EVOLUTIONARY MONISM:
THE CONTINUITY OF JOHN HICK'S THOUGHT

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN CANDIDACY
for
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS

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August 1985
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INTRODUCTION

John Hick, throughout a long and prolific career as theologian and philosopher of religion, has directly faced some of the major problems confronting modern Christian thinkers. Hick's first major book, *Faith and Knowledge* (1957), addressed the problem of the rationality of religious faith. His second, *Evil and the God of Love* (1966), addressed the problem of evil in a world which is purported to be under the guidance of a loving God. Both books have undergone many reprints and have become classics. More recently, Hick has turned his attention to the problem raised by our modern pluralistic culture: the relationship of Christianity to the other world religions. In his book *God and the Universe of Faiths* (1973) he presented his thought on this new theme. Then, in *Death and Eternal Life* (1976), he attempted to extend his thought on the subject of religious pluralism by sketching out a "global theology" of the destiny of human life after the grave. (1) This book has been hailed as "possibly a landmark study." (2)

In *God and the Universe of Faiths* Hick announced that his new theological position requires that Christians undergo a change in the direction of their thought. No longer must they believe that their own religion is the only way of salvation. Instead they must come to see that all the major world religions are equally valid ways of salvation. All religions are "encounters from different historical and cultural standpoints with the same infinite divine reality and as such they lead to differently focused awareness of that reality." (3) Hick refers to
this radical change in perspective as a "Copernican Revolution in
teology." (4) The Copernican revolution in astronomy involved a change
from the Ptolemaic belief that the earth is at the centre of the
universe, to the belief that the sun is at the centre and all the
planets revolve around it. The analogous Copernican revolution in
theology involves a change from the belief that Christianity or any of
the world's religions is at the centre of the "universe of faiths," to
the belief that God is at the centre, and that all religions revolve
around him. In Death and Eternal Life Hick sought to work out his new
theological perspective.

These recent developments in Hick's theology raise the problem of the
continuity of his thought, as apparent tensions within his writings
testify. He describes these developments as involving "a considerable
process of rethinking." (5) Yet elsewhere he maintains that his later
work "built upon his earlier work." (6) How are we to assess these
apparently incompatible statements?

Hick's critics also give conflicting assessments of his latest
theological developments. Some assess his thought in terms of
continuity, whilst others assess his thought in terms of discontinuity.
G. D'Costa, for example, arguing from the presupposition that Hick's
later works are logically dependent on his earlier works, concludes
that Hick's Copernican revolution in theology is incoherent. (7) G.
Loughlin, however, contends that D'Costa's argument is spurious,
precisely because it does take for granted the continuity of Hick's
thought. "It would be like importing Wittgenstein's Tractatus into the
Investigations, and then criticising the latter while citing the former.\(8\) The Catholic theologian I. Trethowan also assesses Hick's thought in terms of discontinuity. He is convinced that Hick has departed so far from his earlier Christian position, that he can "no longer take [Hick] seriously as a Christian." Indeed, as early as \textit{Evil and the God of Love}, Trethowan began to doubt Hick's integrity as a Christian theologian. How, then, are we to assess Hick's thought - in terms of continuity or in terms of discontinuity?\(9\)

In this thesis I address the problem of the continuity of Hick's thought by asking whether there might be one basic conceptual structure underlying his thought. My investigations show, I believe, the possibility that Hick has consistently developed his thought from within the framework of a fundamentally unchanged ontological scheme. Thus I aim to show that when viewed from this perspective, his latest theological developments mark no fundamental hiatus in his thought. I call Hick's underlying ontological scheme "evolutionary monism." The term "evolutionary" captures the theme of change and development which this position regards as a fundamental constituent of reality. We may illustrate the evolutionary theme by means of a quotation taken from \textit{Death and Eternal Life}. The context is anthropology.

... mental life emerges in the increasing complexification of the evolutionary process, and develops through semi-individuality within a collective consciousness such as we glimpse in the close-knit communal life of primitive tribes into the plurality of fully differentiated selves which we now experience.\(10\)
The term "monism" (as distinct from "dualism") implies that this ontological position recognises an original oneness or unity (as opposed to duality) in the basic fabric of life. In Death and Eternal Life, again in the context of anthropology, Hick identifies this unity by the Hindu term "atman."

... atman ... is supra-individual, the presently unconscious unity of humanity or perhaps even of created life as a whole."(11)

The above quotations are taken from Death and Eternal Life because, as we shall see, it is in this book that Hick's evolutionary monism is fully revealed. I aim to show that, even from his earliest writings, this evolutionary monist position is the implicit framework within which he develops his thought.

In the three chapters of the thesis I analyse Hick's three major books, taking them in chronological order. In the first chapter, "The Human Knower," I analyse Faith and Knowledge. I begin by trying to show that, at the outset of Hick's academic pilgrimage, his basic conceptual orientation is consistent with evolutionary monism. Then, I analyse his epistemology in terms of his emerging conceptual scheme. In the second chapter, "The Human in the Making," I analyse Evil and the God of Love and try to show that, by continuing to use the evolutionary monist scheme as a framework, Hick is able to develop an anthropology out of his epistemology. Thus he is able to address the problem of the co-existence of evil and the Christian conception of a God of Love. In the third chapter, "The Human after Death," I analyse Death and Eternal
Life. Here I show that, by holding onto his conceptual scheme, and by using this as a framework within which to interpret data gleaned from the major world religions, Hick is able to develop the anthropology of Evil and the God of Love into a global theology of life after death. Thus I hope to show that Hick's Copernican revolution in theology involves no radical departure from his earlier thought when seen from the vantage point of his basic conceptual position.

I conclude my thesis by addressing some specific theological developments in Hick's thought. I consider these in the light of the overall unity of his thought in order to see if we can thus gain a deeper understanding of his theology.
The title of Hick's first major book *Faith and Knowledge* is, like all good titles, suggestive, allusive, and inviting. It suggests that there is a connection between faith and knowledge, yet it is allusive for it gives nothing away as to what the connection might be. In order to analyse the conceptual structure of Hick's thought, it is crucial that we set out precisely how Hick conceives the nature and relationship of these two dimensions of life.

**FAITH AS PROPOSATIONAL BELIEF**

Hick maintains that the prevailing view held by both non-Christian and Christian scholars alike is that faith and knowledge are clearly distinct. Hick, however, is persuaded to the contrary. He believes that faith is knowledge. Indeed, that is the thesis of his book. Hick develops his argument firstly by criticising the view to which he is opposed. On this view faith is understood to be assent to certain theological propositions such as 'God exists' or, 'God is three in one and one in three' or, 'Jesus is both human and divine.' Assent is made by an act of will since, it is held, there is no direct evidence or proof of the truth of the propositions. Knowledge is contrasted to faith for it is understood to be "a direct and infallible acquaintance with reality," or "intellectual vision." One achieves this not by an act of will but rather either because a proposition is self evidently true or because it has been proven by strict logical rules.
Hick considers four major types of the propositional view of faith. The first is that of Thomas Aquinas, to whom Hick traces the source of the propositional view. According to Hick, Thomas focuses on the distinction this view makes between faith as an act of willing assent, and knowledge as "intellectual vision." The second emphasises the part played by the will in faith and compares faith to scientific belief. The third traces the origin of faith to moral experience. The fourth sees faith as an inference to the existence of God from other evidences within our experience. We will pay close attention to Hick's analysis of each theory of faith, for by so doing we will be able to gain an understanding of his basic conceptual orientation.

According to Hick, although Thomas maintained that the truths of faith must be grasped by an act of will, he did not think that this involves a leap in the dark. On the contrary, he held, there are good reasons for believing: there are the scholastic proofs for the existence of God,(4) the yearning of humankind for salvation, the claim of Jesus that he has brought God's salvation to humankind, the evidence for that claim and the conclusion that the Roman Church with the Pope as its head is the guardian of these truths. However, these reasons are not compelling, for then faith would not be faith. Instead it would be knowledge. The reasons, then, are more like a ladder which, when one has reached the top, one kicks away and grasps the divine truths by faith. It appears, then, on Hick's analysis of Thomas' theory of faith, that although reasoning plays a significant role as a "preamble to faith," in the end knowledge and faith are of an entirely different epistemological status. Whilst in the realm of knowledge the truth compels assent, in the area of faith the truth is grasped by an
exercise of will.

We may represent the Thomistic view of faith, as Hick understands it, according to the following dualistic scheme:

\[ \text{faith} \]
\[ \text{knowledge} \]

The line represents the impassable gulf between the two modes of human experience. We may say that there is a deep cleavage between the human as knower and the human as believer.

Hick describes the incompatibility of faith and knowledge which he finds in this view;

It is accordingly in the nature of the case impossible to have knowledge and faith simultaneously in relation to the same object; knowledge is intellectual vision, whilst faith is firm and undoubting belief concerning that which is not (at any rate in this life) directly knowable.(5)

As we shall see, it is precisely Hick's own argument that one necessarily does have, simultaneously, knowledge and faith in relation to the same object.(6) If Hick is unhappy about splitting up faith from knowledge into separate "watertight" compartments, we shall see from his analysis of the three other theories of faith that he is also unhappy with the other extreme which reduces faith to merely another mode of human experience.
The second view is held by William James and F.R. Tennant. Hick's analysis need not detain us except where Tennant's theory raises the question of "scientific faith," i.e., the notion that faith as an act of "willing" assent plays an essential part in scientific knowledge as well as in religion.

Religious faith is frequently defended by the claim that all our certainties rest on imperfect evidence and therefore involve an act of faith. It is pointed out, for instance, that even the scientific enterprise as a whole rests on the believed and imperfectly evidenced grounds of the uniformity of nature. Since this is so, religious faith needs no special justification.

Hick, however, denies that scientific 'belief' is "an act of faith" of the same kind as religious faith. "Religious faith," he says, "is absolute and implicit belief," whereas scientific 'belief' is an "assumption." It "is an act not of faith but of policy." If the facts do not fit, says Hick, the scientist is then prepared to "withdraw his assumption." By contrast, the religious believer's faith is characterised by "unshakeable dogma, able to absorb and reinterpret all adverse or seemingly contradictory circumstances." (7)

The third view, which traces the origin of faith to moral experience, is held by Immanuel Kant and D.M. Baillie. For Kant, God (as well as the soul and immortality) is a necessary implicate of human moral nature. Since the highest good is "virtue crowned with happiness," God is necessary to ensure that virtue is rewarded accordingly. (8) Belief in God, then, involves the logical move: 'if morality then God.'
Hick criticises this view because it denies that faith is awareness of God and therefore also denies the possibility of entering into the personal relationship with him which is claimed by religious believers. D.M. Baillie thinks that the "realm of religious reality is given us in, or with, our moral consciousness in a much more direct way..." than Kant proposes. (9) However, it appears from Hick's analysis that the relationship between morality and faith on Baillie's view is still a logical one. Baillie believes that if we recognise the authority of conscience, then, logically, we must accept the existence of God - for without the idea of God our absolute values are meaningless. God's existence for Baillie is an "ultimate implicate" of our moral conscience. (10)

Hick solidly rejects Baillie's view, and, by implication, Kant's view as well.

I cannot discover any logically compulsory route from the character of our ethical experience to divine existence, any necessary transition from respect for conscience to belief in God.... It therefore seems clear that some other factor than logical calculation lies behind the move from morality to God; and this other factor is of course precisely religious faith. (11)

Lastly, Hick considers the theory of H. Newman. Newman also believes that religious faith is assent to theological propositions. However, he does not believe that this disqualifies it from the realm of knowledge. Theological propositions, he maintains, are of the same "logical type" as propositions concerning everyday events and situations. "God exists" is, according to Newman, in the same category
as "Lincoln was born in 1809" and "Britain is an island." Each of us comes to believe the latter type of proposition not because we have each verified it for ourselves by any strict method of verification nor are we in most cases able to do so, but because we infer it from other evidences. We were taught at school that Britain is an island, we can see it is so on maps, books take it for granted and so on. In a similar way, according to Newman, the theistic believer infers the existence of God. (12) He lists three pointers which persuade him of the truth of theism; the voice of conscience which suggests one to whom we are responsible, the universal practice of worship, and the providential ordering of the world. (13) Since we rightly refer to the first kind of belief as knowledge, Newman thinks we can also justifiably call the second kind of belief knowledge.

Whilst Hick is favourable to Newman's thesis that "We know a great many things which we are not able to prove,"(14) he is unhappy about Newman's assertion that religious faith is in the same category as everyday beliefs, and is arrived at by comparable procedures.

