretations of it exemplify the subtlety of the relation between the rational and animal souls and the kinds of desire associated with them in the Platonic tradition, which influences Taylor's anthropology, as it did that of the church fathers.

For example, Plotinus, in Ennead III.5.1, argues that the soul - that is, the rational soul - has a certain "tendency … towards pure beauty, in a recognition, in a kinship, in an unreasoned consciousness of friendly relation." ["the longing for beauty itself … in men's souls, and their recognition of it and kinship with it and unreasoned awareness that it is something of their own".][116] The soul itself is sprung from the intelligible realm, and anything which has a resemblance to the Beautiful and the Good attracts it, due to the "delight" arising from the "sense of kinship" ["delights" in what "is akin to it"]. The rational soul's "delight" gives rise to feelings, which belong to the spirited and appetitive parts: the soul's delight is the origin of the "will to beget in beauty" ["want to 'bring forth in beauty'"] which is the cause of "copulative love" ["if anyone delights in something and is akin to it, he has an affinity also with its images. But if anyone rejects this cause, he will be unable to say how far and for what reasons the emotion of love occurs even in those lovers who aim at sexual intercourse"]. This is based on the *Symposium* where the general desire for Beauty, the Good and happiness leads to the desire to beget in beauty (206e).

For Plotinus, following Plato, the desire for Beauty Itself, like Taylor's desire for God, and to be "like God", is related to, and is in a way the foundation for, other primary human desires; an inclination of the mind, affects the passions and appetite. There is a kind of desire on the part of the rational soul for what is purely intelligible, in the Platonic tradition; and while this gives rise to or shapes the desire stemming from the lower parts of the soul, the two can be distinguished. There is a complex relationship between

116 Citations from MacKenna's translation; in square brackets, Armstrong's, for comparison.

different kinds of desire in human nature; but it seems that while there is an analogy between the two, and that the two are interrelated, "desire" is not the prerogative of the lower parts of the soul alone, leaving the higher purely rational.

The Platonists fail to further develop this notion, which seems to suggest an 'appetitive' element to the rational soul itself, which influences and is influenced by appetite and passion; a notion that goes beyond their more usual ideas that mere reasons or ideas alone can stir feeling in the lower parts of the soul, or those feelings cloud the judgement of the rational part.[117] On this Platonist account, feelings and even appetites of a basic, physical kind are shaped by an inclination of the mind, which influences the appetitive and spirited parts prior to specific, willed intention; they do not *simply* represent an independent inclining of the passions, which affects the rational soul, so to put it, from 'without'.[118]

Although the Platonists do not further develop this, Augustine's idea of "will" seems to be partly derived from this Platonist idea of an unreasoned inclination of the mind stemming from pure consciousness.[119] For Augustine, as we have seen, sin began in the soul, prior to any temptation exercised by the passions or bodily appetites, or even feelings and emotions which are a complex 'blend' of the two. In Paradise, the rational soul ruled all the rest of human nature in tranquillity. However, on Augustine's account,

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117 For the more usual Platonist view, see A. Dihle, *The Theory of Will in Classical Antiquity,* Berkeley 1982 pp 20-122; see Rist 1994 p152f for an account of eros/inspiration as compared with Augustinian will.

118 Compare Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection* p198-9: 'It will be an equal convenience to myself and my readers, to let it be agreed between us, that we will generalize the word Circumstance, so as to understand by it … all and everything not connected with the Will, past or present, of a Free Agent. Even though it were the blood in the chambers of the Heart, or his own inmost Sensations, we will regard them as *circumstantial, extrinsic,* or *from without.*'

119 D. Hedley, *Pantheism, Trinitarian Theism and the Idea of Unity: Reflections on the Christian Concept of God,* Religious Studies 32, 1996, p 69-70: "It has been argued in a now somewhat dated but brilliant and still informative book by Ernst Benz that Plotinus's concept of the freedom of the One as His absolute self-willing (in the treatise VI.8.39 *on Free Will and the Will of the One*) was the real source of the Western concept of 'will'." Benz, *Marius Victorinus und die Entwicklung der adendlandischen Willensmetaphysik* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1932). Compare - as Hedley points out - Rist on VI.8, in *Plotinus: the Road to Reality* Cambridge 1967pp 66-83.

the rational soul is itself appetitive, in a certain sense, and it is important to notice that this appetitive aspect of the mind represents a kind of instinct of the mind: it is not wholly in the power of the rational will, but is a by-product of consciousness itself, which provides the foundation for the existence of a rational will at all. It was in this prior inclination of the mind that sin first began.

In his first definition of will, Augustine describes will as an inclination of the mind, before referring to it as the ability to choose.

> Augustine: Do we have a will?
>
> Evodius: I don't know.
>
> Aug: Do you want to know?
>
> Ev: I don't know that either.
>
> Aug: Then don't ask me any more questions.
>
> Ev: Why not?
>
> Aug: First, because there's no reason for me to answer your questions unless you want to know the answer. Second, because I shouldn't discuss these sorts of things with you unless you want to attain wisdom. And finally, because you can't be my friend unless you want things to go well for me. But surely you have already seen whether you will your own happiness.
>
> Ev: You're right; it can't be denied that we have a will.[120]

First of all, we learn from this passage that will, *voluntas*, means a certain kind of wanting. Intellectual curiosity (which is not to be confused with sinful *curiositas*), the desire for wisdom, the general desire for things to go well for our friends, and the desire for *beatitudo* are all examples of our will at work. By will, then, Augustine means what

120 DLA 1.12, trans. T. Williams, Hackett 1993.

we want, the orientation of the thinking self towards certain things. But the mind is deeply mysterious for Augustine; it goes back behind our immediate consciousness. Will in this sense of wanting would seem to arise to a certain extent whether we will or no, in the conventional English sense of the word will; we cannot choose whether we want to be happy or not, for example, and Evodius has this and similar desires prior to his conscious attention being directly drawn to them. John Rist observes this, when he describes the will as originating back in the mystery of the soul:

> In English, 'willing' conjures up the idea of determining on a course of action. Is that, then, not part of Augustine's understanding of it too? It is, but he wants to put the genesis of *voluntas* further back in the mystery of the soul. We determine on doing things as a result of what we are, and what we are is what we love.[121]

By love, Augustine does not mean a feeling or emotion. Again, Rist perfectly summarises Augustinian "love" in the sense we are dealing with here.

> For a human being to love something is more than to be drawn to it by a natural appetite, as is the case with animals. Human beings are able to value things, that is, to set or recognize a value in them ... to "love" something, as Augustine puts it in one of the *83 Questions* (35.1), is "nothing other than to seek it *for its own sake"*: to treat it, that is, as an end in itself ... the notion of loving something for its own sake puts Augustine in the Greek ethical tradition of seeing the highest motivation as that of inspiration.[122]

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121 Rist 1994 p188.

122 Rist 1994 p174-5, discussing CD XI.28. Compare St Thomas Aquinas, "Now on the reason apprehending something, not only the sensitive appetite is moved, as regards its application to some particular thing, but also the intellectual appetite, which is called the will. And accordingly in the intellectual appetite or will there is that delight which is called joy, but not bodily delight." ST 1a2ae q34 art.4.

To love something, is for the mind to be drawn to it; to consciously set or recognise a value in it; but this is a subtle process that does not necessarily involve a clear and developed notion of value: there is a dimension to the mind that is mysterious, even to the mind thinking about itself.

Again, in *de Trinitate*, will in the first instance is a desire or inclination of the mind, which is a natural by-product of reflexive consciousness, before it is the power to choose. The conscious mind that considers itself is apt to love itself; when the mind thinks about itself, and so begets a "word" about itself, it naturally loves what it knows: itself, that is, its own conscious presence.[123] As in DLA, even before we know something, the desire to do so "can already be called will", according to Augustine:

> This appetite, that is inquisitiveness, does not indeed appear to be the love with which what is known is loved [because it doesn't know it yet] … yet it is something of the same kind. It can already be called will because everyone who inquires wants to find out … everyone who inquires wants to know. If he urgently and passionately wants to know he is said to be studious … So parturition by the mind is preceded by a kind of appetite which prompts us to inquire and find out about what we want to know..[124]

Intentional action by the mind is preceded by a certain "appetite" that is naturally consequent upon being a mind at all. For Augustine, the will wants or desires, before it is the power to choose.

Will in this sense, the prior orientation of the soul, affects our feelings. One of the characteristics of the fallen state, for Augustine, is that the various aspects of human

123 de Trin. IX.3.18.
124 Ibid IX.1.2,3 and 2.9f.

nature are now outside the control of the rational mind, as we saw in the last chapter. But there is clearly a sense in which our will, though definitely ours - nothing could be more 'ours', and 'will' is essential, in Augustine's view, to being a self at all - originates "far back in the mystery of the soul"; it is an instinctive appetition or inclination of the mind, not simply the power of the mind to will or not will. Augustine elides the two ideas together; the one provides the basis for the other:

> There is nothing I feel so firmly and so intimately as that I have a will by which I am moved to enjoy something. If the will by which I choose or refuse things is not mine, then I don't know what I can call mine. So if I use my will to do something evil, whom can I hold responsible but myself? For a good God made me, and I can do nothing good except through my will … If the movement of the will by which it turns this way or that were not voluntary and under its own control, a person would not deserve praise for turning to higher things or blame for turning to lower things, as if swinging on the hinge of the will.[125]

Two ideas of will are elided together in this passage; will as what the Scholastics later called rational appetition, or intellectual appetite - the will is initially "moved to enjoy something", to an extent whether it will or no - and will as the power to choose or refuse. For Augustine, as for his successors, the power to choose belonged to that very inclination of the mind to something which he also called will.[126] According to Augustine we are aware of both of these aspects of the will by introspection; but as we shall see in the course of this chapter, they are in tension, and Augustine came round to the view that ultimately we choose whatever it is that we really want more than anything else.[127]

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125 DLA 3.1.

126 See, for example, Aquinas on why this should be so, whatever ones makes of the quality of his arguments: ST 1a1ae q83 arts. 2 and 3.

127 See DLA 1.12, on knowing intuitively that a good will is in our power. For Augustine, just as for

Our desires in general are affected by our will in both senses of the term; that is, the will can affect our appetites and feelings by the resolutions and choices that it makes, but also by its prior inclination. In the last chapter we saw Augustine regretting the loss of the will's control over our feelings, appetites and passions after the fall. But it would seem from what we have now seen about Augustine's doctrine of will that Adam did not simply 'choose what to feel', as we might say, in Eden; rather, the natural orientation of his mind was towards the good, so that the rest of his nature, following this inclination of the mind, "desired as it ought to desire, and what it ought to desire", in Aquinas's phrase. In the *City of God* Augustine says that our feelings depend upon our will, in the sense of love:

> The important factor in those emotions is the character of a man's will. If the will is wrongly directed, the emotions will be wrong; if the will is right, the emotions will be not only blameless, but praiseworthy. The will is engaged in all of them; in fact they are all essentially acts of will. For what is desire or joy but an act of will in agreement with what we wish for? And what is fear or grief but an act of will in disagreement with what we reject? [Which are things that we can't altogether help] … a rightly directed will is love in a good sense and a perverted will is love in a bad sense. Therefore a love which strains after the possession of the loved object is desire; and the love which possesses and enjoys that object is joy. The love that shuns what it opposes is fear, while the love that feels that

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Descartes, we can be deceived about the content of our thoughts when they attend to what is external to the conscious mind itself, but not when they reflect on the mind itself. Just as we cannot be deceived about *whether* we are thinking, so we cannot be deceived about whether we are able to make conscious decisions or not; though the object of those decisions may not be in our power to obtain. However, as we shall see, Augustine gets into difficulties on the basis of his experience, and ultimately he decided that we choose what we really want. In addition, the power to choose does not logically follow from the ability to want. (And see Rist 1994 p88 on the important difference between Augustine and Descartes on the soul: "Self-knowledge [for Augustine] means knowing *that* one exists, but, unlike the view of Descartes, it does not mean having a clear view of *what* we are. Augustine demonstrates that we are, and that we think, but behind that we are quite mysterious, even to ourselves." Stephen Menn, *Descartes and Augustine*, CUP 1998, is an excellent and insightful account of the influence of Augustine on Descartes and issues relating to the nature of mind and the mind-body problem.)

> opposition when it happens is grief. Consequently, these feelings are bad, if the love is bad, and good if the love is good.[128]

If our will, or our love, is rightly directed, then so will our feelings be; it was once the case, for Augustine, but it has been lost. And it came to be lost, because the will started to love itself better than God, and the objective good.

> It was in secret that the first human beings began to be evil; and the result was that they slipped into open disobedience. For they would not have arrived at the evil act if an evil will had not preceded it. Now, could anything but pride been the start of the evil will? For "pride is the start of every kind of sin." And what is pride except a longing for a perverse kind of exaltation? For it is a perverse kind of exaltation to abandon the basis on which the mind should be firmly fixed, and to become, as it were, based on oneself, and so remain. This happens when a man is too pleased with himself: and a man is self-complacent when he deserts that changeless Good in which, rather than in himself, he ought to have found his satisfaction. This desertion is voluntary, for if the will had remained unshaken in its love of the higher changeless Good, which shed on it light to see and kindled in it fire to love, it would not have been diverted from this love to follow its own pleasure …
>
> Thus the evil act, the transgression of eating the forbidden fruit, was committed only when those who did it were already evil; that bad fruit could only have come from a bad tree.[129]

Bad will in the sense of choice, follows upon bad will in the sense of love. This is a

128 CD XIV.6, 7. Also XIV.9: "Christians … [insofar] as they live by God's standards in the pilgrimage of this present life, feel fear and desire, pain and gladness, in conformity with the holy scriptures and sound doctrine; because their love is right, all these feelings are right in them." Not wholly, of course; the flesh still lusts against the spirit. This is partly the result of conscious intention and effort, and partly a fundamental orientation.

129 CD XIV.13.

version of the 'possessive' love for things, which Plato and Plotinus saw as the moral problem for, or with, human beings.[130] For the Platonists, there is a suggestion that this is the result of embodiment, or at any rate, the result of the soul's involvement with 'matter' (for example, this idea runs through Enn. I.8, IV.8); though sometimes it originates in the soul itself: for example, the fall of the souls in the *Phaedrus* myth, and the text on which Augustine's account seems to be based, Enn V.1.1:

> What is it, then, which has made the souls forget their Father, God, and be ignorant of themselves and him, even though they are parts which come from his higher world and altogether belong to it? The beginning of evil for them was audacity [*tolma*] and coming to birth and the first otherness and the wishing to belong to themselves. Since they were clearly delighted with their own independence, and made great use of self-movement, running the opposite course and getting as far away as possible, they were ignorant even that they themselves came from that world … Since they do not any more see their Father or themselves, they despise themselves through ignorance of their birth and honour other things, admiring everything rather than themselves, and, astonished and delighted by and dependant on these [earthly] things, they broke themselves loose as far as they could in contempt of that from which they turned away; so that their honour of these things here and their contempt of themselves is the cause of their utter ignorance of God.[131]

Tolma, 'wishing to belong to oneself', being "delighted" with one's "own independence",

130 On what follows, compare Rist 1994 p152f and 188f; John Burnaby, *Amor Dei*, London 1938 184f.

131 But the more usual Platonist view is that the influence of 'matter' is the cause of the problem. Rist 1994 p103. The earlier fathers tended to this view, as we shall see in ch.4, though there are anticipations of Augustine's position. The influence of matter, or of the flesh or the lower parts of the soul, on the rational soul that is otherwise purely rational and immune from sin, introduces a different anthropological structure to the more dynamic and complex integration of both passionate and intellective appetitive tendencies drawn by Augustine. Of the greatest importance in this respect, as we shall see in the course of this chapter and the next, is the idea that the human propensity to sin is the result not of the 'external' influence of appetite, passion, and feeling, but an internal tendency of the mind itself.

clearly resembles Augustinian pride. "First otherness" and "coming to birth", in other words, the soul's finite particularity, its substantial distinction as a particular reality, are not the result of *tolma*, or constitutive of it, but the condition for it; in a similar way, for Augustine, only a finite soul, "created out of nothing", could be "distorted" by the "fault" of pride (CD XIV.13). The very fact of the soul's particular and reflexive nature 'causes' it - we must use the term with caution - to love itself more than anything else. Pride manifests itself as an inordinate delight in one's own power: the very thing that is highest and best about the soul, its capacity for self-movement, the power it has over itself, to act or not to act. The soul makes its own power the highest good; instead of finding its true freedom and consummation in determining itself according to that wisdom and truth which exists above and independently of the mind, the mind makes itself, its own selfish delight, the measure of all things.[132] The result of such an inordinate delight is often a

132 Augustine apparently regards this as a besetting tendency of finite consciousness, of being a particular self, that requires the influence of grace to counteract it: "the badness of the tree came about contrary to nature, because without a fault in the will, which is against nature, it certainly could not have happened. But only a nature created out of nothing could have been distorted by a fault. Consequently, although the will derives its existence, as a nature, from its creation by God, its falling away from its true being is due to its creation out of nothing." CD XIV.13. This raises the question of whether the fall of man, and of the rebel angels, was avoidable or not: see CD book XII.6-9, on the idea of a 'deficient cause' and the fall of the rebel angels, who "would not have fallen away, had they not willed to do so", CD XII.9; but their capacity to persevere in the good seems to have been dependent on the degree of grace they received: "Either they received less of grace of the divine love than did the others, who continued in that grace; or, if both were created equally good, the one sort fell through their evil will, while the others had greater help to enable them to attain to the fullness of beatitude with the complete assurance that they will never fall away". Augustine says that with grace "all men can be saved if they wish it", DGnM 1.3.6, but presumably only if they have enough grace to *effectually* wish it, and so act: by grace "it comes to pass that the very good will, which has now begun to be, is enlarged, and made so great that it is able to fulfil the divine commandments which it shall wish, *when it shall once firmly and perfectly wish*. This is the purport of what the Scripture says: so that the man who wills but is not able knows that he does not yet fully will, and prays that he may have so great a will that it may suffice for keeping the commandments." (*Grace and Free will* 31. My italics.) Augustine generally seems to hold that Adam possessed sufficient grace to endure in righteousness if he co-operates, but there is a problem with this: "he had received the ability [to persevere] if he willed, but he did not have the will for what he could, for if he had possessed it, he would have persevered." *De Correptione et Gratia* 31. Adam could have stood, if he had willed to do so, but he lacked the will; the trouble is, that like the rebel angels, this is provided by grace. See Rist's discussion of the inevitability or otherwise of the fall: 1994 pp104-8.

We shall see that Taylor's view seems to be that sin is inevitable for every individual without the beatific vision, given the conditions of finite existence, but not in any given instance. Augustine has a further problem at this point, which we shall see Taylor pick up on: if inordinate self-love is a besetting tendency of the finite self, simply on account of being a particular centre of consciousness, why argue that it must have been inherited from Adam, who did not, after all, inherit it from anywhere.

desire for power over others, the *libido dominandi*, according to Augustine.

On Augustine's account, the self wants things for itself, because it loves itself above all; and because it is embodied, it wants physical things. But this begins in the mind's love for itself, not the from influence of embodiment. We had temperate appetites in Eden, which were made inordinate by pride:

> What happens is that the soul, loving its own power, slides away from the whole which is common to all into the part which is its own private property … by the apostasy of pride which is called the beginning of sin it strives to grab something more than the whole and to govern it by its own laws; and because there is nothing more than the whole it is thrust back into anxiety over a part, and so by being greedy for more it gets less. That is why greed is called the root of all evils. Thus all that it tries to do on its own against the laws that govern the universe it does by its own body, which is the only part it has a part ownership in. And so it finds delight in bodily shapes and movements, and because it has not got them with it inside, it wraps itself in their images which it has fixed in its memory.[133]

The mind that knows itself better than anything else, from the 'inside', has a certain tendency to love itself better than anything else; and so treat everything else in relation to how it serves its interests and desires, instead of according to the divinely instituted objective order; things (and other persons) are treated not for their own sake, but for the self's own sake. Because the soul is embodied - as Augustine puts it, has "part ownership" in nothing besides its own body - this ultimately leads to the will loving best what serves the body's desires and needs, as its own highest selfish good.[134]

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133 de Trin. XII.3.14. Compare *Symposium* 208c f.

134 'If the mind loves itself less than it is - for example if the mind of a man loves itself only as much

This is not simply an account of what occurs at the fall, for Augustine; it is also the character of sin in fallen man afterwards. Pelagius and Julian of Eclanum criticised Augustine for effectively reverting to Manicheanism, by which they meant that the mind is compelled to sin by the overpowering force of passions, which are 'external' to the thinking mind itself.

> *Those Manicheans say,* [says Julian,] *with whom we now do not communicate, ... that by the sin of the first man, that is, of Adam, free will perished; and that no one has the power of living well, but that all are constrained into sin by the necessity of their flesh.*[135]

Augustine responded that this was not at all what he held; sinners are not driven to sin by the overwhelming force of passion; rather, they do what they want to do: their will inclines to sin out of inordinate self-love, as much as, or even prior to, their distorted passions:

> free will in the sinner up to this extent did not perish—that by it all sin, especially they who sin with delight and with love of sin; what they are pleased to do gives them pleasure. Whence also the apostle says, Behold, they are shown to have been by no means able to serve sin except by another freedom. They are not, then, free from righteousness except by the choice of the will, but they do not become free from sin save by the grace of the Saviour.[136]

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as a man's body should be loved though it is itself something more than body - then it sins and its love is not complete. Again if it loves itself more than it is, for example if it loves itself as much as God is to be loved, though it is itself incomparably less than God, here too it sins by excess, and does not have a complete love of itself. It sins of course with even greater perversity and wickedness when it loves the body as much as God is to be loved.' de Trin IX.1.4.

135 Augustine quoting Julian's words, *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians* 1.4.

136 ATLP 1.5.

> It is not, therefore, true, as some affirm that we say, and as that correspondent of yours [Julian of Eclanum] ventures moreover to write, that [sinners sin] as if they were unwilling; but if they are already of the age to use the choice of their own mind, they are both retained in sin by their own will, and by their own will are hurried along from sin to sin [in other words, they choose what they want to do, they are not constrained]. For even he who persuades and deceives [the devil] does not act in them, except that they may commit sin by their will, either by ignorance of the truth, or by delight in iniquity, or by both evils —as well of blindness as of weakness. But this will, which is free in evil things because it takes pleasure in evil, is not free in good things, for the reason that it has not been made free. Nor can a man will any good thing unless he is aided by Him who cannot will evil—that is, by the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.[137]

For Augustine, the will is 'free' when of itself it inclines towards something, and loves or takes pleasure or delight in it, without being driven by forces 'external' to it; and not simply according to whether it possesses a power of indifferent choice.[138] And human beings are 'good' or 'bad' not simply according to the choices that they make, but according to their fundamental dispositions: according to whether they love themselves more than anything else, or the good more than themselves:

> We see then that the two cities were created by two kinds of love: the earthly city was created by self-love reaching the point of contempt for God, the Heavenly City by the love of God carried as far as contempt for self. In fact, the earthly city glories in itself, the

137 ATLP 1.7.

138 There is a very extensive literature on this issue; for example, Burnaby 1938 p227f, Mary T. Clark, *Augustine* 1994 p49f and Rist 1994 p132f. It must be said that Augustine is not always consistent; in this passage, he suggests that one can sin by ignorance, and at times he gives the definite impression that fallen humans are overpowered by what Julian refers to as "the necessity of their flesh": for example, DLA 3.18. See Burnaby p187f.

Heavenly City glories in the Lord.[139]

As Edmund Hill observes in his edition of the *de Trinitate*, "the whole virtue of Augustine's structure of the psyche is that it is pregnant with dynamic possibilities; it is in constant movement, either in the right or the wrong direction."[140] Will, before it is the power of choice, is the disposition of the self, not imposed by anything outside, but not simply indifferently chosen. Whereas for the Pelagians the soul is more static, it reasons and chooses, it is not itself appetitive; appetitive influences are wholly external to it, from nature, from appetite or passion; from what Plato portrayed as the lower soul, or what we saw Gassendi in chapter 1 call the *anima*. The characteristic activity of the will for Augustine is not simply to choose; but to love, or delight in, something. This has a complex relationship with assent. There is a sense in which, for Augustine, the Pelagians accepted the same paradigm as the Manicheans: for both, the cause of sin is influence of the flesh on the soul, not an internal inclination of the will, which belongs to the rational soul; though for the Pelagians the flesh in itself is morally indifferent, whereas for the Manichees it is an intrinsically corrupting force.[141] The difference in anthropological structure between Augustine and the Pelagians is of the greatest importance for Taylor's account, which involves an attempt to reconcile libertarian freedom with something like a more Augustinian anthropology. Before considering Taylor, we must look more closely at a characteristic example of the Pelagian anthropology; Pelagius himself, in his letter to Demetrias.

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139 CD XIV.28. Compare Augustine's cry against the Pelagians, "Far be it that it be or be called a good will which glories in itself and not in the Lord." For Augustine, we are good or bad not simply according to our particular acts, as for the Pelagians; but according to the fundamental disposition of the self.

140 p261. Compare Burnaby 1938 p37.

141 See, for example, *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians*, bk 2 chs. 1 and 2.

3.2 Pelagius

Pelagius's dispute with Augustine is partly about whether the will is anything *more* than the pure power of free choice. Pelagius's reduction of will to choice has important consequences for his anthropology as against Augustine's. For Augustine, will partly refers to what we want. Bad will is not simply bad choice, but nor is it caused by any "force of nature" external to itself; bad will is still 'voluntary' in the sense of being what the will of itself wills. We are 'in our own power' when we do what we ourselves want; when we are self-moved, that is, not moved or hindered by any external force: the proud will is still very much in its own power, self-moved (for example, *de Trin* 14.4.15, 19). Plotinus said that "soul becomes free when it moves without hindrance through Intellectual Principle towards the Good"; for Augustine, the soul is free when it moves towards what it wants, without hindrance or external compulsion. With the help of grace, it moves towards what it ought to want, namely the Good.[142]

The principal anthropological consequence of Augustine's in contrast to Pelagius's account is that our human nature is never in any fixed, static, neutral 'middle state', but is inclined, formed and shaped by what we want; so that vicious habit is rooted in bad will, and is not simply an inclination gradually superinduced by free choice giving way to passion. There is a more complex interrelation between thought and feeling, as we might say,[143] and as a result perhaps between soul and body, than Pelagius recognises.

142 Enn. VI.8.7. See Rist on Augustine's repudiation of the "classical optimism" he finds in the Platonist view that we can awaken ourselves from the moral and spiritual torpor derived from the soul's immersion in matter: 1967 p138 and 1994 154f and 179f. However, in CD X.29 Augustine observes that to an extent, the Platonists have an idea of grace. Grace understood in terms of Platonic inspiration is important for Taylor's understanding of grace, as we shall see, as well as many other writers of the period, notably the Cambridge Platonists.

143 Compare Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, Faber 1990 [1967], ch.31, esp. p372f. As will become apparent, I do not agree with Brown that for Augustine, Pelagius's description of human nature "might suit an ideal human being", close though it is in certain respects to what Burnaby 1938 and Harrison 2006 (for example) see as his portrayal of human nature 'in principle', aside from the corruption wrought by the fall,

Human nature is always inclined by what the soul wants or loves, for Augustine; whereas Pelagius acknowledges that the appetite might desire something as a result of it being discerned as good by the rational soul, but not that the *rational soul desires*, except perhaps in Aristotle's sense of deliberated intention. For Pelagius the self remains in a middle state, notwithstanding the natural operation of the passions and the habits fashioned from their interplay with reason.

Apparently attacking what he thinks is Augustine's anthropology, in his letter to Demetrias[144] Pelagius says that the "ignorant majority" believe that "man has not been created truly good simply because he is able to do evil and is not obliged by the overpowering inclination of his nature to do good on compulsion and without any possibility of variation" (3,1). Man's status is in fact "better and higher" for this very reason. It is "in this choice between two ways, on this freedom to choose either alternative, that the glory of the rational man is based, it is in this that the whole honour of our nature consists, it is from this that its dignity is derived and all good men win others' praise and their own reward". Pelagius is more inclined to portray the moral life as a form of spiritual athleticism, grounded in achievement, than Augustine.

This is perhaps how Pelagius understands the Neoplatonic "being in one's own power", and certainly DLA's "hinge of the will". As he responded to Augustine, quoting his own words from DLA 3.18 back at him: "For who sins by doing what he cannot guard against? But there is sin, so it is possible to guard against it." The will is like a pendulum balanced in the middle, which the rational soul can swing this way or that; the pure power of choice, not the mind's inclination towards something. As a result Pelagius sees the rational soul as essentially in a neutral 'middle state' in which virtue is constituted simply

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in DLA.

144 In *Pelagius: Life and Letters*, B.R. Rees, Boydell Press: Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1998 vol. 2 p29f.

by the accrual of good choices:

> Our most excellent Creator wished us to be able to do either but actually to do only one, that is, good, which he also commanded, giving us the capacity to do evil only so that we might do his will by exercising our own. [The capacity to do evil] makes the good part better by making it voluntary and independent, not bound by necessity but free to decide for itself (3,2).

Taylor observes concerning Pelagius, that in a way "nothing but an act can be a sin"[145]; we are not disposed to or in any condition of sin. The 19th century American theologian Benjamin Warfield gives this account of Pelagius' anthropology:

> After each act of will, man stood exactly where he did before: indeed, this conception scarcely allows for the existence of 'man' - only a willing machine is left, at each click of the action of which the spring regains its original position, and is equally ready as before to re-perform its function. In such a conception there was no place for character: freedom of will was all.[146]

Warfield and Taylor give a correct account of Pelagius' understanding of will; but they are not quite right that Pelagius has "no place for character" or concept of habitual

145 UN, works vol. 7 p175: "Pelagius also introduced this opinion, against which I am now disputing … lest concupiscence might be reckoned a sin, he affirmed that no habitude, no disposition, nothing but an act could be a sin. But on the other side, lest concupiscence should be accounted no sin, S.Austin disputes earnestly, largely affirming and proving, that a sinful habit is a special sinfulness distinct from that of evil actions: *malus thesaurus cordis*, 'the evil treasure of the heart,' out of which proceeds all mischief". As we shall see in the course of this and the next chapter, there is some truth to this, notably when human nature's capacity for habit-forming is understood as Taylor understands it; but Pelagius did in fact acknowledge sinful habits as a distinct problem.

146 cited in Jacobs, *Original Sin: A Cultural History* SPCK 2001 p52.

dispositions. Assuming the authenticity of the letter to Demetrias,[147] then we must acknowledge that Pelagius had a place for bad habit, as well as the insidious deep-seated effects of bad example.

> In a word, as long as nature which was still comparatively fresh was in vigorous use and long habit to sinning did not draw a dark veil, as it were, over human reason, nature was set free and left without law; but when it had now become buried beneath an excess of vices and as if tainted with the rust of ignorance, the Lord applied the file of the law to it, and so, thoroughly polished by its frequent admonishments, it was enabled to recover its former brilliance (8,2).

Bad habit can cloud our judgement and resist, even sap our willpower (or in the case of virtuous habit bolster and strengthen us with rightly-directed passion); though once exhorted and reawakened by the Gospel and the example of Christ and the saints to how we ought to behave, we can still exercise our reason and willpower and, using the file of free will to burnish our nature again, work to renew our strength. We do not need the assistance of inward grace changing the heart to do this; our good created nature could not be so inwardly corrupted, for Pelagius; as a consequence, the "law and teaching" and outward example are sufficient if we rouse ourselves. The pendulum of the will is balanced where it was; habits provide external resistance to its swing or clear the way for it to swing freely, but they do not shift the *soul's* own centre of gravity.

> Nor is there any reason why it is made difficult for us to do good other than that long habit of doing wrong which has infected us from childhood and corrupted us little by little over

147 On which see Rees 1998 (vol.2) p29f.

> many years and ever after holds us in bondage and slavery to itself, so that it seems somehow to have acquired the force of nature [meaning, external force over the inner thinking and choosing mind]. We now find ourselves being resisted and opposed by all that long period in which we were carelessly instructed, that is, educated in evil, in which we even strove to be evil, since, to add to the other incentives to evil, innocence itself was held to be folly. [So, mistaken ideas are partly to blame; this is the only sort of inner distortion Pelagius allows or can conceive of.] That old habit now attacks our new-found freedom of will, and, as we languish in ignorance through our own sloth and idleness, unaccustomed to doing good after having for so long learned to do only evil, we wonder why sanctity is also conferred on us as from an outside source (8,3).

Pelagius doesn't think of this in terms of a deep-seated perverse tendency of the self, rather than just the result of ignorance and bad habit. He lays the responsibility for bad habit with error and education in evil; not self-love that might make it desirable for the spiritual self. Pelagius doesn’t deny a tendency to “sloth and idleness” regarding the moral and religious life, which he puts down to education, custom and habit, and which he thinks can be overcome by effort. But in the end it remains the case that sin is "not a fault of our nature but our own choice" (8,1). In scripture "it is not the force of nature but the freedom of the will that is then understood to be at work" (7). Pelagius thinks Augustine’s anthropology (as he understands it, identifying it with that of the Manichees, as Julian would later do) undermines human responsibility; he complains that "those who are unwilling to correct their own way of life appear to want to correct nature itself" (3,2). Nature has not been corrupted by some fault. Human ignorance and persistence in habits of sin are to blame for the "corruption" of our nature; but with the teaching of the scriptures and with genuinely determined effort these can be overcome.

The trouble with Pelagius's anthropology from an Augustinian point of view is not that he does not recognise the power of custom and habit, or the insidious effects of widespread or long-term bad examples (*pace* Taylor and Warfield). It is that he thinks that the corruption of human nature, insofar as it is corrupt, is *reducible* to these things: as Calvin said, "We call [original sin] natural [although it is accidental, not essential, to human nature] that no one may suppose it to be contracted by every individual from corrupt habit" (*Inst.* bk II ch.1 para.11).

Sinning affects our appetites and passions, according to Pelagius; it can even form and shape them in a certain direction so that they "acquire the force of nature" But this habitual inclination is caused in the passions; at a fundamental level the rational soul remains unaffected The soul's reason can be clouded by passion, and its will (freedom of choice) be resisted by appetite; but these forces of passion are 'external', so to speak, to the part of the soul which judges and chooses.

There is a distinct echo of the Platonic, even the Manichean, suspicion of the body here, a 'hard' dualism which sees the material as something which hinders and opposes the immaterial and spiritual with which it is awkwardly united. The soul's problems stem from its embodiment; the soul sins because it is influenced by a force external to its own spiritual and immaterial reality as soul, which corrupts its judgement and hinders free choice of the good, acting as a drag on it, especially once habituated (though for Pelagius unlike the Manichees of course, it does not compel us to sin). The spiritual and moral life is about confronting and overcoming this influence by deliberate use of the soul's own inner resources: through understanding what the good is, and undertaking it by exercise of will (willpower, exerting free choice). The responsibility for sin, as for virtue, lies with man's free will; but free will sins because it is tempted by resistible temptation from outside, not because of an internal distortion of the will. Due to his understanding of will

as the mere power of intellectual discrimination and choice, such a concept makes no sense to Pelagius; he thinks that Augustine means that a fault in nature compromises the will, that is, 'external' appetite or passion overrides and compels our choice. In Pelagius' view, any "fault" of this or any other kind affecting the will would necessarily compromise human responsibility, and thus make the Creator God ultimately responsible for sin.

In contrast, the wrong feelings or even inordinate appetite are often the result of a bad will, for Augustine, in the sense of a wrong orientation of the self and its fundamental desires, even in fallen man. Although the present state of the passions in themselves is indeed the result of the fall, nevertheless we might say that the Augustinian *akratic* man at some level wills the force that overbears him, unlike Aristotle's, whose judgement is blinded by passion; or the Manichean sinner, overwhelmed by passion; or the Pelagian sinner, who gives way to temptation that he could resist.

