

SOME PROBLEMS IN PERSONALISM

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This paper is limited to the American tradition of personalism, and more particularly to the distinguished thinkers and teachers in that tradition who have been associated in the past with the University which is our host [Boston University]. In order that criticism may not be held to violate the proprieties and obligations involved in this hospitality, let me say that such criticism as is here shown implies a deeper appreciation, for it arises from a strong sense of personal debt to these teachers and a high esteem for their influence upon ethical and religious thought.

Professor William Henry Werkmeister must have shaken some personalists and caused some non-personalistic eyebrows to lift by remarking recently that "personalism is still largely a project and a program." It has been widely regarded rather as a sect or a school, and philosophical sects have not been popular since the twenties, when idealists and realists sought a "meeting of extremes" and Professor Ralph Barton Perry foresaw a "peace without victory—in philosophy." Sectarianism has continued to flourish, it is true, in spite of these hopeful efforts at agreement; yet although "isms" have multiplied, many of them importations from abroad, the philosophical temper is inclined to discourage schools in the interest of a common attack upon recognized philosophical problems. It is in this sense that personalism is here to be taken as a cooperative endeavor—based upon a shared conviction that "the role of the personal is central in value systems and reality"—to analyze the implications of this conviction for the problems of philosophy.

1.

Personalism's impact upon religious thought is no doubt the basis for the suspicion of sectarianism. To consider this religious influence is to raise significant questions about the proper methods of philosophy, and the proper boundaries of a philosophy of religion, a philosophy of the Christian religion, and Christian apologetics. Of these, the first two are valid areas of philosophical inquiry, though differently restricted by the data each accepts, but the last can be only one possible, perhaps fortuitous, application of a properly philosophical undertaking.

Personalism is primarily, of course, a philosophy. It comprises a theory of being and of knowledge, a theory of the good and of conduct; and it relates these by means of a philosophical theology. It opposes all ultimate impersonalisms;

in its self-conscious origins in the nineteenth century, the most influential of these were the two contrasting yet strongly affiliated impersonalisms of that century, which Borden Parker Bowne early labeled "know-it-all Hegelianism" and "know-nothing Spencerianism." In its philosophical counteraction against these, personalism appropriated three current intellectual traditions which together were to provide the arguments for its personalistic principle. These were the empiricism and nominalism of the English tradition; the Kantian concern for the concretely reasonable, particularly for the role of the practical reason; and the persistent tradition of theistic realism, recently enlivened by the [Scottish] School. Now each of these traditions gave it important instruments for criticism and construction, so that personalists anticipated many things said later by logical positivists, pragmatists, organic philosophers, and existentialists. But among themselves, these three traditions present serious conflicts, and the difficulties of personalism as a formulated system of thought arise from these conflicts. For its empiricism cannot support its realistic metaphysics, its Kantianism destroys the critical limits of empiricism without supplying a ground for a realistic metaphysics, and the further intellectualization of mind in a later shift from a subjectivized Kantianism to a subjectivized Hegelianism merely underscores these inadequacies.

Personalism is also, however, a philosophy of religion, for it undertakes a philosophical analysis and interpretation of the facts of religion in terms of its general philosophical principles. In this undertaking, it was helped by the rapid growth in the nineteenth century of empirical studies of religion, but also by the growing interest in values and their role in morality. And in personalism, the moralization of religion which resulted from the latter interest provided a rather restrictive norm for descriptive studies in religions. Bowne's thought, it is true, was still largely in the spirit of the works on Christian evidences, though his arguments were made cautious and critical through Immanuel Kant's criticism. Bowne's "transcendental empiricism" (as he was inspired to call it while writing the last pages of his revised *Metaphysics*) provided a theoretical argument for the personality of God, based on the principle that the categories of nature cannot explain consciousness and selfhood but can be understood only as abstractions from self-consciousness itself. His pupil and successor, Professor Edgar Sheffield Brightman, continued this pattern in his philosophy of religion, but being less Kantian in method than Bowne, more explicitly developed the methodology of empiricism into one of hypothesis and verification like that of William James, though he accepted the formulation of ontological theories into which James did not venture. Similarly, in Brightman's theory, personality, though still regarded as the coherent concrete key to the structure of things, was also thinned out from Bowne's still rather robust soul process into the private experiences of a succession of datum selves with a transcendent reference.