We see then, from Hick's critical analysis of the propositional view of faith, that he does not want to split up faith from knowledge in a dualistic way. Nor does he want to reduce religious faith either to the same epistemological status as scientific beliefs or to a logical postulate from moral experience or to an inference from evidences in our experience. The tendency away from dualism and reductionism is further heightened when he considers faith as mediated awareness.
According to Hick, the ordinary religious believer does not report a faith which is assent made through an act of will to certain theological propositions, as the propositional view asserts. Rather, he or she reports an awareness of God, an awareness which is mediated to him or her through awareness of the world. The religious believer meets God "through his social and material environments;" in and through "the gracious actions of his friends he apprehends the divine grace," in and through "the marvels and beauties of nature he traces the hand of the Creator."(15) Nor, according to Hick, does knowledge consist of "an infallible acquaintance with truth." All cognition, he maintains, involves an "inescapable subjective element."(16) Further, all cognitive experience involves mediated awareness. Faith, therefore, exhibits the same "epistemological pattern" as all our knowing.(17) For this reason, Hick maintains, faith can properly be regarded as knowledge. Faith is "religious knowledge."(18) Such a view is non-dualistic, for it does not split up experience into two incompatible compartments. When one understands faith and knowledge as mediated awareness, one does indeed have both knowledge and faith in relation to the same object. One does not cease to be aware, or to know, that it is the friends who are performing the gracious action, nor that the sunset consists of a movement of the earth around the sun.(19)

The ordinary believer does not ... report an awareness of God as existing in isolation from all other objects of experience. His consciousness of the divine does not involve a cessation of his consciousness of a material and social environment. It is not a vision of God in solitary glory, filling the believer's entire mind and blotting out his normal field of perception.(20)
Nor is such a view of faith reductionist. The ordinary believer does not think that the circumstances and events of life are in themselves divine, which would entail one's awareness of the world and one's awareness of God being the same mode of cognition. Rather, the ordinary believer believes these are the media of God's activity towards him.

Hick's basic conceptual orientation is away from both the dualistic separation and the reductionistic identity of believing and knowing. We discover more about the relation of faith to knowledge when we explore Hick's view of significance. Hick recognises three main "orders of significance" or "types of existence." These interpenetrate and mediate one another. He calls the three: "the natural," "the ethical," (or "moral") and "the religious," and, "... in order to relate ourselves appropriately to each," he says, "a primary and unevidenceable act of interpretation is required which, when directed toward God, has traditionally been termed 'faith'."(21) Further, Hick argues that there is a variation in interpretive freedom over the three modes of cognition. It is the three orders of significance, their relationship of interpenetration and mediation, and the variation in freedom of interpretation over the three that are crucial to his conceptual scheme concerning knowledge and faith.

SIGNIFICANCE AND INTERPRETATION

In order to understand what Hick means by "significance," we must go back to the preface of Faith and Knowledge. Here Hick acknowledges his debt to the Idealist tradition and to its forefather, Immanuel Kant. Through these he learned that the mind plays an active role in knowledge.(22) Accordingly, Hick introduces us to the two key terms
which he maintains are fundamental to all cognition, "significance" and its correlate "interpretation". The mind, he says, actively interprets our world as significant. That is, we interpret it as an orderly and settled cosmos, not as a phenomenal chaos.

Significance, then, is;

... that fundamental and all pervasive characteristic of our experience which de facto constitutes it for us the experience of a world and not of a mere empty void or churning chaos.(23)

We can illustrate what Hick means by significance and interpretation by using one of his own examples. He compares how a twentieth century Westerner and a stone-age savage might experience the same object (in this case a fork). The twentieth century Westerner interprets the object as a "man-made instrument for conveying food into the mouth." He does so because he has, through past experience, acquired this concept and it is now part of the 'furniture' of his mind. A stone-age savage, on the other hand, can only interpret the object in terms of the acquired furniture of his own mind. For him it is significant as "a marvellously shining object which must be full of mana and must not be touched; or as a small but deadly weapon; or as a tool for digging; or just as something utterly baffling and unidentifiable." The object, then, "does not bear its meaning [or significance] stamped upon it" but requires an act of interpretation in order for it to become significant to the one who experiences it.(24)
SIGNIFICANCE AND ACTION

We can also use this example to illustrate a further point concerning significance. It is that significance is "essentially related to action."(25) To interpret the object as a fork involves our having a dispositional attitude towards using it as an eating implement.

There is also a second sense in which significance implies action. Hick claims that it is by trying out our various interpretations of our world that they are verified or falsified - we have learned to interpret the object as an instrument for eating in large part by actually using it as such. Indeed, our very survival in a material environment depends on our getting our interpretations right. We would not survive very long if we constantly misinterpreted fire as something safe to put our hands in. Hick develops this characteristic of cognition more fully in relation to the problem of evil in Evil and the God of Love.(26)

Significance, then, implies "practical significance" in that firstly;

... the significance of a given object (or situation) for a given individual consists in the practical difference which the existence of that object makes to that individual.(27)

and secondly;

There is also a reciprocal influence of action upon our interpretations. For it is only when we have begun to act upon our interpretations and have thereby verified that our environment is capable of being successfully inhabited in terms of them, that they become fully "real" modes of
INTERPRETATION AND MEDIATION

Hick goes on to argue that we experience different levels of (practical) significance and that these interpenetrate and are superimposed one upon the other. He gives an example of this from everyday experience. I see an object and interpret it as a rectangular red 'thing' on the floor. On looking more closely, I see or interpret it (and am disposed to use it) as a book. The second level of interpretation does not annihilate the first in a dualistic sense nor is it reducible to it, but the second is mediated by the first.

THREE ORDERS OF COGNITION

Hick is especially concerned to show that this epistemological pattern of mediation and interpenetration occurs between what he recognises as three main orders of significance: the natural, the moral, and the religious.

Natural:

To apprehend our world as naturally significant is to interpret it as an "objective physical environment." Solipsism, Hick maintains, remains a possible alternative interpretation. There is nothing in our experience which compels us to experience it in either way. Since our perception of an objective physical reality involves an act of interpretation, it can rightly be referred to as an order of significance.
Moral:

Not only do we move about in a world of enduring physical objects, we also move about in a world of social relationships in which we may recognise or fail to recognise moral responsibility. Moral awareness also involves a basic act of interpretation. We have an "innate disposition" to interpret our experience as being morally significant, but we can refuse to do so. Hick believes that a failure to sense that one has moral responsibility is analogous to physical blindness. Moral significance is the second main order of significance.

Hick maintains that moral significance is mediated by and interpenetrates natural significance. He asks us to consider the following:

I am standing on a cliff top and I look down and see a man caught by the incoming tide. He is shouting for help. So far I see the cliff, the sea coming in - a group of objects in a naturally significant arrangement. (Hick calls this a "situation"). However, I also interpret the natural situation to be morally significant. I am aware of a moral obligation towards the man and am disposed to fetch help - to find the nearest telephone box in order to phone for the police and fire brigade.

This example shows that moral obligation is sensed in the natural situation, yet it cannot be reduced to a simple description of the empirical state of affairs. Moral significance is mediated by natural significance. Essential to this relationship of mediation is the precondition that natural significance implies a stable physical
environment in which one can predict the outcome of one's actions. Moral responsibility, as illustrated, would be meaningless if one could not trust whether the laws of electro-magnetics on which the telephone depends remained stable from one day to the next. This point is crucial to Hick's anthropology as we shall see in the next chapter.

Clearly, moral significance presupposes natural significance. For in order that we may be conscious of moral obligations, and exercise moral intelligence, we must first be aware of a stable environment in which actions have foreseeable results, and in which we can learn the likely consequences of our deeds. It is thus a precondition of ethical situations that there should be a stable medium, the world with its own causal laws, in which people meet and in terms of which they act. (36)

Moral significance also interpenetrates natural significance in that it has an essential reference to action in the (natural) world.

The two spheres of significance, the moral and the physical, interpenetrate in the sense that all occasions of obligation have reference, either immediately or ultimately, to overt action. Relating oneself to the ethical sphere is thus a particular manner of relating oneself to the natural sphere... (37)

Religious:

The third main order of significance, Hick maintains, is religious significance. To interpret our environment religiously is to see in it the activity and presence of God. This, according to Hick, is faith. Again, we see the same epistemological pattern of interpenetration and mediation.
As ethical significance interpenetrates natural significance, so religious significance interpenetrates both ethical and natural.(38)

However, religious significance is unique in that "The divine is the highest and ultimate order of significance, mediating neither of the others and yet being mediated through both of them."(39)

Our awareness of God is mediated by our awareness of physical reality so that:

... the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork.(40)

and our awareness of God is mediated by our moral awareness so that:

... in the imperatives of morality (the believer) feels the pressure upon him of the absolute demands of God.(41)

Religious significance interpenetrates moral and natural significance in the sense that to apprehend our environment as religiously significant involves our having a corresponding dispositional and practical attitude towards it.

Entering into conscious relation with God consists in large part in adopting a particular style and manner of acting towards our natural and social environments. For God summons men to serve him in the world, and in terms of the life of the world. Religion is not only a way of cognizing, but also, and no less vitally, a way of living.(42)
This quotation also raises the point that religious significance is, according to Hick, a "total interpretation" - it is experience as a whole which the believer interprets religiously. (43) In this, religious significance is similar to physical significance but different from moral significance. "... while only some situations have moral significance, all situations have for embodied beings a continuous natural significance. In like manner the sphere of the basic religious interpretation is not merely this or that isolable situation, but the uniquely total situation constituted by our experience as a whole and in all its aspects, up to the present moment." (44)

This then is Hick's basic thesis. He summarises it succinctly:

Our inventory, then, shows three main orders of situational significance, corresponding to the threefold division of the universe, long entertained by human thought, into nature, man, and God. The significance for us of the physical world, nature, is that of an objective environment whose character and "laws" we must learn, and toward which we have continually to relate ourselves aright if we are to survive. The significance for us of the human world, man, is that of a realm of relationships in which we are responsible agents, subject to moral obligation. This world of moral significance is, so to speak, superimposed upon the natural world, so that relating ourselves to the moral world is not distinct from the business of relating ourselves to the natural world but is rather a particular manner of so doing. And likewise the more ultimately fateful and momentous matter of relating ourselves to the divine, to God, is not distinct from the task of directing ourselves within the natural and ethical spheres; on the contrary, it entails (without being reducible to) a way of so directing ourselves.

In the case of each of these three realms, the natural, the human, and the divine, a basic act of interpretation is required which discloses to us the existence of the sphere in question, thus
providing the ground for our multifarious detailed interpretations within that sphere. (45)

We may represent the three interpenetrating and mediating orders of significance diagrammatically.

THE EVOLUTION OF RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS

Hick discusses further the relationship of the moral and religious dimensions in the context of the evolution of religious consciousness. He describes this:

Occurring, significantly, with [this] growth in individuality there has come about a development within religious awareness toward deeper and more penetrating conceptions of the demands which the Supernatural makes upon humanity. From nonrational taboos there has been a development of the ethically rational demand for righteousness, and from an exclusive interest in outward acts and observances to a larger concern which embraces the inner thoughts and intents of the heart. (46)

Here we see the evolutionary theme which is consonant with what we have called evolutionary monism.
Hick describes the evolution of religious consciousness in terms of two stages. The first stage is that of primitive humanity. It is characterised by a collective, tribal mind where the individual is "entirely merged in the group." (47) It seems that from his later writings Hick understands religious consciousness at this stage as a sense of "cosmic wonder" or "numinous awe" or "dependant finitude." It is also a period of "non-rational taboos," where deities are amoral and "often martial and cruel, sometimes requiring human sacrifices." (48)

The second stage corresponds with the growth of individuality and the development of moral consciousness. Primitive religious awareness is 'moralised' or interpenetrated by moral awareness and the religious believer begins to conceive of the supernatural in ethical-religious terms, as the holy, personal God who demands righteousness. (49)

With the strong anti-dualistic orientation of Hick's thought in mind, we may represent the evolution of religious consciousness diagrammatically. (50)
VARIATIONS IN INTERPRETIVE FREEDOM

Before our analysis of Faith and Knowledge is complete, we must consider an aspect of Hick's epistemology that is crucial to the later development of his thought. Hick maintains that, although an act of interpretation is involved in all cognition, the element of subjective freedom in our interpretations varies over the three orders of significance.