3.3 Taylor's anthropology and the nature and freedom of the will

Taylor recognises and makes use of the Augustinian idea of will as love, or delight, an inclination of the mind; the will can be "delighted" in things; it is not simply a faculty of indifferent choice: "A habit of sinning [for example] cannot remain at all but by consent and by delight, by love and adhesion."[148] Taylor even makes use of the Augustinian idea that the will is so in love with sin, that although "free" in the sense of being uncompelled, it refuses to turn to the good:

> But to sum up all the evils that can be spoken of the infirmities of the flesh; the proper

148 UN, Works vol.7 p173.

> nature and habitudes of men are so foolish and impotent, so averse and peevish to all good, that a man's will is of itself only free to choose evils. Neither is it a contradiction to say 'liberty', and yet suppose it determined to one object only; because that one object is the thing we choose. For although God hath set life and death before us, fire and water, good and evil, and hath primarily put man into the hands of his own counsel, that he might have chosen good as well as evil; yet because he did not, but fell into an evil condition and corrupted manners, and grew in love with it, and infected all his children with vicious examples: and all nations of the world have contracted some universal stains, and the "thoughts of men's hearts are evil continually", and "there is not one that doth good, no, not one that sinneth not": since, I say, all the world have sinned, we cannot suppose a liberty of indifferency to good and bad; it is impossible in such a liberty that all should choose the same thing; but a liberty of complacency or delight we may suppose; that is so, that though naturally he might choose good, yet morally he is so determined with his love to evil, that good seldom comes into dispute..[149]

However, it will be observed that the origin of this condition is quite different to that portrayed by Augustine. The "proper nature and habitudes of men" are "foolish and impotent … averse and peevish to all good"; this is not represented as the consequence of Adam's fall, but as the natural state: at any rate, though originally man was "in the hands of his own counsel", he "fell into an evil condition and corrupted manners", and "infected all his children with vicious examples". The use of terms such as "corrupted manners" and "vicious examples" does not suggest acceptance of the traducian theory, but rather influences that affect individuals in the course of their lives: 'nurture' rather than 'nature', so to speak. However, there is also a sense in which human beings without grace cannot help but sin in many ways, due to the condition of their mere nature, according to Taylor,

149 Sermon XI, *The Flesh and the Spirit*, Works vol. 4 p124.

and this is made worse by education, custom and example:

> [A] man runs to evil as he runs to meat or sleep; for why else should it be that every one can teach a child to be proud, or to swear, to lie, to do little spites to his playfellow, and can train him up to infant follies; but the severity of tutors, and the care of parents, discipline and watchfulness, arts and diligence, all is too little to make him love but to say his prayers, or to do that which becomes persons designed for honest purposes: and his malice shall outrun his years, he shall be a man in villainy before he is by law capable of choice or inheritance; and this indisposition lasts upon us forever; even as long as we live, just in the same degree as flesh and blood does rule us … 'art of physicians can cure the evils of the body, but this strange propensity to evil nothing can cure but death'; the grace of God eases the malignity here, but it cannot be cured but by glory: that is, this freedom of delight, or perfect unabated election of evil, which is consequent to the evil manners of the world, although it be lessened by the intermedial state of grace, yet it is not cured until it be changed into its quite contrary; but as it is in heaven, all that is happy, and glorious, and free, yet can choose nothing but the love of God and excellent things, because God fills all the capacities of the saints, and there is nothing without Him that hath any degrees of amability: so in the state of nature, of flesh and blood; there is so much ignorance of spiritual excellencies, and so much proportion to sensual objects which in most instances and in many degrees are prohibited, that as men know no good but to please a wild, undetermined, infinite appetite, so they will nothing else but what is good in their limit and proportion[.][150]

But for Taylor, in contrast to Augustine, this propensity to sin is not the consequence of the will's own internal activity, of its own inner self love, but instead of the influence of

150 Works vol 4 p124.

external factors: of limitations, like ignorance, and the passions, for example. In this respect Taylor's account resembles the Pelagians and the Manichees, depending on whether these influences can be resisted or not, and diminishes an important feature of Augustine's thought. Taylor quotes Prudentius to the effect that "The soul was created simple and pure, but fell into vice by the evil combination with flesh".[151]

In a sense Taylor reverts to the traditional Platonist account of ignorance and passion as the causes of the soul's "bad behaviour", which Augustine moved away from with his doctrine of the proud will; in addition, he refers to the "similitude of Adam's transgression", in something akin to the Pelagian manner, rather than sin as the effect of it:

> [T]here are many concurrent causes of evil which have influence upon communities of men, such as are, evil examples, the similitude of Adam's transgression, vices of princes, wars, impunity, ignorance, error, false principles, flattery, interest, fear, partiality, authority, evil laws, heresy, schism, spite and ambition, natural inclination and other principiant causes, which proceeding from the natural weakness of human constitution, are the fountain and proper causes of many consequent evils … saith Job, "How can a clean thing come from an unclean?" We all naturally have great weaknesses, and an imperfect constitution, apt to be weary, loving variety, ignorantly making false measures of good and evil, made up with two appetites, that is, with inclination to several objects serving to contrary interests, a thing between angel and beast, and the later in this life the bigger ingredient … so Cicero as St Austin quotes him, "Nature hath like a step-mother sent man into the world with a naked body, a frail and infirm mind, vexed with troubles, dejected with fears, weak for labours, prone to lusts, in whom the divine fire, and his wit, and his manners are covered and overturned." And when Plato had fiercely reproved the baseness

151 UN, Works vol.7 p307.

> of men's manners, by saying that they are even naturally evil; he reckons two causes of it, which are the diseases of the soul (but contracted he knew not how) ignorance and improbity; which he supposes to have been the remains of that baseness they had before they entered into bodies, whither they were sent as to a prison. This is our natural uncleanness and imperfection, and from such a principle we are to expect proper and proportioned effects; and therefore we may well say with Job, "What is man that he should be clean, and he which is born of a woman that he should be righteous?" That is, our imperfections are many, and we are with unequal strengths called to labour for a supernatural purchase; and when 'our spirit is very willing', even then 'our flesh is very weak': and yet it is worse if we compare ourselves, as Job does, to the purities and perfections of God; in respect of which, as he says of us men in our imperfect state, so he also says of the angels, or the holy ones of God, and of the heaven itself, that it is also unclean and impure: for the cause and verification of which, we must look out something besides original sin. Add to this, that vice is pregnant and teeming, and brings forth new instances, numerous as the spawn of fishes; such as are inadvertency, carelessness, tediousness of spirit, and these also are causes of very much evil.[152]

Taylor portrays embodiment as the basic cause of all these: "From hence it follows, that naturally a man cannot do or perform the law of God; because being so weak, so tempted by his body; and this life being the body's day, that is, the time in which its appetites are properly prevailing; to be born of Adam is to be born under sin, that is, under such inclinations to it, that as no man will remain innocent, so no man can of himself keep the law of God".[153] "But to this we may superadd that which Plutarch found to be experimentally true … the foot moves at the command of the will and by the empire of reason, but the passions are stiff even then when the knee bends, and no bridle can make

152 *Unum Necessarium* Works vol 7 p278.
153 Ibid vol 7 p307.

the passions regular and temperate. And indeed, this is in a manner the sum total of our abused and corrupted nature; our soul is in the body as in a prison … it is a sojourner, and lives by the body's measures, and loves and hates by the body's interests and inclinations; that which is pleasing and nourishing to the body, the soul chooses and delights in; that which is vexatious and troublesome, it abhors … Now because many of the body's needs are naturally necessary, and the rest are made so by being thought needs, and by being so naturally pleasant, and that this is the body's day, and it rules here in its own place and time; therefore it is that the will is so great a scene of passion, and we so great servants of our bodies."[154] Therefore, embodiment, and natural, finite limitations, existing in the context of temporality and change, are sufficient to account for the human proneness to sin, according to Taylor. We may compare, for example, the *Phaedo* 65c - 66e.

For Augustine, this is indeed a description of the state deriving from the fall, which contributes to sin in fallen humans;[155] but he includes a further element, which he regards as the cause of the fall, and the origin of this state; an element which continues to constitute much of the willingness to sin, aside from, or even behind, directing and shaping, the influence of the passions: the distinctive disease of the rational soul, pride. For Augustine sin does not simply involve giving in to, or allowing oneself to be dominated by, forces 'external' to the conscious mind; it begins from a trait of the mind itself. The will, for Augustine, is the mind's inclination to something, not simply the power to choose, to act or not act, to assent or resist. An evil will is not just a wrong

154 *Deus Justificatus* Works vol 7 p499.

155 'Do not ask [O soul] what truth is; immediately a fog of bodily images and a cloud of fancies will get in your way and disturb the bright fair weather that burst on you the first instant when I said "truth". Come, hold it in that first moment in which so to speak you caught a flash from the corner of your eye when the word "truth" was spoken, stay there if you can. But you cannot; you slide back into these familiar and earthly things. And what weight is it, I ask, that drags you back but the birdlime of greed for the dirty junk you have picked up on your wayward wanderings?' de Trin VIII.1.3. Truth is obscured by the greedy love of temporal, material things, which the soul compulsively chases, like Hobbes's man who endlessly pursues "desire after desire", ending "only in death". Compare also Bacon's sceptical view of the natural world in ch.1.

choice, but an evil inclination of the self, involving assent.

Taylor's account is more reminiscent of the *Republic*'s tripartite soul in which appetite is the problem for the higher, rational part, which reasons and chooses; the view which we saw influencing Gassendi's view of the relationship between the passions and the rational mind in chapter 1. 'Matter' external to the soul is the problem in the Platonic tradition, though there is an incipient idea of will in Augustine's sense, as we have seen. Taylor has Augustine's idea of will, but the insight behind the doctrine of original sin is still understood by him to be something external, not internal, to the will. For Augustine, *original sin*, as opposed to the *fallen state*, is *internal to the will*. For Taylor, the will is influenced by external forces (traditionally identified with the effects of original sin, with the fallen state, but which for Taylor are natural) which often cause it to fall into sin.[156]

As Coleridge points out in a discussion of Jeremy Taylor on original sin, there seems no very good ground for using the phrase "original sin" to refer to this condition: "the phrase Original Sin, is a Pleonasm, the epithet not adding to the thought, but only enforcing it. For if it be sin, it must be *original*: a State or Act, that has not its origin in the will, may be a calamity, deformity, disease or mischief; but a *Sin* it cannot be."[157] For both Coleridge and Taylor, notwithstanding the rhetoric in the passage quoted at the beginning of this section, sin must be a personal, responsible act, an act of libertarian freedom:

> A Sin is an Evil which has its ground or origin in the Agent, and not in the compulsion of

156 Sometimes, though, Taylor is more Augustinian: he says of the pre-conversion Augustine in the *Confessions*, "his perverse will made his lust grow high", UN, Works vol 7 p167. Taylor makes extensive use of Augustine's account of habit, as we'll see; indeed, our nature is effectively formed out of a lifetime of habits, for Taylor. But the will's "love and adhesion" is the result of the general habituation of the passions, drawn by their own objects, which will understood as power of choice chooses as a result; not Augustinian perverse will, deeper at the back of this.

157 *Aids to Reflection* p199.

> Circumstances. Circumstances are compulsory from the absence of a power to resist or control them: and if this absence likewise be the effect of Circumstance (*ie* if it have been neither directly nor indirectly caused by the Agent himself) the Evil *derives* from the Circumstances; and therefore (in the Apostle's sense of the word, Sin when he speaks of the exceeding sinfulness of Sin) such *evil* is not *sin*; and the person who suffers it, or who is the compelled instrument of its infliction on others, may feel *regret*, but cannot feel *remorse*.[158]

> the universal wickedness of man is no argument to prove our will servile, and the powers of election to be quite lost in us, excepting only that we can choose evil … the contrary doctrine is a destruction of all laws, it takes away reward and punishment, and we have nothing whereby we can serve God. And precepts of holiness might as well be preached to a wolf as to a man … There would be no use of reason or of discourse, no deliberation or counsel: and it were impossible for the wit of man to make sense of thousands of places of scripture, which speak to us as if we could hear and obey, or could refuse.[159]

However, Taylor can't see how to safeguard the insight behind original sin in the Augustinian/Pauline sense, and preserve responsibility, except to make 'original sin' "metonymic", as he puts it: that is, except to place the insight behind original sin in the influence of other aspects of human nature, such as the passions, and natural limitations such as ignorance, on the soul; in those factors that bring sin about, which are necessary but not sufficient conditions of sin, on Taylor's account.[160]

But then the condition is not *original* or *sin*. Taylor reduces the insight behind original sin to "the restraint lying upon our natural appetites, and we being by ill

158 Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection* p 194-5.
159 Taylor, *UN*, Works vol 7 p279.
160 This perhaps influenced Locke: see P.Quinn, *Original Sin*, Blackwell Companion to the Philosophy of Religion p545f.

education determined upon, and almost engaged to vicious actions, we suffer under the inconveniences of idle education, and in the meantime rail upon Adam and original sin." Or again, "our nature is not contrary to virtue, but the instances of some virtues are made to come cross our nature."[161] But this is what Augustine thought of as the fallen state of human nature caused by Adam's sin: not original sin, *peccatum originatum*, as a feature of that nature; and it is a view that is either Pelagian, if the external influence is resistible, or, as Heber argues in his *Life* of Taylor, "he falls into the highest supralapsarian Calvinism, by merely throwing a little further back the origin of man's misery, and representing him as coming immediately from the hand of his Maker with the same load of invincible corruption (invincible unless by superadded grace) which his descendents in their present state carry about with them."[162]

As we shall see later in this chapter, Taylor argues that while we are not responsible for our natural tendencies in the sense of originating them, we *become* responsible for them in the sense of having responsibility for their direction, exercise and control. But as Coleridge says:

> It cannot be said, We know what the Bishop *means*, and what matters the name? For the nature of the fact, and in what light it should be regarded by us, depends on the nature of our answer to the question, whether Original sin is or is not the right and proper designation. I can imagine the same quantum of *Sufferings*, and yet if I had reason to regard them as symptoms of a commencing Change, as pains of growth, the temporary deformity and misproportions of immaturity, or (as in the final sloughing of the Caterpillar) as throes and struggles of the waxing or evolving Psyche, I should think it no stoical flight to doubt, how far I was authorized to declare the Circumstance an *Evil* at all. Most assuredly I would

161 Works vol 1 p 118.
162 Heber, *Life*, Works vol 1, cxxix

> not express or describe the fact as an evil having an origin in the Sufferers themselves or as Sin.[163]

Taylor thinks that he can avoid such a consequence by effectively arguing that we sin inevitably, but not in any given instance; but the solution will not quite do. Original sin, for Augustine, is something we are in the grip of, and have inherited, and yet are individually *guilty* of; it does not merely represent the struggle of the will with natural influences (which for Augustine were brought about by Adam's sin), as for the Platonists, Pelagians and Manicheans; or, indeed, in the account of man's developing responsibility in Irenaeus, which as we shall see in the next chapter was an important influence on Taylor.

The paradox of original sin is well summed up by Coleridge's philosophical mentor, Kant.

> Now the ground of this evil cannot be placed, as is so commonly done, in man's sensuous nature and the natural inclinations arising therefrom. For not only are these not directly related to evil (rather do they afford the occasion for what the moral disposition in its power can manifest, namely, virtue); we must not even be considered responsible for their existence (we cannot be, for since they are implanted in us we are not their authors). We are accountable, however, for the propensity to evil, which, as it affects the morality of the subject, is to be found in him as a free-acting being and for which it must be possible to hold him accountable as the offender - this, too, despite the fact that this propensity is so deeply rooted in the will that we are forced to say that it is to be found in man by nature.[164]

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163 *Aids to Reflection* p200.

164 *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, I.III, trans. Greene and Hudson London 1960. In a way, is this not the Kantian version of the paradoxical situation Augustine identifies in DLA 1.11: "The conclusions that we have reached thus far indicate that a mind that is in control, one that possesses virtue,

Original sin must be our act, not the resistible or compelling influence on us of our sensuous nature; yet it is a propensity, *in the will as if by nature*. This paradox was not understood by the Pelagians: hence Pelagius's criticism of Augustine, that sin is "not a substance, but an evil deed" (quoted by Augustine, DNG 21).

However, although Augustine is not a 'Manichean' in the way the Pelagians portray him - the will is not compelled by forces external to it, but rather, sin still, as Coleridge says, "has its ground or origin in the Agent, and not in the compulsion of Circumstances" - he still ends up denying to the fallen human will the freedom to choose against its own inclination to sin, so in a way the effect is the same. In seeking to reconcile the general guilt of the human race with the responsibility of the individual, Augustine effectively makes sin natural for the will without grace. The problem he is trying to solve is well summarised by Reinhold Niebuhr:

> Sin is to be regarded as neither a necessity of man's nature nor yet as a pure caprice of his will. It proceeds rather from a defect of the will, for which reason it is not completely deliberate; but since it is the will in which the defect is found, and the will presupposes freedom, the defect cannot be attributed to a taint in man's nature.[165]

Taylor, like Kant and Coleridge, insists we need liberty of indifference for genuine responsibility. Taylor often recognises Augustine's position on the nature of a

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cannot be made a slave to inordinate desire [*libido*] by anything equal or superior to it, because such a thing would be just, or by anything inferior to it [such as the *libido* itself], because such a thing would be too weak. Just one possibility remains: only its own will and free choice can make the mind a companion of cupidity [*cupiditas*]." Why would Adam's will, abiding in virtue, have given in to temptation by the "inferior" force of appetite? Taylor argues that Adam had concupiscence before the fall (that Adam's nature was no different from ours, or, is nothing more than an exemplar of human nature in its natural state, as we shall see in the next chapter); but Augustine would not have accepted this as a sufficient explanation of why the fall eventually occurred.

165 *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, London 1941, vol 1 p257.

sinful will, and rejects it, precisely because he thinks that the will is in effect no more free on this account, than on that of the Manicheans:

> When it is affirmed in the writings of some doctors that the will of man is depraved, men presently suppose that depravation is a natural or physical effect, and means a diminution of powers; whereas it signifies nothing but a being in love with, or having chosen, an evil object, and not an impossibility or weakness to do the contrary, but only because it will not; for the powers of the will cannot be lessened by any act of the same faculty, for the act is not contrary to the faculty, and therefore can do nothing towards its destruction.[166]

As Taylor recognises, for Augustine, the fallen will sins because it delights in sin; it will not turn to the good, because it doesn't want to, not because its nature is distorted as such, still less because it is overpowered by 'external' forces. But the effect is the same. Freedom, for Augustine like the Platonists, is freedom from the passions, from compelling external forces, Coleridge's "compulsion of Circumstances";[167] the fallen will retains freedom in this sense, though it has lost *libertas*, the "freedom to abide in the good", which was lost at the fall.[168] Taylor, on the other hand, contends that the will must also have liberty of indifference for genuine responsibility. Here, confusingly, he uses *libertas* to mean liberty of indifference:

> For *voluntas* and *libertas*, "will" and "liberty" in philosophy are not the same: I may will it,

166 *UN*, Works vol 7 p315-6.

167 Plotinus on freedom, VI.8.4: "that is enslaved which is not master of its going to the Good"; for "where there is no compulsion to follow another, how can one speak of slavery? How could something borne towards the Good be under compulsion since its desire for the Good will be voluntary if it knows that it is good and goes to it as good?"

168 On *libertas*, see Burnaby 1938 p227f, Clark 1994 p49f, Rist 1994 p132f. Taylor's understanding of what Augustine called *libertas*, might best be understood by a comparison with Plotinus's account of the highest kind of freedom, that of the One, and of the soul in its contemplation, in Enn.VI.8; as for Augustine himself.

> when I cannot will the contrary; as the saints in heaven, and God himself wills good; they cannot will evil, because to do so is imperfection, and contrary to felicity; but here is no liberty; for liberty is with power to do or not to do, to do this or the contrary; and if this liberty be not in us, we are not in the state of obedience or disobedience; which is the state of all them who are alive, who are neither in hell nor heaven.[169]

What Taylor calls *libertas* in this passage is not what Augustine calls *libertas*; for Augustine that term refers to the higher freedom enjoyed by the saints in heaven, to which Taylor also refers in this passage. Instead, Taylor uses the term to refer to liberty of indifference. He provocatively says liberty of indifference is the doctrine of St Augustine, though of course he knows that is just who his opponents are basing themselves upon.

> This rule is taken from the doctrine of St Austin, who makes freedom and election to be of the constitution and definition of sin. [Cites an anti-Manichean work of Augustine, *de duabus animabus* ch2]; the will is the mistress of all our actions, of all but such as are necessary and natural; and therefore to her it is to be imputed whatsoever is done. The action itself is good or bad by its conformity to or difformity from the rule of conscience; but the man is good or bad by the will [by his choice for or against conscience] … If the actions be natural and under no command of the will, they are good by creation and the act of God; but if it be a moral action it is conducted by another economy. For in these it is true what the wise man said, *Deus posuit hominem in manu consili sui:* God intending to be glorified by our free obedience hath set before us good and evil: we may put our hand to which we will; only what we choose that shall be our portion: for all things of this nature

169 Works vol. 10 p552. Gassendi uses *libertas* in the same sense, to mean liberty of indifference as opposed to liberty of spontaneity. An important English predecessor of Taylor in representing the natural power of the will to include liberty of indifference was Richard Hooker: *Laws* bk I ch.VII. See chapter 4 below, and Nigel Voak's important study of Hooker on free will, *Richard Hooker and reformed theology: a study of reason, will, and grace*, Oxford University Press, 2003.

> he hath left to ourselves; not to our natural strengths, but to our one choice; He hath instructed us how to choose; He hath opened to us not only the nature of things, but the events also of all actions, and invited the will with excellent amabilities and glorious objects; and by all the aids of the spirit of grace hath enabled it to do its own work well. Just as nature is by physic enabled to proceed in her own work of nutriment and increase by a removing of all impediments, so does the Spirit of God in us, and to us, and for us; and after all the will is to choose by its own concreated power.[170]

In this passage, both Augustinian senses of 'will' are recognised; the will is attracted, as well as being the power of choice: grace makes the will "do its own work well", in the sense of loving what it ought to love and thus enabling the choice of it. But Taylor insists on the power to co-operate or resist, on liberty of indifference in *status viae*; otherwise, in effect, the will acts by natural necessity.

Coleridge says: "The Will is ultimately self-determined, or it is no longer a *Will* under the law of perfect freedom, but a nature under the mechanism of cause and effect"; Augustine agrees, but came to think that the will could be cause of itself, *causa sui*, and yet still not be free to will the good in fallen man, or to sin in man redeemed. However, in *De Libero Arbitrio,* Augustine seems to defend liberty of indifference as a natural characteristic of the will. Augustine expresses the same idea as Coleridge, and similarly applies it to liberty of indifference: "our will would not be a will if it were not in our power"; he argues concerning a putative objector, "by assuming necessity he tries to abolish will. For if his willing is necessary, how does he will, since there is no will?" (DLA 3.3).[171] Augustine thinks that we know intuitively that our will is "in our power": "we can deny that something is in our power only if it is not present even when we will

170 *Ductor Dubitantium* vol. 2, Works vol. 10 p548.
171 Compare CD V.10.

it; but if we will, and yet the will remains absent then we are not really willing at all … So our will would not be will if it were not in our power." The will is under our control, because we can deliberately will or not.[172]

Thus in DLA, and not only in book 1, but in the later books 2 and 3, Augustine does seem to hold a power of indifferent choice to be a basic natural characteristic of the will in itself. However, as we have seen, in other texts he seems to move away from this view. It seems likely, as Carol Harrison[173] has recently argued, and as John Burnaby suggested many years ago, that Augustine already held that while in principle our will ought to be in our own control in the sense of being able to will one or another, in reality as we experience it, it is not:

> If the will has a cause to which resistance is impossible, moral responsibility disappears, and sin with it … But in the *De Libero Arbitrio* the statement leads at once to the consideration that in man *as he is* we find states of ignorance and infirmity of which it must be allowed that the victim 'has it not in his power to be good'. And the conclusion is immediately drawn that this condition 'is not the nature of man as he was made, but the punishment to which he has been condemned. When we speak of the freedom of the will to do right, the freedom of which we speak is that in which man was made.' [174]

There is a basic tension between Augustine's two ideas of will. In his first discussion of will from DLA cited above, having established the existence of will,

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172 Kant's defence of free will is a development of Augustine's in DLA: for Kant, not only do we know intuitively that we are free, but we cannot live our lives on any other principle. Roger Sullivan, *An Introduction to Kant's Ethics*, Cambridge 1994, p169: "Kant's claim is that our very ability to exercise spontaneity by thinking of ourselves as members of the noumenal world (and, more strongly, the *necessity* that we do so) is equivalent in cogency, for all *practical* purposes, to the strength of a theoretical proof of our being such members, if such a proof were possible." Yet Augustine ultimately relinquishes the idea that the will can will or not, at will; we will what we ultimately want the most.

173 *Rethinking Augustine's early theology : an argument for continuity*, Oxford University Press 2006.

174 1938 p187-8.

Augustine goes on to ask Evodius whether he has a good will. Evodius asks what a good will is. Augustine replies that it is

> a will by which we desire to live upright and honourable lives and to attain the highest wisdom. So just ask yourself: Do you desire an upright and honourable life and fervently will to be wise? And is it indisputable that when we will these things, we have a good will?
> Evo: My answer to both questions is yes. I now admit that I have not just a will, but a good will.[175]

A good will is in the first instance, again, a desire; we either have, it, or we do not. Augustine's next question is "How highly do you value this [good] will"? This is really another way of asking Evodius again whether he has a good will at all; a little later in the dialogue Augustine asks, "tell me: When [those who have a good will] love their own good will and value it as highly as we have said, doesn't that in itself constitute a good will?" And Evodius agrees that it does. However, having a good will, and placing a proper value in it, involves more than an approving inclination of the mind towards the notion of an upright and honourable life and the possession of wisdom (this is, as we might say, a mere velleity). Our love does not simply draw us to perform good actions smoothly and naturally. It requires positive action on the part of the individual. If Evodius acknowledges that "we have something in our souls - this very thing that I call a good will - in comparison with which [wealth, honours and physical pleasures, or even all of these together, things that a great many human beings will spare no effort and shirk no danger to obtain,] are utterly worthless", then surely he also realises "that it is up to our will whether we enjoy or lack such a great and true good. For what is so much in the

175 DLA 1.12.

power of the will as the will itself?"

According to Augustine, someone who desires an upright and honourable life, is free to adopt this good will as the basis for further action. If we do this, then we have a good will in a fuller, more strict and proper, sense. We can have this good will "simply by willing to have one": we are good, not according to whether we actually succeed in achieving good consequences by our actions, which may or may not be within our power to obtain; but according to our positive intention and efforts to do so, which we can adopt simply by choosing to do so. In book 3, Augustine reasserts the same position: a good will can be ours simply by willing to have it: "we can deny that something is in our power only if it is not present even when we will it; but if we will, and yet the will remains absent then we are not really willing at all … So our will would not be will if it were not in our power."[176] We know that the will is under our control, because we can deliberately will or not. A good will is unlike the will to be happy, in that it does not depend on the attainment of any object external to the will itself. We can be good simply by choosing to be good, but we cannot be happy in the same way.

However, the idea that nothing is so much in the power of the will as the will itself in this sense, does not follow logically from the definition of will that began the discussion in book 1. There would be nothing contradictory about a creature that freely - that is, without any external compulsion - acted intentionally, according to what it wanted, without being able to choose to refrain, or act otherwise. In DLA Augustine apparently holds that we know intuitively, as a matter of fact, that we are not such a creature. The conscious mind which knows from its own intuitive knowledge of itself that it wants certain things, also knows, from the same internal vision, whether or not it is free to choose or refuse them. But we know something else about ourselves, too. Referring to

176 DLA 3.3.

the movement by which the will turns away from the "common and unchangeable good" to the private and selfish, Augustine says:

> But since that movement is voluntary, it has been placed under our own control. If you fear it, do not will it; and if you do not will it, it will not exist. What greater security could there be than to have a life in which nothing can happen to you that you do not will?[177]

But as Burnaby and Harrison observe, he immediately follows this with "But since we cannot rise voluntarily as we fell voluntarily.." Again, at the beginning of book 3, Augustine says that the will can check the "downward movement" from the uncreated and infinite Good, to the particular love of itself and other finite things for its own gratification:

> This movement of the will is similar to the downward movement of the stone in that it belongs to the will just as that downward movement belongs to the stone. But the two movements are dissimilar in this respect: the stone has no power to check its downward movement, but the soul is not moved to abandon higher things and love inferior things unless it wills to do so. And so the movement of the stone is natural, but the movement of the soul is voluntary.[178]

But if Burnaby and Harrison are correct, perhaps Adam could check his sinful will; but we cannot get up voluntarily as we fell. Fallen humans without grace can still do what they want; they are not compelled, but their twisted will wants evil more than good.

Therefore, there is a tension between Augustine's two senses of "will" in DLA,

177 DLA 2.20.

178 DLA 3.1. The issue raised in note above, concerning the inevitability or otherwise of the fall, is raised by this passage. Adam could have checked his sinful will, but lacked the will to do so.

and the different sorts of freedom that go with them: one might argue that if someone *really* has a good will in the first sense, if they really value it, then they *will* act on it. (If you *really* wanted to do that, you'd do it..) This tension causes Augustine considerable trouble, and not just philosophical trouble. As John Rist says, "He had said in *On Human Responsibility* that the will is in its own power, but he had already experienced that it is not (*Confessions* 8.9.21)". Rist rightly recognises that this does not just mean that the will is enslaved to forces outside itself. The human will suffers from a strange kind of internal slavery, according to Augustine; a slavery that is not wholly slavery, but self-imposed; our own will, what *we* at some level want and positively will for ourselves. This will resists our attempts to choose on the other hand what is objectively right and good.

> Why this monstrousness? And what is the root of it? The mind gives the body an order, and is obeyed at once: the mind gives itself an order and is resisted. The mind commands the hand to move and there is such readiness that you can hardly distinguish the command from its execution. Yet the mind is mind, whereas the hand is body. The mind commands the mind to will, the mind is itself, but it does not do it. Why this monstrousness? And what is the root of it? The mind I say commands itself to will: it would not give the command unless it willed: yet it does not do what it commands. The trouble is that it does not totally will: therefore it does not totally command. It commands insofar as it wills; and it disobeys the command insofar as it does not will. The will is commanding itself to be a will - commanding itself, not some other. But it does not in its fullness give the command, so that what it commands is not done. For if the will were so in its fullness, it would not command itself to will, for it would already will.[179]

"The trouble is that it does not totally will … if the will were so in its fullness, it would

179 *Confessions* VIII.9.21.

not command itself to will, for it would already will." If the will fully willed the good, it would not need to make an active choice; choice would come easily and naturally. The good that I would I do not, and the wickedness that I would not, that I do, cried St Paul; Augustine subtly observes that what really lies behind this is often not just weakness of will, or a helpless will, but a lack of will, due essentially to an opposite will. If you really wanted to do something, you'd do it; the problem is that you don't altogether want to do it, not that you are overwhelmed by forces beyond your control. Augustine seems to be contradicting his assertions in DLA that we have the power to choose or refuse our inclinations of will.

As we have seen, up to a point, on Augustine's analysis, our will itself is beyond our conscious control, despite being an essential, constitutive aspect of 'us', of the conscious self who is intuitively aware of being able to deliberately will or not. The self is essentially appetitive, for Augustine; to live, is to desire. And as we have seen, what we desire, is not wholly within in our power to choose. In the passages we considered from DLA, Augustine apparently argues that although we cannot entirely choose what to want, we can choose between our wants, and to pursue them further or restrain them. But in the *Confessions* passage, doubt has crept in. Dividedness of will is not just the condition for a genuine choice; it is a threat (to our true peace, to settled intention and love, a good will, to the "good that we would"). Perhaps the will only commands itself to will insofar as it really wants to. We are still doing the wanting; this will, our will, "not some other". But do *we* really know what *we* really want? Are we - the conscious bit of us - really doing the choosing? What implications does this have for our responsibility? At any rate, it seems to Augustine that the will that consciously - conscientiously - tries to be unambiguously good in its own intention, fails to successfully make this its whole (or even primary) motivation. This can only be because at some level it is not really trying. It

wills to be good, and goodness is internal to the will, and yet it fails to become wholly motivated by goodness; this must be because "it does not totally will" to be so. Augustine is thrown back on God:

> the grace of God is always good; and by it, it comes to pass that a man is of a good will, though he was before of an evil one. By it also it comes to pass that the very good will, which has now begun to be, is enlarged, and made so great that it is able to fulfil the divine commandments which it shall wish, *when it shall once firmly and perfectly wish*. This is the purport of what the Scripture says: so that the man who wills but is not able knows that he does not yet fully will, and prays that he may have so great a will that it may suffice for keeping the commandments. And thus, indeed, he receives assistance to perform what he is commanded. Then is the will of use when we have ability; just as ability is also then of use when we have the will. For what does it profit us if we will what we are unable to do, or else do not will what we are able to do?[180]

When we will what we are unable to do, we are unable because fundamentally we aren't really willing. Fallen man does what he wants to do; but he has no power to choose the good instead, because deep down he does not want the good enough to do so, rather, he wants evil. He lacks a will towards good, and has a positive will towards sin. Such human efforts as there are to will the good will be half hearted, and fail, without divine grace; under which the opposite process takes place. John Rist says of Plotinus, that "for the Platonist real knowing involves willing".[181] For Augustine, real willing has come to involve choosing; the same concept of freedom is involved. As Peter Brown says, "Freedom, therefore, for Augustine, cannot be reduced to a sense of choice: it is a

180 *Grace and Free will* 31. My italics.
181 1967 p132.

freedom to act fully. Such freedom must involve the transcendence of a sense of choice. For a sense of choice is a symptom of the disintegration of the will: the final union of knowledge and feeling would involve a man in the object of his choice in such a way that any other alternative would be inconceivable."[182] Grace begins to restore the freedom to act fully towards the good.

Taylor, on the other hand, thinks that the will acts *naturally* if it does not possess liberty of indifference: at any rate, in the context of time and chance.[183] And indeed Augustine's account does effectively seem to amount to this. Responding to Julian of Eclanum, Augustine suggests that either "both [soul and body] are faulty when derived from man, or one is corrupted in the other as in a faulty vessel" (*Against Julian* 5.3.17). It is difficult to see how the soul, as understood by Augustine, could suffer from an intrinsic, heritable fault, as if it were a physical substance: as Taylor says, "sin is the action of a free faculty, it can no more take away the freedom of that faculty than virtue can; for that also is the action of the same free faculty."[184] An act of will cannot harm the will, any more than an "act of the understanding can lessen the understanding". Even if it could, then that would seem to compromise the personal originality of the delight in sin that Augustine continued to insist that fallen man was guilty of, precisely by virtue of it being the sinner's own will. If, on the other hand, the soul is inevitably corrupted by the disordered passions of the body (indeed, if it can't help delighting in them, finds them irresistibly delightful), which were either caused by Adam's sin, or inflicted as a punishment, then surely that reduces to effectively the Manicheanism Julian (and Pelagius) accused Augustine of.

In any case, if the will is unable to do otherwise, responsibility seems to be

182 *Augustine of Hippo* London 1967 p374.
183 On natural necessity and the will in heaven, Thomas Aquinas in ST 1a1ae q2.
184 UN, Works vol 7 p 281.

compromised. Even if fallen man does not sin by compulsion, it seems that he does sin by what has become ('in Adam') a natural necessity of will, according to Augustine. In DLA, Augustine said that a will would not be a will if it was not in its own power, or its own cause. We have seen how the will could be uncaused by anything outside itself, and yet not be able to choose otherwise, and how Augustine seems to have effectively reached this position. But it seems that he did not advance this view in DLA with reference to the human will prior to the fall, at least: "when we speak of free will to act rightly, we mean the will with which human beings were created." So even if Augustine denies that such a natural necessity of will (regarding sin, anyway) belongs to the will by nature as originally created, he does think that it has effectively become natural. Likewise, he says that the effects of the fallen condition are not natural for man: "to accept falsehoods as truths, thus erring unwillingly; to struggle against the pain of carnal bondage and not be able to refrain from acts of inordinate desire: these do not belong to the nature that human beings were created with; they are the penalty of a condemned prisoner." Yet he elsewhere admits that this has, in effect, since the fall, become natural for man: "the disagreement of flesh and soul through the transgression of the first man turned to nature".[185]

Our good nature, both soul and body, is vitiated by the damage done by Adam's original sin; so in effect, the damage, though accidental to our nature as such, has become natural to us, and we are born with it. Writing against Julian, Augustine sets out their contrasting positions using the example of sexual desire and marriage. He sets out Julian's view as follows: "If God creates men, they cannot be born with any evil. If marriage is good, nothing evil arises from it. If all sins are forgiven in baptism, those born of the reborn cannot contract original sin. If God is just, He cannot condemn the

185 *Against Julian* IV.14.11.

children for the sins of the parents, since He forgives the parents their own sins as well. If human nature is capable of perfect justice, it cannot have natural faults." Augustine's own view is this: "To this we reply that God is the creator of men, that is, of both soul and body; and that marriage is good; and that through the baptism of Christ all sins are forgiven; and that God is just, and human nature is capable of perfect justice. Yet, although all these things are true, men are born subject to the vitiated origin which is contracted from the first man, and therefore go to damnation unless they are reborn in Christ." (*Against Julian* 2.9.31.) Human nature is good, marriage is good, but both are under the power of sin, introduced into creation by the Fall. This is ominously close to violating an important principle Augustine stated earlier in the same text: "If sins do not arise from a thing which is free from sin, then as the Manicheans say, sins have a nature of their own from which they arise." (Ibid 5.16.59.) If sins arise from the human will by natural necessity, then the will is naturally sinful. Though evil remains accidental to human nature in itself, the human will, and human nature as a whole, have effectively become evil by nature through the damage inflicted by original sin.

What Augustine is trying to do, is defend not only the necessity of baptism and the Christian economy of salvation, but the Pauline insight that besides referring to discrete choices and actions, sin is also both our will, and yet somehow not our will; an internal contradiction in our desires that we struggle with, which is a universal experience. It is something that *we* want, not something simply imposed from outside, even by our bodily desires, which are external to the mind, which for Augustine must always retain its causal priority for a person to be considered responsible. Yet if there is no sense in which human nature, notably - though outrageously and mysteriously - the human will, has "natural faults", as Julian, and before him Pelagius, insisted, then sin is reduced to a matter of discrete, particular choices, which seems to be a naïve and

inauthentic view of the human experience, with attendant spiritual and moral dangers. The Pelagian view of the will is too simple, and too sanguine: "Inasmuch, says [Pelagius], as not to sin is ours, we are able to sin and to avoid sin. What, then, if another should say: Inasmuch as not to wish for unhappiness is ours, we are able both to wish for it and not to wish for it? And yet we are positively unable to wish for it."[186] We can no more wholly avoid sin by the mere choice of the will, than we can choose to seek unhappiness, instead of the happiness our will naturally desires.

The Pelagians were far from denying that man's bodily nature is sometimes a source of temptation, which the will must struggle with and restrain; but they think of the will as purely the power of choice, engaged with external temptations, and not as itself the source of the problem, in its own divided inclination, and this has consequences for their anthropology. Ironically, for Augustine, the Pelagians have the same anthropological paradigm as the Manicheans: the soul sins because of it immersion in the flesh, though for the Pelagians, the soul can resist and remain pure, and in the right context - that of marriage, for example - there is nothing intrinsically objectionable about the present condition of the flesh, which remains in its created integrity. With equal irony, for Taylor, fallen man is no more morally responsible for Augustine than he was for the Manichees, though Augustine is no Manichean in the sense the Pelagians thought.

