Whole in every categorial sense, all actuality in one individual actuality, and all possibility in one individual potentiality. This relatively simple idea was apparently too complex for most of our ancestors to hit upon. They did not reject it, they failed so much as to formulate it. (Exceptions are relatively little-known figures in the history of philosophy and theology, and even they were not too explicit about it. Plato, with his World Soul doctrine, is the nearest to an illustrious exception.)

Modal coincidence implies that the traditional identification of deity with infinity was a half truth. All-possibility—which is indeed infinite if anything is—coincides with divine potentiality. Thus, God is infinite in what he could be, not in what he is; he is infinitely capable of actuality, rather than infinitely actual. Not that he thus lacks an infinity which some conceivable being might have, but that an 'absolutely infinite or unsurpassable maximum of actuality' makes no sense. Possibility is in principle inexhaustible; it could not be fully actualized. Actuality and finitude belong together, possibility and infinity belong together. (This may not be quite all that needs to be said about their relations, but it is a good part of what needs to be said.)

We have so far justified our explication of 'God' or 'deity' with reference to religions other than those of East Indian origin. Is not

Buddhism atheistic, and yet a way of reaching individual wholeness? And does not Hinduism admit God only as an inferior manifestation of the mysterious Ultimate? These are subtle questions. There is no doubt that Buddhism, at least in the Northern form, aims at and claims to reach an experience of oneness with all things. How close this comes to theism varies in different sects. Suzuki once said that it comes very close in Zen. My contention is simply this: Buddhism does not offer an explicit alternative to the theistic version of the all-inclusive reality; rather the Buddhist refuses to rationalize what is given in 'satori' or salvation. His doctrine is an intuitionism, not a speculative account of the Whole. (To identify this intuitionism with Western 'scientific naturalism' is, I should think, arbitrary in the extreme.) Buddhism is rather a renunciation of theorizing than a theoretical rival to theism. (And it certainly is not natural science. Supernatural overtones are pervasive in Buddhist writings, even though one cannot readily articulate them conceptually.) Metaphysics, being an attempt to theorize about first principles, does not face a choice between theism and Buddhistic nontheism. The only clear-cut metaphysical theory in Buddhism is its analysis of 'substance' into unit-events or momentary states. This analysis Western metaphysics may well take seriously and even in large part ac-

cept. But the question of deity is not thereby answered. Whitehead, granted a rather simple correction of his analysis, has shown how God can be conceived in these terms.

As for Hinduism, it tends, like Buddhism, "when the chips are down" to renounce theory for sheer intuition. The contrast between Maya, correlative to ignorance, and Reality, correlative to true knowledge, resists conceptual analysis. Is Maya a form of being (and what form?), a form of nonbeing, a mixture of being and nonbeing, neither being nor nonbeing? The question is put, but orthodox exponents are coy with the answer. The analogies, such as the rope seeming to be a snake, are not concepts but extremely vague suggestions. We are told that, as a dream is cancelled by waking and finding it was but a dream, so Maya is cancelled by waking to True Reality. But in sober truth dreams, like ropes, are not cancelled. They remain just as real events as waking experiences. True, what they seemed to reveal concerning the rest of the world may have been largely (though never, as could be shown, wholly) mistaken, but if so the mistakes were really made. It will never be true that they were not made. And the rope was also really there. Press any statement by the followers of Sankara and you find, I am convinced, that the semblance of conceptual definiteness and logical structure is itself Maya. Or, if there is

an intellectual doctrine other than the renunciation of intellect, it is the familiar Western doctrine (as in Plotinus) of 'the absolute', the formless 'infinite', viewed as superior to, but manifested in, all definite, finite actuality, even divine actuality. This doctrine I hold is an intellectual as well as religious mistake. Only potentiality can be strictly infinite, nonrelative, and immutable; actuality, which is richer than potentiality, is finite, relative, and in process of creation. God as actual is more than the absolute (which indeed is a mere abstraction), not less.

I am open to conviction in these matters, but my trouble can hardly be a result of not having read enough Hindu philosophy. For there have been and are learned thinkers in India who have said much the same thing as I have just done. Eventually we may all, in East and West, hope to reach better understanding concerning the role of logic in religious thought. Intuition is valuable, and indeed indispensable; but I have a certain faith in the rights and duties of rational metaphysical inquiry, and I shall give up this faith only when the inevitable failure of rational metaphysics has been shown in some more conclusive way than by arguing ad nauseam from the difficulties of certain traditional forms of metaphysics whose failure I admit from the outset.

In what kind of philosophy is the religious idea of God most at home?

(1) It must be a philosophy in which becoming is not considered inferior to being. For the self-surpassing divinity is in process of surpassing itself, and if the supreme reality is thus a supreme process, lesser individual realities will be instances of an inferior form of process. Being can then be no more than an abstraction from becoming.

(2) It must be a philosophy which avoids declaring all individual existence to be contingent. For God, to be unsurpassable by others, must exist necessarily. Yet at the same time all actuality must indeed be contingent, even divine actuality, for the latter includes all contingent things. It follows that we need a philosophy which distinguishes between the bare or abstract truth that an individual exists and the how or actual concrete state in which it exists. Individual self-identity must be granted a certain independence from concrete actuality. Philosophies which clearly provide for this are of the Buddhist-Whiteheadian type, according to which the most concrete mode of reality is not existing substance, thing, or person, but actually occurring event, state, or experience.

(3) A theistic philosophy must be in some sense indeterministic. It must admit (as Hume and Kant would not) that process is creative

of novelty that is not definitely implicit in the antecedent situation. For otherwise only ignorance would make self-surpassing seem real; while for God past, present, and future would form but a single perpetually complete reality. And this, we have seen, is not the religious view. Also a deterministic theory of temporal process implies theologically either a denial of all contingency, as in Spinoza, or an absolutely mysterious nontemporal freedom (at least for God), as in Kant.

