

# Theological Review

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## MEANING WITHOUT ORDER?

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Stating the obvious is an enterprise rarely helpful to the world at large. Still more is this true when the obvious appears by all accounts to be wrong. Exactly this sort of experience presents itself on occasions within the canonical scriptures, with regards to rewards and punishments. Psalms and lessons within the Divine Office often press the point home. For example, at one point the Anglican order places Psalm 37 alongside Proverbs 10. The thirty-fourth verse of Psalm 37 runs,

‘Wait for the Lord and keep to his way,  
and he will exalt you to possess the land:  
you will look on the destruction of the wicked.’

and then verse 37,

‘Mark the blameless man, and behold the upright:  
for there is posterity for the man of peace.’

The irritation runs deep, for apart from the dubious morality of such thoughts, the shallow doctrine of providence espoused seems in practice untrue. One’s irritation at such thoughts may well increase, as one reads the Old Testament lesson, the first ten verses of Proverbs 10. Again the entire section seems to exhibit much of the same shallowness, but perhaps verse 3 reaches down to the very pit,

‘The Lord does not let the righteous go hungry,  
but he thwarts the craving of the wicked.’

A few moments reflection reveal the manifest falsehood here contained.

Now it is not the intention here to illustrate a number of defective doctrines of providence in the Old Testament, for on such selective quotation it would hardly be just. Throughout the Old Testament, of course, one discovers a variety of views. Indeed, in reaction, one’s mind might wander to other writers, provoking an initial response of something like, ‘Thank God for Ecclesiastes!’ Koheleth, of course, will have nothing to do with such vain thoughts. In 4.1 he remarks,

‘And behold the tears of the oppressed, and they had no-one to comfort them! On the side of their oppressors there was power, and there was no-one to comfort them.’

and with still greater force in 9.11,

‘Again I saw that under the sun the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; nor bread to the wise, nor riches to the intelligent, nor favour to the men of skill; but time and chance happen to them all.’

These last words bring us to the very centre of my area of puzzlement. Is there any rhyme or reason in God’s dealings with men? How much sense does it make to talk of God working his purpose out? Is a worthwhile doctrine of providence possible, and if it is, does creation issue from God in a clear pattern or is randomness and indeed disorder part of the very nature of things? Certainly in the past, the mainstream of Christian theology seems to have opted for some form of ordered sequence of events leading to some final *telos*. This theological thread is one which is traceable right back to our roots in Jewish monotheism, as the

passages quoted above show fairly clearly. Search the psalter and rarely is the triumph of the wicked taken with any seriousness. (Psalm 37 explores the difficulty with much sensitivity, but in the end it is assumed that evil will only bring destruction.) Again, the numerous theologies rooted in salvation history, from the Deuteronomist, through St Luke, and up to the present day seem to assert a similar point. A purpose is clear for all to see if only we open our eyes widely enough.

Now the culmination of the process of thought for Christian theology lay in the teleological argument. For Aquinas, the deduction of such an argument began with the obvious orderliness of the universe, from which could be inferred a supreme intelligence, the originator of such order, whom everyone knew to be God. It is an argument which has passed through many vicissitudes. We are still beckoned by many to look at the natural world and discern God’s tell-tale footprints upon the sands of space and time. We are told that such signs of order are discernible on both the micro and macro scale. So we are directed to the regularity observed in the structure of the atom. Electrons speed around the nucleus in beautifully defined energy-levels. Then there is the phenomenon of life. Each animal seems purpose-built to live out its life in its own environment. Giraffes have long necks to reach food on high branches – chameleons change colour and disappear from human view, and so the list could be multiplied. But as if this were not enough, the universe itself fits together like the bricks of a child’s playroom. Animals and plant-life are but the beginning in Augustine’s great chain of being. Then we can move on beyond the earth to contemplate the tapestry of the heavens. The planets and stars in their courses have their fixed places, like the bricks in the fairy castles of the child’s mind. All this reaches its culmination in the beautifully structured universe of Dante’s ‘Divine Comedy’. And from here, ‘tis but one step to the Creator, so the hymn,

‘Crown him, ye morning stars of light,  
Who fixed this floating ball.’

For many, of course, this pattern is not obvious, and so as we noted teleology in theology has passed through many vicissitudes. The concept of the great chain of being has been challenged over the centuries. The existence of predator and victim has pointed to ‘nature red in tooth and claw’. Others have found purpose and form more difficult to discern – possibly they did not play with bricks in their youth!