B. Taylor's attempt to reconcile an 'Augustinian' anthropology with libertarian freedom, and Coleridge's Kantian critique

Taylor insists with the Pelagians that sin must belong to the will, to choice, that it presupposes libertarian freedom; or sin is not sin, because the will acts either by an

186 DNG 57.

internal necessity or external compulsion. But he wants to preserve the Augustinian and Pauline insight he finds in the doctrine of original sin, that sin is in a sense something that has us in its grip, which we do instead of the "good that we would". However, he underestimates the extent to which for Augustine this is the product of a self-interested will, rather than the 'external' force of feelings and passions, which is "sin" only in an extended, improper sense, without assent. Taylor agrees with the Pelagians that the "flesh", understood essentially as the body and the passions of the animal soul, is the challenge for the moral will; again, like them, to an extent he thinks that these natural passions and appetites are morally neutral in themselves, and good or bad according to the moral context.

But his view of human nature as a whole is more dynamic, and less rigidly delineated, than it is for the Pelagians. To this extent his account more closely resembles Augustine's; we have already touched on this, in chapter 2, concerning Taylor's view of marriage, and we shall return to his views on sex and marriage in comparison to those of Augustine and Julian of Eclanum to develop this point in the next chapter. First, we must look at the ways in which Taylor's somewhat 'Pelagian' anthropology concerning free will and the 'flesh' retains Augustinian characteristics, and consider the solution offered by Coleridge to the problem of original sin and libertarian freedom, in the light of his critique of Taylor.

As we have seen, Taylor tries to preserve the insight behind original sin by placing it in the external influence on the will, not within the will itself: and this reduces to either 'Pelagianism' or 'Manicheanism', depending on whether such influence is resistible. However, his account is of more depth and interest than that of Pelagius, and has important affinities with Augustine's view. Indeed, precisely what Taylor is trying to do is reconcile Augustine's anthropology with libertarian freedom.

We have noticed Taylor claim that for Pelagius, "nothing but an act could be a sin". This is manifestly also true for Taylor; but what he means, to a certain extent, is similar to Warfield's meaning: for Pelagius, sin has no broader reference beyond particular acts; we cannot be in a state of sin, by which Taylor means in the grip of self-induced sinful habits.

> By a sinful habit, I mean the facility and easiness, the delight and custom of sinning contracted by the repetition of the acts of the same sin … that is, a quality inherent in the soul, whereby we work with pleasure: for that Aristotle [Nic Eth bk2 c2] calls the infallible and proper indication of habits … And so long as any man sins willingly, readily, frequently, and upon every temptation, or most commonly; so long he is an habitual sinner: when he does his acts of religion with pain, and of his sin with pleasure, he is in the state of death, and enmity against God. And as by frequent playing upon an instrument a man gets a habit of playing; so he does in renewing the actions of the same sin, there is an evil quality produced, which affects and corrupts his soul.[187]

We have seen that Pelagius does accept sinful habits, which form an evilly-disposed character; including ones acquired over the course of life, from bad education and custom, and before our reason, the ability to understand and opt to obey the gospel and the moral law was fully developed, which we must now break, resetting our nature towards obedience to the gospel using the "file of the law".

There are passages in which Taylor's view seems to be very similar to the position in fact maintained by Pelagius. He can even describe human nature as being of a "middle constitution" prior to habit; but what he means by this seems to be rather different from

187 UN, Works vol. 7 p160-1. By "an evil quality", Taylor apparently means a physical tendency, a habituation of the passions: p165. It is no sin in itself, but it disposes us to sin; either in the sense of being resistible, or such that we need to become aware of it, and work against it through prayer and discipline.

Pelagius in important respects.

> For till habits supervene, we are of a middle constitution … We are divided between good and evil; and all our good or bad is but a disposition towards either: but then the sin is arrived to its state and manhood, when the joints are grown stiff and firm by the consolidation of a habit. So Plutarch defines a habit, a habit is a strength and confirmation to the brute and unreasonable part of man gotten by custom.' 'the brutish passions in a man are not quickly mastered and reduced to reason.' 'custom and studies efform the soul like wax, and by assuefaction introduce a nature.' … For as experience is to notices, and tutors to children, so is custom to the manners of men; a fixing good or evil upon the spirit: that as it was said of Alexander, when he was a man he could not easily want the vices of his tutor Leonidas, which he sucked into his manners and was accustomed to in his youth; so we cannot without trouble do against our habit and common usages; *Usus magister,* "use is the greatest teacher": [Jer 13.23,] ye which are accustomed to do evil, commonly read, ye which are taught to do evil; and what we are so taught to do, we believe infinitely, and find it very hard to entertain principles of persuasion against those of our breeding and education. For what the mind of man is accustomed to, and throughly acquainted with, it is highly reconciled to it; the strangeness is removed, the objections are considered or neglected, and the compliance and entertainment is set very forward towards pleasures and union. This habit therefore when it is instanced in a vice, is the perfecting and improving of our enmity against God, for it strengthens the lust, as a good habit confirms reason and the grace of God.[188]

Even in this passage Taylor displays a deeper view of custom and habit than Pelagius. For Pelagius, the rational soul provides a stable centre which, informed of the law by reason,

188 UN, Works vol 7 p166-7.

can resolve to endeavour against its dispositions of character, which affect the soul itself from outside, from the influence of the passions, in contrast to the way that our loves draw our soul this way and that for Augustine. Habit, for Taylor, is deeper-seated than for Pelagius. Our nature is plastic in its earliest state, but quickly forms quite basic and fundamental traits "before reason and the grace of God are well attended to", on the basis of what attracts the tendencies of mind and body: as we have seen, Taylor understands the will as something that is attracted, and delights or enjoys, in the Augustinian sense, and not simply as the pure power of rational choice. Mind and body are more dynamically related for Taylor than they are for Pelagius, in a way more reminiscent of Augustine. One might even say the distinction between them is less clear for Taylor than for either Augustine or Pelagius, at any rate in the context of this discussion; Taylor is a more acute moral theologian than he is a scrupulous philosopher. On occasion he reduces will in the Augustinian sense of what we want or desire, as opposed to choice, which as for Pelagius is always a faculty of the soul for Taylor, to appetite, like Hobbes.[189]

This doctrine of habitual sin is Taylor's principal substitute for the positively sinful state in which fallen humanity subsists according to St Augustine. We are 'fallen', in the grip of sin, through the bad habits we have formed, according to Taylor.

> The natural capacity of sinful habits is a facility or readiness of the faculty to do the like actions; and this is naturally consequent to the frequent repetition of sinful acts, not voluntary, but in its cause, and therefore not criminal but by a distinct obliquity … [Aristotle says, bk3c8] "actions are otherwise voluntary than habits: we are masters of our actions all the way, but of habits only in the beginning; but because it was in our choice to do so or otherwise, therefore the habit which is consequent is called voluntary:" not then

189 DJ, Works vol.7 p499; UN, vol.7 p431; compare Leviathan ch.6.

> chosen, because it cannot then be hindered; and therefore it is of itself indifferent; an evil indeed, as sickness, or crookedness, thirst or famine, and as death itself to them that have repented them of that sin for which they die; but no sin if we consider it in its mere natural capacity.[190]

No sin in its own nature, a natural effect; but the capacity of resistance is never wholly lost, and human nature is never altogether lacking divine assistance according to Taylor. We remain morally responsible, then, for our condition, if we persist in it:

> For such persons have a supreme habit, a habit of disobedience, and may for want of opportunity or abilities, for want of pleasure, or by the influence of an impertinent humour, be kept from acting always in one scene. But so long as they choose all that pleases them, and exterminate no vice, but entertain the instances of many, their malice is habitual, their state a perfect aversation from God. For this is that which the apostle calls "the body of sin", a compagination of many parts and members; just as among the lawyers, a flock, a people, a legion, are called bodies: and *corpus civitatis* we find in Livy, *corpus collegiorum* in Caius, *corpus regni* in Virgil; and so here, this union of several sins is "the body of sin," and that is, "the body of death."[191]

Taylor sets up a contrast between St Paul's "body of sin", and the body of Christ, *corpus Christi*, on the basis of whether one is habituated to sin or righteousness. In the case of the "regenerate", which for Taylor means not simply the baptised, but those consciously endeavouring to habituate themselves to righteousness, this idea refers to both the individual Christian who is a temple of the Holy Ghost, and the Church which is

190 UN, Works vol 7 p162.
191 Ibid. p161.

corporately the ‘body of Christ’, into which single body the regenerate are fashioned by their moral and spiritual life and corporate participation in the sacraments. [Compare Augustine, CD X.3.] The state of habitual sinners, the “unregenerate”,

> is signally described by St Paul, who calls it “a concupiscence wrought by sin”: “for sin” (saith he) wrought in me all manner of concupiscence”: it is called by him, “a law in the members fighting against the law in my mind”: and the man he calls “carnal, sold under sin, dead, killed”; and the sin itself … “sin dwelling in me”, and “flesh in which dwelleth no good” … “the carnal mind”. These things (as is evident) cannot be spoken of the single actions of sin, but of the law, the power, the dominion, the reign, of sin. It is that which was wrought by sin, viz., by the single actions of sin.[192]

Habit, for Taylor as for Augustine - apparently based directly on Augustine - creates a “second nature”,[193] of dispositions towards certain actions, such that “you cannot leave it if you would”. Taylor cites Augustine as a famous example of the condition, in the *Confessions*: “This mischief ought to be further expressed, for it is bigger than yet signified. Not only an aptness, but a necessity is introduced by custom: because by a habit sin seizes upon the will and all the affections; and the very principles of motion towards virtue are almost broken in pieces. It is therefore called by the apostle ‘the law of sin’. S. Austin represents himself as a sad instance of this particular [quotes Conf bk8 c7 and c5]”.[194] Evil habits are only disposed of with time and effort, just as the contrary habit is obtained only with difficulty, against the resistance of both natural and acquired inclinations:

192 UN, Works vol.7 p173-4.
193 UN, Works vol. 7 p151. There is a sense in which, for Taylor as for Augustine, we are not merely breaking habits, but re-orientating the habitual inclination of our whole nature, built up through the course of life. For Augustine’s *altera natura* or “carnal custom” see Rist 1994, p175f.
194 UN, Works vol. 7 p167.

> For a vicious habit is a new concupiscence, and superinduces such contradictions to the supernatural contentions and designs of grace, it calls back nature from its remedy and purifications of baptism, and makes such new aptnesses, that the punishment remains even after the beginning of the sin's pardon: and that which is a natural punishment of the sinful actions … [The repenting sinner] is forced to do his duty, as he takes physic, where reason and the grace of God make him consent against his inclination, and to be willing against his will. He is brought to that state of sorrow, that either he shall perish forever, or he must do more for heaven than is needful to be done by a good man, whose body is chaste, and his spirit serene, whose will is obedient and his understanding well informed, whose temptations are ineffective, and his strengths great, who loves God and is reconciled to duty, who delights in religion, and is at rest when he is doing God service.[195]

But given our plastic nature which is habituated towards what naturally delights us the most, given our embodied state, we are all necessarily in this condition to some extent at first, and must acquire the state of habitual righteousness. Taylor calls this process *metanoia*, the usual term used by the Greek Fathers for both moral regeneration and the effects of grace (as well as for the change wrought in the Eucharistic elements, a connected point for Taylor and some of his contemporaries, as we shall see in the next chapter). For Taylor, as for the Greek Fathers, it is the whole purpose of the Christian economy. And indeed, as we have already seen, our mere nature in itself is part of the challenge, as well as the corrupt habits we have formed.

3.4 Metanoia

195 Ibid p168-9.

In the 1960s C. F. Allison argued that Taylor held salvation to be dependent on a works righteousness that merely makes allowance for unavoidable infirmities.[196] There is some justification for this view, but there is more to Taylor's account. Although in many ways Taylor can be accused of a rigorous moralism, there is a more subtle dimension to his teaching. "Infirmity" is a natural feature of our moral condition, for Taylor:

> Concerning our infirmities, they are so many that we can no more account concerning the ways of error coming upon that stock, than it can be reckoned in how many places a lame man may stumble that goes a long journey in difficult and uneven ways. We have beginning infant strengths, which are therefore imperfect because they can grow: *Crescere posse imperfectae rei signum est*; and when they are most confirmed and full grown, they are imperfect still. When we can reckon all the things of chance, then we have summed up the dangers and aptnesses of man to sin upon that one principle; but so as they can they are summed up in the words of Epiphanius, … 'the condition of our nature, the inconstancy of our spirits, the infirmity of our flesh, the distraction of our senses, are an argument to make us with confidence expect pardon and mercy from the loving kindness of the Lord, according to the preaching of truth, the gospel of Christ.'[197]

Sins are often, of the necessity of our condition, "innumerable and undiscernible"; to say that "a man might, if he pleased, live without sin",[198] was of the essence of the Pelagian heresy, for Taylor: he thinks the tolerance shown to this view by St Augustine and "some African bishops" as long as it was acknowledged to be the work of grace, "was worse than that of Pelagius, save only that these took in the grace of God, which (in the sense

196 CF Allison, *The Rise of Moralism: The Proclamation of the Gospel from Hooker to Baxter*. London: SPCK; New York: Seabury, 1967.
197 Works vol 7 p27.
198 Works vol. 7 p30.

which the church teaches) the Pelagians did not." The temporal, embodied, changeable human condition, is not one in which precise legalistic accountability can properly apply. Taylor's distinction between the moral law "in its latitude and natural extension"[199] and the "covenant of grace" does not simply make the latter represent a kind of equity: the former sets out the absolute "degrees of perfection", the other enables us to better, though still remotely, approximate to them, by a change of mind or heart; we simply cannot do this when they are considered as law "in its latitude and natural extension".

Taylor moves away from too exact a view of sin as particular acts for which we are responsible, and towards an understanding of the Christian revelation as a means of being "renewed in the spirit of [our] minds", setting the heart right, or "renewing a right spirit", rather than inculcating a moralist keeping of accounts. Indeed, this is a dangerous distortion of the gospel, for Taylor: "fear" is "apt to multiply eternal scruples, and they are equivocal effects of a good meaning, but are proper and univocal enemies to piety and a wise religion." In our natural condition,

> Every passion of the soul is a spring and a shower, a parent and a nurse to sin: our passions either mistake their objects, or grow intemperate; either they put too much upon a trifle, or too little upon the biggest interest: they are material and sensual, best pleased and best acquainted with their own objects. And we are to do some things which it is hard to be told how they can be in our power; we are commanded to be angry, to love, to hope, to desire certain things, towards which we cannot be so affected ever when we please. A man cannot love or hate upon the stock of a commandment.

Christianity, according to Taylor, exists to effect just this; to orientate the mind, and direct

199 Ibid p35.

and habituate the passions, towards the good. It is to draw us from sin and make us love the good; not to make abatements for unavoidable infirmities under a legal code. He uses the Greek term *metanoia* to refer to this process, which he translates "repentance". This is the 'one necessary thing' of his book's title, *Unum Necessarium: On the doctrine and practice of Repentance*.[200] Taylor's sense of this word is not simply leaving or avoiding sin; he quotes Tertullian to the effect that "to repent among the Greeks signifies not a confession of our fault, but a change of mind."[201] The practice of repentance involves endeavouring to live a life according to the Gospel precepts; but this means a spirit of humility and charity, and habitual virtue, not moralism.

Taylor conceives the beginnings of *metanoia* partly on the model of St Augustine's plea, "order my love in me". The change of mind, at least initially, is no work of ours; it is the effect of the divine goodness, revealed in the Incarnation, on our mind and feelings: "He does not only give us all our being and all our faculties, but makes them also irriguous with the dew of his divine grace; sending His holy Son to call us to repentance, and to die to obtain for us pardon, and resurrection, and eternal life; sending His holy spirit, by rare arguments, and aids external and internal, to help us in our spiritual contentions and difficulties."[202] These "contentions and difficulties" are the result of the state of our mere nature, as it is in itself: Taylor can even say that in "the first constitution of our nature" we are "so perfectly given to natural vices, that by degrees we degenerate into unnatural, and no education or power of art can make us choose wisely or honestly: … said Phalaris, 'there is no good nature but only virtue': till we are new created, we are wolves and serpents, free and delighted in the choice of evil, but stones

200 Compare Meister Eckhart's "detachment" as the one thing needful, in his sermon of the same title.
201 Works vol. 7 p61.
202 Works vol. 7 p54.

and irons to all excellent things and purposes."[203]

3.5 Natural propensities and the freedom of the will

We see, then, that what was for Augustine the fallen state is true not just of habitually sinful state, but even of our merely natural one, for Taylor. This nature has a liability towards the formation of habits, which Augustine put down to original sin, but which for Taylor is natural; inspired by grace, we must break our evil habits, and form our nature anew according to virtue.

According to Augustine, the disorder of the passions consequent upon original sin created a certain liability towards the formation of sinful habits. As one leading Augustine scholar puts it, the "effects of the fall are primarily death and the characterization of the soul by a 'carnal quality', typically visible in a sexual 'dereglement' … our carnal quality, our weakness (*concupiscentia*) *for* the flesh".[204] "In Augustine's mature writings *concupiscentia* is not so much the active attitude, the lust of a man which constitutes his sin, but a defect in man which is the effect of sin, the permanent weakness which we have inherited from Adam … as we might speak of having a weakness for wine, or for men". "It is as a result of the fall that we have a permanent weakness for sin … We are now … more liable to be corrupted by bad habits … than to be benefited (and indeed 'liberated') by good ones".[205] This weakness is not a sin in itself, unless consented to.

A similar liability is an important part of our purely natural state for Taylor, though Taylor does not distinguish clearly between concupiscence as a weakness, and as a certain positive 'lusting', in the sense of a strong influence of passion on, or appeal to,

203 Works vol. 4 p125.
204 Rist 1994 p182.
205 Rist 1994 p176.

the soul. As for Augustine, this is no sin unless consented to.

> But when we consent to and actuate our evil inclinations, we spoil our natures and make them worse, making evil still more natural … And this is the doctrine of S. Austin, speaking of concupiscence. ‘Concupiscence or the viciousness of our nature is after a certain manner of speaking called sin; because it is made worse by sin, and makes us guilty of sin when it is consented to (vol 7, 289; Aug., *de Nup. et Concup*.1.23).

For Taylor, this state is a natural consequence of our open, freely-inclining nature, blindly orientated to its own natural objects and in need of habituation according to righteousness and the things of the Spirit. It is both this natural condition, and the condition of actual, habitual sin, that Christianity, according to Taylor, is designed to reform.

> Now this is a state of infirmity; and all sins against which there is any reluctancy and contrary desires of actual reason, are sins of infirmity. But this infirmity excuses no man: for this state of infirmity is also a state of death; for by this S. Paul expressed that state from which Christ came to redeem us: … “when we were yet in infirmity,” or without strength, “in due time Christ died for us”; that is, when we were *aseBeis*, “impious”, or “sinners,” such as the world was before it was redeemed, before Christ came. These are the sick and weak whom Christ, the great physician of our souls, came to save. This infirmity is “the shadow of death”: and it signifies that state of mankind which is the state of nature, not of original and birth, but in its whole constitution, as it signifies not only the natural imperfection, but the superinduced evil from any principle; all that which is opposed to

grace.[206]

This weakness, or liability, to bad habits, which our natural state necessarily involves, means that we all form a 'second nature' positively opposed, in some measure, to grace; a state that we delight in, and choose though we could resist, that "reason and the grace of God" must constantly oppose. All of this condition, is what the Spirit works in us, and with us, to change. It is Taylor's 'non-lapsarian' version of what Professor Rist describes in Augustine: "From desires and loves strengthened by the constant series of assents promoted by habit and easy familiarity arises what we may call a cast of mind, a mind-set, or, in the traditional but ambivalent term, our 'will'."[207]

> For our nature was not made evil but by ourselves; but yet we are naturally evil, that is, by a superinduced nature; just as drunkards and intemperate persons have made it necessary to drink extremely, and their nature requires it, and it is health to them; they die without it, because they have made themselves a new constitution, and another nature but much worse than that which God made; their sin made this new nature; and this new nature makes sin necessary and unavoidable: so it is in all other instances; our nature is evil, because we have spoiled it; and therefore the removing the sin which we have brought in, is the way to cure our nature: for this evil nature is not a thing which we cannot avoid; we made it and therefore we must help it; but as in the superinducing of this nature we were thrust forward by the world and the devil, by all objects from without and weakness from within; so in the curing it we are to be helped by God and His most holy Spirit; … we must have a new nature put into us, which must be the principle of new counsels and better purposes, of holy actions and great devotion; and this nature is derived from God, and is a grace and a favour of heaven. The same Spirit that caused the holy Jesus to be born after a new and strange

206 Works vol.7 p342.
207 Rist 1994 p176-7.

> manner, must also descend upon us, and cause us to be born again, and to begin a new life upon the stock of a new nature. [This happens through the Incarnation; Taylor quotes Origen]: "from Him it first began that a divine and human nature were weaved together, that the human nature by communication with the celestial may also become divine; not only in Jesus, but in all that first believe in Him, and then obey Him, living such a life as Jesus taught": and this is the sum total of the whole design; as we have lived to the flesh, so we must hereafter live to the Spirit: as our nature hath been flesh, not only in its original but in its habits and affection; so our nature must be spirit in habit and choice, in design and effectual prosecutions; for nothing can cure our old death but this new birth: and this is the recovery of our nature and the restitution of our hopes.[208]

Our nature in itself inclines towards its own ends, which makes it liable to the formation of sinful habits. Grace inspires and assists the will to break and re-form the habitual structure of our nature, fashioning a new order of feeling. The object of the Christian economy is not simply to indicate the right choices, or even create a habitual disposition towards them, but to reform our whole nature, to purify and transfigure the natural; as Taylor puts it, to make a new nature, a graced nature, out of the merely natural state. We shall return to this in the next chapter; first, it remains to consider the problem of libertarian freedom in relation to original sin, wrestled with by Taylor.

3.6 Taylor, Coleridge and Kant on the propensity to sin

The above passage is curiously reminiscent of Kant on the "propensity to evil" identified in his *Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason*. Kant also uses the analogy of a latent propensity for intoxicants, which is actuated and made worse by the agent. Philip

208 Sermon XI, *The Flesh and the Spirit*, Works vol.4 p130-1.

Quinn summarises Kant's view very well:

> According to Kant, there is in all humans, as far as we can tell, a morally evil propensity to evil, and he once even calls it *peccatum originarium*.
>
> A propensity, as Kant defines it, is a predisposition to crave a delight which, when once experienced, arouses in its possessor an inclination to it. People with a propensity for whiskey, for example, do not desire whiskey before they first drink it, but once they have tried it they develop a craving for it. Kant regards propensities of this sort as physical because they belong to people considered as determined by laws of nature. Since what is determined by laws of nature is morally indifferent, physical propensities are morally indifferent. Hence if all propensities were physical, a propensity to evil in humans would not itself be morally evil. So there must be non-physical propensities if there is to be a morally evil propensity in humans.[209]

Unlike Taylor, but very like Augustine, Kant means a propensity not of human nature generally, but specifically of the will itself. Taylor thinks of all propensities as physical; he is struggling with the paradox which we have already observed in Kant's account, as in Augustine's: for Kant the propensity to evil is both the responsibility of the agent, and yet is found in the *will*, of all places, "by nature." Taylor's resolution is to prioritise the will understood as choice, and put the propensity in the influence of our physical nature. We have already seen that Kant expressly denies that the propensity can be identified with our "sensuous nature" in this way.

On account of this, Coleridge still objects to Taylor, that "Original Sin, according to [Taylor's] conception, is a Calamity which, being common to all men, must be supposed to result from their common Nature: in other words, the universal Calamity of

209 Philip Quinn, *Original Sin*, Blackwell Companion to the Philosophy of Religion, 1999 p546.

Human *Nature!*"[210] Whereas for Coleridge as for Augustine and Kant, the "*scriptural* article respecting Original Sin … the belief which alone is required of us as Christians" refers to "the corrupt and sinful Nature of the Human Will" itself; to "that state and constitution of the Will which is the ground, condition and common Cause of all Sins". However, against Augustine, Kant and Coleridge insist that this "state and constitution of the will" must itself be an act of libertarian freedom of choice in every individual; or it would again become, as surely as if the will was compelled by external "Circumstances", a "calamity of nature."[211]

As we have seen, Taylor very accurately understands the Augustinian view of the will: as, for example, in this passage:

> Sin is seated in the will, it is an action, and transient; and when it dwells or abides, it abides nowhere but in the will by approbation and love, to which is naturally consequent a readiness in the inferior faculties to obey and act accordingly; and therefore sin does not infect our mere natural faculties, but the will only, and not that in the natural capacity, but in its moral only.[212]

Augustine thought that moral evil was the result of pride, and that pride arose from a finite rational soul becoming too "pleased with itself"; this then affects the 'lower' faculties, which in the state of innocence were naturally temperate (or followed the good will). But the implication of this is that the origin of the propensity to moral evil lies wholly within the soul, and therefore, according to Taylor, it cannot be inherited. Thus, for Taylor, on Augustine's own account, "to him that considers it, it will seem strange and

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210 *Aids* p201.
211 Ibid.
212 UN, Works vol 7 p258

monstrous that a moral obliquity, in a single instance, should make a universal change in a natural suscipient"; namely, that Adam's proud will could in any sense either be inherited by his descendents, or that this will could have an effect on Adam's nature which was then transmitted: as Taylor says, "No man can transmit a good habit, a grace, or a virtue by natural generation", nor a bad one. On Augustine's account of the nature of consciousness, "the soul is from without, and is a divine substance", in the sense that it is not reducible to or identifiable with the material aspects of human nature; a view which is more compatible with the idea that "the soul is immediately created, not generated".[213] So the traducian theory cannot account for the propensity of will; indeed, it seems unnecessary, on Augustine's own view - but at the expense of libertarian freedom, which Taylor wants to preserve.

Kant also distinguishes between 'moral' as opposed to 'natural' capacities in the contrast he draws between nature and will; and it is precisely on the basis of this distinction that he, like Taylor, argues that "however the origin of moral evil in man is constituted, surely of all the explanations of the spread and propagation of this evil through all members and generations of our race, the most inept is that which describes it as descending to us as an inheritance from our parents."[214] Quinn continues:

> According to Kant, nothing is morally evil but libertarian free acts and their products, and so a morally evil propensity to evil has to be a product of an exercise of libertarian freedom. He tells us that, though the propensity to evil can be represented as innate, it should not be represented as merely innate, for it should also be represented as brought by

213 UN, Works vol 7 p259. As John Rist says, Augustine needs a theory in which two "essential" facts about our nature and fallen state are reconciled: "that 'we' are guilty (in or as Adam); that our souls are non material and cannot be reduced to any body. Any theory which can maintain both these contentions and combine them with either traducianism or creationism could be acceptable to Augustine." 1994 p318.

214 *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone* I.IV.

humans upon themselves.

But as Quinn says, Kant also claims that it is “antecedent to all such actions” and is the ground of them; how can it be both a propensity and innate in this rather Augustinian sense, and an act of morally evil libertarian freedom? Kant’s explanation is not, at first sight, particularly helpful. According to Kant, the human will acts by means of the adoption of maxims; rules for conduct, which are either consciously adopted, or we may infer them from someone’s behaviour: as Coleridge says, “We call an individual a bad man, not [simply] because an action is contrary to the law, but because it has led us to conclude from it some principle opposed to the law, some private maxim or by-law in the will contrary to the universal law of right reason in the conscience, as the ground of the action.” [*Aids* p213.] Kant explains the propensity to evil, as a sort of super-maxim governing a person’s general behaviour:

> But the subjective ground or cause of this adoption [of such a maxim] cannot further be known (though it is inevitable that we should inquire into it), since otherwise still another maxim would have to be adduced in which this disposition must have been incorporated, a maxim which itself in turn must have its ground. Since, therefore, we are unable to derive this disposition, or rather its ultimate ground, from any original act of the will in time, we call it a property of the will which belongs to it by nature (although actually the disposition is grounded in freedom). Further, the man of whom we say, "He is by nature good or evil," is to be understood not as the single individual (for then one man could be considered as good, by nature, another as evil), but as the entire race; that we are entitled so to do can only be proved when anthropological research shows that the evidence, which justifies us in attributing to a man one of these characters as innate, is such as to give no ground for

excepting anyone, and that the attribution therefore holds for the race.[215]

Kant's problem, as Coleridge, too, recognises, is that "this evil Principle again must be grounded in some other Principle which has been made determinant of the Will by the Will's own self determination. For if not, it must have its ground in some necessity of Nature, in some instinct or propensity imposed not acquired"; "thus we might go back from act to act, from evil to evil, ad infinitum, without advancing a step".[216]

Perhaps what Kant means, is that all human beings, almost reflexively but actually deliberately, if they were honest with themselves, from the earliest days of their consciousness, in fact adopt self love as their fundamental maxim.[217] When Kant describes this propensity as "subjectively necessary", he intends to suggest that it is freely chosen, but equally that all in fact do so; the propensity is always an accident, a freely chosen act, not a causally determined one, and it possible to overcome, if not wholly extirpate, through the adoption of the categorical imperative as one's alternative ruling maxim. But it remains something the species universally does from the first.

On this account the Kantian propensity resembles the Augustinian "deficient cause". Kant refers to an infinite regress of acts of will, not simply to underline the mystery, but to point out that *acts of will are genuinely original*. We can't seek an absolute causal explanation for the propensity in the limits of our nature, that is, we cannot say that the finite limits of our nature necessarily cause us to adopt such a maxim in any given instance - or if they do, then the act is not original, and not sin, as Heber and Coleridge point out concerning Taylor. Yet we perceive, that implicitly, all human beings

215 Ibid.
216 *Aids* p213.
217 Sullivan (1994) excellently summarises Kant's understanding of an evil will, and the resemblance to Augustine is unmissable: "The real opponent and opposite of virtue is [not weakness of will but] vice, which consists in embracing the principle of self-love as one's basic principle, adopting the intention or disposition to transgress the moral law whenever it conflicts with the possibility of pleasures one wants." p135.

have in fact done so.

Chapter 4: Taylor on Nature and Grace

Taylor's conception of our mere nature as it is in itself, aside from or prior to grace, can sound an extremely negative one. One might even see it as analogous to Platonic 'matter', a corrupting force unless it receives form through spiritual and moral discipline. However, we have also seen (in chapter 2) that Taylor thinks that natural appetites and passions are neutral in themselves, and can even be acceptable in the right moral context, and indeed, be integrated into the renewed order under grace, notably in the case of marriage.

We shall see in this chapter that grace, for Taylor, is never altogether lacking to human nature; but this does not imply that God created man in a corrupt state. Our natural condition is merely the inevitable consequence of that indifference of intellect, will and passion which is necessary for meaningful freedom and responsibility, and is even good on its own level: though we shall also see that Taylor's conception of the moral acceptability of natural passions is in some respects more an adapted Augustinian, than a Pelagian, view: the passions are not simply acceptable in the right moral context, but also need to be integrated with a good will, in something more like the Augustinian sense of a right orientation of the whole person, beyond discrete choices.

4.1 Taylor on nature and grace

There is a useful comparison, and two important contrasts, between Taylor, and Augustine as he is interpreted by Henri de Lubac in his history of the idea of "pure nature" in Scholastic writers, in respect of the relationship between nature and grace. De

Lubac observes that

> St Augustine held the entire dependence, in all circumstances of the rational creature on his Creator; [and] that this dependence was, on his view, not a yoke of wretchedness, but the sign of a greatness that is in some way infinite, since it raises the creature up to God.[218]

For Augustine, according to de Lubac, the dependence of the creature on the Creator is "a universal principle"; there is nothing in it "that implies the fall".[219] Augustine "never attributes to man in any good work either the initiative or the principal role,"[220] either in the fallen state, or in innocence. De Lubac cites the following passage of Augustine:

> Not only free will, which may be used well or badly, but also good will, which can never be used badly, can only come from God. If our free will, by which we can do good or evil, nevertheless comes from God because it is a benefit, and our good will comes from ourselves, it will follow that what we have of ourselves is of greater value than what is given by God, which is the height of absurdity: this can only be avoided by acknowledging that good will is a gift of God.[221]

Free will is a created property of human nature; but good will is from grace, even in the state of innocence. But there is a difference between Adam in the state of innocence, and his fallen descendents, which is illustrated by de Lubac with reference to prayer. Adam prayed, in the sense that his "attitude had certainly to be one of thanksgiving and of continual humility. Augustine does not tell us that Adam had no need of God's help"; he

218 *Augusitnianism and Modern Theology,* trans. L. Sheppard, New York: Herder & Herder 2000 [rep. of London: Geoffrey Chapman 1969].p80-1.
219 p81.
220 Ibid.
221 de Lubac p81; *On merit and the remission of sins* bk 2 n.118.

was not, as de Lubac puts it, a "monster of self-sufficiency"; Pelagianism was not the condition of man in innocence. Rather, "Grace was there, near at hand, proffered, already even within the will, predisposing it to good: in this sense Adam had no need to ask for it; he did not have to pray … 'In that place of beatitude, he did not have to cry, 'Lord deliver me from evil!'"[222]

The first difference with Taylor concerns free will, following on from the previous chapter. Taylor agrees that good will in the sense of the internal disposition of the will comes from grace; but as an Arminian, he thinks that the will must be able to co-operate or resist, and if it is not able to do so, then the natural power of free will, the power to will or not to will, which according to Augustine in DLA we know intuitively that we have as a natural property of the will, has been lost: as indeed, we saw Augustine essentially accept that it had, in the previous chapter. Whereas according to Taylor:

> The grace of God is a supernatural principle, and gives new aptnesses and inclinations, powers and possibilities, it invites and teaches, it supplies us with arguments, and answers objections, it brings us into artificial necessities, and inclines us sweetly: and this is the *semen Dei* spoken of by S. John, "the seed of God" thrown into the furrows of our hearts, springing up (unless we choke it) to life eternal. By these assistances we being helped can do our duty, and we can expel the habits of vice, and get the habits of virtue: but as we cannot do God's work without God's grace; so God's grace does not do our work without us. For grace being but the beginnings of a new nature in us, gives nothing but powers and inclinations. "The Spirit helpeth our infirmities", so St Paul explicates this mystery. And therefore when he had said, "By the grace of God I am what I am", that is, all owing to His grace; he also adds, "I have laboured more than they all; yet not I", that is, not I alone, [but] "the grace of God that is with me". For the grace of God "stands at the door and knocks";

222 Ibid. p90-1.

> but we must attend to His voice, and "open the door, and then He shall enter and sup with us, and we shall be with Him." The grace of God is like a graff put into a stock of another nature; it makes use of the faculties and juice of the stock and the natural root, but converts all into its own nature.[223]

There is a clear comparison between Taylor's view on the relationship between free will and grace and that of Erasmus, cited in the introduction to chapter 1 above. Taylor perhaps has a more optimistic view of the will's capacity than Eramsus. Taylor surely also has Augustine's distinction between *libertas* and *liberum arbitrium* in mind. We have seen how *liberum arbitrium* did not mean liberty of indifference for Augustine, though in DLA he often seems to suggest that the will did possess the capacity to will one thing or another in this way before the fall;[224] but that for Taylor, the power to choose or refuse is essential to the will, or moral responsibility is lost. However, Taylor agrees with Augustine, against Pelagius, that the created power of choice is not all that we receive from God; a good will, in the sense of "new aptnesses and inclinations, powers and possibilities", comes from divine grace. But Augustine calls the created will an "intermediate good", by which he means that the will in itself is a natural faculty which can be used in a good way or an evil one: "when the will cleaves to the common and unchangeable good, it attains the great and foremost goods for human beings, even though the will itself is only an intermediate good. But when the will turns away from the unchangeable and common good toward its own private good, or towards external and inferior things, it sins. It turns towards its own private good when it wants to be under its own control".[225] Taylor thinks that this intermediate, created nature of the will, must

223 UN, Works vol 7 p189.
224 Burnaby 1938 p227.
225 DLA 2.19.

include the power to choose or refuse: as Richard Hooker, an important influence on Taylor, said concerning free will, quoting Augustine in DLA: "Aptness, freely to take or refuse things set before it, is so essential to the will, that being deprived of this it loseth the nature, and cannot possibly retain the definition, of will: 'Voluntas, nisi libera sit, non est voluntas'".[226]

The other difference between Taylor and Augustine is more dramatic, in doctrinal terms. For Augustine, according to de Lubac, human nature is always dependent upon grace, though grace is never owed to nature, and always represents a gratuitous elevation. In this there is a comparison with Taylor. But grace relates to fallen and innocent nature in different ways, for Augustine; and here the other difference with Taylor appears. Taylor makes no such distinction. Taylor's whole doctrine is essentially contained in the following, highly convoluted passage, apparently written at some speed, as if Taylor were speaking:

> if we will suppose there must now be a cause in our nature determining us to sin by an irresistible necessity, I desire to know why such principle should be more necessary to us than it was to Adam? What made him to sin when he fell? He had a perfect liberty, and no ignorance, no original sin, no inordination of his affections, no such rebellion of the inferior faculties against the superior as we complain of; or at least we say he had not, and yet he sinned: and if his passions did rebel against his reason before the fall, then so they may in us, and yet not be long of [owing to] that fall; it was before the fall in him, and so may be in us, and not the effect of it. But the truth of the thing is this, he had liberty of choice and chose ill, and so do we … But it is said, that as Adam chose ill, so do we; but he

226 *Dublin Fragment*. It should be emphasised that Taylor's "new powers and possibilities" means capacities of the will itself, from within; not from a force acting *on* the will. Grace acts from within, empowering the will; we shall touch on this further below. See Burnaby p233 on Augustine on this.