(4) A theistic philosophy must take 'create' or 'creator' as a universal category, rather than as applicable to God alone. It must distinguish supreme creativity from lesser forms and attribute some degree of creativity to all actuality. It must make of creativity a 'transcendental', the very essence of reality as self-surpassing process. This is precisely what Whitehead does in his "category of the ultimate" (Chapter 2 of *Process and Reality*).

(5) A theistic philosophy must have a theory of internal relations and also a theory of external relations. Of internal relations, for a whole logically requires its constituents and God in his concrete actuality being the inclusive whole requires all things; moreover, the creatures require God as the correlate of their own integrity. In some deficient sense the creatures include God, as well as God the creatures. Finally, any creative act requires its anteced-

ent data. Of external relations, for though God in his particular or contingent actuality includes all actuality, yet in his bare individual existence as the divine being and no other he—and he alone—is necessary, and what is necessary cannot include, or be constituted by, relation to anything contingent. Only the contingent can be relative. Hence the abstract necessary aspect of God does not include the actual world, and is not relative to it. (In addition, the antecedent data of a creative synthesis are independent of the synthesis.) Both types of relations are provided for by Whitehead's theory of 'prehensions' and the two 'natures' of God.

With these requirements in mind I ask you, Was it any such doctrine as this 'neoclassical theism' (as I call it) which Hume and Kant evaluated in their alleged refutations of all natural theology? Or were they—and especially, perhaps, Kant—as unaware as any child that such a doctrine could be formulated and seriously defended? I confess I find the latter view to fit the known facts. Kant, at least, did not so much as dream of neoclassical theism, or the metaphysics which can adequately express it. If then he refuted the doctrine, this was indeed a stupendous achievement, an amazing piece of luck or feat of divination. But did he refute it? I fail altogether to see that he did.

Perhaps there is one qualification: the first

Antinomy might be thought to be such a refutation, provided one accepts the finitistic trend in mathematics as authoritative. In the present work this matter must remain unfinished business.

There seems to be no equally clear religious alternative to theistic metaphysics, defined as belief in the modally all-inclusive or nonfragmentary being, surpassable only by Himself. These characterizations spring much more directly from the ideal of worship than terms like 'absolute', 'infinite', 'immutable', 'unconditioned', and similar legacies from Aristotle, Philo, Plotinus, or Plato badly understood. How different intellectual history might have been had we not been saddled so long with these pseudo-platonic simplifications! However, as a politician once remarked, "the future is before us."

In the next chapter I shall give some indications of the manner in which the theistic proofs can be reformulated to fit the new situation in the philosophy of religion, a situation—to repeat—of which Hume and Kant were scarcely able even to dream.

CHAPTER TWO

The Theistic Proofs

That the classical proofs for the divine existence failed is one of the most widely-held philosophical convictions. I agree that the proofs failed; but I find the customary explanations of how and why they did so inadequate and, in part, quite erroneous. And I insist that it was the classical proofs which failed, not all possible theistic proofs, so that the impossibility of proof has not been established.

One trouble with the customary accounts, whether those given by natural theologians or even, to some extent, by their critics, is a naive notion of what a proof in principle ought to amount to. It was thought that a proof would be a set of undeniable or axiomatic premises from which the desired conclusion could be deduced. Today we realize that axiomatic

status is a relative and more or less subjective matter. Scarcely anything of importance is axiomatic for everyone. As for deduction, what it does is to establish a price for rejecting its conclusions. Suppose *P* entails *Q*. Then those who initially accept *P* must either accept *Q* also, or reconsider their acceptance of *P*. The mere entailment relation is of course neutral between these two procedures. Of what use then is formal argument in natural theology? Will not all who doubt the conclusion transfer their doubt to the premises? Some will do so, but all—that may be open to question. Here, as often, there are two opposing extremes and an intermediate position. (In this I am indebted to Dr. George Mavrodes.) Human beings are unlikely (at least in anything like their present state of culture) to find premises acceptable to everyone from which theism can validly be deduced. No matter what theistic argument is offered, some will hold the premises no less doubtful than the conclusion. But though it is unrealistic to hope that all doubts concerning theism can be removed by deductive argument, it may be quite as unrealistic to suppose that no doubts can be removed. In the past many people have felt that certain premises which they thought entailed the divine existence were more convincing than the simple affirmation of that existence by itself. It is very clear to me that I should not have been a theist all these

years had I not found the *P*'s which I take to entail this *Q* to be such that their denial is for me much more clearly counterintuitive than the simple rejection of *Q*.

Of course, from a lofty point of view, formal proofs are but crutches, aids to our weak human insights. Were we less weak and confused we should simply see the truth, and that would be the end of the matter. But crutches for the weak can be very useful. It may be a good deal easier to see a truth if its logical connections with various propositions, initially not known to be connected with it, are made clear. The glib denial of this is unreasonable. The popularity of the denial seems to derive partly from the wish of some that theism should not find rational support because they prefer to go on disbelieving it, and partly from the wish of others that it should not find rational support because, they think, belief should be independent of secular reason and thus remain in the hands of preachers and theologians, or to speak more generously, belief should be a matter of faith. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Never mind the reasoners, unless they too are pure in heart—and then their reason is not to the point. But how many persons are so very pure that they can believe even if they are aware that no reasoner thinks that reasoning favors belief? And ought they to believe, on that supposition? I incline to

think (with Freud, for example) that the impossibility of any rational argument for belief, supposing it really obtained, would be a strong and quite rational argument *against* belief. I suspect that most unbelievers agree with me here. And so, officially, does the Roman Catholic Church.