Of late, this whole notion of purpose and easily defined providence has undergone another fearsome attack. The aggressor has been that war-weary warrior – Darwinian evolutionary theory, sometimes seen as a supporter of teleology. The greatest impact has come from Jacques Monod’s ‘Chance and Necessity’, a book of exemplary clarity and hence challenge.<sup>1</sup> Monod’s book is a paradoxical mixture of old and new, both in its science and in its underlying philosophical convictions. The theory of evolution propounded is traditional and Darwinian – what is novel is his lucid justification of such a theory, using the insights of molecular biology. The philosophy underpinning all is Cartesian, the universe is reduced to mathematics – his innovation is the raising of this insight to that of an atheistic metaphysical principle.

The basis of Monod’s theory is simple enough. Evolution,

and so life, is based on the twin notions of chance and necessity. The reproductive life-processes throw up *chance* mutations. Mutations which are 'fitted' to their environment survive and indeed are perpetuated by the *necessity* of invariant reproduction, which he shows to be a highly conservative process. Life reproduces itself with few mistakes. It is by this two-pronged process, then, that evolution marches on. Monod makes the point that any teleonomy or purposeful activity exhibited by living things cannot be prior to their appearance on the evolutionary scene. Randomness precedes invariance and so teleonomy becomes a secondary factor. If the giraffe has a long neck, and this is helpful to his survival, it is merely by chance that he received such physical advantage. The advantage happily ensured his survival thereafter. This realisation leads Monod to reject all animisms, that is, theories which postulate some form of purposeful development of the human race and the world as a whole. These exiled animisms include all religions, many philosophies and, indeed, Marxism. For Monod, the objective knowledge represented by scientific thought makes such animisms redundant, and so meaningless myths. Their usefulness lies in a myth-strewn past. In a similar vein to the writings of Camus, man must recognise his loneliness in the world and come to terms with it. All life, including the moral life must be based upon objective knowledge. It is a stark creed, apparently facing despair and loneliness with a stoic defiance.

Not surprisingly, it has had its critics, not least from behind the Christian ramparts.<sup>2</sup> Such criticisms have varied in their potency, but at least three arguments have been advanced by a number of writers. The first of these common criticisms relates to Monod's Cartesian philosophical foundations.<sup>3</sup> It is perfectly clear that it is unsatisfactory to reduce all to mathematics; this is reductionism in the true sense of the word. Much of biology and most of the human sciences are not reducible to this level. Mathematics remains a servant and not the master of these disciplines. The second two criticisms appear to spring from this root and are in one sense philosophically derivative therefrom. First of all, is objective knowledge, based upon the model of the empirical sciences, the only form of knowledge? Few philosophers today would adhere to such a sterile creed, which smacks of the pre-war Vienna school of pure logical positivism. Surely poetic, moral and indeed religious modes of expression can speak of reality, and that in an irreducible manner. Finally, Monod's theory revives the age-old argument between atomism and holism. For Monod, all is explicable in terms of an atomised world. The greater is always explained only by the behaviour of its smaller component parts. Biology and physics are, as we noted, finally reducible to mathematics. And yet, surely the whole is greater than the sum of its parts? A group of people behaves quite differently from a set of individuals acting alone.<sup>4</sup> The behaviour of a football crowd is sufficient to clinch this point. Physics has shown similar truths to be applicable in terms of particles and bodies acting upon each other.

Now all of this criticism seems reasonable, but at times, Christian critics go on from here and appear to submerge themselves in a flood of Teilhardian euphoria.<sup>5</sup> The success of their own critique goes to their heads, and somehow out of the wreckage of Monod's theory, rises a new Teilhardian synthesis which flies in the face of chance and randomness. Flying up like a phoenix, it arrives in a new age of

untrammelled optimism, where presumably at the close of the day, all will end happily ever after. The fallacy assumed here is that any notion of chance is either anathema to the Christian theologian, or unnecessary in any real sense. The most measured reaction to Monod is exemplified in the work of Arthur Peacocke. He carefully analyses the meaning of chance, probability and randomness, and shows how and when these are necessary concepts, to which we must needs be alert.<sup>6</sup> Perhaps his crucial sentence is,

'... *pace* Monod, I see no reason why this randomness of molecular event in relation to biological consequences, that Monod rightly emphasises, has to be raised to the level of a metaphysical principle interpreting the universe.'<sup>7</sup>

In other words, the random movement of molecules is not a sufficient principle to explain the path taken by the entire universe.