> was free to good as well as to evil, but so are not we [and this] is the result of original sin. I reply, that we can choose good, and as naturally love good as evil … Here only is our nature defective; we do not naturally know, nor yet naturally love, those supernatural excellencies which are appointed and commanded by God as the means of bringing us to a supernatural condition. That is, without God's grace, and the renovation of the Spirit of God, we cannot be saved. Neither was Adam's case better than ours in this particular. For that his nature could not carry him to heaven, or indeed to please God in order to it, seems to be confessed by them who have therefore affirmed him to have had a supernatural righteousness: which is affirmed by all the Roman party. But although in supernatural instances it must needs be that that our nature is defective; so it must needs have been in Adam: and therefore the Lutheran (who in this particular dream not so probably as the other) affirming that justice was natural in Adam, do yet but differ in the manner of speaking, and have not at all spoken against this; neither can they, unless they also affirm that to arrive at heaven was the natural end of man. For if it be not, neither we nor Adam could by nature do things above nature; and if God did concreate grace with Adam, that grace was nevertheless grace for being given him as soon as he was made: for even the holy Spirit may be given to a chrisom child … The result of which is this; that the necessity of grace does not suppose that our nature is originally corrupted, for beyond Adam's mere nature something else was necessary, and so it is to us.[227]

While Taylor agrees with Augustine that human nature is in need of grace, though grace is never owed to it, he does not distinguish between fallen and innocent nature: he collapses them together. Grace, for Taylor, always relates to the one state of human nature, in the same way; yet he seeks to avoid making that state one of intrinsic

227 UN, Works vol 7 p275-6. Taylor denies that "heaven was the natural end of man"; but this is an unguarded statement. As we have seen in chapter 2, he thinks that man's supernatural end is 'naturally desired, but not naturally attained'; what he means is essentially the same as Augustine according to de Lubac: namely, that the Lutherans do not mean that Adam could obtain heaven by his natural powers before the fall, without grace.

corruption. Grace is needed to attain our "supernatural" end, which is not naturally known or loved, though the capacity, and even a certain desire for this end, is a natural one, implicit in our nature. As we saw in chapter 2, Taylor thinks that we have endless desires, by virtue of being capable of God (and which make us capable of God); though in itself, this does not help us in the attainment: man "was designed to an immortal duration and the fruition of God forever", but "he knows not how to obtain it; he is made upright to look up to heaven, but he knows no more how to purchase it than to climb it". Thus, "Our nature is too weak in order to our duty and final interest, that at first it cannot move one step towards God unless God by His preventing grace puts into it a new possibility." In this sense "our nature of itself" has "nothing in it which can bring us to felicity: nothing but an obediential capacity; our flesh can become sanctified as the stones can become children of Abraham, or as dead seed can become living corn; and so it is with us, that God must make us a new creation if he means to save us".[228]

But our nature is perfect before grace, *as nature*, just as "matrimonial chastity was no law before Eve was created, and yet our nature was perfect before".[229] For Taylor, there was no state of innocence or "original justice". Natural passions and appetites are good in themselves, or at any rate, morally indifferent. Their moral goodness or otherwise depends on the will; and Taylor effectively means two things by this. On the one hand, he means the choices made by the will according to the moral context; on the other, he means something more like the Augustinian idea we considered in the previous chapter, that feeling can be rightly or wrongly ordered. Although Taylor tends to consider our freely-inclining natural tendencies as constituting the whole insight behind the Augustinian doctrine of original sin, his view of nature and will, as we have seen, still

228 Sermon *On the Flesh and the Spirit*, Works vol 4 p119-20.

229 Works vol 9 p There is no moral law derivable from nature alone, for Taylor; an issue with wide ranging theological implications, which we shall consider in the next chapter.

owes a great deal to Augustine.

For Taylor, ‘fallen’ man is simply natural, temporal man, in need of grace to attain his supernatural end, and even to confirm us in our temporal fulfilment; but even so, the natural state as it is can be considered good, or at least morally neutral and potentially good, on its own level; it is not a state of intrinsic corruption. For Taylor, as for orthodox Catholic tradition according to de Lubac, our mere nature never wholly lacks divine grace. Taylor observes that it is generally held that the words of St Paul, “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither indeed can he know them”, mean “that there is in our natures an ignorance and averseness from spiritual things, that is, a contrariety to God.” As we have seen, there is indeed a certain “ignorance and averseness from spiritual things”, according to Taylor, in human nature as it is in itself, considered apart from grace; but this does not derive from Adam’s sin, nor does it represent a corruption of human nature which is a positively immoral state of “contrariety to God”, as his Calvinist opponents hold. The term St Paul uses for the “natural” man, says Taylor, is *physikos*:

> it certainly means a man that is guided only by natural reason, without the revelations of the gospel … An animal man, that is, a philosopher, or a rational man, such as were the Greek and Roman philosophers, upon the stock and account of the learning of all their schools could never discern the excellencies of the gospel mysteries, as of God incarnate, Christ dying, resurrection of the body and the like. For this word *physikos*, or ‘animal,’ and another word used often by the apostle, *sarkikos*, ‘carnal,’ are opposed to *pneumatikos*, ‘spiritual;’ and are states of evil, or of imperfection, in which while a man remains he cannot do the work of God. For 'animality', which is a relying upon natural principles

> without revelation, is a state 'privatively' opposed to the spirit; and a man in that state cannot be saved, because he wants a vital part, he wants the spirit, which is part of the constitution of a Christian in that capacity, who consists of body, and soul, and spirit, and therefore *anima* without *spiritus*, the soul without the spirit, is not sufficient. For as the soul is a sufficient principle of all the actions of our life in order to our natural end and perfection, but it can bear us no further: so there must be another principle in order to a supernatural end, and that is the spirit; called by St Paul, *nea kristis*, "the new creation", by St Peter, "a divine nature"; and by this we become renewed in the inner man: the infusion of this new nature into us is called 'regeneration'; and it is the great principle of godliness, called 'grace', or 'the spirit', *sperma theou*, 'the seed of God,' and by it we are begotten by God, and brought forth by the church, to the hopes and beginnings of a new life, and a supernatural end. And although I cannot say that this is a third substance distinct from soul and body, yet it is a distinct principle put into us by God, without which we cannot work, and by which we can; and therefore if it be not a substance, yet it is more than a metaphor, it is a real being, permanent and inherent; but yet such as can be lessened and extinguished.[230]

"Animality" is "not a state of enmity or direct opposition to God, but a state insufficient and imperfect". "Carnality", on the other hand, "is indeed a direct state of sin", "not only 'privatively' opposed but 'contrarily' also to the spiritual state, or state of grace." "But as the first is not a sin derived from Adam: so neither is the second"; "carnality" is always an individual's own responsibility. "Animality" is "an imperfection, or want of supernatural aids", in which state a person "cannot go to heaven, but neither will that alone bear him to hell: *and therefore God does not let a man alone in that state*" (my italics). "Animality" is mere human nature as such, in itself, rather than a real state of

230 *UN*, Works vol 7 p268-9.

human persons: human beings are never wholly without access to grace.[231] The "state of grace" is not merely a state without positive sin, but a state of habitual righteousness, as we have seen. And as we shall see in the next chapter, grace is not, for Taylor, restricted to Christians.

Taylor's state 'privatively' opposed to the Spirit may usefully be compared with Dominic de Soto's theoretical state of man "with a mind considered in pure nature (*in puris naturalibus*)" [compare Taylor's use of the phrase, vol 1 p117], "without grace as without fault", discussed by de Lubac. For Soto, according to de Lubac, this "man as the ancient philosophers pictured him", "cut off from his transcendent finality" - that is, "a man who had not at the outset been endowed with supernatural means" is a "mere working hypothesis", rather than a "realisable state".

> He is a "physical man" (*homo physicus*) who, if we imagine him as real, will have as his sole ideal to live according to reason, that is - for the word "reason" is equivocal - to contribute his share to the smooth running of the community, without any prospect of a future life. He is therefore, apparently, a mere "political animal" (*animal politicum*); it is for him that laws and ordinances are made, that the magistracy is established. Fundamentally, if he really existed, he would be a man like us, and able to raise himself naturally to a certain knowledge of God, but condemned for want of light to be mistaken about his real end. Soto was well aware that for real man there is only one last end, the end intended by St Augustine when he exclaimed, "You have made us for yourself, Lord!" He knew, also, that there is only one state of [perfect or complete] blessedness, the blessed vision of God. Among the arguments which he brings forward to establish this a place of importance is given to the argument which was a favourite of St Thomas [Aquinas] on the

231 He repeats this contention in his correspondence with Bishop Warner concerning his views on original sin: Works vol.7 p545.

> natural desire which otherwise would be in vain. But the chief argument … comes from the teaching of the Bible. When God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness", it was our very nature that he designated thus; by this he placed in us not only a certain capacity, but by that very reason a "natural inclination", an appetite, and, as St Augustine used to repeat insistently, he who is made in the image of God is made to see God: "for like naturally seeks like".[232]

As we saw in chapter 2, Taylor agrees with Augustine, Aquinas and de Soto that man is made in the image of God, for the vision of God; and like them, he also recognises that this is what he calls "an end above our natural proportion": we have a natural desire for, or openness to, something we cannot attain; according to what de Lubac calls "that venerable maxim", our supernatural end is "natural with respect to appetite, supernatural with respect to attainment". Yet this does not mean our nature is incomplete or imperfect or inadequate *as nature*.

> But by this state "without grace as without fault" rather different things could be understood. In the "natural" (*naturalia*) or "purely natural" (*pura naturalia*), frequently mentioned in medieval texts, it was possible to introduce "original justice" with its gifts of completeness and immortality, or else, taking the expression "purely natural" (*pura naturalia*) in its strictest sense, to apply this only to the properties owing to nature and deriving from its principles. And in line with this thought, it was then wondered whether it was possible to envisage - although we know it did not happen this way - a creation of man "in pure nature" (*in puris naturalibus*) in the strictest sense, that is, not only without sanctifying grace, but without even the gifts of justice, completeness, immortality, and with none of the "grace freely given". Could man have come from the hands of the Creator with

232 de Lubac 2000 [1969] p129.

> only the constituent elements of his nature as man? In this new question it was no longer a matter of knowing whether original justice was independent or not of sanctifying grace - itself a question much debated throughout the scholastic period - and whether Adam enjoyed the former before the latter was conferred upon him; but could original justice have been refused to him before any sin on his part, as it was actually taken away from him after his sin?[233]

Taylor's animal or purely natural man, or human nature "privatively opposed" to the Spirit, applies, as de Lubac puts it, "only to the properties owing to nature and deriving from its principles", lacking the gifts of "justice, completeness, immortality". But like de Soto and the earlier Scholastic tradition (including Aquinas) according to de Lubac, Taylor does not envisage a real state of man "with only the constituent elements of his nature as man". We have seen that he is sceptical about a state of "original justice", but this does not mean that he thinks human nature has ever simply existed in a merely natural state in which grace was altogether lacking to it: rather, grace always relates to nature in the same way, the way in which it operates in the Christian economy. Taylor's animal man, or privative opposition, refers to mere nature as such; it isn't a realisable state, it is just human nature as it is in itself, inherited from Adam as the first human. We have seen how this becomes a moral challenge for the will in certain contexts, and can be harnessed and integrated by it in a positive way in others, with the help of grace

4.2 Taylor's use of the Fathers in his 'non-lapsarian' account of nature and grace

As this, and the discussion of our nature and its liability to habit in the previous

233 Ibid. p218.

chapter, would lead us to expect, the distinction between "animality" and "carnality" is not quite as clear cut for Taylor as he suggests in the passage above. A "carnal", or "unregenerate" person, is properly speaking always someone who is in the grip of self-induced sinful habits - we have seen Taylor make extensive use of Augustine's ideas about habit in this context, and we have seen that there is also a definite sense in which human nature is opposed to the Spirit in itself, in its natural condition, in many moral contexts; and although this is not a state we have brought about, it is certainly one we are obliged to take responsibility for. Christianity, for Taylor, is partly to reorientate human nature from its natural inclinations, and habituate it to a higher calling, to virtue, and the spiritual life, as well as to restore us from our positive sins and the condition induced by them. Natural inclinations are not bad or corrupt in themselves, they have their role; but quite naturally, as they incline without proportion to their natural objects, they inevitably cut across the demands of morality and religion, and must be harnessed and directed in accordance with it. Taylor's devotional and pastoral works, notably his once-celebrated treatises *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying* and his prayers and sermons, have as their object, as Taylor himself puts it, to "turn nature into grace".[234] At their heart is an Incarnation-centred piety, with a central role for the sacraments, and this is rooted in Taylor's patristic learning.

The theological anthropology and the understanding of the work of grace in the extended passage quoted above on the divisions of human nature owes something to the mysterious reflections of St Irenaeus, as well as to Origen. According to Irenaeus:

> There are three elements of which … the complete man is made up, flesh, soul, and spirit; one of these preserves and fashions the man, and this is the spirit; another is given unity

234 Sermon XI, *The Flesh and the Spirit*, Works vol 4 p120.

> and form by the first, and this is the flesh; the third, the soul, is midway between the first two, and sometimes it is subservient to the spirit and is raised by it: while sometimes it allies itself with the flesh and descends to earthly passions…All who fear God and believe in the coming of his Son, and through faith establish in their hearts the Spirit of God, are rightly given the name of men. They are purified and spiritual, and live for God, because they have the Spirit of the Father, who cleanses man and lifts him up to the life of God.[235]

> Soul and spirit can be constituents of man; but they certainly cannot be the whole man. The complete man is a mixture and union, consisting of a soul which takes to itself the Spirit of the Father, to which is united the flesh which was fashioned in the image of God…men are spiritual not by the abolition of the flesh…there would be then the spirit of man, or the Spirit of God, not a spiritual man. But when this spirit is mingled with soul and united with created matter, then through the outpouring of the Spirit the complete man is produced; this is man made in the image and likeness of God. A man with soul only, lacking spirit [?Spirit], is 'psychic'; such a man is carnal, unfinished, incomplete; he has, in his created body, the image of God, but he has not acquired the likeness to God through the spirit [?Spirit].[236]

The idea of the Spirit as the principle of forming and purifying the blindly inclining, natural inclinations of the flesh, and assisting the rational will to habituate them to virtue, as well as their integration with a view to the higher human end, is central to Taylor's revised account of what the Augustinian tradition held to be the effects of original sin, and the Christian economy which restores "fallen" humanity from those effects:

> the great effect of [the effluxes of the Holy Spirit] is this: that as by the arts of the spirits of

235 Irenaeus *Adv. Haer*. V.ix.1, trans. Bettenson.
236 *Adv. Haer.* V.vi.1.

> darkness and our own malice our souls are turned into flesh, not in the natural sense but in the moral and theological, and *animalis homo* is the same with *carnalis*, that is, his soul is a servant of the passions and desires of the flesh, and is flesh in its operations and ends, in its principles and actions: so on the other side by the grace of God, and the 'promise of the Father,' and the influences of the Holy Ghost, our souls are not only recovered from the state of flesh and reduced back to the entireness of animal operations, but they are heightened into spirit, and transformed into a new nature.[237]

For Taylor, as for Irenaeus and Augustine, in contrast to the Platonists, human beings are made "spiritual not by the abolition of the flesh", but by the 'spiritualising of the flesh'; this is in its natural state according to Taylor, good or bad according to context, assent and habit, and in a corrupt one according to Augustine. This is partly attained by fleshly means: the Incarnation and its "extension" in the sacraments.

However, the flesh in this sense is not merely indifferent, and good or bad depending on the moral context, as it is for the Pelagians; it needs 'spiritualising'. A more dynamic conception of human nature seems to be at work, as we saw in Taylor's discussion of our nature, and its liability to sinful habit. The moral and spiritual life is about forming and directing human nature, for both Taylor and Irenaeus; not mere good choices and dispositions. In this respect both writers have more in common with Augustine.

In contrast to both, for Augustine, however, the origin of sin is the temporal soul that loves itself, not the external influence of the flesh. Nevertheless, Irenaeus has a view which is in a way completed by Augustine's doctrine, not contradicted by it, as the Pelagian anthropology is.

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237 Sermon *On the Spirit of Grace,* Works vol 4 p347.

According to Irenaeus, "soul" and "spirit" are "constituents of man", but they are not "the whole man". "The complete man is a mixture and union" of flesh as well as soul and spirit. In language reminiscent of Platonic teaching about the relationship between soul and 'matter', the flesh is "given unity and form" by the spiritual principle; the soul meanwhile "is midway between the first two, and sometimes it is subservient to the spirit and is raised by it: while sometimes it allies itself with the flesh and descends to earthly passions". As for Taylor and the Platonic tradition, the influence of the passions and the "flesh" is the (resistible) cause of sin in the soul. "All who fear God and believe in the coming of his Son, and through faith establish in their hearts the Spirit of God … are purified and spiritual, and live for God, because they have the Spirit of the Father, who cleanses man and lifts him up to the life of God." This is reminiscent of Taylor on human nature being "taken up into the cabinet of the mysterious Trinity" (ch2 above). This refers not to the spirit and soul alone, of course: if "the flesh is not to be saved, then the Lord did not redeem us by his blood, nor is the 'cup of blessing the partaking of his blood', nor is the 'bread which we break the partaking of his body' … How then can [those 'Gnostics' who deny the resurrection of the body] allege that flesh is incapable of the gift of God, which is eternal life, seeing that the flesh is fed on the flesh and blood of the Lord and is a member of him?"

The central mystery of the Christian faith for Taylor is the Incarnation: the "glory and eminencies of the divine love" are "manifested in the incarnation of the Word eternal", which occurred to "remedy … human miseries, to ennoble our nature by an union with divinity, to sanctify it with His justice, to enrich it with His grace, to instruct it with His doctrine, to fortify it with His example, to rescue it from servitude [to sinful habits], to assert it into the liberty of the sons of God [that liberty found in the new powers and inclinations of the will towards the good, which is a foretaste of Augustinian

libertas], and at the last to make it partaker of a beatifical resurrection … For thus the Saviour of the world became human, alluring, full of invitation and the sweetness of love, exemplary, humble and medicinal."[238] Faith in the incarnation is the "first great instrument of changing our whole nature into the state of grace, flesh into spirit".[239] The incarnation inspires our will, to turn from and break its sinful habits, and strive to acquire for our whole nature an habitual likeness to Christ.

For Taylor, the Eucharist 'extends' the Incarnation to us, by which Taylor means it helps to conform Christians to Christ, turn our naturally liable and habitually sinful flesh, into a likeness of Christ's habitual righteousness (which came 'naturally' to Christ, as a consequence of his divinity):

> Christ's body, His flesh and His blood, are therefore called our meat and drink, because by His incarnation and manifestation in the flesh He became life unto us: so that it is mysterious indeed in the expression, but very proper and intelligible in the event, to say that we eat His flesh and drink His blood, since by these it is that we have and preserve life … His body was … an operatory of life and spiritual being to us; the sacrament of the Lord's supper being a commemoration and exhibition of this death which was the consummation of our redemption by His body and blood, does contain in it a 'visible word' … Consonant to which doctrine, the fathers by an elegant expression call the blessed sacrament 'the extension of the incarnation'.[240]

The bread represents and conveys Christ's saving power, in much the same way that according to Augustine, Christ's human flesh made the Word visible:

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238 GE, Works Vol.2 p52.
239 Sermon XI, *The Flesh and the Spirit*, Works vol.4 p132.
240 *Worthy Communicant*, Works vol.8 p23.

> The fact is that it is not the flesh which is the 'principle' [of purification], nor the human soul in Christ, but the Word, through whom everything came into existence. And therefore the flesh does not purify by itself, but through the Word by which it was assumed, when 'the Word became flesh and dwelt among us'.[241]

The relationship between the grace of the sacrament, and the elements, is like that between Christ's flesh and his divinity, according to Taylor, following Augustine:

> When Christ spoke in a mystical sense about 'eating his flesh' some of his uncomprehending hearers were shocked ... Jesus said to those who stayed behind, 'It is the spirit which gives life, the flesh is of no help to anyone'. The 'principle' then, having assumed a soul and flesh, purifies the soul and flesh of believers.[242]

So Taylor:

> Christ, besides His spiritual body and blood, did also give us His natural, and we receive that [spiritual] by means of this [natural]. For this [natural] He gave us but once, then when upon the cross He was broken for our sins ... by the virtue of that death Christ is become the author of life unto us and of salvation ... Christ left to us symbols and sacraments of this natural body; not to be or convey that natural body to us, but to do more and better for us; to convey [bodily to our souls, we who are body-and-soul 'hypostatically' united] all the blessings and graces procured for us by the breaking of that body, and the effusion of that blood: which blessings being spiritual are therefore called 'His body' spiritually ... and are therefore called our food, because by them we live a new life in the Spirit, and Christ is our

241 *Civ Dei* X.24; whether Augustine knew some version of the 'Athanasian' creed or whether his influence affected its composition, is still debated.
242 Ibid.

> bread and our life, because by Him after this manner we are nourished up to life eternal. [Bodily: for we are both body and soul.] That is plainly thus, - Therefore we eat Christ's spiritual body, because He hath given us His natural body to be broken and His natural blood to be shed for the remission of our sins, and for the obtaining the grace and acceptability of repentance. For by this gift and by this death He hath obtained this favour from God, that by faith in Him and repentance from dead works ... we may be saved.[243]

The "spirit of a man", says Taylor, is "nourished with the consecrated and mysterious [and *bodily, material*] elements".[244] He refers to the "pious and reasonable" meditation of St John Chrysostom in a homily on Matthew: "If we were wholly incorporeal, God would have given us graces unclothed with signs and sacraments; but because our spirits are in earthen vessels, God conveys His graces to us by sensible ministrations".[245] The intention of the sacraments, as of the whole Christian economy, is to conform us to the likeness of Christ, and by so doing make us participate in the divine nature by an acquired, habitual likeness to the divine goodness revealed in the person of Christ:

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243 WC, Works vol.8 p25.

244 Sermon *Of the Spirit of Grace*, Works vol.4 p332.

245 WC, Works vol.8 p 31. Compare with Taylor's doctrine on the Eucharist and its intended effect, John Cosin, another Laudian contemporary, in his *History of Transubstantiation*: "St. Ambrose, (A.D. 380.) explaining what manner of alteration is in the Bread, when in the Eucharist it becomes the Body of CHRIST, saith, "Thou hadst indeed a being, but wert an old creature, but being now baptized or consecrated, thou art become a new creature." The same change that happens to man in baptism, happens to the Bread in the Sacrament: if the nature of man is not substantially altered by the new birth, no more is the Bread by consecration. Man becomes by baptism, not what nature made him, but what grace new-makes him; and the Bread becomes by consecration, not what it was by nature, but what the blessing consecrates it to be. For nature made only a mere man, and made only common bread; but Regeneration, of a mere man, makes a holy man, in whom CHRIST dwells spiritually; and likewise the Consecration of common Bread makes Mystic and Sacramental Bread. Yet this change doth not destroy nature, but to nature adds grace". For Cosin and Taylor alike, grace transforms and elevates nature by being added to it, and the sacraments are on important means of this. Their views are derived from their patristic learning, but also from aspects of Reformed theology, and from Richard Hooker: "The mixture of His bodily substance with ours is a thing which the ancient Fathers disclaim. Yet the mixture of His flesh with ours they speak of, to signify what our very bodies through mystical conjunction receive from the vital efficacy which we know to be in His; and from bodily mixtures they borrow divers similitudes rather to declare the truth, than the manner of coherence between His sacred and the sanctified bodies of saints." *Laws* bk V.lvi.

God … hath attested the holy Jesus to be the fountain of sanctity ... and the guide of our manners ... and if anything in the world be motive of our affections or satisfactory to our understandings, what is there in heaven or on earth we can desire or imagine beyond a likeness to God, and participation of the divine nature and perfections? And therefore as, when the sun arises, every man goes to his work, and warms himself with his heat, and is refreshed with his influences, and measures his labour with his course; so should we frame all the actions of our life by His light who hath shined by an excellent righteousness, that we no more walk in darkness or sleep in lethargies, or run a gazing after the lesser and imperfect beauties of the night (Great Exemplar, Works vol.2 p.41).

Every action of the life of Jesus, as it is imitable by us, is of so excellent merit, that by making up the treasure of grace, it becomes full of assistances to us, and obtains of God grace to enable us to its imitation, by way of influence [on us] and impetration [towards God]. For as in the acquisition of habits, the very exercise of the action does produce a facility to the action, and in some proportion becomes the cause of itself; so does every exercise of the life of Christ kindle its own fires, inspires breath into itself, and makes an univocal production of itself in a different subject. And Jesus becomes the fountain of spiritual life to us, as the prophet Elisha to the dead child; when he stretched his hands upon the child's hands, laid his mouth to his mouth, and formed his posture to the boy, and breathed into him, the spirit returned again into the child at the prayer of Elisha; so when our lives are formed into the imitation of the life of the holiest Jesus, the Spirit of God returns into us, not only by the efficacy of imitation, but by the merit and impetration of the actions of Jesus (Great Exemplar p.43).

If we have communicated worthily, we have given ourselves to Christ; we have given him all our liberty and our life, our bodies and our souls, our actions and our passions, our affections and our faculties, what we are, what we have; and in exchange have received

> Him; and we may say with St Paul, 'I live; but not I, but Christ liveth in me' So that we must live no more unto the world but unto God; and having fed upon manna, let us not return to Egypt to feed on garlick (Worthy Communicant, Works vol.8 p.227).

Like Irenaeus, Taylor is positive about the flesh, but both also see it as the problem: the inclinations of the flesh need to be habituated according to virtue, to be 'spiritualised'. For both there remains a certain dichotomy between the 'flesh' understood as the purely physical, and the mind, which is less true of Augustine. For Augustine, as we have seen, an evil will or a good will, a fundamental orientation of the mind, directs the passions. For Taylor, there is usually a more simplistic dichotomy between the 'flesh' and the 'spirit', as for the Platonists and the Pelagians, and the earlier Fathers, like Irenaeus. But human nature is more dynamic for Taylor and Irenaeus than for the Pelagians: it is always moving in the right or the wrong direction, as we saw one commentator describe Augustine's anthropology in chapter 3;[246] rather than simply involving good or bad choices by a static reasoning soul for whom the flesh is good or bad merely according to the moral context, as for the Pelagians. Yet the flesh is not an intrinsically corrupting force, for Taylor and Irenaeus: it is capable of being formed according to good dispositions; the influence of the flesh is not to be simply dispensed with, as for the Platonists.

According to Taylor, the statement in Ephesians 2.3 that "we were by nature heirs of wrath",

> does not relate to the sin of Adam in its first intention, but to the evil state of sin in which the Ephesians walked before their conversion, it signifies that our nature of itself is a state

246 Edmund Hill, de Trin. ed. p261. Compare Burnaby 1938 p37.

> of opposition to the Spirit of grace; it is privatively opposed, that is, there is nothing in it which can bring us to felicity: nothing but an obediential capacity; our flesh can become sanctified as the stones can become children of Abraham, or as dead seed can become living corn; and so it is with us, that God must make us a new creation if he means to save us; He must take our hearts of stone away, and give us hearts of flesh; He must purge the old leaven, and make us a new conspersion; He must destroy the flesh, and must breathe into us *spiritum vitae*, the celestial breath of life, without which we can neither live, nor move, nor have our being. [247]

Human nature pursues its own course, its own natural objects, and moral considerations may cut across this; what we saw Taylor call "crossing" our natural inclinations, in chapter 2. This is not the result of original sin; human nature is simply ordered towards its own particular natural ends, and although it has an intrinsic openness to the supernatural in respect of its endless mental inclinations which are mirrored in the physical, this does not mean that these unfixed desires are naturally directed to it; they may be very resistant to it in themselves; or indeed even to our temporal good, since the inclinations of nature are not naturally proportioned to any fixed temporal end, in themselves.

> And it is no wonder that while flesh and blood is the prevailing ingredient, while men are in the state of conjunction, and the soul serves the body, and the necessities of this are more felt than the discourses of that, that men should be angry and lustful, proud and revengeful, and that they should follow what they lust after, not what they are bidden to do. For passions and affections are our first governors, and they being clearly possessed of all mankind in their first years, have almost secured to themselves the soul of man, before

247 Sermon *The Flesh and the Spirit*, Works vol 4 p119-20.

> reason is heard to speak: and when she does speak, she speaks at first so little and so low, that the common noises of fancy and company drown her voice. This I say is the state of nature. And therefore Lactantius brings in a pagan complaining, … "I would fain avoid sin, but I am compelled. I am invested with a frail and weak flesh: this is it which lusteth, which is angry, which grieves, which fears to die. Therefore I am led uncertainly, and I sin, not because I will, but because I am constrained. I perceive that I do ill, but the necessity of my weakness drives me on, and I cannot resist it." … This is the state of the natural man in his mere naturals, especially as they are made worse by evil customs and vile usages of the world.[248]

The part of human nature that is resistant to the Spirit is principally the flesh, then, understood as the body and what the Platonists and the Fathers thought of as the lower parts of the soul.

Taylor thinks that grace and revelation help the will to restrain, form, direct, and 'elevate' the passions, which naturally blindly incline to their own proper objects, without any intrinsic limit; it is up to us, endowed with reason and will, to habituate them according to the divinely-revealed moral ideal for the natural man, who by himself, knows not the things of the spirit (according to the "pattern seen in the mount", as we might say). We have observed the plasticity of human nature in its earliest condition, according to Taylor, in the last chapter. Echoing Plato, Taylor compares this process with artistic production; "imitation" recalls the Greek word *mimesis*:

> For first we are naturally pleased with imitation, and have secret desires to transcribe the copy of the creation, and then having weakly imitated the work of God in making some kind of production from our own perfections, such as it is, and such as they are, we are

248 UN, Works vol 7 p341-2.

> delighted in the imagery, as God is in the contemplation of the world. For we see a nature brought in upon us by art and imitation. But what in natural things we can but weakly imitate, in moral things we can really effect. We can efform our nature over anew, and create ourselves again, and make ourselves bad when God had made us good: and what was innocent in nature, we make to be vicious by custom and evil habit; or on the contrary, what was crooked in nature, we can make straight by philosophy, and wise notices, and severe customs; and there is nothing in nature so imperfect or vicious, but it can be made useful and regular by reason and custom, and the grace of God; and even our brute parts are obedient to these.[249]

This idea recalls a work of St Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man*; for example V.1, about how the human image of the divine Creator acquires His likeness through the acquisition of the virtues:

> As then painters transfer human forms to their pictures by the means of certain colours, laying on their copy the proper and corresponding tints, so that the beauty of the original may be accurately transferred to the likeness, so I would have you understand that our Maker also, painting the portrait to resemble His own beauty, by the addition of virtues, as it were with colours, shows in us His own sovereignty [shows that we are his image, in being conscious and free]: and manifold and varied are the tints, so to say, by which His true form is portrayed: not red, or white, or the blending of these, whatever it may be called, nor a touch of black that paints the eyebrow and the eye, and shades, by some combination, the depressions in the figure, and all such arts which the hands of painters contrive, but instead of these, purity, freedom from passion, blessedness, alienation from all evil, and all those attributes of the like kind which help to form in men the likeness of God:

249 UN, Works vol 7 p 151.

> with such hues as these did the Maker of His own image mark our nature.

We are to complete the picture using the image of the divine sovereignty in us, free will, to acquire the virtues. Free will, for Gregory as for Taylor, Kant and Coleridge, and as we shall see in a moment, as for Origen and Irenaeus, is principally understood as externally uninhibited freedom of choice.[250] We may also compare a later passage in the same text:

> I may be allowed to describe the human image by comparison with some wonderful piece of modelling. For, as one may see in models those carved shapes which the artificers of such things contrive for the wonder of beholders, tracing out upon a single head two forms of faces; so man seems to me to bear a double likeness to opposite things— being moulded in the Divine element of his mind to the Divine beauty, but bearing, in the passionate impulses that arise in him, a likeness to the brute nature; while often even his reason is rendered brutish, and obscures the better element by the worse through its inclination and disposition towards what is irrational; for whenever a man drags down his mental energy to these affections, and forces his reason to become the servant of his passions, there takes place a sort of conversion of the good stamp in him into the irrational image, his whole nature being traced anew after that design, as his reason, so to say, cultivates the beginnings of his passions, and gradually multiplies them; for once it lends its co-operation to passion, it produces a plenteous and abundant crop of evils. (18.3).

For Taylor there is a sense in which the relationship between man's bodily nature and his mental powers, reason and will, is analogous to the old Platonist idea of his participation in both *logos* and 'matter'. For Gregory as for Taylor, the rational part of human nature

250 Rist translates Augustine's title "de libero arbitrio voluntatis" as "on the externally uninhibited power to choose" and suggests a Greek version of it as a possible title for one of Gregroy's books! 1994 p186.

can take control of and model the "passionate impulses". The purpose of the Incarnation for both Taylor and Gregory is to make us a *mimesis* of Christ, out of man as he is in himself, which in the final section of this chapter we shall see Taylor call the likeness of the 'first Adam', by means of 'forming' and elevating the 'matter' of our nature, according to the divine ideal revealed in the sensible, the Incarnation, through word and sacrament.

For Taylor, naturally, the human mind is, as St Athanasius describes it, "fallen to things of sense", or, in Taylor's words, naturally "apt to comply with" things of sense, due to its embodiment; this is not the result of the fall. In order to raise it, as Athanasius continues, "the Word disguised himself by appearing in a body, that He might, as Man, transfer men to Himself, and centre their senses on Himself, and, men seeing Him thenceforth as Man, persuade them … that He is not Man only, but also God, and the Word and Wisdom of the true God."[251]

However, Augustine has a more subtle, developed scheme in certain important respects. Unlike the earlier and the contemporary Eastern Fathers, the flesh refers to the pride of the self which then loves temporal and material things for itself; and not just to the external influence of lower soul on higher.

In the *City of God* Augustine takes up a similar theme to Irenaeus, concerning the essential unity of man despite the distinctions that can be made within human nature, and the relationship of this unity and distinction in human nature to human redemption. Like Irenaeus, Augustine is interpreting St Paul; he too distinguishes between body and soul and spirit, as well as between an 'animal body' and a 'spiritual body'. Human nature is constituted of body and soul; spirit is more definitely to do with grace than is clearly the case for Irenaeus.

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251 *On the Incarnation of the Word* 16.1.

For Augustine in CD 13.23.1, "Bodies which have a living soul, but not yet a life-giving spirit, are called animal"; but "living soul" in this sense is not just the vivifying soul common to humans and animals: man who is "out of the earth", has what Augustine calls *animus* or *mens*. The "life-giving spirit", meanwhile, is the divine likeness imparted to the rational soul by grace; not the divine image, the "living soul", the *animus* or *mens*, which is created. These distinctions are less clear in Irenaeus. Moreover, for Augustine, the term "flesh" can refer not only to the body and the animal soul, but to the whole man:

> Scripture does not confine the application of the term "flesh" to the body of an earthly and mortal living being … among [scripture's] different usages [of the term "flesh"] is its employment to denote man himself, that is, the essential nature of man, an example of the figure of speech known as "part for whole". (14.2)

In an anachronistic use of terminology, but not perhaps of substance, Augustine's conception of the "essential nature of man" can be called a 'hypostatic union' of body and soul:

> It is on these lines that we interpret this passage, "And the Word was made flesh", that is, "became man". Some people have misunderstood it and therefore have supposed that Christ had no human soul.' (14.2)

So the "works of the flesh" are the works of man, the works of individuals who are a true union of body and soul without confusion or separation. As such the "works of the flesh" include purely spiritual offences as well as those stemming from bodily affections; though the two cannot be separated, they should not be confused. Expounding Galatians

5.19-21 Augustine has this to say:

> [A]mong the works of the flesh which [St Paul] said were obvious, and which he listed and condemned, we find not only those concerned with sensual pleasure, like fornication, impurity, lust, drunkenness and drunken orgies, but also those which show faults of the mind, which have nothing to do with sensual indulgence. For anyone can see that devotion to idols, sorcery, enmity, quarrelsomeness, jealousy, animosity, party intrigue, envy - all these are faults of the mind, not of the body. (14.2)

Augustine observes that "a man may refrain from sensual indulgence" and still remain a wicked man; "still be convicted, by the authority of the Apostle, of living by the rule of the flesh." (ibid.) The purely spiritual vices are in fact the worst; for they are the vices of the Devil (14.3).

All sins, whether they derive from bodily passions or are of a more purely spiritual kind, are sins because they represent a life lived with the self (a 'hypostatic union' of soul and body) as its own final end and highest good. Augustine calls this "living by the standard of man", and equates it with the "human standard of behaviour" (he gives non-sensual examples, jealousy, quarrelsomeness) which St Paul said showed the Corinthians were still "of the flesh" (CD 14.4; 1 Cor 3.3. In the same chapter, Augustine, like Taylor, says that St Paul uses "animal man" and "carnal man" interchangeably.)

> [I]t is not good to forsake the good creator, and to live by the standard of a created good, [in this case, oneself as the first and best-loved created good] whether a man chooses the standard of the flesh, or of the soul, or of the entire man, who consists of soul and flesh and

> hence can be denoted by either term, soul or flesh, by itself. (14.5)

This turn towards the created good stems from the will being created out of nothing, as we have already seen. It is a positive choice of a positive thing, the created good, beginning with the love of oneself; but it stems from something negative, from not-being, finitude, and not from external temptation, the influence of 'matter' or the 'the flesh'. This self-will leads to a kind of mistake about the correct order of being, on the part of a human being who, in the sense of the Greek *eudaimonia* tradition, naturally wills their own "happiness":

> So when a man lives by the standard of truth, he lives not by his own standard, but by God's … we can say with meaning that every sin is a falsehood. For sin only happens by an act of will; and our will is for our own welfare, or for the avoidance of misfortune. And hence the falsehood: we commit sin to promote our welfare, and it results instead in our misfortune … What is the reason for this, except that well-being can only come to man from God, not from himself? And he forsakes God by sinning; and he sins by living by his own standard. (14.4.)

So unlike the Socratic tradition, and unlike the Pelagians, passion does not cloud or overpower intellect; bad will retains priority over passion in the phenomenology of sin. Augustine advances this view as opposed to both the Pelagian view that sin is the result of bad choices made under the temptation of passion (implicit in what he says), and the ultimately similar "Platonist" view that sin is caused in the soul by its entanglement with the body and its passions, which is the explicit target of his critique in CD book 14. The difference between the Pelagians and the Platonists is that the Platonists are closer to the

right view of will, but have a more negative view of the body and its passions; and the Pelagians recognise Christ the mediator, of course; but "make his cross of none effect".