In considering proofs we must realize that if proofs have premises, so—unless they are purely and trivially formal—do criticisms of proofs. For one thing, critics have generally supposed that the theologians knew their business in defining the theism they wished to justify. Thus Kant supposes that the problem is to establish "a most real being," wholly infinite, timeless, and absolute. But if our previous chapter was soundly argued, this is a basic though theologically popular mistake. Furthermore, since divinity is not religiously conceived as a mere illustration of first principles but as somehow *the* first principle, the correlate of every interest and every meaning, it follows that any metaphysical assumption implicitly either expresses or contradicts theism. It cannot be neutral toward it if it is on the metaphysical level of generality. Only empirical issues are thus neutral. Hence no theistic view can be criticized without at least implicit metaphysical commitments.

Kant's rejection of rational theology affirms or assumes a metaphysics (or if you prefer,

an antimetaphysics) which is radically antitheistic (as I have defined theism). It is not merely neutral or agnostic. Thus the procedure does what the proofs are accused of doing. It reaches a controversial conclusion by reasoning from premises equally controversial. Some of Kant's initial assumptions—I could give quite a list of them—are to me, as a theist, no less counterintuitive than his conclusion that there can be no rational argument for belief. The invalidity of classical proofs is not all that would follow from these assumptions; rather they imply the absurdity of theism itself even as affirmed by faith. What Kant cogently refuted were only propositions that rational theology has no need to affirm. And, insofar as his argument touches the truly theistic conception, it is as question-begging as it well could be. The same is true of Hume, though his antitheistic assumptions were only in part the same. (See the discussions of Hume and Kant in my book *Anselm's Discovery,* Open Court, 1965.) Thus the whole episode is a detour. It is time to return to the highway.

All rational argument presupposes rules, universal principles. From the merely particular or specific nothing can be deduced. Yet how can there be principles applicable to God? Is he not the Great Exception? Why otherwise should we worship him? A case under a rule is *a* case, one among others, comparable to

others; but God must be *sui generis,* the only possible worshipful being. From this point of view, it seems not enough to say that God is the 'supreme' being; we must, it seems, go further, and with Tillich deny that God is *a* being. Rather, he is "being itself." Also God does not 'exist', for it is beings which exist. But alas, we now seem to have made deity a mere universal, wholly lacking in concrete or particular actuality. Rightly does Niebuhr fear that in this doctrine Greek abstractionism triumphs over Christian concreteness and appreciation of individual uniqueness. I hold with Niebuhr here.

Two requirements, seemingly opposed, must be met if natural theology is to be in any degree possible. God must, in spite of all difficulties, be a case under rules, he must be an individual being. However, he must not be a mere, even the greatest, individual being; rather, he must also in some fashion coincide with being or reality as such or in general. And here I accuse Tillich of a subtle form of the very error he is trying to avoid, that of putting God under an inappropriate rule. It is a rule universally valid except with reference to deity that what is individual is not, to an equal degree, universal, and what is universal is not to an equal degree individual. Individuality and universality ordinarily are opposed. They are not entirely opposed—and this is important—

in that, for example, a man's distinctive personality traits are a sort of highly specific universals of which each momentary state of the man is a new instance or embodiment. Still, apart from God, an individual is a far cry from anything so general as reality itself or as such. What Tillich overlooks, however, is that this seemingly inevitable contrast between universality and individuality is one of the very rules to which God as worshipful or unsurpassable must be an exception. His uniqueness must consist precisely in being both reality as such *and* an individual reality, insofar comparable to other individuals.

It is clearly nonsense to declare an entity wholly incomparable and yet compare it to all others as their superior. And if not superior, it is not worshipful! Nor can we look up to mere colorless 'being' or reality. God is "the most high" or the most excellent one, and this means that he can and must be compared to others. Yet he is also incomparable. Tillich, in accepting the incomparability and rejecting the comparability, is giving us a half truth, and is missing the point no less than are those who suppose God to be the greatest individual being and *therefore* in no sense as universal as being itself. The Worshipful One is not simply the most excellent individual, but he is that. One may even say that what is incomparable about God is just that he is both comparable and in-

comparable, whereas other individuals are merely comparable. This is a formula translatable into many equivalents. Thus God is not simply infinite, or "wholly other" than finite things; nor is he simply one more, though the greatest, finite thing: rather he and he alone is both finite and infinite, and likewise: both relative and absolute, conditioned and unconditioned, mutable and immutable, contingent and necessary. He is individual, but *the individual with strictly universal functions,* the all-encompassing and yet not merely universal principle of existence.

This is exactly the point of theism: that the ultimate principle is individual, not a mere or universal form, pattern system, matter, or force—or that, conversely, the ultimate individual is strictly universal in its scope or relevance. A human individual is not the very principle of existence; of course not, for he is not the Unsurpassable, he is not God. But a mere universal, even 'being' or 'reality' simply as universal, also cannot be God, who must be the most individual of universals, the most universal of individuals. This may suggest Hegel's "concrete universal," but is really quite different, the point being that individuality is one thing and concreteness or 'actuality' quite another. The same thing can be both universal and individual, but that universality and concreteness should be coincident is mere contra-

diction. God is both universal and concrete; but the concreteness transcends the universality and is incomparably more than God merely as existing or individual. One must admit a real distinction (real for God, not just for us) between abstract individuality or existence (these are the same) and full concrete actuality (which is quite different). Neoclassical theism is not Hegelian, though it may have learned something from Hegel.

But now, if we must thus make deity an exception even to the rule that individuality and universality are opposed, what rules shall we use in reasoning about theism? This is *the* question of natural theology, and one not clearly envisaged in the classical discussions. Not having been envisaged it can hardly have been answered.