It is no doubt a pity that personalism became engrossed, as its primary interest, in the philosophy of religion to the sacrifice of many pressing problems suggested to philosophy by scientific, historical, and social events. Yet a philosophy of religion and even a philosophy of the Christian religion (which personalism still was for Bowne, though not as clearly for Brightman) are certainly legitimate and important philosophical enterprises, which may become important guides to religious life and action—this is a hope the philosopher at least nurtures for ethics, logic, and aesthetics as well. Philosophy, however, can validly serve this practical function only by remaining philosophical. It was the fate of personalism to become involved in apologetics through its inclusion in a program of theological education, thus assuming the role of a widespread liberal and moral interpretation of the Christian faith. It has, as we all know, exercised a wholesome and important influence on this role. It has supported a liberalism based on ethical standards, a liberalism more compatible with the American mood than are versions more relativistic and positivistic. Through its emphasis upon the value of a person, it has pressed for a social appreciation of Christianity, opposing both too exclusively God-centered and too narrowly humanized theologies. In spite of naturalistic deviations, it has preserved an appreciation for the privacy and inwardness of all intrinsic value experiences through its doctrine of individuality. It has affected the essential character of more than one Protestant denomination. In this, it is probably unique among recent philosophical interpretations of religion.

Yet it must be admitted that in this theological role both philosophy and the Christian faith suffer in the end. It weakens dogmatism in religion, but strengthens it in philosophy, where it has no place. There is virtue in Professor Perry's old jibe about idealism once "furnishing all the teachers in the philosophical Sunday School." A story which personalists have long told about themselves is that of William James, who, while discussing the ideality of time and space in his seminar, said as he picked up Bowne's *Metaphysics*, "Now we'll see what the Lord Jehovah has to say on the subject." Personalism has strengthened the activism characteristic of American Protestantism by supplying a reasonable justification for it. But important as it is, this invitation to make a direct frontal attack upon evils which are condemned by the ethical import of Christian faith is natural theology rather than Christian philosophy, and inadequate as a foundation for Christian life. What is the need for an analysis and interpretation of such doctrines of sin and redemption, incarnation and atonement, trinity, in a society of free moral persons directly and immediately supported by the power and wisdom of God—persons capable through their intelligence of discovering the moral purposes of God, and through their moral effort of achieving them? Christianity tends thus to be reduced to moral effort, and the process of secularization which marks the church of our day is strengthened.

Philosophy too tends to be corrupted and confused by having assigned to it a nonphilosophical role. The evident result is a certain recklessness in personalism's professed empiricism, and a certain ambivalence and fluctuation in its use of terms. Empirical terms are assigned nonempirical burdens; for example, in Bowne, phenomena have all the prerogatives bestowed by Kant's transcendental unity of apperception, the very doctrine of Kant with which he has to dispense in order to preserve personal individuality. Thus phenomenal categories can be preserved for science, and yet the existence of nature in any self-determining or self-activating way can be denied. As another instance, Brightman appeals to "objective reference" as a solution to the problem of a realistic theory of knowledge, yet also affirms the self-transcendence of the mind in knowledge, a view which should make the act of reference superfluous. Primary causality is surreptitiously reintroduced, without analysis, as "source" and "ground," and the equivocal terms of "being in" or "outside" of consciousness, difficult as they are, imply a one-level relationship between mind and nature which the ontology denies. There is also an unfortunate use of *ad hoc* hypotheses. The hypothesis of a finite God, for instance, threatens not only a doctrine of special providence but the entire value of God. Intersubjective relations are superimposed upon private or "monadic" minds which think each its own thoughts, and the temporalism of personalism necessitates a rapid acceleration, without empirical foundation, of the creative activities of mind in perception and thought, to bring them within the present moment of conscious experience. Such hypotheses seem to be the result of determination that there is doctrine to be preserved, if necessary by logical definition rather than patient observation.