Natural:
Hick first considers the natural order of cognition and our interpretation of the material world. Here, he says, our cognitive freedom is at a minimum. He goes so far as to say we are virtually "compelled to experience correctly." An exercise of cognitive freedom in our cognition of the physical world would lead to a "perilous deviation," as anyone who has wrongly interpreted a plate glass door as an open space will bear witness. The physical environment, then, provides "constant practical checks and verifications" which act as a guide to our interpretations within it - "We have all learned, within comparatively slight limits, to discern uniformly the natural significance of our environments."(51)

Moral:
Such is not the case with moral significance. There is more variation here, for our moral environment allows us more subjective freedom in our interpretation. One person may be more morally sensitive than another, or the same person may be morally sensitive in one area of life e.g. in family life, but be chronically insensitive in other areas e.g. in business life. We are not compelled to apprehend the world as
morally significant, but are free to develop or neglect to develop our moral awareness. (52)

Religious:
Concerning religious significance, there is even more freedom. We are not compelled to experience the world as religiously significant. Hick sums up this part of his discussion.

The epistemological pattern which we see emerging is one in which certain aspects of our environment force themselves upon our attention, while others can only reach us if we ourselves admit them across our personal frontiers. As we have seen, our cognitive freedom is at a minimum vis-a-vis the physical world, which is our environment interpreted in terms of its "natural" significance. It has greater scope in relation to the (aesthetic and) ethical significance of the world about us. And it is at a maximum, we must now proceed to notice, in our cognition of the religious significance of our environment, its significance as mediating the divine presence. (53)

It appears that only in the physical dimension does the inherent structure of the world dictate who we are to interpret reality.

This aspect of Hick's epistemology has important implications for the continuity of his thought. Firstly, the hypothesis that faith involves a large measure of subjective freedom becomes crucial for the theodicy and anthropology that Hick develops in *Evil and the God of Love*, as we shall see in the next chapter. Secondly, the hypothesis that religious significance is uncoercive paves the way for his Copernican revolution in theology. Since there is virtually no religious structure inherent in the world which compels us to conceive of it correctly, we are free
to supply any number of valid concepts with which to express our religious experience. Hick's later introduction of a divine phenomena/noumena distinction into his global theology is entirely consistent with this position. (54) Thirdly, the fact that there is no inherent religious structure to the world also has implications for Hick's christology as we shall see. (55)

In our analysis of Hick's first book *Faith and Knowledge* we have seen that Hick rejects a dualistic separation of faith and knowledge. We have traced out his conceptual scheme which consists of three irreducible main modes or orders of awareness; the natural, the moral, and the religious. These are in relationships of interpenetration and mediation. There is a variation in the amount of interpretive freedom over the three orders, there being least freedom in relationship to the natural and most freedom in relationship to the religious. We have also seen that there is an evolutionary theme present in Hick's thought. It appears, then, that at this stage of its development, Hick's thought is compatible with the conceptual scheme I have referred to as evolutionary monism. We shall now see that Hick develops an anthropology out of his epistemology by continuing to use this conceptual scheme as a framework.
In this chapter I will attempt to show how Hick builds upon the epistemology of *Faith and Knowledge* and further develops his conceptual scheme into a fully fledged anthropology. He does this in the context of trying to resolve the problem of theodicy. (1) Traditionally this problem has been posed as a dilemma:

If God is perfectly good, He must want to abolish all evil, if He is unlimitedly powerful, He must be able to abolish all evil: but evil exists; therefore either God is not perfectly good or He is not unlimitedly powerful. (2)

**THE TWO THEODICIES**

Many attempts to resolve the problem have succeeded only in grasping one horn of the dilemma at the expense of the other. However, Hick believes that a Christian theodicy must seek to affirm the goodness and omnipotence of God (for such is the nature of the God of Christian tradition) as well as the full reality of evil. He recognises two kinds of Christian theodicy. The first, which has dominated Western Christian thought, has its roots in the thought of St Augustine of Hippo (AD 354-430). The other was first formulated by Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons (c. 130 -c. 200) Hick calls the first type of approach the Augustinian theodicy and the second type the Irenaean theodicy. (3)
The Augustinian theodicy is based upon a literalist interpretation of the Genesis myth of the 'Fall.' The world was created perfect by God, but angels and the first human pair, Adam and Eve, misused the creaturely freedom with which they were endowed, and rebelled against God. This act of rebellion destroyed the perfect moral harmony of God's good creation and brought as punishment all the natural evils in the world such as earthquakes, disease, and floods, as well as all the moral evils such as cruelty and injustice.

This theodicy wishes to affirm the full reality of evil, while it also seeks to relieve the Good Creator of responsibility by placing it firmly on the shoulders of rebellious creatures. Furthermore, it seeks to affirm the omnipotence of God by asserting that God's purposes are not frustrated by sin and evil—God will work evil into a new, morally harmonious pattern in which some will be saved to enjoy eternal life whilst others will suffer eternal punishment.(4)

The Irenaean theodicy stands in contrast to the Augustinian theodicy. It denies that humanity was created perfect and then "fell" from that perfection. Rather, it posits the thesis that God placed human beings in this world as morally and spiritually immature or imperfect in order that they should, through their own free responses to their environment, grow to perfection. All the natural evils in the world such as earthquakes and diseases, therefore, are not punishment sent by God, but constitute "the divinely appointed situation within which moral responsibility and personal growth are possible."(5) Further, God does not save some whilst sentencing others to eternal punishment. Rather, he never gives up calling humanity to respond to him until all
reach perfection. Thus the Irenaean theodicy concedes the ultimate responsibility for evil to God, yet it also wishes to affirm the goodness (and power) of God by asserting that God will bring a greater good out of the present evils we see in the world.

Of the two theodicies Hick favours the latter. He maintains that it is the more plausible of the two. The evolutionary character of this theodicy is the most compatible with the conceptual scheme that emerged in our analysis of Faith and Knowledge, and, as we shall see, consequently easily lends itself to development in terms of this scheme. Hick mounts four severe criticisms against the Augustinian theodicy, from which he believes the Irenaean theodicy is exempt. Firstly, he asserts that it is self-contradictory: the fact that flawless creatures, though formally free to sin, should actually do so shows that they were not flawless after all. Secondly, he maintains that a literalist interpretation of the Fall of angels and a first human pair, is incredible to educated people of the twentieth century - the story belongs to the category of myth rather than fact. Thirdly, "the idea that God would punish the whole subsequent human race for the disobedience of its first two members attributes to God what to our human understanding can only be called a monstrous injustice." Fourthly, the theodicy rests on a "sub-moral principle" - that God should, for the sake of moral harmony, sentence some to eternal punishment whilst saving others.

In order to show that the Irenaean theodicy is a viable Christian solution to the problem of evil, Hick sets out its structure in
Evil and the God of Love. He begins with the two-stage process of creation which characterises the Irenaean theodicy. This is based upon Irenaeus' distinction between the human made in the "image of God" and the human made in "the likeness of God." First, according to Hick, humans are created in the image of God. God causes them to evolve from lower forms of life as intelligent beings with an innate capacity for moral and religious awareness. Then, through their own free responses to their environment, they are brought to completion in the likeness of God. Hick borrows the phrase "soul-making" from the poet Keats to refer to this process.

...the first stage was the gradual production of 'homo sapiens,' through the long evolutionary process, as intelligent, ethical and religious animals. The human being is an animal, one of the varied forms of earthly life and continuous as such with the whole realm of animal existence. But the human being is uniquely intelligent, having evolved a large and immensely complex brain. Further, the human being is ethical - that is, a gregarious as well as an intelligent animal, able to realize and respond to the complex demands of social life. And the human being is a religious animal, with an innate tendency to experience the world in terms of the presence and activity of supernatural beings and powers. This then is early 'homo sapien,' the intelligent social animal capable of awareness of the divine.(11)

But humans made in the image of God are only the "raw material" for the second stage of the creative process.(12)

In this second stage, of which we are a part, the intelligent, ethical, and religious animal is being brought through one's own free responses into what Irenaeus called the divine 'likeness'.(13)
It is in terms of his developing anthropology and the two stages of creation that Hick accounts for the four aspects of evil with which he believes a theodicy must deal - moral evil or sin, pain, suffering, and natural evil.

Hick identifies the "essence" of moral evil as "selfishness, the sacrificing of others to one's own interests."(14) It is this which manifests itself in individual evil acts such as cruelty and oppression. He identifies pain as a "physical and neurological event," e.g., thirst, hunger, cold, which is experienced by all sentient creatures.(15) The physical sensation of pain must be distinguished from suffering, which Hick identifies as the emotional component in the total pain experience; e.g. loneliness, fear.(16) By natural evil Hick means the non-human events in the world, such as earthquakes, floods, and diseases, which inflict pain and suffering on humans and animals, and which arise from a natural environment functioning according to its own autonomous laws.(17)

THE FIRST STAGE OF CREATION, MORAL EVIL AND PAIN

MORAL EVIL
In order to account for the presence of moral evil in the world, Hick builds upon the thesis he advanced in *Faith and Knowledge* that there are variations in interpretive freedom over the three main orders of cognition. Moral evil arises, Hick maintains, when humans are not fully conscious of the presence of God; full God-consciousness "... would make impossible the natural egoism in which we treat ourselves as the centre of our own world, whilst the awareness of God's universal
care and watchful love would render needless that protective self concern by which we seek to safeguard our own interests in imagined competition with our neighbours." (18) Why, then, does not God create us fully conscious of himself so that we should be unable to fall into moral evil? Or, in epistemological terms, why does he not force himself upon our attention in the way that the natural world forces itself upon our attention? According to Hick, if God did so, then we would not longer be free beings.

In such a situation the disproportion between Creator and creatures would be so great that the latter would have no freedom in relation to God; they would indeed not exist as independent autonomous persons. For what freedom could finite beings have in an immediate consciousness of the presence of the one who has created them, who knows them through and through, who is limitlessly powerful as well as limitlessly loving and good and who claims their total obedience? (19)

Therefore, God preserves our freedom by placing us away from his immediate presence at an "epistemic distance" from himself. (20) He achieves this by creating us through the process of evolution as organic to the natural order with its autonomous laws, earthquakes, and diseases. In order to survive in such an environment and because God's presence is not "borne in upon [us] in the coercive way in which [the] natural environment forces itself upon [our] attention," (21) we inevitably distance ourselves from God by turning our attention away from Him and in upon ourselves in self-centredness.

... in causing man to evolve ... out of lower forms of life God has placed His human creature away from the immediate divine presence, in a world with its
own structure and laws in which he has a certain relative but real autonomy and freedom over against his Creator. He exists in such a close organic relationship to the natural world that this is the first object of his knowledge and interest, and he can become conscious of God's presence in and beyond this only in so far as he is willing to know himself as subordinate to a personal Mind and Will infinitely superior to himself in worth as well as in power.(22)

It is important to note that Hick does not assert that the self-centred person sets awareness of the natural world over against awareness of God in the strong dualistic manner described in the last chapter.(23) But in epistemological terms, and as the last sentence in the above quotation implies, the self-centred person is one who fails to see the natural world as mediating the presence of God. Therefore he or she treats it as an autonomous order without reference to God.

But why does God not create us morally perfect, yet at an epistemic distance from himself, or, in epistemological terms, why is moral significance not "borne in upon [us] in the coercive way in which [the] natural environment forces itself upon [our] attention?" This is, Hick concedes, a logical possibility.(24) However, he maintains that "... virtues which have been formed within the agent as a hard won deposit of his own right decisions in situations of challenge and temptation, are intrinsically more valuable than virtues created within him ready made and without any effort on his own part."(25)

Since Hick's theory of moral evil is built on the epistemology that he established in Faith and Knowledge, we may summarise the theory in terms of that epistemology. Moral evil arises from the fact that
religious and moral significance are non-coercive whilst natural significance is coercive. Since humans are organic to the natural world, it becomes necessary for their survival that they turn their attention towards it and upon themselves in self-centredness. However, they then inevitably fail to 'see' religious significance mediated through it.