If the idea of God is to have a rational place among our ideas, four conditions must be satisfied. (1) There must be rules or principles valid for all individuals, not excluding God, rules definitive of individuality purely in general, or as a 'transcendental'. (2) There must be rules valid for all individuals *except* God, rules definitive of 'non-Divine individual', or of individuality as a secular or non-transcendental category. (3) There must be a criterion for the distinction between the two sets of rules. (4) There must be reasons why the distinction needs to be made.

The criterion in question derives from the definition of deity, which may be stated variously as 'worshipfulness', unsurpassability (by another), modal all-inclusiveness, or non-fragmentariness. These phrases I take to be equivalent.

False or at best ambiguous criteria, not equivalent to the foregoing, are: infinity, absoluteness, perfection or completeness, immutability, necessity, self-sufficiency or *aseity*, simplicity, uncaused cause, creator—if these are taken as excluding any and every application of their contraries to the divine reality.

Ordinary individuals, or individuals other than God, presumably in all possible cases, influence and are influenced by some but not all individuals. In other words individuals interact, they are both active and passive, causes and effects. However, with ordinary individuals the scope of interaction is fragmentary, less than cosmic. Also, the power of self-maintenance, or preservation of integrity through interaction, is ordinarily limited, and, therefore, the individual has not always existed; for, the conditions in which its self-maintenance is possible being limited, in infinite past time these conditions will not always have been provided. Any ordinary individual, since its scope of interaction and power of self-maintenance are limited, can conceivably be surpassed by another individual with greater scope and

power. Thus interaction that is surpassable in scope and in power to maintain itself defines ordinary individuality. Whatever is individual, or one being, acts as one and responds as one to actions of others; but, ordinarily, not everything is acted upon by the individual nor does everything act upon it. Likewise its acting and being acted upon have not always taken place and will not always do so.

Since God, to be worshipful, must be unsurpassable, his scope cannot be less than cosmic, and there can be no possibility of an individual beyond the reach of his influence or from which he could not receive influence. Likewise, whereas ordinary individuals maintain themselves only in some environments, not in all, the unsurpassable individual must have unlimited ability to adapt to varying states of reality. It is thus completely 'unspecialized' in the ecological sense, possessing an absolutely general or unsurpassable power of adaptation to things. Hence there can be no beginning or ending of its existence—one state of affairs being neither more nor less suitable for its existence than another—and thus the notion of its nonexistence describes no positive state of affairs whatsoever, since it has no ecological meaning. Only its existence has such meaning. (This is one of the many forms of the ontological proof.)

We now see how our four requirements may be met. (1) All individuals whatever interact. This is a strictly universal positive trait defining individuality as such. (2) All ordinary or non-divine individuals interact in surpassable, not unsurpassable, fashion, and hence they are generated and destroyed, partly ignorant of others and of themselves, and can adapt only more or less well to others. Combining (1) and (2), we deduce that 'divine individual' means an unsurpassably interacting being, hence without possible birth or death, incapable of poor or mediocre response to others—for instance, of complete or partial ignorance of self or others. (3) The criterion distinguishing the transcendental from the merely secular meaning of 'individual' is simply the distinction between the general idea of interaction as such, with scope and quality unspecified, and interaction definitely limited and surpassable, hence inappropriate to deity. In justification of the distinction, we may argue (4) that the idea of limited scope is intelligible only by contrast with that of unlimited or cosmic scope, and the idea of surpassability only by contrast with that of unsurpassability. Thus if secular individuality is conceivable so is divine individuality. This at least throws doubt on the positivist contention that theism is absurd. Moreover, as we shall see, a priori reasons can be given why individuals with restricted scope

need to interact not only with one another but also with a being of unrestricted scope. Thus, without mentioning any truly empirical issues, we can see a rationale in theism which not only does no violence to any basic concept but is required by such concepts.

Classical theism is not in this position. It cannot use interaction, but only one-way action, as a transcendental. The idea of being acted upon, responding to influence, it must take as a category without transcendental application. But since the ground for contrasting ordinary or scope-limited action with transcendental or scope-unlimited action is no different from that for contrasting ordinary or scope-limited response with scope-unlimited response, to reject the second contrast is to deprive the first of any clear rationale. Nor can the rejection be justified religiously by invoking unsurpassability or worshipfulness. That a being with zero response must be better than one with ideal scope and power of response is far from self-evident. And the argument, 'If influence from another can do a being any good, the being must be defective or imperfect', begs the question, since perfection (in the sense that the argument requires), i.e., an all-around maximum of value, is no religious idea, and is logically problematic if not plainly absurd, and since a being cannot be termed surpassable merely because a verbal formula claims to

describe its superior. We must know that the formula makes consistent sense. No such knowledge is available in the present case.

The conception of an ideal power of response has much better basis in ordinary categories than that of 'greatest possible actuality'. Concepts used to describe ordinary individuals do not need to be put in contrast with the supposed notion of a maximal possible value; whereas 'limited or fragmentary scope' does require its contrast with 'cosmic scope', and 'surpassable by another', its contrast with 'unsurpassable by another'.

Note that, as was pointed out in the previous chapter, if 'unsurpassable' meant 'absolutely, even by self', we should have the absurdity of a greatest possible reality. But to say that ordinary individuals can be surpassed both by self and others does not imply, as necessary contrasting concept, the notion of a simply unsurpassable individual, surpassable in no possible respect and neither by others nor by self. So long as we have the two concepts, surpassable and unsurpassable, we can perfectly well distinguish surpassability (or its negative) 'by self' from that 'by others', also surpassability 'in some respect' from that 'in all respects', and there is no logical reason to suppose that every grammatically permissible combination of these distinctions must make sense. Some combination of them must

make sense, but that is the only logical requirement. Classical theism seems to have selected exactly that combination which fails to make sense: i.e., 'in all respects unsurpassable even by self'. But therewith possibility is taken as absolutely maximizable. One could just as well assume that 'greatest possible number' is a definite conception.