So *pace* Virgil, the eloquent spokesman of "Platonism", according to Augustine in this chapter, concerning the origins of vicious desires:

> we must infer that there can have been no truth in the claim that all their culpable and perverted emotions that arise in them are derived from their earthly bodies. For we see that, on the admission of the Platonists themselves, this "dread lust", as their renowned spokesman puts it, is so far from deriving from the body that of its own accord it urges the soul towards a bodily existence, even when the soul has been purified from all bodily infection, and been placed in a situation outside any kind of body. Thus on their own confession, it is not only from the influence of the flesh that the soul experiences desire and fear, joy and distress; it can also be disturbed by those emotions from a source within itself. (14.5; compare, as we saw in chapter 3, Plotinus Enn.VI.8.4 and V.1.1, and Plato in the *Phaedrus*, on the fall and embodiment of the souls.)

Although flesh primarily means the whole man, for Augustine, one can of course make the distinction by the "part for whole" figure of speech.

> Scripture [generally uses man for the whole man but also] … calls the soul the 'inner man' and the body the 'outer man', as if there were two men, whereas the two elements together make up one man. We must, in fact, understand what is meant by speaking of 'man made in the likeness of God', and 'man who is earth, and destined to return into earth'. The former refers to the rational soul, as God implanted it in man (in his body, that is) by breathing on him - 'by inspiration' might be a more suitable phrase. While the latter statement applies to man's body, as devised by God out of dust, the thing which was given a soul so that it

> should become an animal body, that man should be made into a living soul.

But notwithstanding what he believes to be an essential difference of kind between soul and body, Augustine uses the terms "inner man" and "outer man" not so much to reinforce this distinction - as if they were, as he says, in a sense "two men" - but to emphasise them as distinct within the one single, whole man. The distinction of soul and body within the unity of man is vital to Augustine's account of human redemption. He uses the Greek term "*harmonia*" to help describe how the union of divine and human natures in Christ, analogous to that between the "outer man" and the "inner man" in human nature, works through our outer man to renew the inner man, which renewal is completed when it is manifested through the outer man to ensure the ultimate salvation of both.[252] The spiritual man, even after the resurrection, is still of flesh, for Augustine, just as for Irenaeus, though it is an exalted, "spiritual" body.

According to Taylor, commenting on the text, "the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak",

> "The spirit", that is … 'the inward man', or the reasonable part of man, especially as helped by the Spirit of grace, that "is willing"; for it is the principle of all good actions; the *energetikon*, 'the power of working', is from the spirit; but the flesh is but a dull instrument, and a broken arm, in which there is a principle of life, but it moves uneasily; and the flesh is so weak, that in scripture to be 'in the flesh' signifies a state of weakness and infirmity; so the humiliation of Christ is expressed by being 'in the flesh' … but here the flesh is not opposed to the spirit as a direct enemy, but as a weak servant: for if the flesh be powerful and opposite the spirit stays not there … the old man and the new cannot dwell

252 de Trin IV.1.4.

> together; and therefore here, where the spirit inclining to good, well disposed, and apt to holy counsels, does inhabit in society with the flesh, it means only a weak and unapt nature or a state of infant grace.[253]

Again, he tends to distinguish them in a cruder way than Augustine: the struggle is between the flesh, as flesh, and the graced mind; not in a dividedness of mind, of will. But the flesh is understood in a more negative sense in the first instance than it is by the Pelagians; in a more Platonic way, we might say. But it also has a more dynamic relationship with the spirit, and at least the potential for a more integrated orientation of the whole person towards the good, than for the Platonists.

Similarly, though Origen is apparently unsure about the Platonic tripartite division,[254] he thinks that what Augustine calls "animosities", the sins of the spiritual soul, which Augustine distinguishes from "carnalities", the sins of the flesh, come from the influence of the corporeal, animal "soul of the flesh"; they do not, as for Augustine, arise from within the reflexive rational soul itself. In this respect Origen remains closer to the traditional Platonist view.[255]

Again, although for Origen, freedom is principally the power to be free of the external, this freedom means the ability to choose, rather than will in Augustine's wider sense. After distinguishing between animate things, which have the cause of movement in themselves, or are self-moved, in response to "phantasia", and inanimate things, which are moved by something else, Origen says:

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253 Sermon *The Flesh and the Spirit*, Works vol 4 p118. Compare UN p361.

254 De Prin. III.4.1.

255 Ibid. III.2.2,3; III.4. Sometimes Origen partly anticipates Augustine's view of will, while, like Taylor, continuing to assert indifferent choice: "But a man receives the energy, that is, the working, of a good spirit, when he is stirred and incited to good, and is inspired to heavenly or divine things; as the holy angels and God Himself wrought in the prophets, arousing and exhorting them by their holy suggestions to a better course of life, yet so, indeed, that it remained within the will and judgment of the individual, either to be willing or unwilling to follow the call to divine and heavenly things." III.3.4.

> The rational animal, however, has, in addition to its phantasial nature, also reason, which judges the phantasies, and disapproves of some and accepts others, in order that the animal may be led according to them. Therefore, since there are in the nature of reason aids towards the contemplation of virtue and vice, by following which, after beholding good and evil, we select the one and avoid the other, we are deserving of praise when we give ourselves to the practice of virtue, and censurable when we do the reverse. [256]

In III.1.4, Origen argues that we know intuitively that it is up to us whether we give our assent to an external influence or not; possibly Augustine knew this work in Rufinus's Latin translation, and it influenced his similar argument in DLA. Irenaeus takes the same position as Origen: "If it was by nature that some are bad and others good, the latter would not be praiseworthy for their goodness … nor would the bad be responsible, having been so created."[257]

In this respect they resemble Taylor, and are precursors of Pelagius as much as of Augustine. Origen is faced with the same paradox as Augustine, Taylor and Coleridge and Kant: when the Platonist Celsus says evil is from matter, Origen rejects the view that nature and matter are in any way intrinsically evil;[258] but he also recognises sin as a force in a person's life. Like Taylor he identifies it with the struggle between free choice and external forces, instead of one's own perverse or divided will as well, or behind everything else.

For Taylor, Origen and Irenaeus, Augustine and the Pelagians alike, the flesh is not bad in itself, but good in its own place: "There is no need then, in the matter of our

256 *De Prin* bk III.1.3.
257 *Adv Haer.* IV.xxxvii.1.
258 *Contra Celsum* IV.66.

sins and faults, to do our Creator the injustice of laying the blame on the nature of the flesh which is good, in its own kind and on its own level."[259] However, the earlier Fathers and Taylor assign the origin of sin to the influence of the flesh: but they do not see it as intrinsically bad thereby, and they have a more dynamic and integrated view of the relation between soul and body than the Pelagians, in a way closer to Augustine. But the earlier Fathers lack Augustine's doctrine of the will, as a mediating element in the soul, between the soul and the flesh, in something analogous to the way in which Christ's human soul is a mediating element between His humanity and divinity. To an extent, Taylor has reverted to something more like the earlier view. Ironically, given his views on our passionate inclinations and appetites since the fall, Augustine's doctrine of the proud will is designed to absolve the created flesh of the blame for our "sins and moral failings".

4.3 Taylor's revised Augustinianism on the goodness of the flesh: the example of sex and marriage

Taylor shares the common patristic concern to defend the goodness of the flesh against Platonist, 'Gnostic' or Manichean critiques. As Augustine points out in CD 14.9 when arguing against the Stoic and Platonic views, the Christian writers are interested in integrating the flesh and the spirit, thought and feeling; creating good affections, as opposed to getting rid of feelings, stripping away flesh, or aiming for *apatheia*. The Pelagians depart from this common concern to the extent that they tend to see moral choices as the central feature, rather than the direction of a person's whole nature.

Taylor, however, thought that Augustine had effectively allowed that the 'flesh' -

259 CD XIV.5.

in the sense of both the whole man, by virtue of his fallen will, and the corrupt state of the passions - had become evil in itself as a result of the fall. We saw in the last chapter that this does indeed seem to be the effect of Augustine's view, which we illustrated with reference to Augustine's own comparison of his view of marriage with Julian of Eclanum's. Taylor, too, uses the example of marriage. In his reply to a letter from an erstwhile episcopal patron, who tried to remonstrate with him over his views on original sin, Taylor argues that

> the doctrine of original sin, as it is explicated by S. Austin, had two parents; one was the doctrine of the Encratites, and some other heretics, who forbade marriage, and supposing it to be evil, thought they were warranted to say it was the bed of sin, and children the spawn of vipers and sinners. And S. Austin himself, and S. Hierome whom your Lordship cites, speaks some things of marriage, which if they were true, then marriage were highly to be refused, as being the increaser of sin rather than of children, and a semination in the flesh and contrary to the Spirit, and such a thing which being mingled with sin produces univocal issues; the mother and daughter are so alike that they are the worse again. For if a proper inherent sin be effected by chaste marriages, then they are in this particular equal to adulterous embraces, and rather to be pardoned than allowed; and if all concupiscence be vicious, then no marriage can be pure. … But the other parent of this is the zeal against the Pelagian heresy, which did serve itself by saying too little in this article, and therefore was thought fit to be confuted by saying too much.[260]

Taylor does not, in fact, exactly ascribe to Augustine the "Encratite" view (for which we might substitute Julian's "Manichean"); as John Rist says, and as we have seen Taylor acknowledge, Augustine's phrase *concupiscentia carnis* refers to "a generalized weakness

260 Works vol. 7 p567.

of the 'flesh', to which we can improperly assent … a defect, not a sin"; whereas according to Julian, "Augustine's 'real' view is that sexual desire is sinful in itself",[261] and that sin generally is unavoidable because the passions overpower our will. Taylor understands that for Augustine, concupiscence only becomes a sin, when we assent; and the same is true for Taylor himself, when the desire occurs in an immoral context.

But he thinks that in practice, Augustine's view of the present state of human sexual desire as wholly the result of original sin effectively reduces to the "Encratite" or "Manichean" view, of the 'flesh' understood as natural passions in themselves: for Augustine, while marriage does not effect "a proper inherent sin" in itself, the state of fallen sexuality means that at least venial sin is always involved, and taking pleasure in sex is always immoral. *All* human sexual desire, in the post-lapsarian state, is intrinsically disordered and corrupt, even though actual (at any rate, mortal) sin can be avoided (by the baptised) by restraining it, or directing it wholly for the purposes of procreation. Augustine argued against Julian that in his book *On Marriage and Concupiscence* "is found the defence rather than the censure of marriage."[262] Marriage is good in itself:

> Carnal concupiscence, however, must not be ascribed to marriage: it is only to be tolerated in marriage. It is not a good which comes out of the essence of marriage, but an evil which is the accident of original sin.[263]

But for Augustine, this refers to all physical desire, at least in its present form: the natural good of marriage is entirely bound up with procreation; for Augustine, there is a simple alternative between procreation and sensual gratification, with no conception of a higher

261 Rist 1994, p321.
262 ATLP 1.9
263 DNC 1.13

integration with personal love, of the sort which we saw Taylor refer to in chapter 2:

> The union, then, of male and female for the purpose of procreation is the natural good of marriage. But he makes a bad use of this good who uses it bestially, so that his intention is on the gratification of lust, instead of the desire of offspring.[264]

The best Augustine can say about marriages since that of Adam and Eve before the fall is this:

> A man turns to good use the evil of concupiscence, and is not overcome by it, when he bridles and restrains its rage, as it works in inordinate and indecorous motions; and never relaxes his hold upon it except when intent on offspring, and then controls and applies it to the carnal generation of children to be spiritually regenerated, not to the subjection of the spirit to the flesh in a sordid servitude.[265]

As Rist says, Augustine is a sort of "sexual Calvinist" (p324 note 15): "Augustine hardly notices that sexual activity within marriage … can have a beneficial unitive effect and develop marital affection."[266] Taylor does notice exactly these points, as we shall see in a moment. The only sort of higher integration Augustine seems to think of is one where everything is perfectly controlled by conscious will, as in the passages from the *City of God* cited in chapter 2:

> if there had been no sin, marriage would have been worthy of the happiness of paradise, and would have given birth to children to be loved, and yet would not have given rise to

264 DNC 1.1.
265 DNC 1.1.
266 1994 p249.

> any lust to be ashamed of; but, as it is, we have no example to show how this could have come about. Yet that does not mean that it should seem incredible that the one part of the body could have been subject to the will, without the familiar lust, seeing that so many other parts are now in subjection to it. We move our hands and feet to perform their special functions, when we so will..[267]

Yet this is a rather Pelagian view of the will, given Augustine's broader understanding of it; as well as a Platonist or even Manichean view of the flesh, as Taylor observes.[268]

Augustine does understand lust in terms of his broader understanding of will, however. For Augustine, sexual desire isn't just a matter of purely sensual desire; "According to Augustine intercourse for pleasure is simply a form of exploitation (*Confessions* 3.1.1; 4.2.2; 6.15.25). He says he exploited his concubine's body as if she did not have a soul."[269] But this often stems from an evil will, that is, a "possessive" love on the Platonist model, which is caused by pride; the cupidity of the mind, which is the consequence of original sin, stirs up the lower appetite, to possess someone merely for the sake of bodily gratification alone. Worse, there is another, if anything more insidious form of pride, that can be identified in this connection: what Augustine calls the *libido dominandi*. "The proud soul wants like God to 'have others under her control' (*On Genesis Against the Manicheans* 6.13.41), thus again both challenging God as an equal and wishing to disrupt the order which God has established."[270]

However, for Augustine as for the Platonists, *all* physical desire, desire for bodies, is regarded as bad in itself: Plotinus contends that "Once there is perfect self-control, it is

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267 In this respect Aquinas diverges from Augustine, and is more 'Aristotelian' than 'Platonist': all the natural inclinations of human nature existed, but the mean came naturally, perhaps at the deliberate behest of the will.

268 Moreover, children for Augustine are in fact 'naturally' sinners by inheritance, whether it is by nature or will.

269 Rist 1994 p323.

270 Ibid p189.

no fault to enjoy the beauty of earth; where appreciation degenerates into carnality, there is sin." "Carnality" refers to the "lawless" desire of the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*. Ultimately there is no legitimate sexual love for the beloved in the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*; it is always a distortion of, and distraction from, the cerebral love for Beauty. We may compare Augustine on admiring the beauty of bodies in the resurrection (CD XXII.24).

Given his account of the will as rightly ordering or distorting feelings, Augustine could perhaps have made a distinction between physical desire in the context of an evil will, and a good sort of love that could also involve physical desire. Even allowing for his view that sexual desire in itself simply leads to using the other as a body, not a person, Augustine could still distinguish between physical desire integrated with a love for the person, and the mere desire for purely physical gratification, or the *libido dominandi*. Rather, in his account, sexual desire seems to be bad in itself, simply because out of conscious, rational control: Rist notes that "Augustine is worried about orgasm because it seems to imply a loss of the highest form of integration of the personality".[271]

As we have already touched on in chapter 2, Taylor develops an understanding along just these lines. We have observed (at the beginning of this chapter, and in chapter 3) that for Taylor as much as for Augustine, the characteristic activity of the will is to love or delight, as well as to choose; and grace, for both Augustine and Taylor, makes the will "do its own work well" in the sense that it repairs the ability of the will to love rightly, ennabling it to choose good over evil. To be in the Spirit, or in the power of the Spirit, says Taylor,

> is a similitude taken from persons encompassed with guards; they are *in custodia*, that is in

271 1994 p322.

> their power, under their command, moved at their dispose; they rest in their time, and receive laws from their authority, and admit visitors whom they appoint, and must be employed as they shall suffer: so are men who are in the Spirit; that is, they believe as He teaches, they work as He enables, they choose what He calls good, they are friends of His friends, and they hate with His hatred: only with this difference, that persons in custody are forced to do what their keepers please, and nothing is free but their wills; but they that are under the command of the Spirit do all the things which the Spirit commands, but they do them cheerfully; and their will is now the prisoner, but it is *in libera custodia*, the will is where it ought to be, and where it desires to be, and it cannot easily choose any thing else because it is extremely in love with this; as the saints and angels in their state of beatific vision cannot choose but love God, and yet the liberty of their choice is not lessened because the object fills all the capacities of the will and the understanding. Indifferency to an object is the lowest degree of liberty, and supposes unworthiness or defect in the object or the apprehension; but the will is then the freest and most perfect in its operation when it entirely pursues a good with so certain determination and clear election that the contrary evil cannot come into dispute or pretence. Such in our proportions is the liberty of the sons of God … Christ's yoke is like feathers to a bird, not loads, but helps to motion..[272]

In other words, the will freely determines itself towards something on the acknowledgement of it as good; not because it is compelled, by intellect or by feeling, but because of the value it accords to something, upon the understanding's recognition of it as good. In *status viae*, as we have seen, we must co-operate with this disposition, for

272 Works vol. 4 p335. Taylor is no Jansenist; grace empowers the will, it does not overpower it. Burnaby 1938 p223f. (For the Jansenist view, see Pascal, *Provincial Letter* XVIII, p283 in the Penguin ed.; in relation to the question of the influence of grace in this respect, see also John Donne's great sonnet, 'Batter my heart, Three Person'd God'.) Rist (1994) compares Augustine's view with Platonic "inspiration" (p152f) and contrasts it with "Kantian obligation" (p153); but perhaps there is a comparison between this, Augustine's 'love as what we value', and Kantian "respect".

Taylor; for Augustine, with enough grace, ultimately we will do so.[273]

For Taylor, physical desire is indifferent in itself, but as we saw in chapter 2, good if integrated with the Platonist "unreasoned consciousness of friendly relation"[274] between two souls, which he also uses as a natural analogy for the relationship between the soul and God. The idea that all physical desire in itself is bad, is a Platonist or Manichean notion, for Taylor. He shares this view with Julian of Eclanum; but Taylor's view of human sexuality is rather more nuanced than Julian's. Julian tends to regard it as simply legitimate in itself, in the context of marriage, while Augustine regards this as an exploitative use of marriage. For Taylor, humans are creatures of body and soul, and bodily desire and intimacy is natural and good as long as it is integrated with its spiritual analogue, even as body and mind are integrated in human nature.

> The marital love … is a thing pure as light, sacred as a temple, lasting as the world; *Amicitia quae desinere potuit nunquam vera fuit*, said [St Jerome, of all people]; … it is *homilia*, so Moses called it; it is *eunoia*, so St Paul; it is *philotes*, so Homer; … it contains in itself all sweetness, and all society, and all felicity, and all prudence, and all wisdom. For there is nothing can please a man without love; and if a man be weary of the wise discourses of the apostles, and of the innocency of an even and private fortune, or hates peace or a fruitful year, he hath reaped thorns and thistles from the choicest flowers of paradise; 'for nothing can sweeten felicity itself, but love'; but when a man dwells in love then the breasts of his wife are pleasant as the droppings upon the hills of Hermon, her eyes are fair as the light of heaven, she is a fountain sealed, and he can quench his thirst, and

273 The Incarnation is, of course, supposed to introduce love of the immaterial, by means of a material sign or expression of it; and to direct our feelings, by directing the fundamental disposition of the will, through what that sign reveals, to a mind that is already able to form a conception of eternity through the illumination of those principles and "forms" which are 'above' the mind: De Trin VIII.3.7,8. See ch.5 below on Augustine and illumination.

274 Plotinus, Enn.III.5.1. See the beginning of chapter 3, for the relationship between this idea and Augustine on the will.

> ease his cares, and lay his sorrows down upon her lap, and can retire home as to his sanctuary and refectory, and his gardens of sweetness and chaste refreshments.[275]

The whole person can be loved, mind and body, in proper ways, without separation. To an extent the two desires operate independently, of course; and we are inclined towards things before we can choose or refuse them. But one aspect of the moral life is to strive for their integration, by means of inculcating good habit.

Diarmaid MacCulloch points out the influence of the marriage service in the Book of Common Prayer on Taylor, in respect of his views on marriage and family life:

> right from its 1549 version the service emphasised that marriage could be enjoyable for human beings - that one of its purposes was 'for the mutual society, help, and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other'. Cranmer's was the first marriage liturgy in Christian history to say this …
>
> With Cranmer's sonorous liturgical encouragement, England's Protestant clergy cheerfully celebrated their family lives. By the mid-seventeenth century Jeremy Taylor, an Anglican bishop of Laudian outlook and therefore sympathetic in many respects to traditional Catholic spirituality, nevertheless spoke from enjoyable experience of marriage when he spoke of children in one of his marriage sermons: 'no man can tell', he said, 'but he that loves children, how many delicious accents make a man's heart dance in the pretty conversation of those dear pledges; their childishness, their stammering, their little angers, their innocence, their imperfections, their necessities, are so many little emanations of joy and comfort to him that delights in their persons and society'. In what was surely a

275 *Marriage Ring* sermon, Works vol. 4 p224. This rather purple passage is far from congenial to 21st century views, in certain respects; though Taylor advocates a surprising mutuality and equality between husband and wife in this sermon, by the standards of the time. See p228 for a comparison of husband and wife with soul and body; this is derived from Augustine, and again, reflects the common view of male authority in the period.

> conscious refutation of Cardinal Bellarmine's catechism, Bishop Taylor commented in another of his sermons that 'Single life makes men in one instance to be like angels, but marriage in very many things makes the chaste pair to be like Christ.'[276]

Augustine doesn't dismiss love for children, or even the help and comfort involved in marriage;[277] though he is somewhat inclined to the view that "he loves Thee too little, who loves anything beside Thee", in this context as in others. Again, his views are reminiscent of the Platonist idea that earthly beauties distract from Beauty, unless treated purely as reminders of it.

> In words which can still bring tears to the eyes, St Augustine describes the desolation in which the death of his friend Nebridius plunged him (*Confessions* IV, 10). Then he draws a moral. This is what comes, he says, of giving one's heart to anything but God. All human beings pass away. Do not let your happiness depend on something you may lose. If love is to be a blessing, not a misery, it must be for the only Beloved who will never pass away …
>
> There is no escape along the lines St Augustine suggests. Nor along any other lines. There is no safe investment. To love at all is to be vulnerable.[278]

Augustine is not very interested in the goodness of natural love, even in man as redeemed; the greatest love parents show their children appears in their baptising them and bringing them up Christians.[279] Augustine's view of the natural, is coloured by regarding it as corrupted by sin.

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276 MacCulloch 2003, p651-3. MacCulloch goes on to observe that Taylor advocated breast feeding, and comments, "One cannot imagine a bishop of the Counter-Reformation entertaining his flock with such rhapsodies."

277 DNC 1.11.

278 C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*, London 1960, pp137, 138. In a different context, compare *Confessions* X.33, on his enjoyment of music in church.

279 DNC 1.4.

Taylor agrees with Julian that the traditional Augustinian view of the effects of original sin on sexuality necessarily denigrates marriage; but, while he doesn't think there is anything wrong with sexual pleasure in itself, he agrees with Augustine that by itself it is exploitative: he doesn't think a person should be *used* as a body: he wants to integrate the physical desire with personal love.

4.4 Flesh and sinful flesh

Taylor's account of human nature in terms of passions and "the flesh" is a 'naturalised' version of Origen and Augustine on "sinful flesh": Origen anticipates Augustine in some of what he says about the flesh:

> If the Apostle, in speaking of 'this body of sin', is to be understood as meaning this body of ours [due to its corporeal nature] he will be interpreted as meaning the same as David when he said of himself, 'I was conceived in sin, and in sin hath my mother conceived me'. … [St Paul also says that Christ came] 'in the likeness of sinful flesh' … thus showing that while our flesh is sinful flesh, Christ's flesh is *like* sinful flesh.[280]

Origen is striking a similar balance to that set out by Augustine, arguing against both the Manicheans on the one hand, and the Pelagians on the other, concerning the flesh:

> The Manicheans dishonour Christ's flesh by blaspheming the birth from the Virgin; but the Pelagians by making the flesh of those to be redeemed equal to the flesh of the Redeemer. Since Christ was born, not of course in sinful flesh, but in the likeness of sinful flesh, while

280 Origen, *Commentary on Romans* V.9.

> the flesh of the rest of mankind is born sinful. The Manicheans, therefore, who absolutely abominate all flesh, take away the manifest truth from the flesh of Christ; but the Pelagians, who maintain that no flesh is born sinful, take away from Christ's flesh its special and proper dignity.[281]

Taylor is trying to strike the same balance, but without conceding the Augustinian view that the flesh itself has been corrupted in Adam; a view which he regards as crypto-Manichean. But at the same time, he is attempting to avoid the Pelagian view that "no flesh" is in any sense "sinful". Although Augustine has a deeply negative view of fallen nature, it is capable of deification; one of the extraordinary things about fallen man is that he remains capable of God, of being restored and drawn by grace into the life of the Trinity. Taylor agrees that mere nature is negative, in a way, yet denies that it is spoiled by sin; he offers a naturalised account of Augustine's 'fallen' state that treats limitations as natural, things we need to overcome with the help of grace, not as sin and punishment; and is, again, capable of grace. For Taylor, this is the condition of our nature from the beginning.

For Taylor, all flesh is called sinful, by extension, like Christ's according to Origen and Augustine; though all sin, as a result of this flesh, except Christ. Taylor relates his view of the state of human nature and the purpose of Christianity to St Paul's words at the beginning of Romans 8:

> What the law could never do, because our lower nature had robbed it of all potency, God has done: by sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as a sin-offering, he has passed judgement against sin in that very nature; so that the commandment of the law

281 Augustine, ATLP 2.3.

> might find fulfilment in us, who live not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

The state of "sin" refers to both actual sins and habits of sin, and by an extension of meaning to our natural state itself. Our lower nature, "concupiscence, or the first motions and inclinations to sin, is called sin, and said to have the nature of sin, that is, *homoioma tes [sarkos] hamartias* [Rom 8.3, the likeness of sinful flesh], the likeness, it may be, [because it is] the material part of sin, or something by which sin is commonly known" (p249): because it is the cause, albeit the resistible cause, of particular sins. Likewise according to the English Article,[282] concupiscence "[according to the confession of the Apostle, that is, St Paul,] hath of itself the nature of sin": which Taylor elastically interprets to mean "it is the material part of sin, a principle and root from whence evil may spring, according to St Austin's words [in DNC 1.23: 'concupiscence or the viciousness of our nature is after a certain manner of speaking called sin; because it is made worse by sin and makes us guilty of sin when consented to.' Taylor's trans.]."

> Just as if a man have a natural thirst, it may tempt him, and is apt to incline him to drunkenness; if he be of a sanguine disposition, it disposes him to lust; if choleric, to anger; and is so much a sin as the fuel is part of a fire; but because this can be there where the damnation shall not enter, this nature of sin is such as does not make a proper guiltiness.[283]

In this respect Taylor retains a limited 'biological' resemblance to original sin. To the extent that we inherit bad dispositions, "not only Adam, but every father may transmit an 'original sin', or rather an 'original viciousness' of his own; for a vicious nature, or a natural improbity when it is not consented to, is not a sin, but an ill disposition:

282 Ninth of the Thirty Nine Articles, *Of Original, or Birth-sin*.
283 UN, Works vol 7 p339.

philosophy and the grace of God must cure it; but it often causes us to sin, before our reason and higher principles are well attended to."[284] This is also true of natural compassion, what we might call moral sentiments; they are certainly helpful, and the state of habitual righteousness, regeneration, which we aim to achieve, is essentially a state of habitual disposition to virtue, for Taylor; but in itself this state is not strictly moral; that depends on our co-operation and choice (*Duc. Dub*. Vol 1, p79f).

Our nature in itself, then, is not the corrupt state descending from the fall, which Taylor like the Pelagians regards as a crypto-Manichean conception, as we have seen; rather, this is the very nature that Christ took to Himself, though without sin, as we have already seen; that very "likeness of sinful flesh", which includes concupiscence, though Christ was always able to perfectly resist it when it inclined to anything immoral. Christ was able to perfectly harness and direct his nature; the Incarnation is to enable us to do the same, as well as to confirm reasonable natural morality by revelation (as we shall see in the final chapter); we are enabled by grace to imperfectly imitate Christ, just as we imitate Adam in sin.

By his insistence that the state from which we need to be raised is that very nature which we share with Adam as our progenitor, Taylor is attempting to avoid the Ninth Article's anathema against the Pelagians, who "vainly" hold that original sin consists in no more than the "following", that is, the imitation "of Adam". On Taylor's account, we do not merely imitate Adam when we actually sin, but we share his nature; we are in the same natural condition as Adam, which can be called "sin" in the improper sense, as a state of limitations which are part of the cause of sin - what Augustine called the state of "ignorance and difficulty". However, this is not a state of intrinsic corruption, or actually intrinsically sinful.

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284 Ibid p289.

Taylor's account again resembles Irenaeus, in the sense that one might call it a 'bottom up' version of Augustine and Origen on sinful flesh and its restoration and elevation, that includes libertarian freedom. Irenaeus is clearly a source for Taylor. Irenaeus poses the question of whether God could have made man perfect from the beginning. Taylor asks the same question, and replies that he could have done this only by removing our freedom of indifference - that is, never giving it to us at all.[285] Irenaeus answers:

> But contingent things have their beginning in course of time, and for this reason they must needs fall short of their maker's perfection; for things which have recently come to birth cannot be eternal; and … they fall short of perfection for this very reason.[286]

Similarly, Taylor:

> For the nature and constitution of man is such, that he cannot perpetually attend to any state of things: *voluntas per momenta variatur, quia solus Deus immutabilis*: variety and change, inconstancy and repentance, are his in very nature.[287]

Our natural, temporal condition is not intrinsically bad at its own level, but contains the inevitability of error and sin. As Irenaeus says:

> Because of [God's] kindness he bestowed his gift upon us, and made us free, as he is free. Because of his foresight he knew men's weakness, and the results of that weakness; but because of his love and his goodness he will overcome [the weakness of] the nature of

285 UN, Works vol 7 p189.
286 Adv. Haer. IV.xxxviii.1.
287 Works vol 7 p26.

> created man. It was necessary that [the weakness of] men's nature should first be shown and afterwards be overcome, and mortality be swallowed up by immortality, corruptibility by incorruptibility, and man become conformed to the image and likeness of God, having received the knowledge of good and evil.[288]

We may usefully compare Augustine on the virtual inevitability of the fall: as a temporal and mutable particular self, Adam was always liable to the sin of pride, though when he fell he did so "in full knowledge and by free choice".[289] However, as the near-inevitability of the fall for Adam indicates, to an extent this condition is simply a natural one, notwithstanding Augustine's insistence that it is the product of our fallen state: we could not, says Augustine in *de Trinitate* IV.4.24, "pass from being among the things that originated to eternal things, unless the eternal allied himself to us in our originated condition, and so provided us with a bridge to his eternity." To an extent, our love of "temporal and material things" above "eternal" things is a simple corollary of our temporal and material existence, even for Augustine. The Incarnation is a "bridge" from the vicissitudes of time, to eternity: "we by pressing on imitate him who abides motionless; we follow him who stands still, and by walking in him we move towards him, because for us he became a road or way in time by his humility, while being for us an eternal abode by his divinity." (*de Trin*. VII.2.4).

For Taylor, as for Irenaeus on human nature in general, and Augustine on Adam in the state of his creation in innocence, the bestowal of free will implies the inevitability of sin; but for Taylor and Irenaeus, as in a way for Augustine, this also constituted the only means whereby God could achieve free human co-operation in the process of

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288 Adv Haer. IV.xxxvii.4.
289 Rist 1994 p282, cf CD XIV.11.

"divinisation":[290] "it is so far from being true that man after his fall did lose his natural power of election, that it seems rather to be increased. For as a man's knowledge grows, so his will becomes better attended and ministered unto. But after his fall his knowledge was more than before … by which … he grew better able, and instructed with arguments to obey God, and to refuse sin for the time to come."[291] Irenaeus says something similar:

> Man received knowledge of good and evil … man learnt the good of obedience and the evil of disobedience; his mind perceived by experience the distinction between good and evil, so that he might exercise his own decision in the choice of the better course … First the mind learns that disobedience is evil and bitter; and by penitence spits it out. Then it learns by realisation what sort of thing is contrary to goodness and sweetness.[292]

4.5 Taylor's understanding of the 'first Adam' as human nature in itself

Irenaeus argues that "God could have offered perfection to man at the beginning, but man, being yet an infant, could not have taken it";[293] Taylor transfers this to the individual level: conscious experience through the course of time and chance is a necessary condition of human beings choosing one course over another for themselves. Adam, says Taylor,

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290 See Rist 1994 pp278-83 on Augustine on this.

291 UN, Works vol 7 p 279. Compare Plotinus, Enn. IV.8.5: the soul acquires a useful knowledge of evil by its entanglement in matter.

292 Adv. Haer. IV.xxxix.1,2. Compare Augustine: "For it is certain that if man ignores God's will he can only employ his own powers to his own destruction; and thus he learns what a difference it makes whether he gives his adherence to the good that is shared by all, or finds pleasure only in his own selfish good. In fact, if he loves himself, a man is given over to himself so that when as a result he has had his fill of fears and griefs he may use the words of the psalm (that is, if he is aware of his evil plight) and sing, 'My soul is troubled within me', and then, when he is set right, he may then say, 'I shall keep watch for you, my strength.'" CD XIII.21. Also the end of XIV.13. Augustine represents this as own story in the *Confessions;* as Taylor recognises, Works vol.7 p165.

293 Adv. Haer. IV.xxxviii.1.

> had this advantage over us, he was created in full use of reason; we his descendents enter into the world in the greatest imperfection [ie as infants], and are born under a law which we break before we can understand, and it is imputed to us as our understanding increases: and therefore by this very economy, which is natural to us, we must needs in the condition of our nature be very far from Adam's original righteousness, who had perfect reason before he had a law, and had understanding as soon as he had desires.[294]

As we have seen, we *become* responsible; must take responsibility for natural tendencies that have a strong hold on us, but are a resistible, though inevitable, cause of sin in those who have attained the age of reason. By Adam's original righteousness, Taylor means "his doing many actions of obedience and intercourse with God", prior to his sin; as well as that "natural innocence" which "is but negative", which we have when "we have not consented to sin". This is an adaptation of the usual meaning of "original righteousness", [which is more than original justice, includes sanctifying grace,] which Taylor dismisses. "That Adam had any more [supernatural] strengths than we have, and greater powers of nature", says Taylor, "and by his fall lost them to himself and us … ought not to be pretended till it be proved. Adam was a man, as his sons are, and no more; and God gave him strength enough to do his duty; and God is as just and loving to us as to him".[295] Adam is not the model in respect of our supernatural end, for Taylor; *and he never was*.

> If Adam had stood, yet from him we could not have by our natural generation obtained a title to our spiritual life, nor by all the strengths of Adam have gone to heaven: Adam was not our representative to any of these purposes, but in order to the perfection of a temporal life. Christ only is and was from eternal ages designed to be the head of the church, and the

294 UN, Works Vol 7 p335.
295 Ibid p260.

> fountain of spiritual life.[296]

Adam, for Taylor, exemplifies human nature in its natural condition: there was no state of original justice or righteousness in the usual sense. Grace related to Adam, in the same way it relates to us. Christ exemplifies the only possible ideal of human nature under grace; not Adam in the state of innocence.

There is a sense in which Adam lost supernatural grace, for Taylor, but his account of this seems to be a way of sidelining the fall; and he is clear that Christians, under grace in the redemptive economy, are in as good a state or better than Adam can be supposed to have been before it (and we shall see later that grace is not limited to Christians). The most dramatic difference between Taylor and his predecessors and contemporaries, both Catholic and Protestant, regarding the effects of the fall, is what we have already considered: "concupiscence" is not the result of original sin:

> in original sin we are to consider the principle, and the effects. The principle is the actual sin of Adam; this being to certain purposes by God's absolute dominion imputed to us, hath brought upon us a necessity of dying, and all the affections of mortality; which although they were natural, yet would by grace have been hindered. Another evil there is upon us, and that is concupiscence; this also is natural, but it was actual before the fall, it was in Adam, and tempted him. This also from him is derived to us, and is by many causes made worse, by him and by ourselves. And this is the whole state of original sin, so far as is fairly warrantable [from scripture].[297]

Taylor distinguishes between two aspects of the Augustinian doctrine of original sin: the

296 UN, Works vol.7 p304.
297 UN, Works vol 7 p251-2. Compare p289.

"principle", being "the actual sin of Adam"; and the "effects", "a necessity of dying, and all the affections of mortality", along with "another evil", "concupiscence", which Augustine held to be also a result of Adam's sin - either a direct effect, or a punishment inflicted as a consequence - but which Taylor controversially claims "was actual before the fall, it was in Adam, and tempted him". Mortality and its "affections" and concupiscence are all natural, for Taylor; but the former "would by grace have been hindered" before the fall, while concupiscence would not, and played a role in causing the fall.