PAIN

We have seen that Hick's theory of epistemic distance requires that God creates human beings as organic to the natural world i.e. as having evolved from lower forms of life. Pain, Hick maintains, is crucial to this process. Pain acts as "tutor" for survival in that it directs the organism through its objective unyielding environment. If we experienced no sensation of pain when we placed our hand in a fire or when we remained unclothed in sub-zero temperatures, then, as a race, we would not have survived or evolved. "... movement about the material world is our daily occupation and pain, as a teacher of self-preservation amid these movements, is a necessity."(26)

An objective environment, however, which inflicts pain when its boundaries are transgressed, is also crucial for the evolutionary process. We might imagine the state of affairs where the environment does not inflict pain, either because it is plastic to our wishes, or because "its structure is suspended or adjusted by special divine action whenever necessary to avoid human pain."(27)
In a world which lacked a stable nexus of natural law that inflicts pain upon individuals and extinction upon species that are not adapted to its demands, the evolutionary process would scarcely have progressed beyond its earliest stages and the world would probably still be inhabited mainly by jelly-fish. (28)

In order to maintain his theory of pain, Hick has to remove two objections to it. The first comes as a counter proposal which postulates that the primary function of pain is not to direct a healthy organism through a material world but to warn the unhealthy organism of the presence of disease. The second is the objection, levelled by the philosopher Hume, that pain is not a necessary condition for our survival, but that pleasure would do just as well.

Whilst Hick concedes that pain does play an "invaluable" role in the detection of disease, (29) he observes that very often the sheer quantity of pain outweighs the danger to which it relates, as when the pain of toothache for example, does not relate proportionally to the danger a bad tooth presents to the organism. "In general, then, we must say that the pain mechanism, considered as a warning system relating to disease, is clumsy and inefficient." (30)

The body is adapted by its evolution for survival as a vulnerable fleshy organism inhabiting a fairly fixed and rigid world, and we find that the pain system that has developed to meet this basic need is partly useful but partly distressing when the body is diseased. (31)
But could not God have ensured human survival by motivating us through pleasure rather than pain as Hume contends?

All animals might be constantly in a state of enjoyment; but when urged by any of the necessities of nature, such as thirst, hunger, weariness; instead of pain, they might feel a diminution of pleasure, by which they might be prompted to seek that object, which is necessary to their subsistence. (32)

Hick believes this argument has a "flaw" in it. (33) Firstly he points out that pain is a physical sensation (e.g., the experience of hunger, thirst, cold) whilst pleasure is a psychic or emotional experience (e.g., joy). Thus, in order for Hume's argument to be meaningful, his contrast must be between pleasure and displeasure, rather than pleasure and pain. But neither pleasure nor displeasure as psychic experiences are absolute. A particular experience is only pleasurable in contrast with another, less pleasurable, experience. Therefore, in order for the creature to want to gain the pleasurable experience of eating or drinking, he or she must at times experience the contrasting experience of discomfort or displeasure in the form of hunger or thirst in order to be sufficiently motivated.

Again a succinct summary of Hick's theory of pain is possible in terms of the epistemology he established in Faith and Knowledge. The fixed structure of the natural order 'compels' us to interpret it correctly in that it inflicts pain upon us when its boundaries are transgressed. This state of affairs is essential to the evolution of the human animal for the first stage of creation. (34)
THE EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS

Since the evolutionary process - in particular the relationship of human consciousness, animal life, organic life and inorganic life - plays a crucial role in the first stage of creation, we now need to give it more attention. A more developed anthropological model emerges. Whilst he admits the difficulty of interpreting animal consciousness, Hick believes it probable that those forms of life which have a central nervous system are sentient and therefore are capable of experiencing pain. This includes the lower vertebrates and higher invertebrates such as insects, but excludes lower invertebrates such as sea anemones which have no central nervous system and therefore probably no conscious experiences at all. The human stands at the "apex" of sentient life. Thus human consciousness differs "in degree rather than absolutely from animal consciousness."(35)

The human is not only a sentient creature, but, as we have noted, is also "uniquely intelligent having evolved a large and immensely complex brain."(36) It is because humans are intelligent or "rational" that they turn pain into suffering; because they are "self-conscious ... have a sense of the passage of time ... have the capacity imaginatively to anticipate the future," they are able to translate a pain in the stomach into fear of cancer, or hunger into fear of starvation.(37) That human intelligence belongs to the self-centred aspect of our nature is clear from the fact that Hick identifies it as the serpent in the Adam and Eve myth:
... the serpent, the most subtle of the beasts, represents the exploring experimental intelligence that is inherent in man's rational nature and that is evoked by an environment which challenges him to master it as a natural realm apparently existing in its own right. The serpent is the first scientist; his 'temptation' is the earliest hypothesis; and the fall is the first and most daring experiment.(38)

Hick appears to make a radical distinction between sentient life with human consciousness at its apex, and organic and material reality which, as a rigid world order, stands 'over against' the former, inflicting the pain (which is experienced by the latter) when its boundaries are transgressed. It is through the interaction of conscious life with the rigid world of matter that the evolutionary process continues to higher forms of life.
The spiral represents the continuous interaction of consciousness with the rigid world of matter. This leads to the creation of higher forms of life. Hick summarises and develops his view further:

By an exercise of creative power God caused the physical universe to exist, and in the course of countless ages to bring forth within it organic life, and finally to produce out of organic life personal life; and when man had thus emerged out of the evolution of the forms of organic life, a creature had been made who has the possibility of existing in conscious fellowship with God. (39)

As I have already noted, and as the last sentence in the above quotation draws to our attention, humans made in the image of God are also ethical and religious, as well as intelligent, sentient animals. They possess an innate potential for moral and religious awareness. Therefore, in order to complete the picture of the human animal made in the image of God, we have the intelligent, sentient, moral, religious animal at the first stage of creation.
I have represented moral and religious consciousness by means of a dotted line in order to express the fact that at the first stage of creation, these are not fully active modes of awareness. They are innate, potential modes of awareness. When the human animal created in the image of God begins to experience "a dim sense of moral demand and holy claim, the pressure upon [the human creature's] spirit of his unseen Creator,"(40) then the second stage of creation begins.

**THE SECOND STAGE OF CREATION, SUFFERING AND NATURAL EVIL**

Before we consider the place of natural evil and suffering in the second stage of creation, we must first consider more closely the role played by the religious and moral dimensions.

I have already noted that morality and awareness of God are inseparably bound. Indeed, Hick talks of the second stage of creation both in moral and in religious terms.(41) What then is the relationship between the religious and moral dimensions in the second stage of creation? Hick does not specifically address this question, though we can answer it by referring back to his epistemology. It seems that the fashioning of the individual in the likeness of God involves not only isolated morally good acts, but a total transformation of character. Since religious significance, unlike moral significance, is a total interpretation of the created order, then moral significance must be interpenetrated by religious significance in order to bring about a total moral transformation.(42)

If both the religious and moral dimensions are crucial to the second stage of creation, so too is the natural dimension. In *Faith and*
Knowledge, Hick showed that moral significance is mediated by natural significance and that this requires that the natural dimension be a stable environment. (43) Hick now asserts that a hard, rigid, stable order which is not "plastic to human wishes" and which inflicts pain and suffering is necessary for moral development. (44) He again asks us to imagine what would be the situation if the laws of nature were suspended in order to prevent pain and suffering — if God were to divert the murderer's bullet, or turn the killer's knife into paper. In such a world, Hick maintains, moral development would be impossible.

... a world in which there can be no pain or suffering would also be one in which there can be no moral choices and hence no possibility of moral growth and development. For in a situation in which no one can ever suffer injury or be liable to pain or suffering there would be no distinction between right and wrong action. No action would be morally wrong, because no action could have harmful consequences; and likewise no action would be morally right in contrast to wrong. Whatever the values of such a world, it clearly could not serve a purpose in the development of its inhabitants from self-regarding animality to self-giving love. (45)

A world which was devoid of natural evils would also, according to Hick, prohibit the development of moral character. For this requires an environment in which there are

... challenges to be met, problems to be solved, dangers to be faced, and which accordingly involves real possibilities of hardship, disaster, failure, defeat, and misery as well as of delight and happiness, success, triumph and achievement. For it is by grappling with the real problems of a real environment ... that one can develop in intelligence and in such qualities as courage and determination. And it is in the relationships of human beings with one another, in the context of
this struggle to survive and flourish, that they can develop the higher values of mutual love and care, of self-sacrifice for others, and of commitment to a common good. (46)

Therefore, just as Hick builds on his epistemology and consistently develops his conceptual scheme in order to account for moral evil and pain in the first stage of creation of the human animal, so too he builds upon these in order to account for suffering and natural evil in the second stage of creation.

We are now able to see more clearly the emerging dynamics of Hick's ontological position. He describes the second stage of creation in terms of "tension between our animality and our ethical values" - a tension which arises from our creation as imperfect human animals in the image of God. (47)

But that the human being has a lower as well as a higher nature that one is an animal as well as a potential child of God, and that one's moral goodness is won from a struggle with one's own innate selfishness, is inevitable given one's continuity with the other forms of animal life. (48)
Another diagram may help to clarify this.

The natural dimension, with its characteristic of coercion, plays a powerful role in the evolutionary process and the first stage of creation. However, it is the higher aspect of human nature which must take the lead in resolving the tension between it and the lower nature. It is this that takes the self forward in the creative process. We may say that in Hick's overall scheme the upper dimension has the priority. In accordance with Hick's rejection of dualism, I have represented the origin of the dimensions of human nature as a monistic unity. However, at this stage, the precise nature of the unity is not clear.

In *Evil and the God of Love* Hick argued that the four kinds of evil, moral evil, pain, suffering, and natural evil, all have their place within the divine creative purpose of bringing the human animal created in the image of God to completion in the likeness of God. In that God
will bring final triumph out of all the evils of this life, Hick has tried to affirm the goodness and omnipotence of God as well as to assert the full reality of evil. (49) I have shown that Hick consistently develops his evolutionary monist conceptual scheme. Thus he is able to build an anthropology upon his epistemology in order to set out the structure of the Irenaean theodicy as a viable answer to the problem of evil. In accordance with Hick's evolutionary monist conceptual scheme, Hick's understanding of the four types of evil may be represented:

Moral evil is occasioned by individuals who lack God-consciousness. Natural evil is occasioned by the hard, rigid, world of matter. Both these evils cause suffering in intelligent creatures and pain in sentient creatures.

Hick's anthropology has two important and related implications for the future direction of his thought. The first is that all people will eventually be 'saved' (for if some were not, then God's purpose would be frustrated and he would not, therefore, be omnipotent). (50) The
second is that since very few individuals reach perfection upon this earth, the process of creation must continue beyond the grave. As Hick himself says, these implications contribute to the growing pressure upon him to develop a global theology of death. (51) He does this in his third major work, *Death and Eternal Life*. 
We have now arrived at the crux of the matter concerning the continuity of Hick's thought. *Death and Eternal Life* is the first major book in which Hick attempts to construct a global theology based upon his Copernican revolution in theology. If I can show that, even as he takes up this new theological position, Hick continues to develop his thought within the framework of the conceptual scheme of his earlier writings, then my thesis will be substantially complete. The subject is death, or rather life after death. Hick chose this topic because, he says, for many years there has been a "cultural taboo" on the subject of death. However, there are signs that this is being lifted, for the subject is now being discussed more openly. Yet, Hick laments, Christian theologians have failed to meet this challenge. They are in "disarray" over the topic. While the conservatives resort to an unacceptable mythology of eternal heaven and hell, and the radicals have capitulated to humanism by denying personal life after death, the liberals have just vaguely asserted a doctrine of universal salvation. In short they all have failed to spell out a rationally acceptable theology of death. In *Death and Eternal Life*, Hick sets himself the task of doing just this.

But Hick also chose this topic because, as I noted at the end of the last chapter, his soul-making theodicy requires that life continue after the grave. Since he is sensitive to the criticism that, even as he condemns Augustinian theologians for speculating about a "prehistorical past" he himself speculates about a "post-historical
future," he must show that belief in life after the grave is a rational belief. (2)

In order to construct his global theology of life after death, Hick draws together data from the major doctrines of other world religions as well as from Christianity. However, I aim to show that even as he does this, he builds on the anthropology which he developed in *Evil and the God of Love* in complete continuity with the conceptual scheme of his earlier writings. (3)

We may divide Hick's discussion into three main areas. The first addresses the question: is life after death plausible? The second addresses the question: what is life after death like? The third addresses the question of the structure of human nature.

**IS LIFE AFTER DEATH PLAUSIBLE**

**THE MIND/BODY RELATIONSHIP**

Hick begins his discussion by making the important anthropological assumption that the human self is to be identified as the non-physical aspect of the psycho-physical unity we know as the human person.