To be fair one must see that the traditional procedure had a certain plausibility. There is indeed a profound and religiously relevant asymmetry between acting and being acted upon. Ordinary individuals are through and through acted upon or caused, there is no independent individual trait in them, one which was always able, or will always be able, to maintain itself. Even their indispensable qualities are all caused. The extraordinary individual, in contrast, is acted upon or caused only in its dispensable or contingent qualities, those additional to its primordial-everlasting self-identity as the sole unsurpassable being. This unsurpassability itself is an abstract, yet truly individual, form which is embodied anew in concretely diverse ways in each divine state. The form as such is not even self-surpassable. God, one might say, is unsurpassably unsurpassable, and the adverb holds absolutely. Ordinary individuals have no such underived, unsurpassable, invulnerable form. They are sheer effect; looking to the sufficiently remote past,

they have simply inherited "a world they never made," can never alter, and without which they would not have existed. But any world God inherits he also preceded and (with suitable qualifications) created. No one can influence God except someone already influenced by him. This statement would be absurd of any other being.

The asymmetry between the ordinary case of completely caused or dependent reality and only partly caused divine reality seems the chief reason why traditional theism could be found credible. If we abstract from God's contingent qualities, with respect to the rest of his reality we can view classical theism as largely correct. Here indeed is the uncaused cause, impassible, immutable, and all the rest of it. Only it is not God, nor—in spite of Thomism —is it an actuality, 'pure' or otherwise; rather, it is a mere abstraction from the contingent and caused actuality of the divine life. To identify God with this abstraction seems a philosophical species of idolatry. God is no such abstraction. He remains entirely free, in his full reality, to be receptive, enriched by his creatures, perpetually transcending himself, a genuinely active and loving subject, sympathetic companion of all existence. Eternally fixed, immune to influence, and incapable of increase is only the generic divine trait of universal interaction, unsurpassable in scope and adequacy

—just what is properly meant by calling God 'all-knowing', 'all-powerful', 'ubiquitous', also unborn and immortal. These abstractions come to the same thing. But they are empty by themselves. It is vain to interact universally and always, but with nonentity, or to have unsurpassable knowledge, but of no other individual than self. But this emptiness is precisely what classical theism spoke of as God when it declared him absolutely and in all respects immutable and independent of the world. If love of the highest kind is ultimate, then so is the social interdependence of which it is the ideal form.

Now we are in a position to consider the theistic proofs. The first is what I call the religious or 'global' proof (because in a fashion it sums up all the others). It is not the usual argument from religious experience taken as a mere fact. It is an argument from the rational necessity of religious experience and of God as its adequate referent. If an individual must have integrity in order to exist as an individual, and if the conscious form of integrity is worship, then while an individual may live by unconscious integrity, or may to some extent lack integrity, he cannot consciously and rationally choose to do either of these. Hence there is something irrational in choosing not to believe in God. There seems no other way than the theistic to conceive the

objective correlate of personal integrity. How can various interests form one complex interest, various loves one complex love, unless the totality of objects of interest or love is felt to constitute a reality at least as unified or integrated as the creaturely individual? The whole of the previous chapter may be taken as the explication of this global reason for belief.

Some will urge against the foregoing that there can be no question of 'choosing', rationally or otherwise, to believe, for belief is either coerced by evidence or it is insincere. And even one who feels the need for worship may argue that it is wishful thinking to try to elicit evidence from a mere need.

I have two ways of countering this, either of which is to me personally almost convincing by itself.

The first way is to argue that the notion of wishful thinking is here inapplicable, the attempt to apply it deriving from an ambiguity in the notion of 'need' or 'wish'. Ordinary needs are matters of more or less. For some purposes, one needs this, for others, that, and the importance of the purposes is relative, not absolute. To be very happy a mother may need to believe that her son is not a criminal. Still if he is a criminal she may need and be able to face this fact in order to do her duty in the real world as it is. The very meaning of life does not depend, though it may almost seem to,

upon believing in the son's moral or legal innocence. The value of truth, closely connected with ethical values, is not to be traded for the value of dreams. But the wishfulness expressed in such a trade is concerned with particular, contingent, dispensable values. And they are limited values, which can be outweighed by others. On the contrary, the essential religious value is not one value among others, it is not measurable, contingent, or particular, but the very principle of all achievement, really presupposed by both the value of facing harsh reality and the value of enjoying deceptive dreams. If and only if life has meaning do particular forms of life have meaning.

William James in his 'will to believe' failed to make the above distinction with sufficient clarity, and this was what spoiled his insight. Where contingent alternatives, particular instances of value, are concerned, truth, 'facing reality', has priority. Here it is absurd to argue, "This view is good, the belief in it yields value, hence we shall take it as true." For until we know that it is factually true in some further sense than that of giving satisfaction by being believed we do not know what its value will prove to be. 'True, therefore valuable', not 'valuable, therefore true', has to be the inference in all beliefs about contingent matters —apart perhaps from suppositions about the future which are scarcely beliefs but hopes or

states of confidence, as when we confidently jump over a crevasse. (Even here we have reasonable knowledge that something of the sort is possible.) No comforting illusion has right of way over acknowledgment of the real world in which all our obligations lie. But where an idea is so fundamental as to concern all possible contingent values, where a purpose is so basic as to be implicit in any reasonable or legitimate purpose, the pretence to reject the idea or purpose is itself a form of illusion. Any relative 'need' can be sacrificed in behalf of a relative need of greater dignity. But if there be an absolute 'need', one can sacrifice it only through confusion or inconsistency. There is something here deeper than a wish, or a merely contingent direction of will; rather, rational volition as such is in question. Hence the word 'need' is inadequate to describe it.