This is a radical departure from the tradition: for Augustine and for most of those who followed him, mortality was natural, but hindered by grace before the fall; but various of what Taylor calls the "affections" of mortality, and especially concupiscence, were disruptions, or damage, caused in human nature by the fall, or inflicted as a punishment for it. Duns Scotus agreed with Taylor that concupiscence was natural, but even he thought that it was restrained by grace prior to the fall.[298] Taylor can allow that mortality, though natural in itself, was caused by the loss of the grace that restrained it prior to the fall, because unlike concupiscence it is morally innocuous, it is not the cause of particular sins; so whether or not it was caused by original sin is irrelevant to our moral condition (compared to concupiscence, anyway). And Taylor goes on to argue that while death may have been a punishment for Adam, it is no such thing for his descendents:

> This evil which is a condition of all our natures, viz., to die, was to some a punishment, but to others not so. It was a punishment to all that sinned both before Moses and since; upon the first it fell as a consequent of God's anger upon Adam, as I before discoursed; upon the

298 Richard Cross, *Duns Scotus*, Oxford 1999 p

> latter it fell as a consequent of that anger which was threatened in Moses' law [that is, for breaches of that law which they themselves were responsible for]. But to those who sinned not at all, as infants and innocents, it was merely a condition of their nature, and no more a punishment, than to be a child is. It was a punishment of Adam's sin; because by his sin human nature became disrobed of their preternatural immortality, and therefore upon that account they die; but as it is related to the persons, it was not a punishment, not an evil inflicted for their sin, or any guiltiness of their own, properly so called.[299]

Taylor implicitly recognises the injustice inherent in making mortality a 'punishment' for a 'guilt' that is imputed, not personally acquired. The criticism Taylor makes of the traditional view of original sin, including the more mitigated view generally held by Roman Catholics at the time, that it involves a mere deprivation of grace and the effects of that, rather than any actual damage to human nature, is equally applicable to his own doctrine of mortality alone as consequent upon a deprivation of grace:

> But suppose this to be a mere privative state, yet it cannot be inflicted upon infants as a punishment of Adam's sin, and upon the same account it cannot be inflicted upon anyone else. Not upon infants, because they are not capable of a law for themselves, therefore much less of a law which was given to another, here being a double incapacity of obedience: they cannot receive any law, and if they could, yet of this they were never offered any notice till it was too late. Now if infants be not capable of this, nor chargeable with it, then no man is; for all are infants first, and if it comes not by birth, and at first, it cannot come at all.[300]

At any rate, Taylor ostensibly agrees that the effect of Adam's sin was to deprive

299 UN, Works vol 7 p250.
300 UN, Works vol 7 p252.

human nature of certain "gifts and graces" which Adam possessed; but these gifts supplied him only with an "endless duration and abode in this life", which God had not promised and was under no obligation to continue to bestow on Adam's posterity; they did not ensure temperance in Adam's appetites. Aside from mortality, supposing this to have been graciously restrained, Adam and his descendents have the same nature, for Taylor. Human nature is in no way distorted in post-lapsarian man, it merely lacks certain supernatural gifts; but these gifts did no more than restrain mortality, and anyway, of course, Christians do not, in Taylor's view, lack the grace which makes a "supernatural end" possible for them:

> This sin brought upon Adam all that God threatened, but no more. A certainty of dying, together with the proper effects and affections of mortality, was inflicted on him, and he was reduced to the condition of his own nature, and then begat sons and daughters in his own likeness, that is, in the proper temper and constitution of mortal men. For as God was not bound to give what he never promised, viz., an immortal duration and abode in this life; so neither does it appear in that angry entercourse that God had with Adam, that He took from him or us any of our natural perfections, but His graces only.
>
> Man being left in this state of pure naturals, could not by his own strength arrive to a supernatural end (which was typified in his being cast out of paradise, and the guarding it with the flaming sword of a cherub). For eternal life being an end above our natural proportion, cannot be acquired by any natural means. Neither Adam nor any of his posterity could by any actions or holiness obtain heaven by desert, or by any natural efficiency; for it is a gift still, and it is *neque currentis, neque operantis,* 'neither of him that runneth, nor of him that worketh, but of God' who freely gives it to such persons

> whom He also by other gifts and graces hath disposed toward the reception of it.[301]

So the difference between Adam before the fall and his successors in respect of either their common nature or the grace that provides moral insight and strength, is minimised. Taylor in fact immediately goes on to express scepticism about what "gifts and graces or supernatural endowments God gave to Adam in his state of innocence", which would have given him greater moral strength or insight than Christians now have; indeed, the post-lapsarian state of those under grace, at any rate, may actually be *better* than that of Adam before his sin:

> God hath nowhere told us, and of things unrevealed we commonly make wild conjectures. But after his fall we find no sign of any thing but of a common man. And therefore as it was with him, so it is with us; our nature cannot go to heaven without the helps of the divine grace; so neither could his: and whether he had them or no, it is certain we have, receiving more by the second Adam than we did lose by the first: and the sons of God are now "spiritual", which he never was that we can find.[302]

For Taylor, the "first Adam" seems to typify human nature as it is itself, prior to, or as distinct from, that nature in receipt of grace; rather than an original individual, in a state

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301 UN, Works vol 7 p243. In a way this is Taylor's version of Augustine, CD XIII.13-14: "For after their disobedience to God's instructions, the first human beings were deprived of God's favour … The soul, in fact, rejoiced in its own freedom to act perversely and disdained to be God's servant; so it was deprived of the obedient service which its body had at first rendered … This then was the time when the flesh began to "lust in opposition to the spirit", which is the conflict that attends us from our birth. We bring with us, at our birth, the beginning of our death, and with the vitiation of our nature our body is the scene of death's assault, or rather of his victory, as the result of that first disobedience. God created man aright, for God is the author of natures, though he is certainly not responsible for their defects. But man was willingly perverted and justly condemned, and so begot perverted and condemned offspring. For we were all in that one man, seeing that we all *were* that one man.." The opposition between the flesh and the spirit is not the result of original sin for Taylor, but natural; and we receive mere nature as it is in itself from Adam, not a vitiated, corrupted version. We are one with Adam to the extent that he is the exemplary "first man, the man from earth", whose nature we share; but this nature never lacks access to grace.

302 UN, Works vol 7 p243-4.

of divinely-preserved moral integrity which was lost through sin. Taylor directly compares the "first Adam" and St Paul's "natural man that knoweth not the things of the Spirit of God", and continues:

> There are two great heads of mankind, the two Adams; the first and the Second. The first was framed with an earthy body, the Second had (viz, after His resurrection, when He had died unto sin once) a spiritual body. The first was earthly, the Second is heavenly; from the first we derive an earthly life, from the Second we obtain a heavenly; all that are born of the first are such as he was naturally, but the effects of the Spirit came only upon them who are born of the Second Adam: from him who is earthly we could have no more than he was, or had; the spiritual life, and consequently the heavenly, could not be derived from the first Adam, but from Christ only. All that are born of the first, by that birth inherit nothing but temporal life and corruption; but in the new birth only we derive a title to heaven. For "flesh and blood", that is, whatsoever is born of Adam, "cannot inherit the kingdom of God".[303]

Indeed Adam himself received grace in lieu of the coming of Christ, immediately after his fall; and Adam's loss of grace can have no implications for the baptised anyway:

> Now although the sin of Adam left him in his nakedness, and a mere natural man, yet presently this was supplied; and we were never in it, but were improved and bettered by the promise, and Christ hath died for mankind … and therefore now no infant or idiot, or man or woman shall for this alone be condemned to an eternal banishment from the sweetest presence of God.[304]

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303 UN, Works vol 7 p304. Compare Augustine, CD XIII.23, above, commenting on the same verses of St Paul.

304 Ibid p253.

According to Jeremy Taylor, human nature was not damaged by the first sin; its present condition is natural; and we never lack access to grace, which always works with and relates to human nature in the same way, the way it operates in the Christian economy of redemption and 'deification'. Human nature in itself is incapable of arriving at our "supernatural end", but God supplies grace through the Christian economy - and, as we shall see in the next chapter, also outside it - to enable us to do so. All this applies to Adam before his fall quite as much as it applies to his posterity after it; any difference between the two, seems to have been entirely dispensed with. The Incarnation, for Taylor, apparently provides mere human nature as such, typified by the 'first Adam', with the means of attaining its supernatural end:

> For if we will speak of what is true and plainly revealed; from all the sins of mankind Christ came to redeem us; He came to give us a supernatural birth; to tell us all his Father's will; to reveal to us those glorious promises upon the expectation of which we might be enabled to everything that is required. He came to bring us grace, and life, and spirit; to strengthen us against the powers of hell and earth; to sanctify our afflictions, which from Adam by natural generation descended on us; to take out the sting of death, to make it an entrance to immortal life; to assure us of resurrection; to intercede for us, and to be an advocate for us, when we by infirmity commit sin; to pardon us when we repent. Nothing of which could be derived to us from Adam by our natural generation. Mankind now taken in his whole constitution and design is like the birds of paradise which travellers tell us of in the Molucca islands; born without legs, but by a celestial power they have a recompense made to them for that defect; and they always hover in the air and feed on the dew of heaven: so are we birds of paradise, but cast out from thence, and born without legs, without strength to walk in the laws of God or go to heaven; but by a power from above we

> are adopted in our new birth to a celestial conversation, we feed on the dew of heaven. "The just does live by faith", and breathes in this new life by the spirit of God. For from the first Adam nothing descended to us but an infirm body, and a naked soul, evil example and a body of death, ignorance and passion, hard labour and a cursed field, a captive soul and an imprisoned body; that is, a soul naturally apt to comply with the appetites of the body and its desires, whether reasonable or excessive: and though these things were not direct sins to us in their natural abode and first principle, yet they are proper inherent miseries and principles of sin to us in their emanation. But from this state Christ came to redeem us all by His grace and by His spirit, by His life and by His death, by His doctrine and by His sacraments, by His promises and by His revelations, by His resurrection and by His ascension, by His interceding for us and judging of us. .[305]

Taylor is disassociating a state that he thinks the tradition is right to identify as the source of human sin and imperfection (though he thinks that the state is a natural and in itself morally neutral one) from Adam's sin as its cause. The problem for Taylor is not the inherited effects of Adam's sin, but simply our natural state, inherited from him; though nothing in this natural state is a sin properly, many aspects of it can become "proper inherent miseries and principles of sin". We might usefully compare a text of Origen: "we receive as it were the beginning, the seeds, so to say, of sins, from those things which are an essential part of our natural life. But when we indulge beyond what is enough, and do not resist the first motions of intemperance, then the hostile power seizes the chance offered by this first wrongdoing, and incites us, and urges us on". (De Principiis, III.ii.2.)

4.6 Conclusion to chapter 4

305 DJ, Works vol 7 p516-7.

For Taylor, the state from which "Christ came to redeem us" is that of 'sin' in an improper, extended sense, that is, what causes sin, the state of the "first Adam", the "man from earth"; as well as that brought about by our own actual sins and habits of sin. We are born in a state in which the soul is "naturally apt to comply with the appetites of the body and its desires", and while this is not intrinsically evil, it becomes an instrument of temptation and struggle in morally illicit contexts; at the same time, as we have seen, the passions are also "instruments of felicity for this duration", and capable of integration and elevation towards a morally acceptable natural good and to our supernatural end. Taylor is adapting the classical Thomist idea that grace completes, perfects or elevates nature, to explain how our natural created condition can be good in itself, on its own natural level, and yet the source of the moral challenge traditionally associated with the effects of original sin.

As we have seen, for Taylor, sin must always be an act, and a free act, or it is not sin. But for Taylor we also live in a condition of limitations, which to some degree is a state of evils and imperfection, and contributes to actual sin. Taylor argues that we don't all sin in the same way, though we all sin one way or another; sin is inevitable, but not in any given instance.

So Taylor's version of the fallen state is the consequences of temporal finitude and the necessities of embodiment, which are not in themselves actually sinful in the imputable sense, unless we could have done otherwise. As we saw him argue in chapter 3, we fall short of the "law in its [ideal] latitude and extension". This state of our nature can be called sin in the improper sense; a state we become responsible for; we must take responsibility for our nature. Naturally we are inclined to many things which are sinful, and become involved "before reason and the grace of God are well attended to", and we form habits due to this, constituting a positively sinful state that needs to be reformed.

But we are not compelled, according to Taylor; or if we are, then our action cannot properly be described as sin. His point is simply that we are free in the sense of responsible for taking control; something is not sin until it could have been resisted. Just as for Plotinus - and Irenaeus - "the soul becomes free when it moves through intellectual principle towards the good"; that is, when it takes control of itself, without allowing itself to be dominated by passions or anything external.[306] Taylor, like Plotinus, ascribes our propensity to sin to this influence, and not to the soul's own self-love, which is a vital feature of Augustine's account. But unlike Plotinus, and like the ante-Nicene and Eastern Fathers, Taylor defends a libertarian account of human freedom. This is similar in a way to the writings of Pelagius and Julian of Eclanum; but Taylor's account of human nature is more dynamic in structure and subtle in terms of the relation of soul and body than that of the Pelagians; and sin or the avoidance of it is far from being a matter simply of good and bad choices, or even habit, for Taylor, as for the Greek Fathers as well as Augustine.

In a sense, for Taylor, *we are all Adam*; rather than being, at one time, as for Augustine, "in Adam" (Taylor accurately translates the notorious "inasmuch" of Rom. 5.12). Taylor still distinguishes between Adam as a historical individual and humanity in general, and therefore doesn't make Adam an archetypal figure. But still, there is a sense in which the human nature we all share, *is* the first Adam; rather than Adam, being an example of it.

However, Taylor's account of human nature is arguably subject to the criticism de Lubac makes of the seventeenth century theologian Michael Baius; this aspect of Baius's work was condemned by the Roman Catholic Church:

306 "Self-disposal, to us, belongs to those who, through the activities of Intellectual-Principle, live above the states of the body." Enn.VI.8.3.

> Baius understood the gift of the Spirit to innocent nature as being owed to it, and not as a gratuitous gift: "*owed* from a natural exigency and the condition of human nature, not the gratuitous kindness of God." Quite certainly, in his view there was something lacking in man which, without belonging to him essentially, was indispensable to him as the logical complement of his being, just as wings were necessary to a bird to fly; and so his Creator owed it to him.[307]

Coleridge makes a similar point: "to have been born with a body prone to sickness, and a Soul surrounded with temptation, and having the worst temptation within itself in its own *temptibility*! To have the duties of a Spirit with the wants and appetites of an Animal!"[308] Coleridge understands Taylor to believe that this condition is the result of the loss of supernatural grace; Taylor does on occasion hold this to be the case, which would align his doctrine very closely with what had become the usual Roman Catholic teaching on original sin at the time.[309] However, elsewhere, and overall, as we have seen, Taylor dismisses the idea that concupiscence and difficulty are the consequence of any deprivation of supernatural aids. Nevertheless, the point Coleridge is making is the same:

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307 de Lubac 2000 [1969] p29; emphasis original, quote from another scholar, Fr Feret.

308 *Aids* p208.

309 Admirably summarised by Newman in his reply to Pusey's *Eirenicon*: 'Our doctrine of original sin is not the same as the Protestant doctrine. "Original sin", with us, cannot be called sin, in the ordinary sense of the word "sin"; it is a term denoting the *imputation* of Adam's sin, or the state to which Adam's sin reduces his children; but by Protestants it is understood to be sin, in the same sense as actual sin. We, with the Fathers, think of it as something negative, Protestants as something positive. Protestants hold that it is a disease, a change of nature, a poison internally corrupting the soul, and propagated from father to son, after the manner of a bad constitution ... by original sin we mean ... something negative, viz., this only, the *deprivation* of that supernatural unmerited grace which Adam and Eve had on their creation, - deprivation and the consequences of deprivation.' (Newman, *Letter to Pusey* p.51.) Whether Newman is correct in thinking that "the Fathers" - certainly Augustine - regard original sin as a "mere deprivation", is a moot point. As we have seen, "original sin" for Augustine strictly always means a sinful will - or, as Coleridge says, it is "not original, and not sin" - as opposed to the effects of Adam's original sinful will, such as mortality and concupiscence. Taylor denies that anything which is not an act of libertarian freedom is a sin: so he places the insight behind original sin in the influence of "concupiscence" (etc) on the will. But this reduces to either 'Pelagianism' or 'Manicheanism' as we have seen, and as the quote from Heber once more underlines.

it is the one we saw Heber make in chapter 3: "he falls into the highest supralapsarian Calvinism, by merely throwing a little further back the origin of man's misery, and representing him as coming immediately from the hand of his Maker with the same load of invincible corruption (invincible unless by superadded grace) which his descendents in their present state carry about with them."[310] The Kantian understanding of original sin, which, as we saw in chapter 3, is in one sense more faithful to Augustinianism, is supposed to evade such a criticism; given the "subjective necessity", the actual universality of the maxim of radical evil, it is not altogether clear whether it does so.

In the final chapter we shall see some of the consequences of Taylor's rather 'Baian' view of human nature, in relation to his denial of any natural morality, and ascription of all to grace: a view which certainly, as de Lubac says, makes the ethical order wholly supernatural, even for a rational animal; and grace something "*owed* from a natural exigency and the condition of human nature".

310 Heber, *Life*, Works vol 1, cxxix.

Appendix to Chapter 4: Newman and Taylor on human nature, nature and grace and faith and reason

A similar view of the natural passions and other inclinations of human nature as having their own proper and indefinite inclination, independent of instigation and perfect direction by the rational will, and this as intrinsic to our natural condition, not a wholly negative consequence of original sin, and the relationship of human nature so understood to grace, can be found in a later writer, who was a close reader of Taylor during his Anglican years: Cardinal Newman, here discussing "reason" as a faculty of human nature compared to others, in his lectures on the idea of a university.

> Right Reason, that is, Reason rightly exercised, leads the mind to the Catholic Faith, and plants it there, and teaches it in all its religious speculations to act under its guidance. But Reason, considered as a real agent in the world, and as an operative principle in man's nature, with an historical course and with definite results, is far from taking so straight and satisfactory a direction. It considers itself from first to last independent and supreme; it requires no external authority; it makes a religion for itself. Even though it accepts Catholicism, it does not go to sleep; it has an action and a development of its own, as the passions have, or the moral sentiments, or the principle of self-interest. Divine grace, to use the language of Theology, does not by its presence supersede nature; nor is nature at once brought into simple concurrence and coalition with grace. Nature pursues its course, now coincident with that of grace, now parallel to it, now across, now divergent, now counter, in proportion to its own imperfection and to the attraction and influence which grace exerts over it. And what takes place as regards other principles of our nature and their

developments is found also as regards the Reason. [311]

Newman has a similar idea of human nature and its inclinations to that of Taylor; as well as a similar view of nature's relationship to grace to both Taylor and de Lubac. For Newman in this passage, the inclinations of human nature go their own way; they have their own proper objects, which they pursue without any inherent natural restraint relative to other considerations. In the Aristotelian terminology of the Scholastics, in human nature, the 'natural appetite' does not follow the 'natural power'. Human persons, of course, are capable of restraining and directing and cultivating their inclinations, whether of the mind or the body; but the inclinations themselves, including our reason, are not naturally proportionate to our rational judgement concerning any moral or other teleological scheme. Possibly Newman does think of this as a consequence of original sin; but he does not seem to regard it as a bad thing in itself, a corruption relative to a prior state of golden moderation and clear and distinct reasoning that came easily and naturally to human beings in their original state. In fact, it appears that such a state is both undesirable and grounded in an unreal view of human nature and its inclinations, on Newman's model, just as on Taylor's. It is worth following this theme in the *Idea of a University* a little further, to better illustrate this point in respect of Taylor's view as well as Newman's.

Newman draws an analogy between reason as an inclination of human nature, and the different subject areas taught in a university. His understanding of reason is not that of the Roman Schools; indeed this is a view he is implicitly opposing. Newman's idea of reason is much more like Taylor's; it achieves certainty by accumulated probabilities, and a kind of *phronesis*, good judgement; as a result reasoning is not a straightforward,

311 Lecture VII, *Liberal Knowledge viewed in relation to Religion*, Everyman ed. p176.

demonstrative process, at any rate in the 'moral sciences.' Like reason itself, according to Newman, the physical and moral sciences alike have no direct bearing on revealed truth: natural science, as Galileo said, tell us how the heavens move, not how to arrive at heaven; the humanities, meanwhile, lead us to an understanding of "man and his history", not directly as fallen and redeemed, the subject of salvation history and moral theology, but simply man as we find him and experience him. But this does not make them intrinsically opposed to Christianity [Catholicism] or invalidate their importance as fields of study for Christians [Catholics]. On the contrary. Newman takes the (controversial, for Catholics at that time) example of literature, by which he partly means 'humanities' subjects in general:

> Literature stands related to Man as Science stands to nature; it is his history. Man is composed of body and soul; he thinks and he acts; he has appetites, passions, affections, motives, designs; he has within him the lifelong struggle of duty with inclination; he has an intellect fertile and capricious; he is formed for society, and society multiplies and diversifies in endless combinations his personal characteristics, moral and intellectual. All this constitutes his life; of all this Literature is the expression; so that Literature is to man in some sort what autobiography is to the individual; it is his Life and Remains. Moreover, he is this sentient, intelligent, creative, and operative being, quite independent of any extraordinary aid from Heaven, or any direct religious belief; and *as* such, as he is in himself, does Literature represent him; it is the Life and Remains of the *natural* man, or man *in pura natura*. I do not mean to say that it is impossible in its very notion that Literature should be tinctured by a religious spirit; Hebrew Literature, as far as it can be called Literature, certainly is simply theological, and has a character imprinted on it which is above nature; but I am speaking of what is to be expected without any extraordinary dispensation; and I say that, in matter of fact, as Science is the reflection of Nature, so is

> Literature also - the one, of Nature physical, the other, of Nature moral and social.[312]

There is an important distinction between the two (modern scientists would not altogether agree with the static, Newtonian portrayal of physical nature, but perhaps this only reinforces Newman's argument): "while Nature physical remains fixed in its own laws, Nature moral and social has a will of its own, is self-governed, and never remains any long while in that state from which it started into action. Man will never continue in a mere state of innocence; he is sure to sin, and his literature will be the expression of his sin, and this whether he be heathen or Christian … from the nature of the case, if Literature is to be made a study of human nature, you cannot have a Christian Literature [that is, a literature that is simply morally edifying]. It is a contradiction in terms to attempt a sinless literature of sinful man".[313] In a sense, then, there is no "pure nature," without sin as without fault, for Newman; but perhaps, as for Taylor, a state of "original justice" makes little sense, too.

On Newman's account, self-governed, wilful nature moral and social, is not

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312 Ibid p222.

313 p223; 224. Augustine makes a similar claim for literature - secular, not sacred - that it draws our attention to insights we somehow implicitly know already about human life; or, if we do not know them, then we recognise the rightness, or authenticity, of what we are being shown: "[It is like someone who shows us something, and says,] 'You know this, but you do not know that you know it; I will remind you, and you will discover that you know what you supposed you did not know.' Literature performs precisely this function, when it is about things that the reader discovers under the guidance of reason to be true, not simply believing the writer that they are true as when he reads history, but himself discovering with the writer that they are true, and discovering it either in himself or in truth itself guiding the mind." de Trin XIV.2.9. Augustine - and Newman - also think that sacred scripture functions this way; notwithstanding what both say about the truths of faith being believed on authority, like those we accept in a more qualified way from historians and scientists. The difference with secular literature is that the truths scripture communicates include things that transcend what we already know, or experience, even implicitly; however, like the Trinity itself in Augustine's great work, they connect with things we do know already: we can understand the Trinity that God is, to a limited extent, because we already know our own mind, and the mind is capable of participation in God, because it already possesses the divine image in the structure of its consciousness of memory, understanding and will: de Trin 14.3.11. (For a large part of the work, Augustine seeks to prove to us that we do indeed know intuitively that we are memory, understanding and will.) Revealed truths are thrown into propositional form by the church. What Christians believe on authority, for Augustine and Newman, is an abstract, propostional description of a spiritual reality that is communicated in a more subtle way.

simply a realistic assessment of how things are in our fallen state: it reflects our nature *in itself*, as created by God. Literature is the reflection of every aspect of human nature, of a "sentient, intelligent, creative, and operative being", with "appetites, passions, affections, motives, designs", and "an intellect fertile and capricious", which is the source of intellectual vitality and vigour and the ground of human achievement, as well as the source of sin and religious infidelity. The two aspects are not separable; they belong to the same essential nature of human reason: "Knowledge, viewed as Knowledge, exerts a subtle influence in throwing us back on ourselves, and making us our own centre, and our minds the measure of all things." This is necessary for the unbiased pursuit of truth, at any rate of natural truth, aside from divine revelation; but a side effect, is that "Liberal Knowledge has a special tendency, not necessary or rightful, but a tendency in fact, when cultivated by beings such as we are, to impress us with a mere philosophical theory of life and conduct, in the place of Revelation … Pursue [knowledge] … to its furthest extent and its true limit, and you are led … to the Eternal and Infinite, to the intimations of conscience and the announcements of the Church. Satisfy yourself with what is only visibly or intelligibly excellent, as you are likely to do, and you will make present utility and natural beauty the practical test of truth, and the sufficient object of the intellect." (p212.)

Newman illustrates how the necessary and rightful operation of natural reason can be ostensibly opposed to Revelation, using the example of the "opposition between Theology and Physics" noted by Francis Bacon, whose importance for Taylor we considered in chapter 1. "Lord Bacon's justification, and an intelligible one, for considering that the fall of the atheistic philosophy [Epicureanism] in ancient times was a blight upon the hopes of physical science" is that the "inquiry into final causes … passes over the existence of established laws [of nature]; [and] the inquiry into physical, passes

over … the existence of God". Final causes "are properly alleged in metaphysics; but in physics, are impertinent, and as remoras to the ship, that hinder the sciences from holding on their course of improvement, and introducing a neglect of searching after physical causes". (p217, quoting from Bacon). Newman contrasts the empirical method in science, with the "deductive" method (from the truths of faith) in theology: "Christian Truth is purely of revelation; that revelation we can but explain, we cannot increase, except relative to our own apprehensions … Avowals such as these fall strange upon the ear of men whose first principle is the search after truth, and whose starting-points of search are things material and sensible. They scorn any process of inquiry not founded on experiment; the Mathematics indeed they endure, because that science deals with ideas, not with facts, and leads to conclusions hypothetical rather than real; 'Metaphysics' they even use as a by-word of reproach; and Ethics they admit only on condition that it gives up conscience as its scientific ground, and bases itself on tangible utility". (p219.)

Reason has its own space, then, exemplified by the study of both science and the humanities, upon which theological doctrines and church authority have no immediate claim. This is not simply a consequence of the fallen state; it is basic to the natural created order, to the way that human reason works, and to the independent operation of all natural processes; as such, it is good in itself, and worthy to be cultivated. Yet the same state of things is the cause of sin and apostasy; indeed, without completion by revelation, scientific and philosophical reason, belonging to man in his natural state, almost *inevitably* runs into a position opposed to Christianity: Newman's penultimate lecture, *Liberal Knowledge viewed in relation to religion*, is subtly devoted to this issue, chiefly with reference to a secular moral ideal, created by a liberal education: "the *beau ideal* of the world". Here is his conclusion, or peroration:

> Such are some of the lineaments of the ethical character, which the cultivated intellect will form, apart from religious principle. They are seen within the pale of the Church and without it, in holy men and in profligate; they form the *beau ideal* of the world; they partly assist and partly distort the development of the Catholic. They may subserve the education of a St Francis de Sales or a Cardinal Pole; they may be the limits of the virtue of a Shaftesbury or a Gibbon. [St] Basil [of Caesarea] and [the Emperor] Julian ['the Apostate'] were fellow-students at the school of Athens; and one became a Saint and Doctor of the Church, the other her scoffing and relentless foe.[314]

For Newman, there is no definable state of pure nature in contrast to fallen nature: nature, considered in itself, is always dynamic and unformed, and grace always works with it in the same way: the Church works like "some moral factory, for the melting, refining, and moulding, by an incessant, noisy process, of the raw material of human nature, so excellent, so dangerous, so capable of divine purposes".[315]

Human nature and academic disciplines alike have their own momentum and direction; indeed, the latter derive their right to their own independence and integrity from the natural tendencies of the former. Newman thinks that in the university as in the individual, this is a good thing, which drives our understanding of the world; but he also thinks that the authority of the Church has a role to play, in a Catholic university as in relation to Catholic believers, in setting out the boundaries of theological truth relative to other disciplines, as it does relative to the tendencies of human nature and the speculations of human reason in general, which pursue their "course, now coincident with that of grace, now parallel to it, now across, now divergent, now counter". It is vital that reason be allowed to go its own way; it is equally vital that the truths of faith be

314 Ibid p205.
315 *Apologia* p284.

established as a counterweight. The tension between private judgment and magisterial authority can be a creative one if wisely managed (which it wasn't being, in Newman's view, at the time Newman was writing).

For Taylor reason exercises the same control on faith, and faith on reason, as for Newman, though there is no formal *magisterium* in Taylor's view beyond scripture and the united witness of the "undivided church":

> Whatsoever is against right reason, that no faith can oblige us to believe. For although reason is not the positive and affirmative measures of our faith, and God can do more than we can understand, and our faith ought to be larger than our reason, and take something into her heart that reason can never take into her eye; yet in all our creed there can be nothing against reason. If true reason justly contradicts an article, it is not "of the household of faith".[316]

This is because "The authority of scripture is superinduced, but right reason is the eternal word of God; 'the kingdom of God' that is 'within us' … and therefore in whatsoever [a man] goes against his reason he must needs go against his conscience, because he goes against that by which he supposes God did intend to govern him, reason not having been placed in us as a snare and a temptation, but as a light and a star to lead us by day and night".[317] However, we "cannot safely conclude thus, This is agreeable to right reason, therefore this is so in scripture, or in the counsel of God; not [because] one reason can be against another, when all things are equal, but [because] the state of things, and of discourses is imperfect"; and "whatsoever is above our understanding is not against it":[318]

316 *Worthy Communicant*, Works vol 8 p106.
317 *Ductor Dubitantium* vol 1 p69
318 Ibid p69,70.

> The reason of man is a right judge always when she is truly informed; but in many things she knows nothing but the face of the article: the mysteries of faith are oftentimes like cherubim's heads placed over the propitiatory, where you may see a clear and a bright face and golden wings, but there is no body to be handled; there is light and splendour upon the brow, but you may not grasp it; and though you see the revelation clear, and the article plain, yet the reason of it we cannot see at all; that is, the whole knowledge which we can have here is dark and obscure.[319]

Reason exercises a certain control on faith; faith begins, we may say, where reason leaves off; or, faith completes, and can transcend, but not contradict, reason. Taylor bases his view on Richard Hooker and Thomas Aquinas; with their Scholastic understanding of reason adapted by Grotius and probabilism. Similarly, in *The Idea of a University* Newman argues that the truths of faith come from revelation, not reason; but "Nature and Grace, Reason and Revelation, come from the same Divine Author, whose works cannot contradict each other." (p214-5.) But as we have seen, this is far from immediately obvious to reason, starting from the bottom, operating by itself, going its own way. Reason is a negative test, where revealed truth is concerned.

> That the new and further manifestations of the Almighty, made by Revelation, are in perfect harmony with the teaching of the natural world, forms indeed one subject of the profound work of the Protestant Bishop Butler; but they cannot in any sense be gathered from nature, and the silence of nature concerning them may easily seduce the imagination, though it has no force to persuade the reason, to revolt from doctrines which have not been authenticated by facts, but are enforced by authority. In a scientific age, then, there will

319 Ibid p64.

> naturally be a parade of what is called Natural Theology, a widespread profession of the Unitarian creed, an impatience of mystery, and a scepticism about miracles. (p221.)

By natural theology, Newman means reducing religion to what can be known by, or reasonably believed on the basis of, reason alone; and he associates it with Latitudinarianism, and the Socinian divines of the 18th century who pursued a scientific, or pseudo-scientific, approach to theology; such as that associated with William Paley. Taylor influenced Newman's principle source, Bishop Butler, but as we shall see in the next chapter, Taylor is actually more sceptical than Newman and Butler about the "teaching of the natural world". The natural world gives little indication, at first, of any moral governorship by a wise and beneficent Providence. This is most apparent from Taylor's account of natural law.

Chapter 5: Taylor on natural law

In this chapter, I consider Taylor's ideas about nature and grace in the context of natural law. Taylor's views on natural law follow a humanist tradition, based on the idea of a "state of nature"; instead of the common Christian narrative of fall and corruption, this tradition posited a theoretical state of nature in which animal appetites were naturally unconstrained in man, and built a structure of morality and law on top of this. Grotius and his followers, notably Hobbes, sought to build a purely natural law from sceptical beginnings, to some extent aiming to construct a non-teleological, post-Aristotelian version of Aquinas's natural law theory, which made use of Augustine's ideas about the "temporal law" and the "peace of the earthly city": a non-salvific natural law for fallen man whose reasoning is fallible, which is built on self interest, since the fallen world is one of ignorance and passion. Like Taylor, Grotius and Hobbes effectively identify fallen nature and pure nature, naturalising what were traditionally held to be the result of the fall. Taylor, however, rejects the notion of natural law developed by Grotius and other, due to his belief that a law founded on self interest, like a law derived from natural teleology, would compromise the unqualified nature of morality, and human freedom. But this leads him to what we called a "Baian" view, at the end of chapter 4. However, Taylor is not simply a divine command ethicist or voluntarist; he is also much influenced by the intuitionism characteristic of Platonism and the Church Fathers.

Taylor, like some modern theologians in the high Anglican and Roman Catholic traditions, despite the Catholic natural law tradition, thinks that ultimately morality, and even law and political authority, requires revelation. This seems somewhat analogous to

Baius, and what de Lubac calls "strict traditionalism".[320] Grotius and Hobbes looked for purely natural foundation for the state and society: like Augustine's temporal law and earthly peace. Taylor makes use of their account to defend the idea of the natural as good, aside from grace and revelation; but not natural law. But this brings the idea of a natural good at all into question.

5.1 Taylor's idea of nature in the context of questions of natural right and natural law

Taylor also expresses his idea of pure human nature in the abstract, nature as it is in itself, by means of the ancient legal concept of the *ius naturale,* the "right of nature". According to the Digest, "*ius naturale*" refers to "the natural *facultas* of doing what one wants, as long as it is not prevented by force or law (*ius*)." Taylor follows earlier legal and political thinkers in the humanist tradition, and notably two influential contemporaries, John Selden and Thomas Hobbes, in understanding this to refer, in the first instance, to a purely negative freedom, a theoretical state in which there is no law or restraint on the natural desires and impulses of the individual. These impulses are effectively in a 'post-lapsarian' state, understood as natural. Given Taylor's acceptance of libertarian freedom, the fact that this is how nature is in itself, as opposed to containing any natural teleology, provides a morally neutral background for freedom of choice: nature in itself determines us to no particular moral end. We must choose by our own free will to organise and discipline our freely-inclining natural tendencies according to moral standards which are supervenient upon the state of nature.

320 There is no conflict between Taylor's idea of a freely inclining, dynamic nature, which is always in relation to grace, and the possibility of a purely natural morality. Indeed, Cardinal de Lubac says that insofar as St Augustine denied "a purely rational morality … St Augustine was wrong", 1969 p105-6, agreeing with those critics who suggest that in this respect Baius and Jansenius followed Augustine, but denying that this constituted the essence of their heresies.

Taylor rejects the idea of a natural law partly on the grounds that it compromises moral freedom, and partly on similar grounds to those which Pope Benedict XVI has highlighted as the basis for modern scepticism about traditional ideas of natural law:

> Natural law has remained - especially in the Catholic Church - one element in the arsenal of arguments in conversations with secular society and with other communities of faith, appealing to shared reason in the attempt to discern the basis of consensus about ethical principles of law in a pluralistic, secular society. Unfortunately, this element has become blunt, and that is why I do not wish to employ it to support my arguments in this discussion [about the moral foundations of a free state]. The idea of the natural law presupposed a concept of nature in which nature and reason interlock; nature itself is rational. The victory of the theory of evolution has meant the end of this view of nature.[321]

Taylor had not, of course, heard of the theory of evolution, but the concept of nature with which he is dealing is no longer one in which "nature and reason interlock", in Pope Benedict's sense.[322] Nature has no intrinsic rational or teleological order capable of providing moral guidance. An examination of 'nature' as it is in itself with a view to deciding how to live yields nothing more than a course driven by the fulfilment of natural impulses and survival. Taylor takes the traditional categories of the "right" of nature, and the "law" of nature, and dismisses the idea that the former represents any kind of inherent positive right:

> The right of nature or *jus naturae*, is no law, and the law of nature is no natural right. The

321 *Values in a time of Upheaval*, San Francisco: Ignatius 2006, p38-9.

322 The Pope, and Taylor, apparently think this means morality and law need theological presuppositions. This is just what Aquinas, Grotius and Hobbes, and even Augustine, don't think, as we shall see.

> right of nature is a perfect and universal liberty to do whatsoever can secure me or please me. For the appetites that are prime, original and natural, do design us towards their satisfaction, and were a continual torment, and in vain, if they were not in order to their rest, contentedness and perfection. Whatsoever we naturally desire, naturally we are permitted to. For natures are equal, and the capacities are the same, and the desires alike; and it were a contradiction to say that naturally we are restrained from any thing to which we naturally tend. Therefore to save my own life, I can kill another, or twenty, or a hundred, or take from his hands to please myself, if it happens in my circumstances or power; and so for eating, and drinking, and pleasures. If I can desire, I may possess or enjoy it; this is the right of nature. *Jus naturae*, by *jus* or right understanding not a collated or legal right, but a negative right, that is, such a right as every man hath without a law, and such as that by which the stones in the streets are mine or yours; by a right that is negative, because they are *nullius in bonis*, they are appropriate to no man, and may be mine; that is, I may take them up and carry them to my bed of turf, where the natural, wild or untutored man doth sit. But this is not the law of nature, nor passes any obligation at all.[323]

The *jus naturae* is a purely negative liberty or licence, "such a right as every man hath without a law". Human appetites in their present state are "prime, original and natural", and not the consequence of original sin. They incline blindly towards their own satisfaction, and there is no rationally-discernible internal scheme for their regulation; therefore, on the basis of nature alone, "whatsoever we naturally desire, naturally we are permitted to". One person has as much 'right' to something as anyone else, on this basis: for "natures are equal, and capacities are the same, and desires alike", at any rate nearly enough to make little difference. As Taylor's contemporary, the great materialist political

323 *Ductor Dubitantium* vol 1, Works vol 9 p280.

philosopher Thomas Hobbes, said:

> Nature hath made men so equall, in the faculties of body, and mind; as that though there bee found one man sometimes manifestly stronger in body, or of quicker mind than another; yet when all is reckoned together, the difference between man, and man, is not so considerable, as that one man can claim to himselfe any benefit, to which another may not pretend, as well as he. For as to the strength of body, the weakest has strength enough to kill the strongest, either by secret machination, or by confederacy with others, that are in the same danger with himselfe. [All things considered, strength of mind doesn't adequately set anyone apart, either.]
>
> From this equality of ability, ariseth equality of hope in the attaining of our Ends.[324]

This is a very different notion of "equality" from that described by the greatest exponent of classical Christian natural law theory, Thomas Aquinas, on which he bases his account of justice and right (*ius*):

> It is proper to justice, as compared with the other virtues, to direct man in his relations with others, because it denotes a kind of equality, as its very name implies; indeed we are wont to say that things are adjusted when they are made equal, for equality is in reference of one thing to some other.[325]

The virtue of justice is "the firm and stable will to render to each their own", or their "right", and on the Aristotelian account adapted by St Thomas "each man's own is that which is due to him according to equality of proportion." (ST 2a2ae q58 art11).