We are using 'self' as the name from which our thought necessarily starts, namely the consciousness which is now composing these sentences, or which is now reading them, and which is a source of volitions and a subject of perceptions and emotions. (4)
With this assumption, Hick has, at the outset, indicated the direction his theology will take, for, since he defines the self primarily as bodiless consciousness (his use of mind as a synonym for self accentuates this), then life after bodily death may be conceived of as the continued survival of the mind after the death of the body. However, in order to establish this as a credible hypothesis, he must first show that consciousness is not dependent upon the body for its existence. To that end he turns his attention to the problem of the relationship between the mind and the body. He identifies three main theories concerning the relationship between the mind and the body. These are the mind/body identity theory, epiphenomenalism, and what we may term the mind/body interaction theory.

The first two theories rule out any possibility of the mind existing apart from the body: the mind/body identity theory in which the mind and brain are identified as two terms that refer to the same object, so that the death of one means the death of the other; and epiphenomenalism in which mind and brain are identified as different realities, though the mind is an epiphenomenon of the brain and therefore totally dependent upon it. Hick rejects both theories on logical and empirical grounds. Since consciousness and physical processes within the brain appear to be different kinds of reality, Hick maintains that the burden of proof lies upon those who assert that although apparently different, they are in fact one and the same. However, Hick believes that no such proof can be forthcoming. Proof of identity would require that the phenomena in question have the same spatial reference. While it is possible to locate a brain process in space, it is impossible (without begging the question) to locate a
mental event in space. He rejects epiphenomenalism on the grounds that it entails total determinism, and like all such theories, it is self-refuting. The body, as part of the material world, is subject to the physical laws of cause and effect; if the mind were only an epiphenomenon of the body, then consciousness or thought also would be subject to, and determined by, these laws. Yet rational belief such as epiphenomenalism presupposes intellectual freedom, a freedom that the same theory denies. (Hick points out that this argument also applies to the mind/body identity theory.)

Hick then brings in the evidence of telepathic experience - that one mind may directly influence another without physical mediation - to strengthen his case against the above theories. This evidence, he claims, "is now very strong," yet, since both of the above theories assert that mental processes have physical causes, they necessarily must deny the possibility of telepathy.

Having rejected the mind/body identity theory and epiphenomenalism, Hick proceeds to examine and to accept the mind/body interaction theory. This theory states that the mind and body are "different" and "independent kinds" of reality yet they causally interact in some mysterious way. (8) By adopting this theory, Hick wants to "... leave the door open, or at least unlocked, to a belief in the survival of the conscious self." (9) There is now apparently no necessary reason why the mind should not exist after the death of the body. Of course this is not to say that it in fact does exist. Indeed there are those who accept the interaction theory, yet deny the possibility that the mind may exist after the death of the body. They believe, "the conjunction
of [the body and mind] is required for the occurrence of consciousness."(10) It would be fortunate for Hick if the evidence from parapsychology (the claim that the dead communicate through a medium) were conclusive regarding this matter; however he concedes that it can be explained more plausibly on other grounds.(11) In the last analysis, then, Hick maintains that belief in life after death is reached through the perspective of one's "philosophy as a whole."(12) He notes:

Intuitively, it seems odd that of two realities whose careers have been carried on in continuous interaction, one should be mortal and the other immortal. But it also seems, intuitively, odd to deny that of two independent realities of basically different kinds, one might be capable of surviving the other.(13)

WHAT IS LIFE AFTER DEATH LIKE?

Having set forth his case for the survival of the self upon the death of the body, Hick turns his attention to the question of what actually may happen to the self after bodily death. In order to answer this question he explores and evaluates the doctrines of life after death of the great Western and Eastern religious traditions, in particular, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism.(14)

CHRISTIANITY

Hick traces Christian beliefs about life after death from their origin in the New Testament through the developing thought of the church to the views of contemporary Protestant and Catholic theologians. I have already noted that he finds the response of modern theologians to the subject of death and eternal life inadequate. Since they have failed to spell out a coherent theology of death, he finds little of value to
draw from the four Protestant theologians (Moltmann, Tillich, Hartshorne, Pannenberg) or from the two Catholic theologians (Rahner, Boros) with whom he deals. Further, he maintains that Hartshorne, Pannenburg, Rahner and Boros assert a "static, frozen immortality" (15) where no further change and growth are possible. Although Hick believes that humanity will eventually reach a permanent and irreversible end state, as we have seen, his theodicy necessitates further development after death. (16)

The central New Testament concept upon which Christian beliefs concerning life after death turn is that of resurrection of the body, particularly as it has been taught by the apostle Paul. However, Hick maintains that this may be understood in two ways, either as the revivication of the corpse and its transformation into a "body of glory," or as the re-embodiment of the personality in another "spiritual body." Hick confesses that he cannot be sure which view, if either, Paul intended, but he believes that the latter is, at the very least, "a coherent possibility." (17)

According to Hick, we see a movement within early popular Christian thought from the first view to the second, "more sophisticated," view. (18) This corresponds to a shift from a 'this worldly' conception of salvation to an 'other worldly' conception. Initially, it was more generally believed that God's final purpose would be fulfilled upon the earth among flesh-and-blood people; accordingly, resurrection was understood as a revivication of the corpse. With the delay of the end of the age, and with the growing sense that this world is not a fitting place for the manifestation of God's kingdom, the locus of salvation moved from earth to heaven (or hell), and emphasis was placed upon the soul (though "still visualised in bodily terms"). (19)
Under the influence of Augustine, the belief prevailed that at death, each individual soul would be judged and sentenced either to eternal damnation in hell, or to eternal bliss in heaven, or to purgatory, an intermediate state between earth and heaven. We have already seen that Hick rejects the belief in an eternal hell. Heaven was conceived of in two different ways, as a community of individuals (having some measure of recognisable continuity with individuality as we know it on earth) endlessly worshipping God in a perfect society, and as "beatific vision" where the individual, although maintaining his or her personal identity, merges into oneness with the Godhead. Hick believes that the first view involves conceptual difficulties in that it is questionable "whether personal identity can be conceived as holding over unlimited time." Nevertheless, as we shall see, he is able to build both views into his theology by making a distinction between the paraeschaton and the eschaton. Hick also is able to build the notion of purgatory into his theology. Purgatory, it was believed, is an intermediate state between earth and heaven for those who are unfit to be immediately translated into the presence of God; there they "face the consequences of their own sins and become purified in character and prepared for the beatific vision."

HINDUISM AND BUDDHISM

The Eastern doctrines of life after death turn upon the concept of reincarnation, the precise meaning of which depends on whether one is considering the popular theory or the more complex theories which are found within Vedantic Hinduism and Buddhism. The popular theory states that "the conscious ego, the remembering, anticipating, choosing,
acting self ... having died in one body will be reborn in another,"(23) whilst the Vedantic Hindu and Buddhist theories state that it is not the conscious ego that is reincarnated, but rather a set of character dispositions (linga sharira in Hinduism, karmic deposit in Buddhism) which have been formed through one's earthly pilgrimage and in one's previous lives.

Although Vedantic Hinduism falls into two main streams, the theistic and non-theistic, the basic conception of individual rebirth, according to Hick, is the same in each. The creative power of the Universal and Immutable Consciousness (Atman or Brahman) expresses itself in the existence of the Universe. Individual souls (jivas) which are, in their depths, one with Atman, suffer the illusion of separateness from each other and from Atman. Through successive rebirths, the souls purify themselves of the illusion until they finally realize their identity with Atman. The theistic system differs in that beyond Atman there is a personal Creator (Isvara, Vishnu, Krishna) and life is not understood in the teleological sense of non-theistic Hinduism, but in cyclical terms. Creation is an endless divine breathing in and breathing out of maya "within which souls are gradually moving through illusion towards conscious communion with God."(24)

In Vedantic Hindu thought, according to Hick, the empirical psycho-physical ego is conceived of as a temporal expression of the soul, and it is the psycho part of the psycho-physical ego (linga-sharira) which is said to be reincarnated. Hick maintains that we must think of this in terms of "finite," "changeable" character dispositions such as "thoughts, emotions and desires."(25) It is through repeated
embodiments of the linga-sharira that the soul is purified from its "egotistic appetites" until it is finally released from maya to become one with the immutable Atman.(26)

The Buddhist understanding of life after death, according to Hick, rests on three doctrines, anicca ("transitoriness," "process"), anatta ("no soul"), and dukkha ("suffering," unsatisfactoriness").(27) Anicca points to the "insubstantial and transient nature of all temporal existence;"(28) i.e., the fact that all is in process means that it is ultimately unreal. The meaning of the anatta doctrine is, Hick says, more difficult to determine. The two most credible interpretations are, firstly that "the empirical self is a process and not a timeless unchanging entity," or secondly, the denial of the Hindu doctrine that there is an immutable Atman with which we are all one in the depths of our being.(29) In either case, Hick maintains, if the doctrine is "understood as an instrument of moral training," then it attacks the notion of "hard-core ego-identity." This, he believes, "was a central insight of the Buddha's."(30)

So long as we see and value from an egocentric standpoint we shall be driven by false desires, cling to false values, and seek to perpetuate our own separate existence with all the imperfection and liability to suffering that is inseparable from it.(31)

The doctrine of dukkha points to the "transitoriness and imperfection of human life" including the liability to pain and suffering as well as to happiness.(32) As Hick notes, this doctrine is compatible with his theory that the world is a vale of soul-making.
Hick sums up the Buddhist view.

Man, then, is an essentially temporal creature (anicca), indeed temporal without remainder (anatta) and inherently vulnerable to evil (dukkha). And like every other distinguishable item of the world process he is composite, a temporary and changing conjunction of elements.(33)

Although reincarnation is generally to be conceived of as re-embodiment in this life, whether as a human or as a lower form of life, both Vedantic Hinduism and Buddhism assert that there are other realms in which the soul may continue its journey.

Hick fills many pages with his assessment of the reincarnation theories. However, although he finds that each has its relative strengths and weaknesses, in the last analysis he is unable to come to a firm conclusion as to which is the most plausible.(34) As we shall see, he draws data from each for his own global theology of death, in particular, the concept of atman from Hinduism, the Buddhist emphasis on life as process, and the belief in both Hinduism and Buddhism that the goal of life is to transcend egoity.

Before Hick proceeds with the positive task of constructing his global theology, he raises the important question: Is reincarnation compatible with the Christian belief in resurrection? He finds no necessary reason why Christians should reject reincarnation. Indeed, if a theme found both in Hinduism and Buddhism is taken up - i.e., that reincarnation occurs in different "worlds," - then, Hick maintains, reincarnation is compatible with the Irenaean tradition of Christianity.
which asserts that the process of soul-making must continue after the grave. (35)

By distinguishing two stages of life after the death of the body, the pareschaton and the eschaton, Hick believes he can build the insights of both the Western belief in resurrection and the Eastern belief in reincarnation into a coherent global theology.

THE PARESCHATON (36)

In *Evil and the God of Love* Hick argued that, in order for the individual to achieve perfection, the soul-making process must continue after this life. (37) He also argued that this process requires that the individual be organic to a world which exhibits a hard, rigid structure inflicting pain and suffering, and that he or she be in community with others. (38) In accordance with this, he maintains that the next world will be

a real spatio-temporal environment, functioning in accordance with its own laws, within which there will be real personal life - a world with its own concrete character, its own history its own crises, perils, achievements, sacrifices ... For moral and spiritual growth, as we know it, depends upon interaction with other people within a common environment. (39)

That the self becomes re-embodied in another space-time environment is, according to Hick, compatible with both the Western concept of resurrection and the Eastern concept of reincarnation. Resurrection would be understood not as the resuscitation of a corpse, but as a 'clothing' of the self in a new spiritual body. Reincarnation would be
understood as re-embodiment in the next life rather than re-embodiment in this life.

Hick maintains that re-embodiment will not take place immediately. Rather the self will first pass through an intermediate disembodied state or "bardo state." (40) In this state, since it is disembodied, the self receives no outside stimuli, but creates its own dreamlike world out of its memories. In a process of self-judgement, and in the form of images constructed out of its religious and metaphysical beliefs about the world, the self is confronted with both the good and the bad which it has become. Eventually, the self begins to long for something more, and this longing leads it on to further re-embodiment where the soul-making process may continue.