2.

The remainder of this discussion is concerned with the problems of personalistic method and the difficulties it creates with respect to certain central theories which are essential to the personalistic argument and conclusions.

The empiricism of Bowne and Brightman has, as we have said, a double reference—the British inclination toward sense data and subjectivity, and the transcendental (Kantian) or concrete (Hegelian) inclination toward the grasp of structured wholes, though the structures grasped are in both cases also subjective. Like George Berkeley, personalism rejected the existence of general abstract ideas. It resented all reified abstractions. Misplaced concretions disturbed it very much, as they have since disturbed Alfred North Whitehead. As the slogan of its revolt might be taken Philonous's response to Hylas's efforts to bolster up realism and materialism—"I have a mind to have some notion of meaning in what I say." In this spirit, Bowne brushed aside as fallacies of the universal or of abstraction the conceptual apparatus of traditional ontol-

ogy—not merely the various rationalistic survivals and rewritings of scholasticism, but also the dialectic use of negation, the resort to paradoxes and polarities, the reification of absolutes, of matter, of qualities, relations, and principles. By his attack upon these, he was able to clear away much obscurantism with an effectiveness which positivists might have emulated. A strong sympathy with the positivism and nominalism of his day, indeed, is shown in *Personalism*, where the critical analysis of knowledge by the Comtean is accepted as a halfway point toward a clearer and more empirical concreteness. Thoughts "have application only as we find some concrete experience which illustrated them."¹ Bowne consistently rejected the abstract as merely phenomenal and "nonexplanatory," and required that a metaphysical interpretation be "concretely experienced."²

The "transcendental empiricism" which developed from this insistence upon the concrete held, as we have already said, that the principles of metaphysical analysis assume their concrete meaning only when seen as aspects of, or abstractions from, an intelligent willing subject. Only "the active self-experience of intelligence" is given.³ "Mind is the only ontological reality. Ideas have only conceptual reality. Ideas energized by will have phenomenal reality. Besides these realities there is no other."⁴

How then can Bowne establish a realistic epistemology, in particular, a theism? If the order of knowledge and being is to be understood as self-experience (since we are not God), Bowne seems self-consigned to subjectivism or solipsism. The term "transcendental" seems introduced to serve ambivalently in the double significance of Kant's usage and a realistic independence. To hold to both is ontologically superfluous. My mind may provide the structural quality of experience, but if so, God's mind does not. In this case, I can claim to be empirical in the sense of self-experience, but there is no need or basis for a theistic argument. If I restore a personalistic *analogue entis*, my empiricism is sacrificed. To the degree that I discover order not of my own making, I cannot have empirical knowledge of my own creative role in that order. The point increases in obscurity because of the unclear status of phenomena in Bowne's writings, and especially in his realistic distinction between phenomenal and metaphysical categories, since both sets of categories, after all, are mental operations.

There is in Bowne, of course, another epistemological language never adequately related to this, in which he seems to ascribe to the knowing mind an intentional perceptive grasp of objects not internal to itself. Thus,

in its perceptive activity the mind finds its objects in the world of things. But it finds a highly complex system of objects in itself, or in its own subjective, social, and historical manifestations. . . . An abiding order, independent of our finite and individual thinking, and in this sense a real

order, is the necessary presupposition and implication of our thinking. And this order becomes our subject or our mental possession only through our own activity. In this way existence slowly passes into knowledge.⁴

The inevitable result is that the division of cognitive labor, as between God and ourselves, is never justly apportioned. To the extent that we find an objective order, the concrete and empirical activity of our mind comes to more grasping or intuiting; to the extent that we create what we know, we must expect to find less order in the independent world. To refer the problem to an epistemological dualism is a redundancy which loses the economy of Kant's analysis without throwing light on the problem.