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324 Leviathan 13.
325 ST 2a2ae q57 art1.

For Taylor, in contrast, it is not possible to derive a notion of justice from natural proportion, or from anything else in nature; at least not with such quasi-mathematical certainty:

> Justice is natural, as all virtues are, that is, reasonable and perfective of our nature, and introductive of well-being. But nature alone hath not enjoined it originally, any more than matrimonial chastity was a natural law, which could not be before Eve was created, and yet our nature was perfect before.[326]

Justice, according to Taylor, like grace according to Aquinas, completes or perfects nature. But it is not demonstratively derivable from it; "neither can any man be sure that any thing is a law of nature, because it seems to him hugely reasonable, neither if it be so indeed, is it thereby a law."

Taylor is making quite a radical distinction between the ethical sphere, and a purely natural one in which blind processes and animal instincts are morally indifferent in themselves, until consciousness, and with it an intuitive sense of freedom and thus moral responsibility,[327] introduce the question of right and wrong: reason, says Taylor, "is that which distinguishes us from beasts, and makes us capable of laws",[328] though "reason is

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326 DD vol 1, Works vol 9 p281.

327 Compare Coleridge: "whatever originates its own acts, or in any sense contains in itself the cause of its own state, must be spiritual, and consequently supernatural: yet not on that account necessarily *miraculous*. And such must the responsible Will in us be, if it be at all". "Spirit", or "spiritual" or "supernatural" mean for Coleridge "That which is not comprehended in Nature: or in the language of our elder divines, that which transcends Nature" in this sense of not being subject to cause and effect.

328 As Taylor argues against Aquinas and others, "that a thing is common to men and beasts is no indication of a law of nature, but only of a common necessity, instinct or inclination respectively. For they do it without a law, and therefore so may we, unless something else besides nature makes it a law to us; for nature or natural desire in them and us is the same, but this desire is in them where a law cannot be, and therefore in us also it may be without a law. Beasts do all that they can do, and can love, and are no more capable of law than of reason; and if they have instincts and inclinations, it is no otherwise than their appetites to meat, concerning which nature hath determined all, but without proper obligation … "Fishes and birds eat one another, because they have no justice or laws amongst them", said Hesiod; and the like is in Homer." Works vol 9 p284. The reference to Hesiod and Homer's conceptions of nature is interesting;

not itself the law, or its measure".

> Right reason is the instrument of using the law of nature, and is that by which together with the conscience (which is also reason) we are determined to a choice and prosecution of it ourselves, or to a willingness of obeying the obliging power … "reason entertains the divine laws (of nature), and so is made a most vigilant judge", said Hierocles. This is that which distinguishes us from beasts, and makes us capable of laws.[329]

Reason and free will are natural to human beings, but there is no natural moral law, either derivable from the natural order by reason, or from the principles of reason alone.

Taylor seems to think that the existence of such a law would compromise the unqualified nature of morality; that is, people would choose to behave ethically on account of its truthfulness, rather than on account of an unqualified perception of its sheer goodness: in Kantian language, they would be driven by factors other than the law's "own exceeding lawfulness" (with the vital difference that for Kant, truthfulness and goodness are identifiable; unqualified respect for the moral law comes precisely from a perception of its rationality. It ought to be pointed out that Taylor seems to mainly have in mind the Thomistic idea of natural law, as he understands it, and theories based on what he refers to as "well-being", or, as we shall see, self-interest, rather than any proto-Kantian account, such as Stephen Darwall identifies in the work of Taylor's contemporaries the Cambridge Platonists;[330] at least one of whom, Henry More, was a friend of Taylor).

However, it is clearly the case that without a rational basis for morality and law,

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Taylor could equally have mentioned Lucretius or Epicurus. Compare the view of nature in Montaigne's *Apology for Raymond Sebond*.

329 D.D. vol 1, Works vol. 9 p293.

330 *The British Moralists and the Internal Ought* Cambridge 1995.

divine law, or even merely human positive law, can become wholly arbitrary, based for its authority entirely on sanction and enforcement, rather than a good reason (whatever that may be, and however it may be assessed). This has both theological and political implications.

5.2 Taylor's rejection of natural law and its implications

To "well-being", or as an essential part of it, Taylor might have added "self interest" or "self preservation"; it seems clear that a theory of justice founded on this would have been still less to Taylor's taste. Yet Taylor's account of the "right of nature" is largely based on a tradition that derived a theory of natural law from precisely this. Taylor's discussion is principally indebted to the English legal theorist John Selden, whose work also influenced Hobbes; Selden and Hobbes were both profoundly influenced by Grotius. Grotius rejected the idea of a natural justice based on equality of proportion as both absurd and contrary to conventional ideas of justice,[331] and sought a basis for law and morality that could be regarded as valid on the most sceptical analysis, even in the event of "what could not without the greatest impiety be maintained", the non-existence of God. The trouble with Grotius, from the point of view of Selden and Taylor, was that he didn't identify an adequate source of obligation.[332]

Grotius identified the desires for one's own preservation and flourishing as basic facts about human nature which even the ancient sceptics of the New Academy accepted. In the Prolegomena to his *De Indis*, he describes what one might call a sceptical version

331 'This … was correctly observed by the teacher of Cyrus. For when Cyrus had given to the smaller boy a smaller tunic although it belonged to another, and on the other hand had given a larger tunic to the larger boy, his teacher thus instructed him: 'That would have been a proper course to pursue in case a referee had been appointed to decide what would be suitable for each; but when the question to be settled was, to which boy the tunic belonged, then only one point was to be considered, which boy was more justly entitled to it - whether the object should belong to him who had violently taken it away, or to him who had made or purchased it.'" (De Iure Belli, Prol. 3; Xenophon, *Training of Cyrus* II.ii.18.)

332 Parkin 1999 p60.

of Aristotelian appetition, to the extent that the appetition is for oneself and one's own interest:

> Since God fashioned creation and willed its existence, every individual part thereof has received from Him certain natural properties whereby that existence may be preserved and each part guided for its own good, in conformity, one might say, with the fundamental law inherent in its origin. From this fact the old poets and philosophers have rightly deduced that love, whose primary force and action was directed to self-interest, is the first principle of the whole natural order. Consequently, Horace should not be censured for saying, in imitation of the Academics, that expediency might perhaps be called the mother of justice and equity. For all things in nature, as Cicero repeatedly insists, are tenderly regardful of self, and seek their own happiness and security. This phenomenon can be observed not only in the human race, but among the beasts also, and even in connexion with inanimate objects, being a manifestation of that true and divinely-inspired self-love, which is laudable in every phase of creation. As for the *philautia* which is classified as a vice - in other words, immoderate self-interest - it is an excess of such love.[333]

For Grotius in this passage, the good is "that at which all things aim": but this specifically means one's own good. Grotius also seeks to found natural law on other natural human inclinations, notably sociability, and in this respect is reminiscent of Aquinas. In the Prolegomena to his late masterpiece, the *De Iure belli ac Pacis*, Grotius argues that human beings have an "impelling desire for society, that is, for the social life - not of any and every sort, but peaceful, and organised according to the measure of his intelligence, with those who are of his own kind; this social trend the Stoics call 'sociableness'".

333 *de Indis*, Prol. p.9; cit. Tuck 1993 p.172-3.

(Prol.6). According to Grotius, "maintenance of [this] social order…consonant with human intelligence" is the "source of law properly so-called" (Prol.8).

> Since over other animals man has the advantage of possessing not only a strong bent towards social life, of which we have spoken, but also a power of discrimination which enables him to decide what things are agreeable or harmful (as to both things present and things to come), and what can lead to either alternative: in such things it is meet for the nature of man, within the limits of human intelligence, to follow the directions of a well-tempered judgement, being neither led astray by fear or the allurement of immediate pleasure, nor carried away by rash impulse. Whatever is clearly at variance with such judgement is understood to be contrary also to the law of nature, that is, to the nature of man. (Prol.10).

However, in Book I Chapter I section III Grotius states that "law in our use of the term here means nothing else than what is just, and that, too, rather in a negative than an affirmative sense, that being lawful which is not unjust". And "that is unjust which is in conflict with the nature of society of beings endowed with reason". The lawful is that which is not unjust; and we discover what is not unjust with reference to whatever undermines the social life towards which we are inclined by nature:

> Thus Cicero declares that to take away from another in order to gain advantage for oneself is contrary to nature; and in proof he adduces the argument that, if this should happen, human society and the common good would of necessity be destroyed … "Just as all the members of the body agree with one another", says Seneca, "because the preservation of each conduces to the welfare of the whole, so men refrain from injuring one another because we are born for community of life. For society can exist in safety

only through the mutual love and protection of the parts of which it is composed."

So individual preservation and flourishing alike are threatened by unsocial behaviour:

> For society has in view this object, that through community of resource and effort each individual be safeguarded in the possession of what belongs to him ... It is not, then, contrary to the nature of society to look out for oneself and advance one's own interests, provided the rights of others are not infringed; and consequently the use of force which does not violate the rights of others is not unjust. (I.II.I.5,6).

Hobbes took the idea of self preservation as the foundation of natural law to the extreme, specifically to develop a basis for law and morality out of even the most sceptical analysis. Hobbes describes the same theoretical state of liberty and right in the most absolute and negative sense, a state of unconstrained licence and anarchy, described by Taylor. Hobbes, the keener philosophical mind, defines his terms more closely.

> The Right of Nature, which writers commonly call *Jus Naturale*, is the Liberty each man hath, to use his own power, as he will himselfe, for the preservation of his own Nature; that is to say, of his own Life; and consequently, of doing any thing, which in his own Judgement, and Reason, hee shall conceive to be the aptest means thereunto.
>
> By Liberty, is understood, according to the proper signification of the word, the absence of external Impediments: which Impediments, may oft take away part of man's power to do what hee would; but cannot hinder him from using the power left him, according as his judgement, and reason shall dictate to him …

> because the condition of Man … is a condition of Warre of every one against every one; in

> which case every one is governed by his own Reason; and there is nothing he can make use of, that may not be a help unto him, in preserving his life against his enemyes; It followeth, that in such a condition, every man has a Right to every thing; even to one anothers body.[334]

But due to equality of natures in his sense of no one being able to get the upper hand over anyone else, it is contrary to one's own interests not to respect others: from this Hobbes derives certain "laws of nature", namely that people should "seek peace, and follow it", insofar as others are willing to do so to - otherwise such a course would do no more than expose those who pursued peace "to prey". The pursuit of peace involves laying down our "right to all things", insofar as we may safely do so, and being "*contented with so much liberty against others men, as he would allow other men against himselfe"*.[335]

In addition, human co-operation is mutually beneficial in a more positive sense:

> In such condition [the state of nature], there is no place for Industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no Culture of the Earth; no Navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by Sea; no commodious Building; no Instrument of moving, and removing such things as require much force; no Knowledge of the face of the Earth; no account of Time; no Arts; no Letters; no Society; and which is worst of all, continuall feare, and danger of violent death; And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short.[336]

Perhaps this approach to natural law is not so different from that of Aquinas as is sometimes claimed. When attempting to identify an idea of "good [that] is to be done, and evil [that is to be] avoided" on the basis of a consideration of natural human

334 Leviathan 14.
335 Ibid, original emphasis.
336 Lev.13.

inclinations alone, Aquinas also begins from self-preservation; and like Grotius in *de Iure Belli ac Pacis*, or even Hobbes on the subject of arts, letters, navigation and the like, he also thinks that the fundamental characteristics of our nature leads us to certain conclusions about what is good for humans in a more positive sense. But essentially, for Aquinas as for Grotius and Hobbes, even what is good for humans communally is ultimately good for the individual on the basis of their own self-love or self-interest (even where it is not a matter of self *preservation*), when natural inclinations alone are taken into account. At any rate, one could certainly interpret the following passage in these terms, bearing in mind that Aquinas is discussing a purely natural law, that makes no contribution in itself to salvation:

> Since good has the nature of an end, and evil, the nature of a contrary, hence it is that all those things to which man has a natural inclination, are naturally apprehended by reason as being good, and consequently as objects of pursuit, and their contraries as evil, and objects of avoidance. Wherefore the order of the precepts of the natural law, is according to the order of natural inclinations. Because in man there is first of all an inclination to good in accordance with the nature which he has in common with all substances: inasmuch as every substance seeks the preservation of its own being, according to its nature: and by reason of this inclination, whatever is a means of preserving human life, and of warding off its obstacles, belongs to the natural law. Secondly, there is in man an inclination to things that pertain to him more specially, according to that nature which he has in common with other animals: and in virtue of this inclination, those things are said to belong to the natural law, "which nature has taught to all animals" [Pandect. Just. I, tit. i], such as sexual intercourse, education of offspring and so forth. Thirdly, there is in man an inclination to good, according to the nature of his reason, which nature is proper to him: thus man has a natural inclination to know the truth about God, and to live in

> society: and in this respect, whatever pertains to this inclination belongs to the natural law; for instance, to shun ignorance, to avoid offending those among whom one has to live, and other such things regarding the above inclination.[337]

Indeed, Grotius ascribes to Aristotle himself the view that there is a difference between good in the absolute sense, and what is good for oneself; in the following passage, Grotius manages to make Aristotle sound quite 'Hobbesian':

> there is one kind of good that is so called in an absolute sense, and there is another that is good from the standpoint of a particular individual. Indeed, to borrow Aristotle's admirable explanation, "whatever each person's understanding has ruled for him regarding a given matter, that for him is good." For God created man *autoexousion*, "free and *sui iuris*", so that the actions of each individual and the use of his possessions were subject not to another's will but to his own … For what is that well-known concept "natural liberty", other than the power of the individual to act in accordance with his own will? And liberty in regard to actions is equivalent to *dominium* in material things.[338]

In a way the humanists accept Aquinas's first kind of *ius naturale*, the merely negative kind, but not his second; indeed, Grotius and Hobbes seek to derive the second simply from the first:

> A thing is said to belong to the natural law in two ways. First, because nature inclines thereto; for example, that one should not do harm to another. Secondly, because nature did not bring in the contrary; thus we might say that for man to be naked is of the natural law

337 ST 1a2ae Q94 art2. Avoiding offending those among whom one has to live is in every individual's best interest; for the reasons Hobbes gives, and for the sake of the flourishing of the whole community - which is also in one's own interest.

338 *de Iure Praedae* trans. Williams 1950, p18, cit. Tuck 1979 p60.

> because nature did not give him clothes, but art invented them. In this sense, "the possession of all things in common and universal freedom" is said to be of the natural law, because the distinction of possessions and slavery were not brought in by nature but devised by human reason for the benefit of human life.[339]

Professor Tuck points out that the first kind of right is not a prima facie right of any kind, for Aquinas; in contrast to Scotus, who thought that individual *dominium* was excluded by the common use of the state of innocence.[340] (Compare Augustine in CD 19.15.) For the humanist writers, there is no state of innocence; just the state of nature: natural liberty, is simply the ability to take whatever you want. This is not a positive right as such either; but in effect it becomes one, in the absence of force or law.

"Natural liberty" for Grotius means to do what one wants, and this can be divided into two senses: it refers to both free will, and to living as one pleases, in the absence of any law or other constraint, in the external sense (as for Hobbes in his discussion of right and liberty in *Leviathan*, above; we are also free to do as we want, internally, for Hobbes, but he rejects liberty of indifference). Grotius uses the Greek terms *autoexousion*, which we have already encountered as used by the Neoplatonists and the Church Fathers, to refer to both kinds of freedom. We have seen in chapter 3 that free will can have two senses: either the power to choose one thing or another, or simply the freedom to do what you want unhindered, irrespective of whether you can choose between competing wants. Hobbes accepts the latter sense of freedom but not the former; the Arminian Grotius, like Taylor, also accepts the former.[341]

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339 ST 1a1ae q94 art5.
340 Tuck 1979 p20-1.
341 The Platonists mean externally uninhibited freedom (including freedom from one's own passions and appetites), but not necessarily liberty of indifference; the Fathers liberty of indifference; as we have seen in ch.4.

Grotius claims that living as one pleases, in the absence of law, represents a kind of *dominium*, analogous to the power we have over our own will (the power Augustine claims, at least for man in innocence, in DLA): we have a kind of mastery, power, control over something, if we own it; and in the absence of law, no one owns anything: Taylor's "stones in the streets" can be "mine or yours", precisely because they are "appropriate to" no one, beyond whoever can take them. Something can become 'one's own' simply because there is no restriction on our power to use or possess it; just as an unimpeded will is in our power, so also things are absolutely in our power when there is no controlling or regulating force or law. In a curious way, then, a negative right to something due to the mere absence of any force or law, becomes a kind of positive right, based on one's unhindered power to take it or control it.

But, as Taylor says, "this is not the law of nature, nor passes any obligation at all". It is "such a right as every man hath without a law". Grotius, like Taylor, rejects any positive conception of an inherent *ius naturale*, other than the *dominium* anyone may have, where there is no force or law to prevent them. The Italian humanist Lorenzo Valla, cited by Taylor as an example of a writer who rejects *ius naturale*,[342] does so because he thinks *ius* must refer to something positive: "it is ridiculous to call *ius naturale* what nature teaches to all animals. Who will call the desire for association, and even more the desire to harm weaker animals, ravage and kill, a i*us*?"[343] Yet this is just what Grotius and his followers, including Taylor, refer to using the term *ius*.

For when God made man a free agent, He by nature gave him power to do all he could

342 Works vol.9 p283.

343 cit. Tuck 1979 p34. Contrast with Taylor on fish and animals and *ius* in Hesiod and Homer, above, note 327. Animals have no free will in the sense defended by Grotius and Taylor, but they are certainly free to pursue their appetites. Valla also defended the compatibility of free will and divine foreknowledge; and was more interested in Stoicism and Epicureanism, and reconciling them in Christianity, than in Aristotle/Scholasticism. See Sarasohn 1996 p22 on Valla.

> desire: and all that is *jus naturale*, a natural right or power: it needs no instances; for it is everything he could desire in eating and drinking and pleasures and rule and possession: but the law was superinduced upon this. Right is liberty, but law is a fetter. Nature is free to everything which it naturally desires; … "that's the right of nature, to be free, to be subject to no law, to do absolutely whatever pleases us."[344]

Like Hobbes, Taylor has St Paul in mind in his context of right and liberty in their most basic sense: "But for the law, I had not known sin." For Taylor, the law, and the capacity to understand and choose to obey it, is what introduces the question of morality, and the idea of 'sin'. One consequence of this is that, as Hobbes says, "The Desires, and other Passions of man, are in themselves no Sin. No more are the actions, that proceed from those Passions, till they know a Law that forbids them".[345] The "desires and passions of man" are in themselves neither good nor bad; their relationship to the supervenient moral law determines whether they are legitimate or must be resisted. Again, Taylor is rejecting the Augustinian idea that the present state of human passions and appetites derives from the Fall; they are natural, and prior to any question of law or morality, or in an allowable moral context, they are innocent. We might say that the only real sense which the idea of an original "state of innocence" has for Taylor, is of a state in which right and wrong did not apply, due to the absence of conscious freedom and law: nothing is either good or bad but thinking - the ability to reason and make conscious choices in the light of some recognisable binding moral obligation - makes it so. Prior to that, or without that, all is morally neutral.[346] But this brings us to the question of the origin of obligation.

The radical natural liberty of will and appetite found in the state of nature is

344 Works vol.9, p295.
345 Lev.13.
346 Compare Hobbes on the absence of right and wrong in the state of nature, at the end of Lev.ch.13.

restrained by a natural law grounded on the preservation and flourishing of each individual, for Grotius and Hobbes; but Taylor follows Selden in rejecting this solution. For Taylor, the basis for morality, and even law, lies wholly with divine revelation. Reason "makes us capable of laws"; but "reason is not the law, or its measure; neither can any man be sure that any thing is a law of nature, because it seems to him hugely reasonable, neither if it be so indeed, is it thereby a law". Reason makes us capable of understanding and choosing to obey the law, but the obligatory force of the law comes from an "obliging power". Taylor is a voluntarist, that is, the source of law is not reason or a rationally-discernible order in nature, but *will*; however, he is a voluntarist of a rather curious kind. Firstly, he does allow a role, sometimes quite a significant role, for reason. Reason, says Taylor, "can demonstrate, and it can persuade and invite, but not compel anything but assent, not obedience, and therefore is no law."[347] Law requires enforcement, or it cannot properly be considered law; and perfect sanction can only come from God: "It was God that gave justice to mankind: He made justice by his sanction."[348]

This would seem to suggest that while reason can indeed indicate the divine law, its conclusions cannot be regarded as law, only because the conclusions of reason cannot enforce obedience by themselves; and we cannot be sure that something is a law, simply because it seems to us to be "hugely reasonable", because fallible human reason can always reach erroneous conclusions. Law is rational, but not law, strictly speaking, without sanction.

This is Hobbes's view; but in fact, not quite Taylor's. He is more sceptical about the power of reason to reach certain conclusions *at all*, even aside from the possibility of error, than he sometimes sounds; however, he is not altogether convinced that *moral*

347 DD vol 1 p293.
348 Quoting Cicero, DD vol 1, Works vol 9 p295.

obligation, at least, arises from sanction. By reason, Taylor chiefly has in mind empirical reasoning, as Aquinas and Hobbes; being a latter-day form of what Augustine called "scientia." But we shall that for Taylor, what Augustine called "sapientia", can give us a law, which we make a 'law to ourselves'. This law is from grace, for Taylor, not pure nature; the situation is more complicated for Augustine.[349]

For Hobbes, while reason can not just persuade and invite, but even demonstrate, it cannot enforce. Hobbes argued that there were indeed rationally-demonstrable principles of natural law, but that they had no force as law, unless they could be enforced.[350] This is a basis for law that is both natural and artificial, in a way; it has been called "natural positive law". Hobbes is an empiricist; he derives his natural laws from nature, but as for Taylor, they are not rationally discernible in nature; they are rational - that is, in one's own self interest - on the basis of nature as it is. Hobbes does seem to think that given natural human desires for survival and flourishing, these "laws of nature" are objectively rationally valid: that is, given the essentially equal dangers of the state of nature, only by adopting these rules can security for any given individual actually be secured, and only in the context of peace and security can people safely fulfil their desires. Despite this, they are meaningless in practice, mere "theorems of reason", unless everyone agrees to adopt them; which means in practice, unless they can be enforced.[351]

Taylor does not think that there are any demonstrable natural laws. Hobbes's

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349 Compare Augustine's distinction between *scientia* and *sapientia* with Coleridge's between "understanding" and "reason"; as well as the difference between different rational functions in de Trin. XII.1.3. Compare Enn. V.3.3.

350 "These dictates of Reason men use to call by the name of Lawes, but improperly: for they are but Conclusions, or Theoremes concerning what conduceth to the conservation and defence of themselves; whereas Law, properly is the word of him, that by right hath command over others." Lev.14, end. See Parkin 1999 p67-8.

351 So there is a sense in which Hobbes agrees with Aquinas about law being the product of reason; but strictly speaking it is not *law*, for Hobbes, without enforcement. Aquinas: "Law is a certain rule and measure of acts whereby a man is induced to act or is restrained from acting … Now the rule and measure of human acts is reason, which is the first principle of human acts … since it belongs to reason to direct to the end, which is the first principle in all matters of action, according to the Philosopher … Consequently, it follows that law is something pertaining to reason."

natural laws are demonstrative; Taylor only really allows for demonstrative reasoning in mathematics, elsewhere, probability is always the measure.[352] Moreover, for Taylor, assent to moral or religious truths involves the whole personality, not simply the reason.

> The law of nature is a transcript of the wisdom and will of God written in the tables of our minds … a product of experience, but written with the finger of God, first in the tables of our hearts. But those tables we, like Moses, brake with letting them fall out of our hands, upon occasion of the evil manners of the world: but God wrought them again for us, as He did for Moses by His spirit, in all the ages of the world, more or less, by arts of instruction and secret insinuation, by all the ways proportioned to a reasonable nature; till from an inclination it came to a firm persuasion, and so to a law: God, in this, ruling in our hearts something after the manner by which He reigns in heaven, even by significations of what is fit, by inspirations and cogenite notices, by natural necessities: but this thing was yet no law till God also had signified it to men, after the manner of men, that is, by discourse and human communications, by something that taught them and obliged them.[353]

Taylor is much influenced by the idea that sanction is needed for something to be law in the strict sense; but it will be noticed that the sense of obligation towards certain moral principles is not reliant on God as the ultimate enforcement in this passage. People come to a firm persuasion of the rightness or wrongness of something by "all the ways proportioned to a reasonable nature"; thus, the law is not based merely on divine fiat.

> For the law of nature is nothing but the law of God given to mankind for the conservation

352 "And yet it is without peradventure that all laws which are commonly called natural are most reasonable, they are perfective of nature, unitive of societies, necessary to common life, and therefore most agreeable to reason. But if you make *analysis* of these, and reckon backward, you cannot wisely and demonstratively reckon from reason, or consent, or natural inclinations, up to natural laws." DD vol 1 p295.
353 Works vol.9 p295-6.

> of his nature and the promotion of his perfective end: a law of which man *sees a reason and feels a necessity*. God is the lawgiver, practical reason or conscience is the record; but revelation and express declaring it was the first publication and emission of it, and till then it had not all the solemnities of law, *though it was passed in the court, and decreed and recorded*.[354]

God wills to bring his reasonable creatures to their end and well-being by appealing to their own mind and reason, by convincing them and teaching them concerning what their true happiness and well-being consists in. People are endowed with an intuition, a sense of what is good and bad, by the Spirit of God in their conscience. From a prompting of the conscience, underscored by reason or some desire arising through the interplay of reason, conscience, natural appetite and experience, a stronger sense of what is good arises, and this "firm persuasion" guides and helps to determine the will towards the good.

However, mere reason does not provide certainty concerning the moral law, for Taylor; only revelation can do that. But reason is one important means of access to it, and a control on what belongs to it, like reason in relation to the truths of faith, discussed in the appendix to the previous chapter. This is, says Taylor, "the perfect meaning of those words of St Paul, 'but for the law I had not known sin'; that, "although by natural reason and the customs of the world I had or might have reasons to dislike many actions; yet till the law declared it I could not call anything a sin … therefore neither could the gentiles know it *merely by nature*." (My italics.) The "gentiles" know the law by grace, by having the law written on their hearts:

354 D.D. vol 1., Works vol.9 p296. My italics.

> But yet a man may become a law unto himself: so St Paul observes of the gentiles, who "not having a law do by nature the things contained in the law, and so become a law unto themselves." So does every man who believes any thing to be necessary, though it be not so; yet he "becomes a law to himself", because by his conscience and persuasion he makes to himself a law or obligation … so St Paul, 'their conscience bearing witness'; for either God published these laws by express declaration ... or else by imprinting upon the conscience such fears and opinions that passed upon the man the reverence and obligation of laws. In both these there was variety, though in the latter there was amongst the better sort of men a more regular and universal influence and effect: and although it is very probable that all the measures of justice and natural laws of honesty were expressly published ... these laws were maintained by more imperfect relations, and kept up by fears and secret opinions which the Spirit of God, who is never wanting to men in things necessary, was pleased in his love to mankind to put into the hearts of men, that men might be governed by instruments which would not fail.

Conscience, for Taylor, is a conviction or persuasion that something is right or wrong, and a consequent sense of obligation: an autonomous, self-imposed obligation, which is the product of neither demonstrative reasoning nor enforcement. This comes about by a certain mysterious sense of its rightness or wrongness, but this is not independent of any relation to reason, welfare and sociability. The graciously enlightened intellect does not compel assent to moral truths, or indeed the truths of faith, in the way that a syllogism or mathematical formula, for example, does; rather it must strive for a moral certainty, analogous to probabilism in science, but with room for the will, for a free decision according to goodness not simply truthfulness. (However, the problem with this, as we shall see in a moment, remains, that if reason is not the test of what is good, what is?) Assent is brought about, then, by a complex process including probabilistic reasoning,

very similar to Newman's idea of it in the *Grammar of Assent*.[355]

It is in this way, says Taylor, that "St Hierome affirms that Pharaoh knew his sins by the law of nature ... by this the fathers lived, by this Noah was 'found just', and Abraham the 'friend of God'". The Christian revelation confirms and extends what is universally suggested by the activity of the Spirit in the world:

> When God sent the blessed Jesus into the world to perform all righteousness, and to teach the world all his Father's will, it was said and done, 'I will give my laws in your hearts, and in your minds I will write them': that is, you shall be governed by the law of natural and essential equity and reason, by that law which is put into every man's nature; and besides this, whatsoever else shall be superinduced shall be written in your minds by the Spirit, who shall write all the laws of Christianity in the tables of your consciences. He shall make you to understand them, to perceive their relish, to remember them because you love them, and because you need them, and cannot be happy without them: He shall call them to your mind, and inspire new arguments and inducements to their observation, and make it all as natural to us, as what we were born with.
>
> Our mind being thus furnished with a holy rule, and conducted by a divine guide, is called conscience; and is the same thing which in scripture is sometimes called 'the heart' ... Sometimes it is called 'spirit', the third ingredient of the constitution of a Christian; the spirit, as distinct from soul and body.[356]

So the morality associated with the Christian revelation is not entirely arbitrary,

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355 Compare *Apologia* p100: "It is faith and love which give to probability a force which it has not in itself." And Austin Farrer, in *Faith and Speculation*: "The gospel offers God to me as good, not simply as fact. In embracing the good I am convinced of the fact." Preliminary rational considerations are inconclusive; one opts to believe out of a conviction of the goodness of the gospel, when arguments regarding truthfulness are inconclusive in themselves. Something similar can be found in Hooker, on the relation between reason and scripture.

356 Works vol.9 p.6-7

any more than the teaching of ‘natural’ conscience; which is not wholly natural. For Taylor, Christian morality is connected with “the consummation of man’s last end, which was first intended, and is always the same”:

> For the natural law [that is, the law revealed in the conscience] being a sufficient and a proportionate instrument and means to bring a man to the end designed in his creation, and this law being eternal and unalterable ... it was not imaginable that the body of any law should make a new morality ... [the purpose of the natural law being] the consummation of man's last end, which was first intended, and is always the same. It is, as if there were a new truth in an essential and a necessary proposition ... there can be no new justice ... [or] proper and natural relations ... between God and us, but what always were ... Hence it comes, that that which is the most obvious and notorious appellative of the law of nature, that it is a law 'written in our hearts', was also recounted as one of the glories and excellencies of Christianity. Plutarch, saying that 'kings ought to be governed by laws', explains himself, that this law must be "a word, not written in books and tables, but dwelling in the mind, a living rule, the interior guide of their manners, and monitor of their life'. And this was the same which St Paul expresses to be the guide of the gentiles, that is, of all men naturally [in Romans 2.14]. And that we may see it was the law of nature returned in the sanctions of Christianity, God declares that in the constitution of this law, He would take no other course than at first, that is, he would write them in the hearts of men: indeed with a new style, with a quill taken from the wings of the holy Dove; the Spirit of God was to be the great engraver and the scribe of the new covenant, but the hearts of men should be the tables: 'I will put my laws into their hearts, and into their minds will I write them: and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more', that is, I will provide a means to expiate all the iniquities of man, and restore him to the condition of his first creation, putting him into the same order towards felicity which I first designed

> to him, and that also by the same instruments.[357]

The "law of Jesus Christ" is the completion and consummation of the "law of nature", that is, of conscience. Christianity fully reveals God's design for us, supplementing and perfecting the notion we were already able to form from our conscience, from past revelation, and from our reasoning concerning the inclinations of nature and the customs of wise and civilized people and nations. The moral state of "gentiles" who live by the light of 'nature' and Christians who have the law of Jesus Christ, then, is not so very different:

> *Nomos kai logos*, so Christ is called by St Peter and the Greek fathers, he is the 'word of the Father', and 'the law'; and it is remarkable, this word or law of the Father was the instrument of teaching mankind in all periods of the world.[358]

For Taylor, conscience is the image of God in man; as we saw in the last two chapters, consciousness and the powers of reason and free will that arise from it constituted the divine image for Irenaeus and Origen, as well as Augustine in the *de Trinitate*.

> God governs the world by several attributes and emanations from Himself. The nature of things is supported by His power, the events of things are ordered by His providence, and the actions of reasonable creatures are governed by laws, and these laws are put into a man's soul or mind as into a treasury or repository: some in his very nature, some by after-actions, by education and positive sanction, by learning and custom: so that it was well said

357 GE, Works vol.2 p.20-1

358 D.D. vol 1, Works vol.9 p300. Taylor cites examples of the 'universal logos' teaching from Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, and even Tertullian.

> of St Bernard, 'conscience is the brightness and splendour of the eternal light, a spotless mirror of the divine majesty, and the image of the goodness of God' ... God is in our hearts by His laws: He rules in us by His substitute our conscience ... So Lactantius: 'let him remember that he hath God for his witness, that is, I suppose, his mind; than which God hath given to man nothing that is more divine'. In sum, it is the image of God: and as in the mysterious Trinity we adore the will, memory, and understanding, and theology contemplates three persons in the analogies, proportions and correspondencies of them; so in this also we see plainly that conscience is that likeness of God in which He was pleased to make man (Taylor, Ductor Dubitantium Works vol.9 p.3-4)

As such, morality, for Taylor, in Christianity and outside, is based on the "natural relation between God and us"; he relates this to his view of nature, which has no intrinsic order, but relies on that introduced by reason and will, from conscience and revelation:

> all the law of nature is adopted into religion, and by our love and duty to God we are tied to do all that is reason, and the parts of our religion are but pursuances of the natural relation between God and us. And beyond all this, our natural condition is, in all senses, improved by the consequents and adherences of this religion: for although nature and grace are opposite, that is, nature depraved by evil habits, by ignorance and ungodly customs, is contrary to grace, that is, to nature restored by the gospel, engaged to regular living by new revelations, and assisted by the Spirit; yet it is observable, that the law of nature and the law of grace are never opposed. "There is a law in our members", saith St Paul; that is, an evil necessity introduced into our appetites by perpetual evil customs, examples and traditions of vanity; and there is a law of sin, that answers to this; and they differ only as inclination and habit, vicious desire and vicious practices. But then contrary to these are, first, "a law of my mind", which is the law of nature and right reason, and then the law of

> grace, that is of Jesus Christ, who perfected and restored the first law, and by assistances reduced it into a law of holy living: and these two differ as the other; the one is in order to the other, as imperfection and growing degrees and capacities are to perfection and consummation. The law of the mind had been so rased and obliterate, and we, by some means or other, so disabled from observing it exactly, that until it was turned into the law of grace, (which is a law of pardoning infirmities, and assisting us in our choices and elections,) we were in a state of deficiency from the perfective state of man to which God intended us.[359]

Grace works with nature in the same way within the Christian dispensation and without to reform our nature, especially as that nature has acquired vicious habits. The "law of the mind" and the "law of grace" are the same, but the latter extends and completes the former and enables us to fulfil it according to the spirit, if not the letter, as we saw in ch.3 above on *metanoia*.

One might call Taylor an intuitionist, as much as a voluntarist, concerning morality. Augustine is a form of intuitionist, in the Platonist tradition. In book 8 of *De Trinitate*, Augustine discusses our knowledge of various things. Taking the example of a just man, he observes that we know what a man is from experience; the experience of encountering them, and of being one.

> But this is not how I search for what "just" is, nor how I find it, nor how I look at it when I express it, nor how I am agreed with someone when I express it, nor how I agree with someone when I hear him, as though I had seen such a thing with my eyes or learnt it by any of my senses or heard about it from others who had so learnt it. For when I say, and say with full knowledge, "That mind is just which knowingly and deliberately, in life and in

359 GE, Works vol 2 p29.

> conduct, gives each man what is his own", I am not recalling something absent like Carthage [which Augustine had visited], or fabricating it as best I can like Alexandria [from the general notion of a city; Alexandria being a city Augustine had not visited]; but I am perceiving something that is present to me, and it is present to me even if I am not what I perceive. And anyone who hears me and knowingly agrees with me also perceives the same thing in himself, even if he is not what he perceives.[360]

Justice, for Augustine, is a "form" perceived by the mind, which like mathematical proportion is an intrinsic truth about the world which transcends the mind. Such forms illuminate the mind, like light illuminating the eye; all perceive it, even the unjust have a conception of justice, by this intuitive knowledge, according to Augustine. Taylor draws on this view.