According to Hick, we should not expect just one further embodiment, but any number, depending upon what is needed for the individual to transcend self-centredness or egoity. Why a number of lives rather than just one prolonged life? Hick gives two reasons. Firstly, personal identity would not survive an extended life span. Memory would fade and character would change to such an extent that, over a million years, it wuld be difficult to identify oneself with an earlier self. (41) Secondly, relatively short spans of life, each separated by the boundary of death, gives to life an urgency and sense of responsibility. This "makes possible the growth and development of the moral personality." (42) Eventually, when the self is sufficiently purified from its egoity, it is ready to enter the eschaton, and then, (in terms of Hick's theodicy), the total creation of the human person
in the "likeness of God," is achieved. (43)

THE ESCHATON

In order to gain a picture of what the end state itself may possibly be like, Hick again turns to the Western and Eastern religions. He admits that, on the surface, the two traditions appear to be opposed to each other. This opposition centres around the concept of individuality and its ultimate importance or unimportance. Christianity emphasises the value of the individual, and accordingly conceives of the end state in terms of finite personal individuals separate from their Maker, whilst the Eastern religions emphasise "the ultimate unimportance and indeed unreality of individual personality." (44) However, Hick maintains that the doctrines of both East and West are more open ended than is apparent at first sight. I have already mentioned the mystic conception within Christianity, wherein the individual enters into oneness with God. This has been likened to a piece of iron which, when placed in a fire, glows red as it is penetrated by the heat. (45) Here, Western Christianity reaches out in the direction of the Eastern conception which likens the end state to "a rain drop merging into the sea." (46) Conversely, Hick maintains, certain strands of the Eastern religious tradition reach out towards the Western emphasis on the individual. In particular, the theistic Vedantic Hindu tradition as propounded by one of its greatest thinkers Ramanuja, asserts that individuality will not be completely swallowed up by Ultimate Reality:

... finite souls are identical with God in the sense that they have no being independantly of him and are totally his creatures, existing through his creative will, instrument of his purpose, his possessions, wholly at his disposal ... But in
another sense they each have their own distinct though derivative existence. For they are objects of the divine love and are called to be lovers of God.(47)

Similarly, in the Mahayana strand of Buddhism, according to Hick, "there is still some kind of individual consciousness in Nirvana even though the boundaries of the different consciousnesses have become, so to speak, mutually transparent."(48)

Eastern and Western theories of the eschaton are in closest agreement, however, over their mutual assertion that, in the end state, egoity, conceived of as "anxious self-concern," will have been transcended.(49)

Hick draws together these insights concerning the eschaton into what he believes is a coherent picture. Using the Christian concept of the Trinity as a model, he says we are to imagine an eschatological community which is "one-in-many and many-in-one," wherein egoity has been transcended.(50)

HUMAN NATURE

Having set out Hick's proposal concerning what might occur after the death of the body, I now want to relate it to his theory of human nature as a whole. In the course of his discussion, Hick has used a number of anthropological terms. The main ones are; self, consciousness, mind, body, egoity, personality, atman, spirit. In order for us to fully understand his anthropology, it is important that we understand precisely how these terms relate to one another.
We have already seen that Hick identifies "self" as "consciousness" -
the psycho part of the psycho-somatic human being. He argues that the
self is an entity independent from the body with which it interacts. He
also maintains that the self has "two polar aspects," "egoity" and
"personality." "As ego the self is an enclosed entity, constituted and
protected by its boundaries ... Its basic concern, as a unit of
conscious existence, is its own preservation." Personality is
essentially interpersonal and consists in our relationships with other
persons." It "seeks its full realization in a society of selves each
wholly open to the others in a perfect mutuality in which egoity has
been transcended." Whereas the self as ego is "essentially finite,"
the self as personality is "in principle infinite."(51)

Egoity and personality are in "tension" with each other.(52) The
process of life which Hick formerly described as a movement from the
image of God to the likeness of God, he now describes as a movement
from ego to person.

Could it be that the gradual perfecting of the human self, which is in traditional language its
salvation, consists in its becoming more and more
a person and less and less an ego?(53)
As well as ego and personality, Hick recognises two other important aspects of the self. These are the "individual unconscious" and the "collective unconscious." The individual unconscious "interacts with consciousness" and consists of memories and other mental material "which has been repressed in the course of building up the autonomous ego self." "Beneath" the individual unconscious, there exists a "collective unconscious." This theory was advanced by C.G. Jung "to account for certain basic images or archetypes which appear in mythology and dreams throughout the world." Hick distinguishes the Jungian concept from another concept of "collective unconscious," this is "the central Hindu notion of the atman, the universal self which all the separate human consciousnesses unitedly are in the depth of their being." Whilst the Jungian collective unconscious is a product of man's semi-animal past," the atman "refers to the ideal state of human consciousness which waits to be realised through the negating of individual egoity."(54)

On the relationship between the individual unconscious, the Jungian collective unconscious and the atman in the life process, Hick writes;

The goal is a return to unity at a higher level, a movement from pre-individualised unity through separate egoity to a supra-individual unity. Again it is a movement from the collective unconscious, through the self-negating of the ego which has created the unconscious, to the fully realized collective consciousness of the atman.(55)

Human destiny, then, is to be conceived of as a movement from egoity to personality culminating in the shared and unified consciousness of the
atman. Since egoity is to be understood as the self as bounded and cut off from other selves and from its "deepest identity as atman," in the end state when egoity has been transcended, each individual self will be "transparent to the others in a corporate atmanic humanity.(56)

... the perfected individual will have become a personality without egoity, a living consciousness which is transparent to the other consciousnesses in relation to which it lives in a full communmity of love. Thus we have the picture of a plurality of personal centres without separate peripheries. They will have ceased to be mutually exclusive and will have become mutually inclusive and open to one another in a richly complex shared consciousness. The barrier between their common unconscious life and their individual consciousnesses will have disappeared, so that they experience an intimacy of personal community which we can at present barely imagine.(57)

Further, since egoity is essentially connected to embodiment, as Hick established in Evil and the God of Love,(58) and, since the purpose of embodiment is to enable the soul or self to make the soul-making journey from ego to the atman, then, when the journey is completed and egoity has been transcended, there will be no need for further embodiment.

Our eschatological speculation terminates in the idea of the unity of mankind in a state in which the ego-aspect of individual consciousness has been left behind and the relational aspect has developed into a total community which is one-in-many and many-in-one, existing in a state which is probably not embodied and probably not in time.(59)

Thus far, from Hick's analysis of human nature, we have "self" with its two polar aspects "egoity" and "personality," and its two
dimensions of depth, the individual unconscious, and the Jungian
collective unconscious. And we have "atman," the universal self.
Hick also uses the term soul. He discusses the concept of soul in
the context of its use in Christian thought. Traditionally, the
soul was thought to have been specially created by God and
"infused" into growing embryos.(60) Hick maintains that this
notion has been "rendered otiose" by our knowledge of the genetic
process.(61) The empirical human self is, without remainder, a
product of an interactionary process between genetically inherited
characteristics and environment. Hick therefore reserves the
term as a "valuing name for self." It "connotes the moral and
spiritual personality which the child becomes in interaction with
its human environment."(62)

The final main anthropological term used by Hick is "mind." He uses
this term as a synonym for the individual self or soul.(63)

Hick takes body, mind and atman or spirit, as the three major
components of human nature.

... we have been led ... to a threefold analysis
[of human nature] which in its western version is
body-soul-spirit and in its eastern version body-
mind-mind-atman. Each body is an individual physical
organism occupying a separate volume of space. The
mind or soul is closely related to the body, being
known to us as embodied mind, an aspect of a
psycho-physical individual. But mind is also
related to spirit or atman, which is supra-
individual, the presently unconscious unity of
humanity or perhaps even of created life as a
whole. Accordingly the set of basic terms which
seems most suited to the vocabulary of a global
theology will include body, mind and atman.(64)
I am now able to fully set out diagramatically Hick's evolutionary monist anthropology.

Hick now identifies the original unity to life as atman: the pre-individualised, universal self. With individuation, the atman differentiates into two aspects, ego and personality. These are in tension in the individual self. The life struggle for the individual self is to transcend egoity (and this means ultimately its bodiliness and individuality) and, via the personality, regain the unity it once had.

In his book Death and Eternal Life, Hick has constructed a global theology of life after death. First he asked the question: is life after death plausible? This required him to examine theories of the mind/body relationship. He concluded that there was no necessary reason why the mind should not continue to exist after the death of the body.
Then he asked what might life after death be like? He examined both Eastern and Western doctrines, drawing together the most plausible data from each. Out of this he constructed his theology of life after death. This involved a two stage journey of the self. The one in which the self continues in an embodied state in which it is perfected. The other, final state, into which the perfected self enters. I have shown that even though Hick includes what he believes to be compatible data from both Eastern and Western religions in order to construct his theology, he builds this theology upon the anthropology of Evil and the God of Love, and around the conceptual framework of his earlier writings.
In this thesis I have explored the question of the continuity or discontinuity of Hick's thought through three of his major writings. I have shown that Hick has consistently developed his thought from within the framework of an evolutionary monist conceptual position that has remained unchanged since his earliest writings. In Faith and Knowledge he constructed an epistemology in order to determine the nature of religious faith. In Evil and the God of Love he was able to show how the existence of evil in the world may be reconciled with the belief in an all-powerful and all-loving God by developing an anthropology out of his epistemology. Thus, Hick's third major book Death and Eternal Life marks a significant point in the development of his thought because in it he attempts to construct a global theology. This book, therefore, reflects the apparent change in his thinking that he referred to as a Copernican revolution in theology. I have shown however, that even as Hick now draws data from other world religions than Christianity, he constructs his global theology upon the anthropology of Evil and the God of Love and in a way which is consistent with his evolutionary monist framework. Therefore, if Hick's thought is viewed from the vantage point of his underlying conceptual position, there is no radical break in continuity.

With a knowledge of the underlying unity of Hick's thought, I believe it is possible to attain a deeper understanding of his specific theological developments. I conclude this thesis by exploring this possibility. I address firstly, the problem of Hick's apparent change
in christology, and secondly, his new theology of religious pluralism.

CHRISTOLOGY
Since the person of Christ is central to Christianity, the Copernican revolution in theology has important implications for christology. Hick maintains that Christians may no longer hold to the traditional belief that Christ is the sole saviour of the world. They must come to see that he is only one saviour amongst others.(1) In God and the Universe of Faiths, Hick contrasts his new christological beliefs with those of his pre-Copernican days which he describes as follows.

I believed that God has made himself known to mankind with unique fullness and saving power in Christ, and has ordained that all men must come to him through Christ.(2)

Although this seems like a major shift, upon closer analysis it appears that Hick's newest christological position does not mark such a radical departure from the christology he develops in Faith and Knowledge and which is implied by the anthropology of Evil and the God of Love.

The christology of Faith and Knowledge turns upon the concept of a "spiritual catalyst."

Some item of experience, or group of items, impresses the mind so deeply as to operate as a spiritual catalyst, crystallising what was hitherto a cloud of relatively vague, amorphous feelings and aspiriations, and giving a new and distinctive structure to the "apperceiving mass" by which we interpret our stream of experience. A sufficiently
For the Christian, the spiritual catalyst is Jesus Christ. In accordance with his epistemology, and particularly his theory of "practical significance," Hick maintains that the process by which Jesus becomes a spiritual catalyst takes place in two stages. He refers to the first stage as "faith in Christ." He refers to the second stage as "faith from Christ."

**FAITH IN CHRIST**

To have faith in Christ is to interpret Jesus as being religiously significant. The believer expresses this significance by using such terms as "unique Son of God."(4) However, this interpretation of significance arises from, or is mediated by, the believer's prior moral interpretation of Jesus. "The sheer goodness and purity" of Jesus first grips the hearts of his followers.(5) This leads them to realise that it is the very presence and love of God himself that they experience in Jesus.

**FAITH FROM CHRIST**

Faith in Christ leads to faith from Christ, in that Jesus' followers come to see that the entire world of physical events and of human relationships, is the "sphere of interaction with the will and purpose of God."(6) Salvation is theirs in that Jesus makes "credible to them a vision of the world as ruled by divine love, thereby releasing them from selfish preoccupations and setting them free to love one another as themselves."(7)
This, in outline, is the christology that Hick advances in *Faith and Knowledge*. For Hick, the significance of Christ is his role as a spiritual catalyst. That is, Jesus is an activator of religious consciousness.

The disciples' innate tendency to interpret their experience religiously was powerfully evoked by and focused upon the person of Christ ... (8)

The traditional Christian doctrine of Christ as the unique atoner for sin is not essential to this theory. Nor is the Kierkegaardian notion of Christ as the unique 'Teacher.' For Hick, Christ is merely the occasion for religious awareness, and, as such, there is no necessary reason why there should not be other spiritual catalysts providing other occasions for religious awareness. In the last analysis, it is this awareness that saves and releases humanity from sin.