What I have been saying parallels rather closely Kant's contentions about the primacy of the practical will and also what Albert Schweitzer says in a similar vein. But there are differences. As will perhaps be already clear, my view as to why or how the idea of God is intrinsic to rational volition as such is dissimilar to Kant's, if not to Schweitzer's; and also I do not quite want to say that practical reason is primary in the drastic Kantian sense. It is, I think, decisive: that is, no one is foolish for taking its 'postulates' as definitive for

him. The requirements of rational living cannot rationally be repudiated as mere illusions, since if all choice is irrational, so is the choice of rejecting illusion. But—and this is my second way of meeting the objection—the 'practical' argument is not primary in the radical sense of being the only decisive or cogent argument. The trouble with advocating the practical while rejecting all theoretical proofs, as Kant did, is that the impossibility of a theoretical argument for a conclusion would be no mean theoretical argument against it. If a belief is legitimate, evidence for it cannot be absolutely lacking. Nor can the evidence be merely moral. How can the moral side of our natures be so profound, if the theoretical side is so incurably superficial?

The global or religious argument is at best sadly compromised if we have to admit that it cannot be unpacked into more explicit arguments, at least some of them 'theoretical'. So let us consider these more explicit proofs. One of them argues (as we shall see in more detail presently) that localized interaction cannot of itself make intelligible the possibility of any order and that without some order the concept of interaction itself lacks definite meaning, so that the denial of a strictly universal yet individual form of interaction would be the denial of any interaction at all. And what sense could that have? This may be thought of as a form

of the design argument for theism, which Thomas Aquinas more nearly correctly stated, in my judgment, than he did any of the others. (It was, as he stated it, rather far from the form of this argument which Kant refuted. Here, as at not a few points, Kant was a rather ignorant man, considering the almost unlimited scope of his ambitions and claims as a critic of natural theology.)

Again, since God alone is both contingent and necessary, whereas any other individual is simply contingent, or dispensable, a theistic proof might consist in showing that purely contingent existence is not self-sufficient or intelligible by itself, so that to deny God would be, absurdly enough, to reject any and every form of existence. (As I have argued elsewhere, that something exists is no mere fact, but an a priori truth.) This is the cosmological argument.

Moreover, since God's existence has an aspect of necessity, something like an ontological proof must be possible. The multitudinous opponents of this proof do chiefly two things: first, they take advantage of a bad mistake made by Anselm, repeated by Descartes, but —as some of us think we have shown—inessential to the ontological proof as such; second, they appeal to an alleged axiom that all existence, existence as such, must be logically contingent. But to put God under this rule is no more legitimate than to put him under

the rule that individuals interact locally rather than cosmically, or are more or less ignorant. As we have seen, if all otherwise universal rules must apply also to God the word God stands for nonsense. This positivistic position can be defended, but if that is the ground upon which Anselm's proof is being attacked, let the critics state as much and stop confusing the issue. God's existence could not, logically could not, be merely contingent. Perhaps God could not exist at all, the idea being absurd, but that he should exist contingently is then doubly absurd. This much of the Anselmian position is, or ought to be, truistic; and it is time this was taught in elementary philosophy classes, instead of being incompetently 'refuted' by virtue of an axiom which simply begs the question and makes nonsense of the religious idea.

But note that, on the view I am defending, God is both necessary and contingent and that this combination, not necessity alone, is his uniqueness. It is analytic that no a priori proof for a contingent actuality, divine or not, could make sense. And this seems to be the intuitive ground for the stubborn opposition to an ontological proof. Such a proof could not give us God as a concrete actuality. The concrete divinity can only be contingent and empirical. Thus the particular actual world which presents itself to the divine experience, hence the particular character of the divine experience itself as

receptive of the world, is knowable, if at all, empirically only. For instance, God as the God of humanity is but an empirical fact; for there might have been no humanity. A priori is only the "God of whatever creatures there are." Anselm and Descartes quite missed the logical significance of this obvious distinction. Their opponents missed it no less, though somewhat differently. The popular combination, through the centuries, of the two incompatible propositions: God is wholly uncaused or necessary, but our evidence for him, if any, must be wholly empirical, is a logical scandal. At least one of these propositions must be false or absurd. Are not both absurd? God must be necessary and contingent, and our knowledge of him must have an a priori and also an empirical aspect.

The empirical aspect of God, however, concerns, not his existence or eternal character, but only the accidental or generated qualities constituting, with the eternal aspect, his full reality. The bare question of the divine existence is purely nonempirical. Hence empirical existential proofs in natural theology are bound to be fallacious. Here I agree entirely with Hume and Kant.

Does it follow that the ontological proof alone holds? No, for it is distinguished from others not by being a priori, nor by arguing from concepts, but rather by taking as its premise the intelligibility of one concept, that of

deity, or Worshipfulness. Other equally a priori arguments can be based on concepts not initially identified with this. Thus, in the reasonable argument from design, we may argue that if all interaction is supposed to be local and more or less unknowing, it is not to be understood how reality could be or remain anything but a "shapeless chaos"—to quote Jefferson's phrase, used in this connection. Only universal interaction can secure universal order, or impose and maintain laws of nature cosmic in scope and relevant to the past history of the universe. This argument is not observational. For, if the reasoning is correct, the alternative to God's existence is not an existing chaos but, rather, nothing conceivable. The argument is that the very concept of reality (and any significant 'unreality' as well) implicitly involves order and an orderer. Apart from God not only would this world not be conceivable, but no world, and no state of reality, or even of unreality, could be understood. It is not any mere fact that must be rejected—according to a properly conceived natural theology—if theism is rejected, but the basic concepts by which alone we can conceive even possible facts. All the arguments are just as truly a priori as the ontological.