An examination of Brightman's theory of experience, too, drives us to the conclusion that it is inadequate to establish either a realistic order of nature or a real order of persons, human or divine. In one of his finest and most impressive papers, the presidential address to the Eastern Division in 1936 (directed primarily at naturalism), Brightman speaks the language of a direct realism. "Whether idealism or realism be true, there are experients interacting with a world." "The essence of verification, then, in science as well as in metaphysics, is not merely that facts *be observed*, but rather that systematic relations of facts *be perceived*." And "reason and experience are not two separate powers, but reason is a function of experience and experience is a movement toward rational totality."⁵ But in *A Philosophy of Religion*, four years later, experience is limited to a private realm, indeed, to the momentary realm of the "empirical situation" or the "datum self." Experience is not knowledge, and all knowledge which penetrates beyond the conscious realm of its environing existence is hypothetical and inferential. Experience is certain but not true; knowledge is subject to verification but uncertain. Sense is subjective and prior to perception, which is judgmental and propositional in nature. It is true that Brightman also speaks as if there were direct apprehension of a kind, since the datum self of a person has the quality of trans-temporal and trans-spatial reference. But this reference seems always to be hypothetical and inferred, and never enters really into the perception. When I transcend time by remembering that war was declared in December 1941, the past is in no sense involved as ingredient in my experience; the once existing past is involved only as the remote phenomenal cause of a causal sequence of which I now have to experience only the last member. It is true that the objective reference of judgments is a part of their empirical givenness. But such reference is itself one of the "internal, private acts" which I do not experience (when I see an apple tree, for example), and now I can only believe that the relation of knowing is anchored in an independent object. Brightman thus wants an open and growing knowledge by rational conjecture, yet a knowledge that is circumscribed by a closed theistic universe which is also known. Knowledge of God himself is the

"objective reference" of a hypothesis, verified as well as possible, yet theoretically uncertain (of the same kind of uncertainty as my perceptual judgement that there is a cow in the meadow): yet God is himself immanent in the mechanisms of my own mental life, in short, every aspect of consciousness for which my own will is not accountable.

It is true, of course, that experience is also given a much broader meaning; for instance, "religious experience is any experience of any person taken in its relation to his God."⁶ It is not clear here whether "his" God is to be construed as entirely within the present datum or the relation of experience is that of the rational apprehension of external being. Whatever his meaning, Brightman frequently asserts that experience is private, and so numbers himself among those who build knowledge upon subjective data, only to fail to arrive at externality, rather than among those who find reason operating within, and serving to clarify, enlarge, and differentiate experience through the analysis and generalization of the structures discovered in it. This position can be maintained only by setting up unempirical ontological hypotheses, and Brightman sometimes seems to play upon the egocentric predicament, which is here irrelevant, that the making of these hypotheses is itself an experience. *Experience* taken as broadly as all consciousness cannot furnish either a method of knowledge or a test of its truth.

The realistic ontology of personalism is thus out of harmony with its adherence to the subjectivistic tradition of empiricism. Though Bowne described his thought as Kantianized Berkeleyanism, it could more appropriately be called a Berkeleyianization of Kant, for the empirical must take over the function of the transcendental. To introduce an epistemological dualism merely complicates the difficulty, for the alleged "parallelism between thought and things" is not itself subject to verification, since the things themselves must always be a construction from the mental or subjective end.

As personal realism, it seems, personalism cannot dispense with a realistic theory of perception or an intentional dimension in cognition, one in which discursive reasoning and perceptive grasp are but two interacting dimensions of the same act of direct apprehension, except insofar as the mind proceeds independently to extend its understanding through conceptual structures to the end that a more adequate grasp of perceptive existence may become possible. The crucial problem of realistic epistemology is that of distinguishing, within the structures observed and thought about, between the order which is independent of our thinking and the order which we impose upon it in the creative functions of our intelligence.

3.

The epistemological difficulty in personalism involves the most important issues in its metaphysics. Four of these derivative problems can here be pointed out—the theory of universals, the concept of God, the interpretation of personality itself, and the problem of our relations with other persons.

A.