> Philo says, the law of nature is a law … 'engraven in an immortal understanding by an immortal nature.' In this whole affair, God is as the sun, and the conscience as the eye: .. God … being the *intellectus agens* did inform our reason, supplying the place of natural faculties and being a continual monitor (as the Jews generally believe, and some Christians, especially about three or four ages since): which Adam de Marisco was wont to call 'Helias his crow': something flying from heaven with provision for our needs. And [others, including Maimonides] affirm this to be the meaning of David in the fourth Psalm, "Offer the sacrifice of righteousness"; it follows "who will show us any good?" Who will tell us what is justice, and declare the measures of good and evil? He answers … "Thou hast consigned the light of Thy countenance upon us" … "that in Thy light we may see light".[361]

For Augustine, even natural knowledge relies to some extent upon divine

360 de Trin. VIII.4.9.
361 DD vol 1, Works vol 9 p298.

illumination; grace, for Augustine, seems to involve a more intense, or more extensive, enlightenment, as well as aid which enables the will to love what the soul knows.[362] In *de Trinitate*, Augustine often represents the fallen condition as one in which God has been "forgotten"; by which he seems to mean that God's presence to the mind, in a way analogous to the mind's own presence to itself, has been lost:

> This trinity of the mind [the internal structure of the conscious mind, 'memory', that is, naked self awareness, and understanding and will which arise from it] is not really the image of God because the mind remembers and understands and loves itself, but because it is also able to remember and understand and love him by whom it was made. And when it does this it becomes wise. If it does not do it, then even though it remembers and understands and loves itself, it is foolish.[363]

Grace remedies this "foolishness" by a fresh enlightenment, but this is the same in kind to that by which all, just and unjust alike, know what justice is:

> Not that [the soul] remembers [God] because it knew him in Adam, or anywhere else before the life of this body, or when it was first made in order to be inserted into this body. It does not remember any of these things at all; whichever of these may be the case, it has been erased by oblivion [through the fall]. Yet it is reminded to turn to the Lord, as though to the light by which it went on being touched in some fashion even when it turned away from him. It is in virtue of this light that even the godless can think about eternity, and rightly praise and blame many elements in the behaviour of men.[364]

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362 See Burnaby 1938 p155.
363 *de Trin* XIV.4.15. Its own excessive love of itself, which it remembers and loves aside from God, makes it "foolish".
364 Ibid XIV.4.21.

For Taylor, in an even stronger way than for Augustine, all morality is from grace. Taylor is trying to be universalist, to open up the possibility of salvation to all, even those outside the Christian dispensation, without being a Pelagian. But he does this by making even what is possible for the unjust, on Augustine's account, depend on supernatural aid; he makes what for Augustine is common to all men, albeit from divine illumination, part of the supernatural dispensation. Conscience is not natural to the soul, but in the case of a right conscience at least, is always an aspect of the "spirit", in other words, a product of grace.[365] Taylor cites Origen to this effect, in his own translation:

> The apostle says, that they use the testimony of their conscience who have the law written in their hearts. Hence it is necessary to enquire what that is which the apostle calls conscience, whether it be any other substance than the heart or soul? For of this it is otherwise [also] said, that it reprehends, but is not reprehended … 'Our glorying is this, even the testimony of a good conscience.' … in good things it is always glad and rejoices, but in evil things it is not reproved, but reproves and corrects the soul itself to which it does adhere; I do suppose that this is the very spirit which by the apostle is said to be with the soul, as a pedagogue and social governor, that it may admonish the soul of better things, and chastise her for her faults … 'Because no man knows the things of a man but the spirit of a man which is in him'; and that is the conscience, concerning which he saith, 'That Spirit gives testimony to our spirit.'[366]

365 The possession of a right conscience, along with a good disposition of the will, relies on our co-operation to be effectual in terms of moral action, according to Taylor. For Augustine, one who sees what justice is but does not do it, ultimately lacks the grace to love justice more than themselves.

366 Works vol.9, p7. Origen, *Comm. on Romans* II.ii. Augustine thought that we have a *conscientia* about ourselves, that highlights our fallen condition: one of the things he becomes introspectively aware of in the *Confessions*, is that his will is monstrously divided between an inclination to good, and an inclination to sin. For Pelagius, too, the doctrine of conscience is central: *To Demetrias* 4.2: "There is, I maintain, a sort of natural sanctity in our minds which, presiding as it were in the mind's citadel [the rational soul: see Aug., CD XIV.19], administers judgment equally on the evil and the good, and … distinguishes the one side from the other by a kind of inner law." But we are not aware of our helplessness and need of grace, for Pelagius: "let us approach the secret places of our soul, let everyone examine himself more attentively, let us ask what opinion our own personal thoughts have of this matter, let our conscience itself deliver its

Conscience, for Taylor, is the product of grace; this would have seemed a strange doctrine to Augustine, and more strange still to Aquinas. (Newman has a more 'personal' idea of conscience: "not a mere law of my nature, but the echo of a person speaking to me … an echo implies a voice, and a voice a speaker. That speaker I love and I fear." From his novel, *Callista*. But even Newman wasn't quite suggesting that this "echo" was solely from grace.)

Ironically enough, in this respect Grotius and Hobbes follow Thomas Aquinas: "justice" is natural for human beings, or at any rate it is possible to advocate it on a purely natural, and empirical, basis. As we have seen, Aquinas thought justice could be derived from natural inclinations by created reason, without any direct divine aid:

> Hence the Psalmist, after saying "offer up the sacrifice of justice", as though someone asked what the works of justice are, adds: "Many say, who shows us good things?", in answer to which he says: "The light of Your countenance, O Lord, is signed upon us"; thus implying that the light of natural reason, whereby we discern what is good and what is evil, which pertains to the natural law, is nothing else than an imprint on us of the divine light.[367]

Created human reason forms an understanding of good and evil through its own capacity to establish what is good for human beings, and what is bad for them; this is not the result

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judgement on the good of nature, let us be instructed by the inner teaching of the mind, and let us learn about each of the good qualities of the mind from no other source but the mind itself." (ibid. 4.1.) What we learn, is that we are good or bad by our mere choices and acts, and acquired dispositions; not that we have an evil will, in Augustine's deeper sense: "The only freedom before God is freedom not to be a slave to sin, the highest form of nobility before God is to be distinguished for virtue." (ibid 21.) For Augustine's response, see for example, *on the Spirit and the Letter* 12: "This reflection does not issue in self-esteem. That fault arises when each man trusts in himself, and takes himself to be the source of his life … By doing so man withdraws from that well of life, whence alone righteousness can be derived; withdraws himself from that unchanging light by sharing in which the rational soul is in a manner kindled, and itself becomes a created light".

367 ST 1a2ae q91 art2. For Taylor, what Thomas calls *synderesis* comes from grace; Taylor also uses the term, DD vol 1, Works vol 9 p14.

of direct divine illumination. Reason is a created resemblance to God's own intellectual capacity, in the sense that through it, we come to understanding. The similarity between Aquinas and Grotius and Hobbes is well illustrated by Stephen Darwall's comments on Hobbes:

> Hobbes aimed to understand morality's normative grip in entirely naturalistic terms. The laws of nature are dictates of reason, but this does not mean that they structure an independent, irreducible normative order grasped by an intuitive faculty. Right reason is right *reasoning* - the correct use of calculative, theoretical reason. And it dictates not by discovering norms but through the practical force of its discoveries from an agent's point of view, indicating unavoidable means to an inescapable end … Reason discovers, for instance, that keeping covenants is essential to maintaining peace, which is necessary to self preservation.[368]

Aquinas, too, is a kind of empiricist; concerning the natural law, at any rate. What he calls the "divine law" completes and extends the natural law, and illumination by grace, as well as revelation, are necessary for this. The assistance of grace is necessary for fallen man to be just, and it is necessary absolutely for charity; but mere justice - rendering to each their due, or like for like - was possible for man in innocence without the assistance of grace - though man in innocence was never without grace: therefore, for example, "man even before sin required grace in order to attain eternal life, which is the principle reason for the need of grace; but man after sin requires grace beyond this, even for the remission of sin and the support of his weakness."[369]

The absence of any purely natural basis for morality exposes Taylor to the idea we

368 Darwall 1995 p81.
369 ST 1a1ae q95 art4 ad1.

saw de Lubac identify in Baius at the end of the last chapter: grace becomes something *owed* to nature, is needed by nature in order for nature to be itself, to function effectively as nature. Moreover, for Taylor, even civil justice and social order ultimately rely directly on God; and where all is *adiaphora*, indifferent, aside from an enforced law - notwithstanding obligations we may or may not conscientiously impose on ourselves - in effect, nothing is *adiaphora* at all: "This right of nature being now almost wholly taken from us, part of it is taken up to God, and part of it is deposited in the hands of the civil power, but we have none of it".[370]

The same is not true of Augustine. Firstly, "justice" is known intuitively even by the unjust, by the illumination all human beings have in order to attain natural knowledge.[371] Secondly, Augustine actually has a kind of empirical natural law, which is necessary for the peace and flourishing of *fallen* humanity, though it is of no value for salvation. In DLA, he calls it the "temporal law", as opposed to the "eternal law", which is known intuitively.[372] In the *City of God*, he develops a similar notion, the "earthly peace", or peace of the "earthly city". Peace is central to Augustine's theory in both texts, because peace is ultimately necessary for the security and flourishing even of the godless. Grotius and Hobbes seem to owe a great deal to Augustine's ideas in their own theories of a purely natural, secular, empirical basis for law and morality.

In DLA, bk 1 Augustine distinguishes between two laws, the "eternal" law and the "temporal" law. What Augustine regards as true morality can only be based on the

370 Works vol.9 p304. A result of this is Taylor's very radical royalist absolutism, see D.D. vol 2 ch1, *Of Human Laws*, Works vol.10. For Taylor man is above all born free. But that freedom is negative: liberty is just the absence of constraint; there is no *prima facie* right to it. In the pre-moral world, that which is 'purely natural' (instinct, passion) is morally indifferent. Law intrudes to introduce law-breaking, and the duty to curtail and transcend one's natural impulses. Because Taylor is a voluntarist, almost anything can be matter for a law. Contrast the Thomist view, where something is indifferent, and bindable by human law, only where nature (reason) does not determine the contrary.

371 See Clark 1994 ch.2, "Search for Truth", and bibliography, on Augustine on divine illumination, natural knowledge, and grace.

372 Even by the godless, as we have seen; but it is not effectually loved and performed by them, and perhaps not always adequately known without additional illumination, which those under grace possess.

eternal law, which we know intuitively and which "demands that we purify our love by turning it away from temporal things and towards what is eternal". But since the fall, human beings are obsessed with, and distracted by "temporal and material things". For fallen humans - some of whom are under grace, and lovers of justice, and some not - to live together harmoniously, each in safety from the others, they must be governed according to a law guaranteeing certain temporal things:

> But when human beings in their cupidity cleave to things that can be called ours only for a time, the temporal law demands that they possess those things in accordance with the law by which peace and human society are preserved - insofar as they *can* be preserved on the basis of such things. The first such good is the body, along with all of the things associated with it that are called goods, such as health, keen senses, strength, beauty, and other qualities, some of which are necessary for good deeds and are therefore to be regarded highly, and others of which are less valuable. The second such good is freedom. Now the only genuine freedom is that possessed by those who are happy and cleave to the eternal law; but I am talking about the sort of freedom that people have in mind when they think they are free because they have no human masters, or that people desire when they want to be set free by their masters. Then come parents, brothers and sisters, a spouse, children, neighbours, relatives, friends, anyone who is bound to us by some need. Next is the city itself, which frequently takes the place of the parents, together with honours and praise and what is called popular acclaim. And finally comes property, which includes anything over which the law gives us control and which we have a recognised right to sell or give away.[373]

The measure of the "temporal law" is the preservation of "peace and human

373 DLA 1.15.

society". It demands that human beings have secure possession of certain temporal "goods", "things that can be called ours only for a time"; that is, during our temporal life. These include bodily integrity and health, "freedom" in the sense of having "no human masters" - as we might say, 'external autonomy' - family life and other peaceful social relations, property, and, in effect, citizenship and the pursuit of harmless, and, preferably, socially beneficial ambitions.[374] We might call these 'rights', though as we shall see Augustine is very far from ascribing them absolutely to human beings in the way that later moralists and lawyers sought to do. However, these 'rights' do seem to entail certain responsibilities: essentially, respecting the same rights in others, and recognising that one's own possession of them relies on the preservation of the *polis*, and as a consequence seeking its welfare. Augustine is quite clear that these principles, this "law", applies to the fallen state: when human beings, "in their cupidity", "cleave to things that can be called ours only for a time", instead of "purifying their love" by turning away from temporal things and towards eternal. Notwithstanding this, the temporal goods which the temporal law concerns are still properly called goods; they may be "necessary for good deeds", but even besides this they are good in themselves, good for us to possess.

Augustine discusses the same idea again in book 19 of the *City of God*, though he no longer uses the term temporal law; he speaks of earthly or temporal peace. But this is effectively the same thing: he still sees it as the basis for human society and the individual possession and enjoyment of worldly goods, and a civil law to govern this.

God, then, created all things in supreme wisdom and ordered them in perfect justice; and in

374 His treatment of Regulus in the *City of God* (CD V.18,19) suggests that Augustine - good Roman that he was - thinks the pursuit of honour, praise and acclaim usually entails some form of noble, even generous, in a certain way, public service.

> establishing the mortal race of mankind as the greatest ornament of earthly things, he has given to mankind certain good things suitable to this life. These are: temporal peace, in proportion to the short span of a mortal life - the peace that consists in bodily health and soundness, and in fellowship with one's kind; and everything necessary to safeguard or recover this peace - those things, for example, which are appropriate and accessible to our senses: light, speech, air to breathe, water to drink, and whatever is suitable for the feeding and clothing of the body, for the care of the body and the adornment of the person.[375]

As in DLA, in the *City of God* Augustine regards temporal things as good in themselves, but there is a difference between those who are citizens of the "earthly city" alone and those who are also citizens of the "Heavenly City" as to the proper value and estimation of temporal things, and as a consequence what "use" is made of them: "all man's use of temporal things is related to earthly peace in the earthly city; whereas in the Heavenly City it is related to the enjoyment of eternal peace." 19.14.

Man's use of temporal things, is not, of course, necessarily just; but peace is still the motivation. "Anyone who joins me in an examination, however slight, of human affairs, and the human nature we all share, recognises that just as there is no man who does not wish for joy, so there is no man who does not wish for peace." 19.12. This is not necessarily a just peace; Augustine makes the point that wars are waged with peace as their object, even if that peace is simply "the conquest of the opposing side", that is, the imposition of one's own power; and "even when men wish a present state of peace to be disturbed they do so not because they hate peace, but because they desire the present peace to be exchanged for one that suits their wishes." The *libido dominandi* itself, then, has in view not war, but peace; that just means own peace, the peace that best suits it, its

375 CD XIX.13.

own repose in dominance of others. “Thus pride is a perverted imitation of God. For pride hates a fellowship of equality under God, and seeks to impose its own dominion on fellow men, in place of God’s rule. This means that it hates the just peace of God, and loves its own peace of injustice. And yet it cannot help loving peace of some kind or other. For no creature’s perversion is so contrary to nature as to destroy the very last vestiges of its nature.” 19.14. Augustine argues that bandits and subversives wish for peace with their confederates and their families, and even a single one who suspected all others and was able to succeed by himself would wish for the peace of domination.

> We see, then, that all men desire to be at peace with their own people, while wishing to impose their own will on those people’s lives. For even when they wage war on others, their wish is to make those opponents their own people, if they can - to subject them, and impose on them their own conditions of peace.

Finally, Augustine cites the figure of Cacus from Virgil’s *Aeneid*, “such a man as is described in the verse of epic legends, a creature so unsociable and savage that they perhaps preferred to call him a semi-human than a human being.”

> Now although his kingdom was the solitude of a dreadful cavern, and although he was so unequalled in wickedness that a name was found for him derived from that quality [Cacus, from the Greek *kakos*]; although he had no wife with whom to exchange endearments, no children to play with when little or to give orders to when they were a little bigger, no friends with whom to enjoy conversation … although he never gave anything to anyone, but took what he wanted from anyone and removed, when he could, anyone he wished to remove; despite all this, in the very solitude of his cave, the floor of which, in the poet’s

description

reeked ever with the blood of recent slaughter

his only desire was for a peace in which no one should disturb him, and no man's violence, or the dread of it, should trouble his repose.[376]

For Augustine, a peaceful and ordered society requires the guarantee of certain temporal things. "The basis for [true peace among men] is the observance of two rules: first, to do no harm to anyone, and secondly, to help everyone wherever possible." 19.14. True peace of this kind is only possible in a community united by the objects of its loves, 19.23-24, which is found in this world only in a partial way, in the Church, the "heavenly city on pilgrimage in this mortal life". But an image of this peace is possible even for the earthly city: like Hobbes, it is based on seeking a peace between "clashing wills". Augustine sets out the relationship between this peace, which can still be thought of as a distorted shadow of the peace of heaven, in CD 19.17. He begins by pointing out that sociability is natural for human beings, using the example of the household, based on the family (like Grotius, he points out that even animals show endearment to their offspring, and even beyond; "How much more strongly is a human being drawn by the laws of his nature, so to speak, to enter upon a fellowship with all his fellow men and to keep peace with them, as far as lies in him.")

[A] household of human beings whose life is not based on [Christian] faith is in pursuit of an earthly peace based on the things belonging to this temporal life, and its advantages, whereas a household of human beings whose life is based on faith looks forward to the blessings which are promised as eternal in the future, making use of earthly and temporal things like a pilgrim in a foreign land, who does not let himself be taken in by them or

376 CD 19.12.

distracted from his course towards God, but rather treats them as supports which help him more easily to bear the burdens of "the corruptible body which weighs heavy on the soul"; they must on no account be allowed to increase the load. Thus both kinds of men and both kinds of households alike make use of the things essential for this mortal life; but each has its own very different end in making use of them. So also the earthly city, whose life is not based on faith, aims at an earthly peace, and it limits the harmonious agreement of citizens concerning the giving and obeying of orders to the establishment of a kind of compromise between human wills about the things relevant to mortal life. In contrast, the Heavenly City - or rather that part of it which is on pilgrimage in this condition of mortality, and which lives on the basis of faith - must needs make use of this peace also, until this mortal state, for which this kind of peace is essential, passes away. And therefore, it leads what we may call a life of captivity in this earthly city as in a foreign land, although it has already received the promise of redemption, and the gift of the Spirit as a kind of pledge of it; and yet it does not hesitate to obey the laws of the earthly city by which those things which are designed for the support of this mortal life are regulated; and the purpose of this obedience is that, since this mortal condition is shared by both cities, a harmony may be preserved between them in things that are relevant to this condition …

Thus even the Heavenly City in her pilgrimage here on earth makes use of the earthly peace and defends and seeks the compromise between human wills in respect of the provisions relevant to the mortal nature of man, so far as may be permitted without detriment to true religion and piety. In fact, that City relates the earthly peace to the heavenly peace, which is so truly peaceful that it should be regarded as the only peace deserving the name, at least in respect of the rational creation; for this peace is the perfectly ordered and harmonious fellowship in the enjoyment of God, and of each other in God. When we arrive at that state of peace, there will be no longer a life that ends in death, but a life that is life in sure and sober truth; there will be no animal body to "weigh down the soul" in its process of corruption; there will be a spiritual body with no cravings, a body

> subdued in every part to the will. This peace the Heavenly City possesses in faith while on its pilgrimage, and it lives a life of righteousness based on this faith, having the attainment of that peace in view in every good action it performs in relation to God, and in relation to a neighbour, since the life of a city is inevitably a social life.[377]

The earthly peace which is essential for the security and peaceful flourishing of both the earthly city, and the heavenly city which is on pilgrimage in the earthly city and as part of it, is the product of a "compromise of between human wills about the things relevant to mortal life". Augustine thinks that in the fallen state, human beings selfishly pursue various kinds of inordinate desires, some from the "animal body" which "weighs down the soul" with its cravings and corruptibility, and some, as we have seen, from the soul itself; and this brings people into conflict. The laws of the earthly city regarding "those things which are designed for the support of this mortal life" are based on a compromise between such "clashing wills", the object of which is to preserve peace between individuals so that a society can flourish in which all can pursue whatever they hold to be the human good, without coming into conflict.[378] This is a sort of purely natural good, a non-salvific ethic lacking authentically moral motivation, but still, in entirely natural terms, a certain form of good, for Augustine. Christians, of course, ought not to pursue temporal goods greedily and for their own sake, and should love their neighbours as themselves; they should not need the temporal law; but the temporal law is necessary in a world where not all are Christians, and where not all Christians live according to the grace they have received [19.27].

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377 CD XIX.17.

378 Augustine, unlike Taylor, thinks that even the highest pagan virtue - self sacrifice such as that of Regulus - is driven by what are in absolute terms, under the eternal law, morally bad motives; in the case of Regulus, the desire for glory, for endless fame. The motivation resembles the Platonic reason for the desire to beget children, stated by Diotima in the *Symposium*: to achieve a kind of immortality. Ironically, for Augustine, personal immortality is achieved through selflessness.

The principle Augustine extracts, then, concerning the "temporal law" or "earthly peace" is markedly similar to that of Hobbes: for the sake of their own preservation and secure flourishing, everyone ought in effect to pursue a peace based on the laying aside of the radical liberty of the state of nature, which Augustine's examples of bandits, Cacus and the like recall, and "*be contented with so much liberty against others men, as he would allow other men against himselfe*."[379] Augustine, like Hobbes, seems to regard this as an argument for absolute obedience to (in Augustine's case) the Roman Emperor; perhaps it is a better argument for a state based on the guarantee of "the sort of freedom that people have in mind when they think they are free because they have no human masters" (DLA 1.15 passage above).

Taylor's doctrine has no such potential. Although he sets a very high importance by free choice - internal autonomy, we might say - he does not see the external kind as an important correlate; this despite the importance for him of a contingent and morally ambiguous universe as a context for meaningful moral choice. For Taylor, both God and the state can ultimately rule what they like: God is just in a way analogous to everyday human notions of justice, for Taylor, but this is known only by intuition, revelation and, ironically, a rather empirical form of probabilism.

So a purely natural basis for law, and for guarantees of and restrictions on personal liberty, in the political sphere, is important for this reason; and a purely rational morality is important for the theological equivalent, to ensure equivalence between ordinary notions of the good, and divine commands. Intuition is not enough to preserve this. For the proto-Kantians like the Cambridge Platonists, a compelling moral obligation - perhaps it would be better to say, a *morally compelling* obligation, which the will can adopt or reject according to either acquiescence in objective goodness, or its own

379 Hobbes, *Leviathan* 14. Original emphasis.

selfishness - provides the latter;[380] liberal theories of "negative" freedom, partly derived from Grotius and Hobbes, have been seen in the western tradition as the basis for the former.

380 Darwall 1995 p110: "it can be shown that the idea of self-determination played a very significant role in the thought of a number of early modern British philosophers and, indeed, that some of those writers advanced versions of a thesis we are much more familiar with in Kant: that moral obligation is self-imposed in the practical reasoning of a self-determining agent." For Kant, in addition, the liberty of the rational agent *implies* the freedom of having no human master. Inner self-determination is a form of *libertas*, as well as an act of indifferent choice: a higher freedom of being truly free in ourselves only when we act according to the exceeding lawfulness of the law. This seems to better fit Augustine's Christian Platonist metaphysic than Augustine's own intuitionism: for Kant, our highest freedom is precisely to freely determine *ourselves* according to the moral law, which is both within, and yet above us.

Conclusion

For Taylor, the atomic swerve, or at least, the free indifferent state of nature in general and human nature in particular, including the free inclining of the passions to their own objects, and sceptical probabilism concerning reason, provides a neutral context for meaningful moral choice (which to some extent needs to be *achieved*, just as a maturing child achieves a measure of rational independence of the effects of nature and nurture). The natural order is not wholly determined by cause and effect but contains a real element of contingency, allowing for free choice. However, ironically, the moral indifference of intellect, will and nature, as well as guaranteeing freedom, also inevitably involves error and sin, though not in any given instance.

Grace always relates to nature in the same way, 'redemptively', and is never wholly lacking to nature; whether explicitly in the Christian revelation, or in making those outside a "law to themselves". There is never any state of innocence except a pre-moral one in which right and wrong do not apply; but this does not lead to the Manichean-like conclusion that nature is intrinsically evil and corrupting without grace: the natural passions, for example, are natural goods in the right moral context, and coupled with the right disposition of the person.

Taylor is, however, vulnerable to the criticism that in theological terms, nature in effect *requires* or is *owed* grace, given the disproportion between its natural condition and the demands of morality, which for Taylor is wholly "supervenient" upon mere nature. We always possess free will naturally; but not for supernatural things. Taylor is exposed to the criticisms of Heber and Coleridge: if the supernatural is *demanded* of us, then grace is owed, if grace is required to fulfil it; and if not, he is a Pelagian. To a certain extent,

grace enables the sort of legal righteousness that de Lubac suggests Baius held it to enable in Adam in innocence and in humanity under grace: a form of Pelagianism enabled by grace, one might say. But this is not the whole story for Taylor, as we saw in chapter 3.

The conclusion that moral standards are based purely on divine commands or a certain higher intuition is an alarming one; but Taylor found the attempt to derive morality from self-interest or preservation equally alarming, would doubtless have found the utilitarian calculus so too. Dr Darwall has drawn attention to the appearance of proto-Kantian theories, but they seem to have had little influence on Taylor, despite his personal contacts with some of their progenitors. Aspects of Taylor's moral ideas resemble virtue ethics, notably concerning the acquisition of good habits that contribute to individual and collective "well-being".

So Taylor makes use of Epicurean, sceptical, and voluntarist ideas to preserve both free will, and the insight behind the traditional doctrine of original sin, but certain difficulties arise from this, notably concerning his voluntaristic view of God and His relations with His creatures, which a dose of Christian Platonist theological and ethical intuitionism fails to quite resolve.[381]

Taylor's use of Platonist and Epicurean ideas in working out a 'naturalistic' view of original sin tends to shift the emphasis from Augustine's central idea, that original sin abides in the *will* of fallen humanity, in the rational soul itself, as pride, or a delight in or attraction to one's own selfish good above all; and instead makes this the result of influence from the 'lower' parts of human nature, from appetites and passions, swaying the will or clouding moral judgement. We are brought back to Heber and Coleridge's

381 Compare my conclusions on this with an old article by Robert Hoopes, "Voluntarism in Jeremy Taylor and the Platonic Tradition," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 13 (1950): 341-54.

criticism: if such influence is resistible, and can be overcome, then Taylor's view simply resembles Pelagianism; if not, his view is no different from, or is even still more Manichean than, that of his Calvinist opponents (to the extent that sin is the result of nature itself, as Heber points out, not even the fallen, corrupted condition of it). However, Taylor is surely right that on Augustine's account, sin is from what has *become* a natural tendency of the will, after Adam, albeit 'free' in the sense of uncaused by anything outside the soul itself. Either that, or Manicheanism has in effect become true after the fall: the soul is corrupted in the body, "as in a corrupted vessel".[382]

However, Taylor observes, and attempts to preserve, the Augustinian idea of will as more than mere choice, and the anthropological considerations that flow from this. Professor Hilary Armstrong identifies two kinds of freedom in the Greek tradition: we might label them Platonist/Stoic, and Epicurean: or even, Augustinian, and Pelagian:

> On one side the essence of freedom is perceived as being free to be *oneself,* which means … to be oneself at one's best, to energise according to one's full and complete *energeia*, to realise which is one's good and goal; and to be so without external limitation, constraint or impediment - external, that is, to one's true nature or selfhood. On the other hand, the essence of freedom is seen as consisting in an absolutely undetermined power of choice between alternatives, a liberty of opinion not restricted or determined even by one's own nature …
>
> The Epicureans [were] the Hellenic philosophers who passionately championed the view that the power of absolute undetermined choice is the essence of human freedom. For them indeterminacy is built into our nature by the famous (though none too clearly attested)

382 Calvin is probably an Augustinian, not a 'Manichean': the will delights in sin, it is not overborne by other forces. Wendel, *Calvin*, p189f.

doctrine of the atomic 'swerve'. [383]

Taylor wants both; Augustine's *liberum arbitrium,* the natural, created power of the will, must include liberty of indifference, "Epicurean" freedom, as a necessary condition of moral responsibility, even if the will is also an inclination of the mind to something, a wish or a delight, and the former kind of freedom the ultimate aim. Taylor belongs to a wider movement in both Catholicism and Protestantism, beginning with Erasmus and flowering through the influence of Molina and Arminius, that sought to reconcile the two kinds of freedom. Some English divines began to pursue this, even before the influence of Arminius; Hooker is a paramount example, though whether he ever quite reached the view that the elect could fall from grace, is debatable. However, there is no doubt that Taylor and his fellow Laudians held precisely this view.

In a way, pure freedom of indifference without the freedom to energise according to the good, is precisely the origin of the problem: in a sense this is just what Plotinus means we are too pleased with, when we are too pleased with being "in our own power": the power to determine for ourselves entirely what we will do, without reference to any higher good assessed according to any standard beyond our own capacity to choose; which ironically ends up meaning, according to any standard other than our own will in the sense of what pleases us most, just as for Augustine, delight in one's own power, leads to pride.[384] However, Taylor is surely right that liberty of indifference is a necessary condition of moral responsibility, just as 'negative liberty', autonomy in the external

383 *Two Views of Freedom: a Christian objection in Enn.VI.8?* in *Hellenic and Christian Studies* London 1990 p397-8.

384 The view that freedom means pure liberty of indifference is often ascribed to Kant, and often by Roman Catholic scholars eager to defend a more 'Augustinian' notion of freedom in contradistinction to a perceived amoral licence inherent in Western liberalism (including de Lubac; see also D.C. Schindler's otherwise excellent *Communio* article, *Freedom beyond choosing: Augustine on the will and its objects*.) That I think this a travesty of Kant's actual views, will be apparent from my various earlier allusions to him.

sense, is a necessary condition of a free society (something which Taylor fails to appreciate, as we saw in chapter 5); though neither are a sufficient condition of some more positive vision.

The will understood merely as the power of choice tends to certain anthropological implications: there is a loss of integration between the thinking and choosing mind, and the ‘lower’ features of human nature; feelings become purely external to definition of the self, and the mind rather 'static', purely rational. We have seen Taylor endeavour to preserve libertarian freedom while avoiding such a disjunction of thought and feeling. For Taylor as for Augustine, the objective of the Christian economy is the direction of the whole man in the right, rather than the wrong, direction; though for Augustine the 'wrong' direction began in the ruling part, with pride, not in the influence of passion or feeling. And for both Taylor and Augustine, this is an endless process; finite humanity falls infinitely short of the divine perfection. For neither is there any Pelagian good nature or Stoic *bonum naturae*, good or bad simply by its choices.

Finally, Kant and Augustine think original sin - that is, for both, self-love as the basic principle of conduct, and its consequences - arises from pure will; though Augustine *also* thinks it is inherited. Kant, with Taylor, thinks that if it belongs to the thinking self, this cannot be, on Augustine’s own principles concerning the nature of the rational soul. However, as the primatologist Frans de Waal has written, after quoting the passage of Hobbes on human desire we considered towards the end of chapter 2:

> The desire to dictate the behaviour of others is such a timeless and universal attribute of our species that it must rank with the sex drive, maternal instinct, and the will to survive in terms of the likelihood of its being part of our biological heritage.[385]

385 *Good Natured: the origins of right and wrong in humans and other animals*, Harvard UP 1996.

Scientific research shows us that there is a sense in which we inherit our minds, and their tendencies, as well our more obviously 'physical' traits. The relation between the two, and the merit of the 'subtle dualist' arguments of Augustine and Coleridge and many others, remains, of course, a matter of intense debate.

For de Waal, the drive to dominate is ultimately a survival strategy: just as for Hobbes, human acquisitiveness is a way of guaranteeing "the way of [our] future desire", and so our future preservation. But the natural tendency towards sociability and co-operation (observed by Grotius, and even Augustine, as much as Aristotle) is the same; de Waal observes in chimpanzees what Hobbes suggests concerning humans: the desire for domination ends up being a strategy for self-destruction, not survival, as the other members of the group begin to avoid the cheat in the Prisoner's Dilemma, and co-operate to bring down the bullying alpha male. Grotius had already made the same point in relation to states. Taylor observes that whatever our natural inclinations, of mind or body, may dispose us towards, for good or ill, only a conscious choice to act in a certain way, when we could have done otherwise, can be considered strictly moral.

Whether the origin of what Taylor calls our "strange propensity" to our own selfish good is the 'external' influence of instinct, or the by-product of a reflexive consciousness that knows itself, and so loves itself, better than anything else, and how far instinct is shaped by this, or whether the distinction is essentially false, is a debate of the most involved kind, and possibly insoluble, if anything is. However, we have seen that for Augustine, the appetitive nature of the rational soul contributes to a more dynamic and integrated view of human nature as a whole, in which the distinctions are controlled by analogy with Christological dogma: material and immaterial are hypostatically united, they may be distinguished, but not separated.

At any rate, as Armstrong argues,

> What the Platonic tradition [and others, the "older Greek" and "more authentic Christian",] wish their followers to get rid of is the acquisitiveness which not only makes it impossible to start the ascent to the divine but breeds envy, hatred and strife among mankind.[386]

Iris Murdoch has suggested how a form of "Platonic inspiration" might complement "Kantian obligation"[387] in assisting human beings who desire a good will, and value it above "wealth, or honours, or physical pleasures",[388] to be better than they generally find themselves to be: "a place", she says, "for the idea of grace":

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386 Compare Rist 1994, p152: "In the *Symposium* Plato had written that all that is beautiful, and above all beauty itself, arouses desire for a kind of possession. But one of the differences between desire for passing goods, like beautiful bodies, and desire for immaterial goodness, is that desire for the immaterial has no need to be possessive; there is as much and to spare for everyone. The gods, Plato tells us in both the *Phaedrus* (247a) and the *Timaeus* (29e1-2), are neither envious nor grudging. So a proper understanding of the good and the beautiful will bring us (some of us) to an inspired and godlike condition which Plato calls a form of madness (*Phaedrus* 244a-245c). As Diotima puts it (*Symposium* 206e), when we have seen the vision of beauty, we shall beget in the beautiful, produce many noble and splendid ideas (210d), engender true virtue (212a): that is, in plainer terms, we shall do good deeds and know what we are doing and why we are doing it. Furthermore, this love brings its necessities, obligations and responsibilities. Beauty is both Destiny and the Goddess of the labours of childbirth. Eros is a compelling force, and Diotima's remarks about begetting in the beautiful suggest a double analogy for good works: the inevitability of orgasm when a certain stage has been passed in the confrontation with beauty, and the subsequent conception." Plainly, this is an important source for Augustine's idea of a good will: "We can all enjoy [truth] equally and in common; there is ample room, and it lacks for nothing. It welcomes all of its lovers without envy; it belongs to them all but is faithful to each. No one says to another, 'Step back so that I too can get close; let go of it so that I too can embrace it.' They all cleave to it; they all touch it. No one tears off a piece as his own food; you drink nothing from it that I cannot also drink. For what you gain from that communion does not become your own private property; it remains intact for me. When you breathe it in, I need not wait for you to give it back so that I can breathe it too. No part of it ever becomes the private property of any one person; it is always wholly present to everyone." DLA 2.14. We have seen in ch.4 how even temporal goods can be rightly loved, on Taylor's developed version of Augustine's account: that is, not in a possessive, acquisitive, greedy way, but for the sake of their own created value and goodness. Feelings, and even appetites, can be integrated with, given their direction by, a rightly-directed will, and in their own measure help to motivate the will itself. "The Augustinian saint will not separate his lower sensible interests from his higher, but will blend his heart into a new but ordered unity, with God's help." Rist 1994 p185. This is important in the context of what we have just discussed concerning the relation between 'material' and 'immaterial' in human nature, and relates directly to both the purpose and the general significance of the sacramental principle, for Taylor as for the Fathers. Taylor, like Augustine, wants our will to be in its own power, and not driven by our feelings; but he also wants our feelings to be rightly directed, following a good will, and thinks the right feelings can have a legitimate motivational role.

387 As John Rist contrasts them, 1994 p153.

388 DLA 1.12.

> Any religion or ideology can be degraded by the substitution of self, usually in some disguise, for the true object of veneration. However in spite of what Kant was so much afraid of I think there is a place both inside and outside religion for a sort of contemplation of the Good, not just by dedicated experts but by ordinary people: an attention which is not just the planning of particular actions but an attempt to look right away from self towards a distant transcendent source of perfection, a source of uncontaminated energy, a source of new and quite undreamt of virtue. This attempt, which is a turning away from the particular, may be the thing that helps most when difficulties seem insoluble, and especially when feelings of guilt keep attracting the gaze back towards the self. …
>
> Love is the general name of the quality of attachment and it is capable of infinite degradation and it is the source of our greatest errors; but when it is even partially refined it is the energy and passion of the soul in its search for the Good, the force that joins us to Good and joins us to the world through the Good. Its existence is the unmistakable sign that we are spiritual creatures, attracted by excellence and made for the Good. It is a reflection of the warmth and light of the sun.[389]

Taylor, as well as Augustine, would have found a reflection of many of his ideas in this passage. But for Taylor, like Augustine, "our goodness, unlike the fictitious perfection of the Platonic and Stoic sage, remains fragile, and carnal customs can easily set in again.

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389 *The Sovereignty of Good*, London 1970, p101, 103. For Murdoch, like Augustine according to John Rist, "Logically correct thinking can aim at all sorts of goals, but if we are to say that one of these goals is superior to another, it seems right to think of it as more valuable, more worthy of love and respect, rather than as more intelligible. Augustine certainly held that the more lovable is also the more intelligible, but if we are talking about human motivation, we need an object which is desirable as well as intelligible, Augustine knew that as well as Hume or Plato." 1994 p184.

Murdoch also has an 'Augustinian' idea of the role of humility: "Simone Weil tells us that the exposure of the soul to God condemns the selfish part of it not to suffering but to death. The humble man perceives the distance between suffering and death, and although he is not by definition the good man perhaps he is the kind of man who is most likely of all to become good." p104. Augustine on the humility of God's example in Christ, designed to subvert human pride: "Just as the devil in his pride brought proud-thinking man down to death, so Christ in his humility brought obedient man back to life ... Christ came humble and lowly, he rose, and raised up man who believed in him." de Trin. IV.3.13.

The Pelagians are wrong to imagine that [sinlessness is attainable] on earth".[390] Perhaps he can help to remind us that, as part of an approach such as Murdoch describes, we might find ready help in "signs" in the old patristic sense of the term, clothed in material form and celebrated and administered in a community which they help to foster; signs which can help to empower and enable, to give what they signify.

77,173 words.

390 Rist 1994 p179, on Augustine "after about 415".

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