One may, for instance, argue from such basic concepts as truth, beauty, or goodness. These, taken in their ultimate generality, are not em-

pirical ideas. It is not just our human values, or terrestrial animal values, but any values for any possible valuer, which require divine valuations to make sense. Thus consider goodness. A rational ethics requires what Kant termed the *summum bonum,* or the supreme rational aim for any rational being as such. This is an a priori conception (one which could be formulated in any world in which philosophizing could go on). But Kant misconceived the content of the rational aim. He said we should hope to combine complete virtue with complete happiness, this combination to be our individual possession approximated to in some infinite post-terrestrial state. But absolutes like perfect happiness combined with perfect virtue, so far as they make sense at all, are divine prerogatives. It is God's combination of these qualities, not ours, which alone can furnish the aim of all effort. True, our efforts must be able to aid the divine self-realization, and this would have seemed impossible to Kant since he held the Aristotelian dogma that God must be without receptivity, immune to possible influence from the creatures. According to our previous discussion, however, this denial of divine reaction or interaction is mistaken. Once it has been renounced, the way is open to reconceive the *summum bonum* as the divine life itself, to which all creatures in their measure contribute. Serving God is then truly the

inclusive aim. To this aim no creature is irrelevant. Not that we help God to be virtuous—this would indeed be absurd. But we may contribute to the richness of his 'happiness', the beauty of the contents of his always perfectly righteous experience.

Our ancestors were afflicted with a subtle egoism. They wanted to serve God everlastingly, but with the understanding that he also would serve them everlastingly. A fair bargain, as it were! However, since their logic was confused enough to permit them at the same time to deny divine receptivity, they were really saying that while God would everlastingly serve them, they could do nothing for him, since he is immune to gifts, or to being enhanced or influenced in any way, an absolute marvel of self-sufficiency and indifference. So, in effect, God serves his creatures forever; they do not, in any intelligible sense, serve him. He is the means to our achievement, we are neither means nor end for him—but, in value terms, bare nothing. My proposal is that we should serve God for our time, rather than forever, and should trust him in a suitable sense to serve us also for our time.

Only in one sense do we serve God forever. Since He, having unsurpassable memory, cannot lose what he has once acquired, in acquiring us as we are on earth he acquires us forevermore. But we do not in the same sense

acquire him forevermore. (Whether we like it or not, there are divine prerogatives which cannot be ours.) Personally I find this by no means basically sad or troublesome. Though we do not forever continue to serve God, our temporary service is everlasting in a sense which I find deeply satisfying: whatever enters the treasury of the divine life is at once where moths cannot corrupt and thieves cannot break through nor steal. And we can in this life be aware of ourselves as already immortal elements in deity, and so by Love we participate now in our immortality. The triumph over death as our triumph is now, not in a magical future. But apart from God, is not the triumph with death?

Is this an empirical argument? No, any possible thinking creatures, in no matter what state of reality, would face the essential problem. Rationality as such requires that there be an aim which it is rational to pursue in spite of the mortality of nondivine individuals and species of individuals. But only deity provides a clear meaning for immortality. And only an all-loving deity whom all may love can provide nondivine individuals, even though vicariously, with permanent achievement for their effort. This is so, not because of contingent features of our world, but because in any world God alone could and would be universally loving, universally lovable, and everlasting.

Nontheistic substitutes for a divine orderer and a divine immortalizer of achievements seem but makeshifts. 'Matter' is just a label for the orderly processes of nature, it is not a positive principle to explain their possibility. The old notion that "in infinite time atoms would by chance fall into all possible arrangements" was a naive begging of the question. To talk of this or that set of atoms is to talk of a kind of order, not to explain that kind. The mere existence of atoms with definite character, maintaining themselves through time and relative to one another, is already a tremendous order. Materialism in principle refuses to take order as a problem.

Again, the purely humanistic version of immortality, 'social immortality', is an evasion. Our contributions to human life do, to some small extent, survive our death; but to suppose mere humanity capable of preserving even this partial contribution strictly forever is to blur the distinction between the known traits of humanity and the idea of God in a fashion which I at least find wildly irrational. The other alternative, living only for the finite, vaguely foreseeable but limited human future, seems also irrational. It is animal instinct which we then fall back upon to give us a sense of life's value; it is not our philosophy or religion. I am fond of the subhuman animals, but I

think we should accept our human role of living in the light of conscious aims.

Let us consider the classical objections to the argument for a divine orderer. First, the argument was generally stated as proceeding from the premise that the actual empirically-given order and detailed pattern of the world is too good and beautiful to be thought less than a divine product. The objectors promptly (in the time of Carneades, for example) pointed to what, for our human judgment, cannot but appear as flaws in the world picture. A partially botched product can hardly be sufficient evidence for a perfect producer. Both parties, I hold, were mistaken. Any world would require a divine orderer, and therefore the contingent characters of this world are irrelevant, one way or the other. All that these characters can do is to throw light on the contingent qualities, additional to his existence, which God may have. Furthermore, unsurpassably universal knowledge and love are not among the contingent, rather they belong to the necessary or definitional, characters of deity. To the question, Why then the partial disorder and evils in the world? a creationist philosophy has essentially but one answer. It holds that it is not God alone who acts in the world; every individual acts. There is no single producer of the actual series of events; one producer, to be sure, is uniquely universal, unsurpassably influential.

Nevertheless, what happens is in no case the product of his creative acts alone. Countless choices, including the universally influential choices, intersect to make a world, and how, concretely, they intersect is not chosen by anyone, nor could it be. A multiplicity of choosers means that what concretely happens is never simply chosen; rather, it just happens. Purpose, in multiple form, and chance are not mutually exclusive but complementary; neither makes sense alone. ('Purpose not in multiple form' is, I believe, contradictory or mere gibberish.) Concrete evils and goods simply happen, they are never in their full particularity chosen. Hence to ask, Why did God choose to inflict this or that evil upon us? is to ask a pseudo-question.