As we have seen, Hick develops the idea that religious awareness is decisive for salvation from sin in *Evil and the God of Love.* (9) The idea also has christological implications. In this work, Hick understands the traditional Christian doctrine of Christ's sinless perfection in accordance with his theory that complete God-consciousness would make sin impossible. Christ was perfect because he was fully God-conscious, (10) and in that Christ was perfect, he acts as a spiritual catalyst. According to Hick's soul-making anthropology, we are all at various stages on the path to full God-consciousness. Jesus, therefore, is different in degree rather than in kind from the rest of humanity. Although Hick appears to believe that Christ is the
only saviour of the world in *Evil and the God of Love*, there seems no necessary reason why there should not be other fully God-conscious and therefore sinless individuals who may act as spiritual catalysts.

It appears, therefore, that the christology which is made explicit in *Faith and Knowledge* and which is implied by the anthropology of *Evil and the God of Love* is consistent with Hick's later christological belief. From the point of view of Hick's christology, therefore, "Copernican revolution in theology" seems too radical a title by which to refer to the changes he has made in his thought. I now turn to his theology of religious pluralism.

**Theology of Religious Pluralism**

Shortly after Hick announced his Copernican revolution in theology, some of his critics argued that, since he retained the Christian concept of the personal God of love at the centre of his theology, his Copernican revolution in theology was incomplete. If it is incomplete, then it is also unsuccessful, for as Hick himself has argued, a global theology requires that no one religious tradition or doctrine is at the centre of the universe of faiths. Hick tried to clarify his position by introducing a Kantian distinction between noumenon and phenomenon into his theology. He argued that we must conceive of the divine reality as the divine noumenon which is beyond conceptual grasp, and we must conceive of the world's religions as the various phenomenal responses to the divine noumenon. By introducing this distinction, Hick was able to overcome a particularly difficult problem for the project of a global theology, i.e., the apparent incompatibility of the eastern conception of the divine reality as non-personal and the Christian
conception of the divine reality as personal. Both conceptions, he could now maintain, are equally valid responses to the divine noumenon.(11)

Hick's introduction of the divine phenomenon/noumenon distinction into his later thought is, as I have already noted, consistent with the epistemology he advanced in Faith and Knowledge: in particular with his thesis that there are variations of cognitive freedom over the natural, moral and religious orders of significance.(12) In terms of the epistemology of Faith and Knowledge, the structure of reality dictates our interpretive concepts in the natural dimension of life. This is not the case in the religious dimension where our interpretive freedom is at a maximum. In terms of the phenomenon/noumenon distinction, only in the case of physical reality does the noumenon dictate the form of its phenomenal counterpart. The religious believer may respond to the divine noumenon by means of a wide range of phenomenal concepts. According to Hick, our religious concepts are culturally and historically contingent. Theology, he says, "begins with religious experience ... and then tries systematically and consistently to interpret this and to relate it to our other knowledge. But since both the intellectual categories with which we do this, and the contextual knowledge within which we do it, are parts of the ongoing stream of human culture, theology necessarily changes through time."(13)

We can understand the position Hick takes on theology more easily when we consider it in the light of his evolutionary monist scheme: supra-individual religious consciousness continually interacts with
culturally and historically contingent intellectual categories or concepts to produce the various world theologies (including Christian theology). This process may be represented diagramatically:

Further, since on this model life is a teleological process, this implies that ultimately, the norm for life is the end of the process. Accordingly, when Hick is pressed on the question of grading religious experience, his criterion is the end of the soul-making process itself. He asks: is the particular religious experience "soteriologically effective? Does it make possible the transformation of human existence from self-centredness to Reality-centredness?" If so then it is valid.\(^{14}\)

**SUMMARY**

In this thesis, we have discovered a continuity to John Hick's thought by uncovering its underlying conceptual framework. By addressing some
of his theological developments from the vantage point of this scheme, we also begin to understand that an adequate analysis of his thought must go beyond merely assessing the viability of each theological position in isolation from the rest of his thought. Rather, we must consider the viability of each tenet via its place in the conceptual scheme as a whole. For a similar reason, an adequate critique of Hick's thought cannot be made merely by comparing his various theological formulations with those of traditional Christian doctrines.(15) In the end we need to judge the overall viability of Hick's position by considering his scheme as a whole. If we do this, we find that some problems arise.

For Hick, there is a tension between two aspects of our human nature. In *Evil and the God of Love*, Hick referred to these aspects by such terms as image of God/likeness of God; self-centredness/God-centredness. In *Death and Eternal Life*, he referred to these as egoity/personality. Elsewhere, he calls them lower nature/higher nature. The first cluster of terms refers to that aspect of our human nature which is concerned for our individual welfare and self-survival. It is essentially connected to bodiliness. The second set of terms refers to that aspect of our humanity which is "inherently self-giving" and seeks its fulfilment in a bodiless "community of love" wherein "egoity has been transcended." It is by fully realising this second aspect of our human nature, that we achieve final salvation. A problem arises at just this point. The tension between the two aspects of our human nature implies that it is only by denying our bodily selves that we can be concerned for others, and only by transcending our individuality can we find intimacy with others when finally the barriers that are raised by our
individuality have dissolved away. In *Evil and the God of Love*, Hick describes this tension in theological terms. God first creates us in his image as embodied beings who are biologically continuous with the natural world. Our very bodiliness means that we inevitably turn our attention away from God and others and self-centredly concern ourselves with our own survival. This is our sin. Redemption necessarily implies that we have to transcend our individuality and bodily nature and therefore that which constitutes our humanity. Hick’s position presents us with what seems to be a tragic dilemma. Either I am human, i.e., an embodied individual and only 'for myself,' or I am 'for others' and must therefore transcend my individuality (my "humanization" requires that I transcend my humanness!). It is this basic egoity/personality tension at the heart of Hick’s thought, that I believe is questionable.(16)

John Hick is an important Anglo-American Christian theologian, as much for his openness to face the major problems that continue to face the modern theologian as for his ability to offer interesting solutions to them. In this thesis, I have shown that, throughout his development as a theologian, Hick holds onto a basic ontological position. I have called this position evolutionary monism. This gives his thought a fundamental continuity and coherence. It also provides him with a strong, yet adaptable, conceptual framework, from which he can meet the challenges that he so readily takes up and which continue to guide his theological pilgrimage.
INTRODUCTION

1 The editions of Hick's four major works referred to in his thesis are as follows: Faith and Knowledge, second revised edition (Cleveland, Ohio: Collins, 1978); Evil and the God of Love, first edition (London: Macmillan, 1977); God and the Universe of Faiths (Glasgow: Collins, 1977); Death and Eternal Life (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1976). Hereafter these works will be referred to by the initials FK, EGL, GUF, DEL, respectively.

2 Publisher's Weekly, quoted on the cover of Death and Eternal Life (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1976).

3 GUF, p. 141.

4 GUF, p. viii.

5 GUF, p. xiv.


10 DEL, p. 52.

11 DEL, p. 450. The method I use to analyse the underlying ontological scheme of Hick's thought was developed by the Dutch Calvinist philosopher D.H.T. Vollenhoven and his followers. For a full description of the method see James Olthuis and Arnold De Graaff, 'Models of humanity' (Toronto: ICS unpublished paper 1979).

Hendrik Hart, who has analysed the thought of John Dewey using this method, describes dualism and monism as follows: "... dualists assume a basic and irreducible diversity, either a plurality or a duality, as the original condition of existence. To explain the unity of things they resort to such concepts as fusion, combination or mixture. Thorough continuity is denied by them. A monist proceeds from the
assumption of original and primary unity. He explains the diversity of existence by means of development, bifurcation, change, differentiation etc., always within a context of unity and continuity." H. Hart Communal Certainty and Authorized Truth (Amsterdam: Swets and Zeitlinger, 1966), p.17.
I. THE HUMAN AS KNOWER

1 FK, 97. Hick recognises both a cognitive aspect and a non-cognitive aspect of the concept of faith. The first, which he calls "fides," is the subject of his book. The second he calls "fiducia." It is "religious trust which may be compared with trust or confidence in another human person" (p. 3). The first, he maintains, presupposes the second (p. 4).

2 FK, 200.

3 C. Reinhold Brakenheilm in How Philosophy Shapes Theories of Religion (London: Gleerup, 1975), p. 81, questions whether Hick draws too sharp a distinction between propositional faith and faith as awareness. Brakenheilm suggests that the second presupposes the first.

4 Thomas believed that the existence of God is philosophically demonstrable. FK, pp.25-26.

5 FK, p. 15.

6 See 16

7 FK, pp. 55-56. Whilst Hick's point is granted, i.e. that religious faith has a different epistemological status from scientific belief, it is not quite so evident that scientists are prepared to withdraw their assumptions under pressure of recalcitrant 'facts.' See Thomas Kuhn on Max Planck in The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, second edition (Chicago: University Press,1970), p. 151; also pp.152-153.

8 FK, p. 60.

9 FK, p. 65.

10 FK, p. 67.

11 FK, pp. 67-68.

12 FK, pp. 80-81, 90.

13 FK, pp. 88-89.

14 FK, p. 91.

15 FK, p. 96.

16 FK, p. 203.

17 FK, p. 97

19 See pp. 11-12.

20 FK, 95. The anti-dualistic nature of Hick's theory of faith may be highlighted by contrasting it with the dualistic theory of Martin Buber in I and Thou, trans. Walter Kaufman (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), p 62. Buber locates faith as an "I - You" (rather than an "I - It") relationship with God: "the relation to the You is unmediated. Nothing conceptual intervenes between I and You, no prior knowledge and no imagination...."


22 FK, p. viii.

23 FK, p. 98.

24 This example is taken from God and the Universe of Faiths, p.41, where Hick relates his theory of significance and interpretation to Wittgenstein's notion of seeing-as in Philosophical Investigations. For a comparison of Hick and Wittgenstein on this and for subsequent criticism of Hick, see L. Bryant Keeling and Mario F. Morrali in "Beyond Wittgensteinian Fideism: An examination of John Hick's Analysis of
It is not at all clear, at this stage, whether Hick believes that significance actually inheres in objective reality or that it is 'superimposed' upon reality by the mind (this is also a much discussed point concerning the theory of Immanuel Kant to whom Hick is indebted). Jerry Gill in his book The Possibility of Religious Knowledge (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1971), p. 169, apparently thinks that Hick means the former. This is precisely what Austin Farrer in his review of Faith and Knowledge, Journal of Theological Studies, 59 (October, 1958), p. 58, finds to be the "crux of the matter" concerning Hick's theory of faith. Since Hick goes on to argue (as we shall see) that faith is the apprehension of religious significance in our environment, Farrer asks how can "religious ... significance be said to inhere in our environment?"

This matter becomes particularly important for Hick's later philosophy of religious pluralism, when his theory that all religions are the phenomenal response to the same unknown divine noumenon seems to suggest that religious significance is virtually entirely supplied by the mind of the believer. See "Toward a Philosophy of Religious Pluralism," Neue Zeitschrift Fur Systematische Theologie Und Religionsphilosophie, 22 (1980).

25 FK, p. 103.
26 FK, see pp. 33ff. See also p.22.
27 FK, p. 100.
28 FK, p. 104.
29 FK, p. 103.
30 FK, p. 118.
32 FK, p. 136.
34 FK, pp. 104–105.
35 GUF, p. 46.
36 FK, p. 112
37 FK, p. 112.
50 In order to see more easily the continuity of Hick's evolutionary monist thought, I shall continue to represent, diagramatically, the various stages of complexity as they emerge.

51 FK, p. 123.

52 FK, p. 125.

53 FK, pp. 127-128.

54 See p. 76.

55 See pp.72ff.


2. THE HUMAN IN THE MAKING

1 Theodicy as a technical term for the defence of the goodness and omnipotence of God in face of the fact of evil is popularly believed to have been first coined by the philosopher G.W. Leibniz (1646-1716).


Since it first appeared, Hick's theodicy has drawn a barrage of criticism and discussion on just about every essential point. Since this is not the focus of this thesis, I shall do no more than make the briefest reference to the more important writings in the footnotes. For one of the most serious critiques see D.R. Griffin in God, Power, and Evil: A Process Theodicy (Philadelphia: The Westminster press, 1976), hereafter GPE.