Accepting this counter, however, the result of this slightly tedious dialogue on the borderlands of science, philosophy and theology may be vital for our doctrine of providence. Surely we should learn something from Monod's contentions. Chance can now be seen to play a considerable part in the workings of the universe. In some manner, randomness must be seen as part of the way things are. God's way with his world does appear at times to pass near the roulette table. Disorder and randomness do not necessarily imply meaninglessness. Instead, any meaning included within the processes of the universe may be considerably more subtle.<sup>8</sup> Equally, the converse is true. Order need not imply meaning. Indeed, the eighteenth century Deists reduced the reality of God almost to vanishing point, whilst rejoicing in the patterns discernible within the world and seeing God as no more than their originator. Elizabeth Templeton makes this point in a discussion of the place of disorder.<sup>9</sup> Hence it should be clear that an acceptance of randomness need not deny that the Almighty originally span the roulette wheel, but this will be explored later on. My initial point is that a reasoned acceptance of randomness leads us toward a more satisfactory view of God's providence and a more acute awareness in man of his own contingency. It will mean that the course of God's world is not predetermined and it may mean that the final goal is not set before all time.

We arrive, then, at the second stage of our argument, having taken randomness into our theological system and as part of God's way with his creation. As children we are given bricks, but there is no programme as to how they should be fitted together.<sup>10</sup> Each brick is not numbered for its position in the structure, as in the transatlantic removal of a Scottish castle, or of London Bridge. Instead, the *possibility* remains, it seems, that all could end up as a heap of bricks, in total disorder.

Disorder brings us to a second scientific concept related to that of randomness and germane to these reflections, the concept of entropy. The study of thermodynamics has shown that all systems in the universe are tending in the direction of greater disorder. To put it in technical terms, entropy is always increasing. Once again this is a difficult pill to swallow and take into the Christian theological digestive system. Yet still it is a challenge which we cannot

avoid, since it is concerned with the sum and hence the result of the randomness already explored. If simple teleologies and doctrines of providence are trivial and manifestly untrue, why should there necessarily be any tendency toward order? If randomness is part of God's creation, then will it not tend to ever increasing disorder? In the article referred to earlier, Elizabeth Templeton<sup>11</sup> has demonstrated how Christian theology is soaked in the notion of order and she appeals for much of this to be squeezed out. Seeking for order often mirrors our own desperate searching for ultimate security. But if God's way with his creation includes randomness, then surely at some point we must expect an increase in entropy. So much of our experience of the world seems to be in terms of disturbance and disorder.

At this point, however, a number of issues are raised by parallels in science. The first is that it has become clear that it is possible for steady-state systems to operate within a general environment of increasing chaos. A human analogy would be that often a highly ordered mind keeps a desk and a study which bear comparison with an realistic picture of the *inferno*. From within science, this model seems to be the only possible explanation for the emergence of life, from what is generally termed the 'primaeval soup'.<sup>12</sup> The suggestion is that within such disorder, there are systems which can effectively neutralise themselves and work the other way. If man is now, in some sense, the business manager of evolution, this will probably mean that chance is not king of the universe. It is possible for us to choose one direction rather than another, although of course the most distant consequences will still appear random to the naked eye.

The second set of issues raised by our glance at entropy is that which revolves around notions of order, law and chance. What do we mean when we talk of order and is there any consensus? As I look down a kaleidoscope, I see a pattern of many colours, and as I turn the screen, so the patterns change. Order is scrambled, a new pattern is formed. So with the familiar trick of the diagram of two faces. Some see it as two faces looking to each other, others as a standing goblet. Finally, on a still more banal level, I sit daydreaming at the ceiling during a lecture. After a few minutes, all sorts of fantasy have been born, the cracks in the plaster have become the outlines of a pig sniffing a basket of straw. It becomes clear that, as we go on, order and pattern and purpose develop out of the human mind, at least to some extent. Order is the necessary construct which we place upon our world in order to make life bearable. It is presumably against such false constructs that Beckett and Ionesco are protesting in their drama. How do we decide when such projected patterns hold no validity? Presumably one of the major criteria is consensus. But consensus will change and this is just as true in science. Earlier views seemed to point to more obvious patterns. The atom, for example, was built of three basic particles locked into a structured pattern. Evolution was purposeful development. Now the atom is built of any number of particles, whose positions can only be described in terms of probability, and which often behave more like waves than particles anyway. Such an account may or may not be seen as describing order. Or again, evolution now seems to issue from chance and randomness. Order is less than obvious. How contagious is the disease which disperses order?

Suffice to say that patterns need not vanish without a

trace. There is still predictability even if a variety of paths must be left open. This holds good within the worlds of science and theology. Arthur Peacocke notes that law and chance need not simply be juxtaposed. Rather, the world can be seen in terms of different potentialities. They are there to develop and seek a number of possible targets. We return to the child's playroom. Any good set of bricks includes cubes, cylindrical blocks, arches, pyramids and so forth. The child has a vast number of possible buildings which he may erect. He could make a bridge, a railway station or a tower, but in each case the bricks will determine something but not everything of the final result. The possibility of total disorder is still there, but working within the system is the child – an island of potential order in a sea of entropy.