The order of the world requires a divine orderer, not because the order is perfect, or because there is nothing chaotic or unfortunate in the series of events, but because apart from God there is no way to understand how there could be any limits at all to the confusion and anarchy implied by the notion of a multiplicity of creative agents, none universally influential or wise. And that there are such limits to anarchy is no mere fact; for there would have to be limits in any genuinely conceivable state of reality. But to understand this necessity is to see it as one with the necessary existence of God as cosmic orderer.

A second trouble with the classical proof from order was that God's ordering was supposed to be done in eternity, entirely uninfluenced by any creaturely decisions. Indeed, the creaturely decisions were themselves divinely chosen. But then the divine cause of all things was a sheer exception to the rule that concrete effects are also concrete causes, and vice versa, and also to the rule that the cause precedes, the effect follows. To say that one individual is merely cause, not effect, is to say that it is merely prior to others. But God outlasts us as definitely as he precedes us; there is no logic in making him cause only, and not also effect. On the neoclassical view, as I call it, God is both before and after, both cause and effect, of all events.

What then is left of the customary objection that theism must misuse the concept of cause? True, the bare existence of God is no effect and is prior to everything rather than subsequent to everything. But this strictly prior existence is not God as concrete cause of anything; it is God conceived abstractly in his bare self-identity, not his full contingent actuality. As *concrete* cause of each event, God is always also effect of prior events, including prior divine events or experiences. Thus we admit a rule applicable to all causes, even divine. That God, and only God, can also be abstract cause in so extreme a sense that, in this aspect, he is

not effect at all is an obvious logical consequence of his being the universal individual, confined to no one stretch of space-time, the very principle of reality as such. But in this universal role, deity is abstract, a mere outline of reality. The concrete is always more than any universal, it is always an instance of universals. Each concrete divine state is an instance of the transcendental, 'concrete actuality', and of the divine attribute, unsurpassability. (For not even God could surpass his response to the same actual state of the world.)

A third objection to the design argument is that it does not exclude polytheism. But (a) the point of the argument is that only strictly universal and unsurpassable interaction can explain cosmic order, and (b) to assign two or more individuals the role of universal interactor is to imply a distinction without a difference, or utter confusion. Each cosmic interactor would have to interact with the others, and then there would be no overall integrity, and one might as well have no cosmic interactor. Order is in principle 'the rule of one'. Even a committee needs a chairman, and not two chairmen but one. (To posit several not quite universal interactors is a notion which throws no light at all on any problem. For one thing, the status of being nearly universal, even if supposed by chance to obtain at a given

moment, must be inherently unstable to an unlimited degree.)

In a sense, however, the objection points to a truth, the old Platonic one that evil and partial disorder in the world do mean more than one agent influencing reality. However, there is no clear sense in which this can amount to a plurality of 'gods'. One (there is no room for more) unsurpassable or divine agent, with a multiplicity of surpassable ones, covers both the possibility of order and that of partial disorder.

When Kierkegaard said that 'God' was "not a name but a concept" he stated a half truth, just as did Tillich when he said that God was not a being but being itself. For, in this unique case, a word is both name of an individual and label for a universal property (unsurpassability). To say that this cannot be is to say that God cannot be. And more than ordinary grammar is required to establish that! This case is linguistically unique, just as God is existentially unique. To the charge that one commits a category mistake in regarding a certain property as self-individuated, the countercharge is in order: since nothing can be worshipfully superior to all and at the same time simply one more instance under ordinary categorial rules applied in the ordinary way, it is the objector who misapplies categories. In the old language, 'God' does not connote a class.

Without doubt someone in this controversy is misusing concepts, but (*pace* Gilbert Ryle) it is just the question at issue over again which side is doing this.

Is it a rule without possible exception that all individuals are surpassable? Then theism is absurd, as positivism says it is. Is the rule subject to a possible but not necessary exception? This will not do, for a nonnecessary being is *ipso facto* surpassable. Is the rule subject to a necessary though unique exception? Then theism is necessarily true. In support of this, consider the following: the exceptional status of God can itself be put as a transcendental or strictly universal rule. Thus, "Every individual whatsoever interacts (at least) with *some* other individuals, and also, and *in all possible cases,* with God, who alone universally interacts." This rule is absolute. For since God, in a fashion, interacts with, that is, both influences and (in subsequent states) is influenced by, himself, all individuals whatever interact with deity, as well as with at least some individuals other than deity.

It is also to be noted that all the exceptional properties essential to deity are in themselves universal rules of a kind, under which innumerable instances can come. Thus of *any* divine state the rule holds that it accomplishes a not conceivably surpassable synthesis of its actual

data. And the number of possible, perhaps also of actual, divine states is more than finite.

We thus have three sorts of rules: (1) those definitive of individuals other than divine, that is, of surpassable, not universally interacting, localized or fragmentary individuals; (2) those definitive of all individuals whatever, individuality purely as such; finally (3) rules definitive of the unsurpassable individual. And we have intelligible relations between these three kinds of rules. What more could one ask for? If this is not a rational view, what would be?

If local interaction requires cosmic interaction to set limits to chaos and mutual frustration, does not cosmic interaction require local interaction, as a ruler requires citizens to rule? Also, a multiplicity of ephemeral purposive agents requires a single everlasting agent whose purposes embrace the whole and give permanence to the values of the parts. But without parts there is also no whole. Thus 'God as such' and 'creature as such' have each its a priori status and function, and these are complementary. But this symmetry is embraced in a profound asymmetry. *God as such* is individual, while *creature as such* is an extremely general class. Only the nonemptiness of the class is necessary or a priori, not the individual members of the class. God requires *a* world, but not *the* world. By contrast, what the world

requires is not simply *a* God but *the* one and only possible God, the Worshipful One. Thus God in his eternal necessity is alone and unrivalled among individuals.