2 EGL, p. 5.

3 Hick traces the Augustinian theodicy from its source in the writings of Augustine, through Hugh St. Victor, Thomas Aquinas and Charles Journet within the Catholic tradition and through John Calvin and Karl Barth (with reference to G.W. Leibniz and William King) within the reformed tradition. The phrase "type of theodicy" is particularly pertinent to the Irenaean theodicy, for it suggests similarity in approach rather than a continuous tradition. Hick finds this similarity of approach in the writings of Irenaeus, F. Schleiermacher and F.R.Tennant.

4 SC, pp. 95-96.

5 SC, p. 98.

6 GUF, p. 63-64.
Most, but not all. The renowned philosopher of religion Alvin Plantinga for one, apparently does not disbelieve some kind of a literalist interpretation. See God and Other Minds (Ithica, New York: Cornell University Press, 1967), pp. 149ff.

For Hick's distinction between the mythical and the factual, see EGL, pp. 281ff, also GUF, pp. 165ff.


10 Apparently Irenaeus based his distinction on a dubious interpretation of Genesis 1:26, see EGL, p. 290.

11 EE, p. 41.

12 SC, p. 97.

13 EE, p. 42.

14 EE, p. 45.

15 EGL, p. 331.

16 EGL, p. 347.

17 EGL, pp. 18-19, 340-341.

18 EGL, p. 298.

19 EE, pp. 42-43.


21 EGL, p. 317. D. Griffin in GPE, p. 193, maintains that Hick's dichotomy between God-centredness and self-centredness is unsound since Hick has not shown that there is a necessary connection between ethical actions and faith in God. However, Griffin's criticism does not appear to be valid, for, since the above terms refer to total character orientations, God-centredness can only be achieved through the interpenetration of the ethical dimension by the religious dimension. See pp. 21-22, of this thesis.
22 EGL, p. 322. This argument was also developed by F. Schleiermacher, see EGL, pp. 228ff.

23 p. 16.

24 EGL, 317. See chapter 1 of this thesis pp. 22-23

25 EE, p. 44. This thesis was also proposed by F. R. Tennant, see EGL, p. 251. The traditional argument which asserts that God could not have created beings who are free and who also do what is right, is known as "The Free Will Defense." It has more recently been criticised by Anthony Flew in "Divine Omnipotence and Human Freedom," New Essays in Philosophical Theology (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1955), pp. 144-169, and J.L. Mackie in "Evil and Omnipotence," Mind, vol. 64, no. 254 (1955), pp. 200-212. Hick thinks that the Flew/Mackie argument is sound as it stands, but he believes that God could not have made creatures who are free, yet who always respond to himself in love and trust. See EGL, p. 311.

26 EGL, p. 337.

27 EE, p. 47.

28 EGL, p. 342.

29 EGL, p. 335.

30 EGL, p. 336.

31 EGL, p. 337.

32 EGL, p. 338, quoting Hume.

33 EGL, p. 339.

34 D. Griffin fails to see why such a complex and lengthy evolutionary process, involving animal pain, is necessary for the creation of humans at an epistemic distance from God, GPE, p. 191. See also EE, p. 53, and EE, pp. 63ff, for Hick's response.


36 See p. 34.

37 EGL, pp. 349-350.

38 EGL, p. 320.

39 EGL, p. 291.

40 EGL, p. 322.
41 See pp. 30-31. See for example, EE, pp. 41, 48. D. Griffin notes that there is confusion in Hick's theodicy as to the nature of sin. He asks: is it a "lack of authentic fiduciary attitude toward God?" or is it "moral evil?" (GPE, p. 193.).

42 See p. 24.

43 See p. 22.

44 EE, p. 47.

45 EE, pp. 47-48. J. M. Rist in The Journal of Theological Studies, 23 (April 1972), pp. 95-105, rejects the implication of Hick's theory that one can only know that something is wrong after one has had direct experience of it.

46 EE, p. 48. C. Stanley Kane in The International Journal of the Philosophy of Religion, 6 (Spring 1975), pp. 1-22, maintains that human moral character may develop without the presence of natural evil. However, he also questions why, in any case, we should need to develop moral character if we are destined for a sinless and evil-less heaven.

47 EE, p. 45.

48 EE, p. 45.

49 The most serious criticism of Hick's theodicy is that the fails to show how God can incorporate the sheer amount of evil we experience in the world into the process of human creation and still be all-loving. See D. Griffin GPE, p. 189; G. S. Kane, op. cit; Puccetti, Religious Studies, 2 (April 1967), pp. 255-268; W.D. Hudson, Theology, 70 (January 1967), pp. 34-36; J. McIntyre, Interpretation, 21 (April 1967), pp. 206-208. I Trethowan, op. cit.

50 See M. Perry in The Ressurection of Man (London and Oxford: Mowbrays, 1975), who is in agreement with Hick on this point.

Since God cannot save humans by coercion, Hick uses the analogy of a therapist and patient in order to show how salvation is universal - God has made the human with an inbuilt desire for God. God, like a divine therapist, will never cease to help the 'patient' to achieve his or her desires (EGL, pp. 380-381).

51 Hick goes into more detail in God has Many Names (London: Macmillan, 1980), where he also gives other reasons for his change in thinking. For a sustained critique see D.A Hughes "Christianity and Other Religions: a review of some recent discussion," Themelios (Jan 1984) pp. 15-21.
3. THE HUMAN AFTER DEATH

1 DEL, p. 92.


3 This chapter unavoidably reflects the descriptive nature of much of the content of DEL.

4 DEL, p. 38. There are those who contend with Hick that the body is a necessary condition for being a human person. See for example B. R. Reichenbach in Is Man the Phoenix: A Study of Immortality (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1978), ch 4.

5 DEL, pp. 112ff

6 DEL, p. 119

7 DEL, p. 121. Hans Kung in Eternal Life (London: Collins, 1984), p. 27, has more reservations than Hick regarding this phenomenon.


8 DEL, p. 120.

9 DEL, p. 112.

10 DEL, p. 112.

11 DEL, p. 143-144.


13 DEL, p. 126.

15 DEL, p. 220.

16 p. 49.


18 DEL, p. 195. In order to answer the question of the plausibility of the concept of resurrection, Hick advances his well-known "replica theory." Firstly, he maintains that there is no logical reason why there should not be "any number of worlds, each in its own space, these worlds being all observed by the universal consciousness of God but only one of them being observed by an embodied being who is part of one of these worlds." Secondly, he argues that it is logically possible for a complete psycho-physical "replica" to appear in another space on the bodily death of the person. (Hick uses the term "replica" in the special sense that there can be only one replica of the "original" and that this cannot exist simultaneously with the original). DEL, pp. 278-296. Hick first put forward this theory in FK, pp. 180ff. For a critique of the theory see Murray J. Harris, (Basingstoke: Marshall Morgan and Scott, 1983), pp. 130ff and Robert Audi in "Eschatological Verification and Personal Identity," The International Journal for the Philosophy of Religion, vol 7, no 4 (1976), pp. 391-408. For a defense of Hick against Audi's criticism, see "Audi's critique of Hick: An Evaluation," The International Journal for the Philosophy of Religion, vol 10, no 1 (1978), pp. 51-60. P.Badham modifies Hick's theory in "Recent thinking on Christian Beliefs, VI - The Future Life," Expository Times, vol. 88 (1976-1977), pp. 197-202.

19 DEL, p. 198.

20 DEL, p. 206.

21 DEL, p. 409.

22 DEL, p. 201.

23 DEL, p. 363.

24 DEL, p. 312-313.
25 Del, p. 316.
26 Del, p. 319.
27 Del, p. 332.
28 Del, p. 332.
29 Del, p. 338.
30 Del, p. 345.
31 Del, p. 345.
32 Del, p. 342.
33 Del, p. 343.
34 See Del, pp. 391-392, for a summary of Hick's analysis of the reincarnation theories.
35 P. Byrne in "John Hick's Philosophy of World Religions," Scottish Journal of Theology, vol 35, no 4 (1982), pp. 289-230, takes issue with Hick's assumption that truth lies at the points where the world religions are compatible. Byrne argues that since the world's religions contradict each other on so many crucial points "to deny truth to any of them seems more plausible than granting truth to all." (p. 290).
36 Michael Goulder supplied Hick with the rare Greek word "pareschaton" meaning "next to last."
37 EGL, pp. 374ff.
38 p. 46.
39 Del, p.418. B.R Reichenbach argues against Hick's theory that embodiment is necessary for moral growth in "Price, Hick and Disembodied Existence," Religious Studies, 15 (1979), pp. 317-325. Similarly, W. J. Wainwright in his review of Del, Anglican Theological Review, 63 (1981), 344-346, is not convinced that embodiment is necessary for genuine interaction between persons. He maintains that Hick "is not fully consistent, for God has no body and yet interacts with His creatures and, on Hick's view, while the final state of humanity involves personal interaction, it may nonetheless be bodiless."
40 Del, pp. 400ff. See footnote 62 below. Hick takes the term "bardo state" from the "Tibetan Book of the Dead" which purports to describe the experiences of the soul between death and rebirth. He also draws on data from western spiritualism concerning the 'next world' for this part of his theology.
41 Del, pp. 410-411, see also, pp. 305-309.
42 SC, p. 129. Hick apparently draws together the views of Jean-Paul Sartre and Martin Heidegger for this aspect of his theology, see chapter five of DEL.

43 D. Dawe in his review of DEL, in Interpretation, 32 (1978), pp.93-95, thinks that Hick's theory is Pelagian in that it implies that humans have to "make themselves ready for God." As such it obscures the dimension of grace in Christian, Hindu, and Buddhist teaching. R.G. Swinburne in Religious Studies, 13 (1977), pp. 355-357, makes the related point that in the Christian tradition, God saves humanity even before their characters are transformed. Also, Dawe maintains that Hick does not do justice to the Christian faith which sees the next life not as this life continued, but as this life transformed.

44 DEL, p. 426.
45 DEL, p. 444.
46 DEL, p. 458.
47 DEL, p. 430.
48 DEL, p. 441.
49 DEL, pp. 433, 446.
50 DEL, p. 464.


52 DEL, p. 50.
53 DEL, p. 135.
54 DEL, pp. 51-52.
55 DEL, p. 53.
56 DEL, p. 451, 462.
57 DEL, p. 460.
58 See pp. 36ff. See also footnote 62 below.
59 DEL, p. 464.
60 DEL, p. 40.
61 DEL, p. 40.
62 DEL, pp. 45-46. There is a tension which runs through
DEL. This arises because Hick apparently retains the idea he advanced in EGL, that the ego-self is essentially connected with bodiliness, and maintains that the ego-self can exist after the death of the body. See DEL. pp. 46ff, pp. 49-50, p. 416.

63 DEL, pp. 45-46, p. 450.
64 DEL, p. 450.
CONCLUSIONS

1 See GUF for a full description of Hick's 'Copernican christology.' J. Coventry in his review of this book in Theology, 84 (1981), pp. 226-228, criticises Hick for theological irresponsibility. He maintains that the Christian paradox that there is no salvation outside of Christ yet persons may be saved through following conscience, is an ancient one but Hick shows no awareness of the history of the debate. Hick's Copernican revolution in theology rejects one half of the paradox and therefore seeks a solution which is facile. Theology, Coventry claims, never progresses in that way, but rather by embracing both halves of a paradox it breaks through to a deeper level of truth. See also R. Rice's review of DEL in University Seminary Studies, vol XVII (Autumn 1979), pp. 216-218.

2 GUF, p. 122.

3 FK, p. 216.

4 FK, p. 218.

5 FK, p. 223.

6 FK, p. 236.

7 FK, p. 224.

8 FK, p. 226.

9 see pp.37ff.

10 EGL p. 299.


12 See p. 28ff.

13 GUF, p. 93.


15 This is the approach of I. Trethowan for example, see Religious Studies, 10 (1973), pp. 117-120.

16 Indeed, many modern thinkers are discovering that the way to health, either for self or society, is not achieved in the way Hick suggests. They are finding that it is only through self-
affirmation that there can be concern for, and intimacy with others. Only by being 'for self' may we be 'for others'. See J. Olthuis "Self or Society: Is there a Choice?" from Your Better Self: Christianity, Psychology, and Self-Esteem, ed, Craig W. Ellison (New York: Harper and Row, 1983); Theodore Roszak Person/Planet (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1978).


Hick, J. "Eschatalogical Verification Reconsidered,"


Owen, H.P. *Theology*, 71 (1968), pp. 36-37.


Trethowan, I. Religious Studies, 10 (1973), pp. 117-120.