In spite of its inclination toward nominalism (or rather, subjective conceptualism), personalism does, we have said, hold to a theory of objective universals to which we believe that our most coherent hypotheses have reference. It holds, too, that these objective universals, whether laws of nature or principles of perfect valuation, present a systematic unity which justifies our belief that they can be interpreted as the intelligent will of a divine person. The belief that objective order is found only as our own conceptual inventions show themselves to be coherent thus results in a two-level universe of meaning—one level subjective and created by me, the other objective but personal, though merely believed in by me. The further the question of the knowledge relationship—the question of how a subjective series can be like and yet in some sense provide true knowledge of an objective series—remains unexplained.

But such a two-level theory, it seems, destroys the very nature and function of concepts. If universals serve any function in knowledge, it must be one of analyzing, preserving, amplifying, and verifying experience itself, not of drawing our own pictures of what is otherwise unknowable. One result of the theory is, for instance, to dispense with the entire task of a realistic cosmology based upon scientific findings. Personalists affirm that a doctrine of creation is needed for finite personality, but not for the physical world, which is phenomenal. Properly speaking, however, even this creation of persons should rather be thought of as emanation, "fulguration," or some such process, since the essential difference between creator and creation is lost sight of, and man interacts directly only with God, but not with a natural order. So man cannot act upon things, but only upon God. This is to use God's intelligent will in a very Pickwickian sense indeed, and such a theory can hardly be regarded as empirical.

Bowne, it is true, sometimes speaks the language of an intuitionist and realist. There is a tough common sense about his writings, which his phenomenism does not permit to establish itself. "Spontaneous thought deals with its objects rather than with itself, and the work of reflection is difficult. Thought hides behind itself, and takes its own products for original data from without,"⁷ and this spontaneous way of thinking is "the parent of a very large part of

popular speculation," arising from the "tendency of spontaneous thought to take its own operations as the double of reality."⁸

A realistic epistemology, we propose, must accept at something much closer to face value the claims of spontaneous thought. However much our knowledge is involved in subjective qualia, symbols, and inferences, a realistic metaphysics demands a theory of discovery, not of faith in our own inventions regulated only by sensory and emotional compulsions. The coherence conception of truth itself implies the perception of ordered unities which mental activity does not create. Logical formulas and universals inhere in the relations we perceive in nature and in the realm of possibility. Professor Aaron is right in reminding us again of the need of two types of universals, those which we construct and those which "reality" presents, and without which we can construct none with any truthfulness.⁹ The basic problem of such a realistic epistemology is to relate adequately two dimensions in knowledge—that by acquaintance (to use James's old distinction) and that by description. Description requires a re-presentative relationship, acquaintance merely a presentative, but the former must be based upon, and, if it is to be adequate knowledge, framed in by, the latter.

Concepts, therefore, though they are more real than the symbols by means of which we make them usable, are abstractions from complex structures, in which perception of real wholes and discursive thought are supplementary poles. Repetition of these structured experiences is the empirical ground for universals.

The acceptance of such a theory of knowledge would save personalism from over-easy and loose metaphysical generalizations; for with less speculation and more observation of relationships that are given, more light will be thrown upon the issues of providence and the conditions and history of man. Personalism has neglected the phenomenal part of its method.

B.

Universals, so conceived, give us a knowledge of nature rather than of God. A realistic theory of perception such as is suggested here would not, of course, serve to establish the existence of God. Our perception falls too far short. "Wie muss der Mensch gebildet sein, der Gott sehen will?" someone asked Meister Eckhart, the mystic, who answered gruffly, "Der muss tot sein." A realistic theory may, indeed, render more difficult the easy analogy from finite persons to an intelligent, purposive, and perfectly good divine person. Reality itself must remain the X from which the thinker of perception or insight strips, by the method of analysis and synthesis, increasingly sharp and adequately structured orders of knowledge. God is not to be comprehended in this sense. But neither is substance. An argument for God's existence as the personal being in which all phenomenal truths are *bene fundata* (well founded) would be possible on this

basis only if we could show, by an increasing adequacy of penetration into an objective order, that all the perceived orders and meanings of the world converge upon that "complete notion" which is God, or at least upon a "highest possible notion" of some kind of a determinate, describable God. But such coherence in the results of analysis and synthesis is obviously impossible for man; Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz would say that the analysis involved is infinite and therefore beyond us.

We cannot, therefore, demand that "personalists" affirm the personality of God as an essential dogma. For the arguments which personalism itself adduces go no farther than this. The backbone of its argument has been threefold:

1. The argument from the mental, yet objective nature of concepts, to establish the intelligence of God.
2. The argument from regularly repeated causal mechanisms in our own nature, to establish God's immanence yet otherness.
3. The argument from norms of value and action, to establish his enveloping goodness.

But these neither add up conclusively to a personal intelligence, nor does any one of them point with any conclusiveness to personality as experienced inwardness. For as we have seen, we do not discover the mental nature of the concepts involved in discovering the conceptual order of events; we have no empirical grounds for attaching another mental pole than ourselves to the conceptual structure of reality as a whole. Thus the idea of God must remain in the realm of speculative hypothesis from this theoretical viewpoint.

Recent personalism has shown itself restless and dissatisfied with the Kantian distinction between the theoretical and the practical concern of man. It is his emphasis upon the role of the practical reason and its primacy, however, which Brightman intellectualized into a theory of objective and normative value structure willed by God, in which Bowne came closest to finding a realistic basis for experience and knowledge, and therefore for our knowledge of (as opposed to about) God as well. In the moving chapter in *Theism* titled "The World Ground as Ethical," he recognizes that it is in the realm of action and moral compulsion that we really confront existence.

The deepest things are not reached by formal syllogizing but by the experience of life itself. . . . If one were called upon to formally justify his confidence in another, he could not succeed. . . . And in all reasoning upon reality the same thing is true. There is an element of immediacy back of all inferential conviction which logic only very imperfectly reproduces. We may need the logical for its expression and impartation, but it is not

reached this way. It is intuition or instinct rather than ratiocination, a formulation of life rather than an inference of logic.¹⁰

The moral argument for God, in particular,

can never be rightly estimated in passive contemplation, but only in moral action. . . . [T]he force of the ethical demand for an ethical Creator cannot be felt from mere reflection, but only from living participation in the moral effort and struggle of humanity.¹¹

An objective order of existence is thus given in *personal action*, and this is prior to the conceptual analysis involved in our perception and understanding of it. The pull of reality is on the whole person, not on the intellect, and the "personal situation"—this term might be contrasted with Brightman's "empirical situation"—which, as we shall see, can hardly provide a personal source of moral and religious action; the "personal situation" is a realistic encounter, by a person, of a reality not subject of his thought or will. But Bowne was too much involved in the Kantian schematization of reason to give full play to his outward impact of personality upon other existence. "Existential" givenness (to use the recently modish term) as opposed to conceptual or ratiocinative givenness, involves this prior face-to-faceness, in action, with reality, which combines a subjective awareness of coercion with the perception of objective order or structure. The undergirding order of nature and (if, as I believe, we can discover them) the overarching order of value norms must be presented in an immediacy; to serve, the one as instrument, the other as goal. The confrontation of reality, physical and personal, in purpose and action—a reality on the same level of being as my own consciousness—must be taken as primary among the data upon which personalism builds its argument.

C.

This means that our analysis of personality must be adequate to explain its dynamics of motives, drives, intentions, and actions. The present need in education, politics, and the realm of creative art for a theory of man need not here be reviewed. Historically, personality is an ethical rather than a psychological or ontological concept; a person has a self-determining and responsible role in decisions and contracts. Moral right, responsibility, and obligation are the minimal marks of a person, and self-awareness is the minimal prerequisite for these marks. It is well to remember that long before existentialism became explicit, personalism undertook to philosophize from man and his potentialities and situation outward. The one thing which should with assurance have been expected from it was a philosophical anthropology on empirical grounds. But

here again the apparent clarity of subjectivism and a Berkeleyanized Kantianism have blocked a direct attack. Rightly emphasizing the Augustinian discovery of inwardness, it has sought to build upon this alone a theory of personality as self-conscious content with some kind of temporal tenacity adequate for intelligent memory, purpose, and decision. It is true that Bowne, by clinging to a soul concept which he understood in the spirit of his metaphysical dictum that to be is to be active, retained some depth of perception into the limiting and enabling elements in man which lie beyond the present active moment. But so tenuous and thinly drawn has this theory of personality sometimes become, in the interest of Humean empiricism and the analogical argument to the personal nature of God, that it externalizes as environment, and therefore knows only as a hypothesis, the body and the unconscious drives and powers of man—factors essential to man's very moral nature. Thus, for example, personalism cannot support the distinction in personality between an experience and an attitude or complex habit pattern, between religious experience and faith. How can a sequence of internal momentary states of consciousness have faith?

It may thus be desirable for personalism to put aside the urgency of grounding its theistic argument upon the nature of human personality for a deepened analysis of the internal components of human action. For the clues to the divine are to be found, after all, not in the analogies which can be constructed upon a theory of consciousness, but in man's experience of objective orders, powers, norms, and in his moral and creative endeavors, his sense of need, the inward roots of his failures, his ability to achieve wisdom and the understanding, cooperation, and love of his neighbors. We need to come to terms with the findings of neurology and the confused and conflicting claims of the depth and level of psychology, and to develop an adequate theory of intersubjectivity as well, if we are to find the anthropology which should be our first contribution to human thought.

D.

It is well to emphasize, these days, the self-determining nature of man and his essential privacy. Thoughtful people are rapidly discovering the inadequacies and dangers of "other-directedness" in the practical area of conduct, and of the behavioristic internalization of man in theory. There is therefore a great virtue in personalism's insistence that the worth of man rests upon his self-experience and his self-value. But this should not lead us to harden the inward approach to man prematurely into an ontology, and to neglect the decisive importance of social conditions in determining his nature. Personalism, in spite of its interactionism and its theory of efficient causation, has darkened the windows of the individual even more completely than were those of Leibniz's monads, for these perceive the entire world, each from its point of view, while in

personalism the self seems to construct only the scaffolding of its own hypotheses around the living conscious core of its experience, the qualitative content of this core of experience being the subjective effect of internal or external causes. Leibniz was able to outline a basis for social, political, and Christian order based upon the harmony of the interlaced patterns of perception; monads see one another, even though they depend only upon God. Personalism has not done this.

Bowne and Brightman have both, it is true, demanded social cooperation as the ethical fruitage of religion. Religion itself is defined by Brightman as "cooperation with God and man for the realization of individual and of shared value."¹² The goal of religion is "a community of those who share a common purpose."¹³ But how can two private series of datum selves, each self-determined by its own data and its time-binding memories of its own past experience and its own future goals, share a common purpose? This has not been shown except by offering the generalized hypothesis that it is the immanence of God as nature which makes it possible, this immanence making possible the chain of interaction upon which communication and cooperation are based.

The sharing of a common purpose and the cooperative executing of a common task must presumably take place by the process which William Ernest Hocking has described as double translation. *A* tells *B* of his private purpose by the instrumentality of symbols and physical processes which are a part of the physical level of God's providence; *B* may compare his own translation of these symbols to his own private purpose, and by a similar process report their similarity or dissimilarity back to *A*. Eventually an agreement may be arrived at that the two purposes are similar, and further agreement may be reached about what each is to do. But a numerical identity of purpose, and a common object and effect of the separate personal actions cannot be established. Thus the question of how cooperation in a common situation toward a common goal is possible is not yet answered, for the theory presupposes previous agreements (upon symbols, for example) and the existence of social structures and the social openness of personality. It requires more than private experiences which are the effect of, and to this extent supported by, a complex of causal factors in nature; it involves a mutuality of understanding and a unity of perceived people, natural forces, social structures, and possibilities of value. Historically, these precede and sustain my own personal nature. The presence of other persons and an order of existent communality are more than a causal nexus within which my experience arises; they are the condition and support of the patterns of perception and of action which I share with others. They must be included in any adequate account of experience. They are the full concreteness of personality and personal action in which the perceived order and continuity of existence and possibility show themselves. To quote Bowne again, "only by living participation in the moral effort and struggle of humanity"¹⁴ do we

confront existence. And only within this context of a common order of perceived being do we communicate, cooperate, form social goals, and attain common values.

Both political and religious thought have often undertaken an explanation of human social order on the basis of a sharp assertion of the separateness of persons. Persons are, after all, the locus of values and the sources of creativity, not communities and institutions. Hence solitariness is sometimes seen as the essence not merely of religion, but of all cultural and spiritual life; even Christian love is commonly defined as my joy (or assent) in the joy or well-being or perfection of another. But unless this individualism involves immediacy of responsiveness, the "knowing of others" not merely by a set of propositions but directly and through a sharing of the issues and outcomes of life, political and religious unity is weak and thinly conceptual indeed. Personalism can thus render a distinctive service to the clarification of both religious faith and a democratic political faith in voluntary self-determining cooperativeness and voluntary self-forming community life, by supplying a description and analysis of the social structures and purposes in which persons share, without abandoning an adequately ethical and ontological theory of privacy.

4.

That personalism, therefore, that is not merely a sect but "a project and a program" may well find it necessary to reexamine and restate its position in certain fields of philosophical inquiry in which it has been too devotedly attached to the formulations of the nineteenth century. It may require:

1. A revision of *method* which surrenders apriorism (but not the search for universality) for the sake of a descriptive task in which analysis and synthesis are secondary and speculation is tertiary to perception. Our method must be phenomenological if we are to establish a sound realism.

2. A *metaphysics* more patient in its analysis of the categories; one which does not leap to the personalistic synthesis to solve its problems, but which follows more carefully the universalities and necessities of science as criteria for distinguishing between phenomenal and metaphysical categories. It does not contribute to the understanding of space and time to call them ideal (as long, at least, as we all correct the psychological flow of time by our watches), nor is the order of nature understood the better by ascribing it to God's intelligent will. We have relied too heavily, moreover, upon the analogies of physical mechanisms in interpreting God's providence and the common order and context of our experiences. Persons may confront each other in a way not reducible to causal mechanisms alone.

3. A shift in the *critical task*, to come to terms more adequately with contemporary schools and issues; to clarify personalism's relations to modern

logic, to new points of view in the natural and social sciences, and to philosophical movements from positivism to existentialism and Scholasticism which have goals and convictions in common with it.

4. The cultivation of a deeper *historical orientation*, so that personalism may strengthen its roots by going beneath Kant and Hume to the Augustinian and Scholastic sources of its way of thinking.

5. A new address to the problems of *philosophical anthropology* and an ethics, which will make its essentially human and moral concern more effective in our times. For this is nearest to the central problem in terms of which personalists must continue to fix their sense of direction—the problem of human personality, its natural and social conditions, its powers and limitations, and the nature of its worth.

Notes

1. Borden Parker Bowne, *Personalism* [(New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1908)], pp. 177f.
2. Borden Parker Bowne, *Metaphysics* [(New York: Harper Brothers, 1882)], pp. ii, 424.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 423.
4. Borden Parker Bowne, *Theory of Thought and Knowledge* [(New York: American Book Company, 1897)], p. 57; see also *Personalism*, p. 21.
5. Edgar Sheffield Brightman, ["An Empirical Approach to God,"] *Proceedings*. APA (1936) [*The Philosophical Review* 46, no. 2 (March 1937): 147–169], pp. 151, 153 [italics added], 155. [Reprinted in Richard T. Hull, *Presidential Addresses of The American Philosophical Association, 1931–1940* (Amsterdam and Atlanta, Ga.: Editions Rodopi, 2001), pp. 401–417].
6. Edgar Sheffield Brightman, *Philosophy of Religion* [(New York: Prentice-Hall, 1940)], p. 415.
7. Bowne, *Theory of Thought and Knowledge*, p. iv.
8. *Ibid.*, p. v.
9. [Probably Richard Ithmar Aaron, *The Theory of Universals* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952).]
10. Borden Parker Bowne, *Theism* [(New York: American Book Company, 1887)], p. 259.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 260.
12. Brightman, [*Philosophy of Religion*,] p. 435.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 383.
14. Bowne, *Theism*, p. 261.