Discussion of randomness and disorder has immediate implications for both theological methodology and metaphysical discourse. The openness of the world just described requires theology to be viewed as an intellectual and experiential process. The very unpredictability of the way of the world will require us constantly to be renewing our theological reflections. The same must be true, then, of the metaphysical speculations which will ensue. What exactly is the Almighty up to all of the time? What kind of a God is implied by the picture which has developed of a universe where much seems to remain in the melting pot for most of the time?

Certainly it points us in the direction of process theology. Any talk of potentiality immediately calls Whitehead to mind.<sup>13</sup> Now, amongst others, Austin Farrer has criticised process theology for limiting God too much.<sup>14</sup> The problem, he suggests, is that God becomes so relative to the world and human response as to be virtually contingent upon it. Farrer himself is not wedded to all of the mediaeval absolutes and allows the life of the world to affect God. God and man drift apart, when man fails to conform his will to that of God. Farrer's thesis cannot be accepted wholly, however. For he goes on to talk of God as having a life apart from the world. It is difficult to know in what sense we are to understand this. If it suggests that as well as relating to humanity, God lives a life relating only to himself, then it seems difficult to give this content. For if this is so, how are we ever to have gained knowledge of such a life? Secondly, it seems to imply the possibility of us climbing into the mind of God. Once again, this seems to be a logical impossibility.<sup>15</sup> Indeed this is one of the main drawbacks to the social doctrines of the Trinity, upon which Farrer calls for support. The attractive part of Farrer's thesis, however, is his admission that God is affected by his world, coupled with his notion of God's 'prior actuality'. To state it in simplistic terms, this second concept asserts that God came first<sup>16</sup> and so preserves his transcendence.

If I should happen to have children, then as a loving parent, I cannot help but relate to and be affected by my offspring. If my young son falls into the road and is hit by a car, I experience an agony too. If he should shout at me or deny me love, then I shall be hurt. Both of these experiences will affect me profoundly and may in some sense alter the course of my life practically and emotionally. None of these facts, however, alters the case that it was my decision, a contingent decision, that set in train the process whereby the child was born, and through which these later facts became a possibility. The initiative lay with me in the beginning,

and, on Farrer's model, so it does with God. His existence precedes ours, both logically and temporally.

This approach would fit well with our earlier conclusions. The bricks are there entirely in a contingent sense. Alongside this, however, man is left freedom – creation as a whole develops from potentialities towards one out of a number of possible targets. The randomness and disorder, which are part of man's experience of God's creation are not compromised. We are not seers looking out upon a planned and assured future. Instead, we live out the everdeveloping history of God's world.

We cannot, however, leave the story here. The game with the bricks leaves us with some still unanswered questions. These concern the morality of that game. Might not the final pattern achieved with the bricks be trivial? Or indeed might not the final result be ultimate disorder, the bricks heaped in no pattern whatsoever – the child left with empty deams? Moreover, in the end, can the child do anything about it – does he not operate in a random and heartless world, unprogrammed and unresponsive? Doesn't the very randomness we perceive deny all our efforts to intervene? Many of these questions are caught up together in lines of Louis McNeice, who writes,

'It's no go my honey love, it's no go my poppet;  
Work your hands from day to day, the winds will  
blow the profit.  
The glass is falling hour by hour, the glass will fall for  
ever,  
But if you break the bloody glass you won't hold up  
the weather.'<sup>17</sup>

But the thorough going fatalism implied here is not the inevitable conclusion of our foregoing argument. Indeed, man's responsibility in such an 'un-programmed' creation is much the greater. So W.H. Vanstone,

'If God is love, and if the universe is his creation, then for the being of the universe God is totally expended in precarious endeavour, of which the issue, as triumph or tragedy has passed from his hands. For that issue, as triumphant or as tragic, God waits upon the response of His creation.'<sup>18</sup>

Hence all is not chance, yet all is far from predetermined. Man's response will affect how potentialities move towards the numerous possible targets.

This has obvious implications for theology and human behaviour. We can see that our responsibility as co-creators with God no longer allows us to sit back and let the world go by. To revive McNeice's images, at times we may be required to break the 'bloody glass'. Elizabeth Templeton catches the mood well, when she notes,

'If . . . there are theological grounds for dissatisfaction with the given structures of human existence, then it is less easy for faith to sleep so promiscuously with acceptance of the status quo.'<sup>19</sup>

This means that theology holds immediate significance for our attitude to the world. We have the opportunity to choose paths and potentialities. The constructs of order and purpose which we place upon the world are often too glib, and assume a predetermined pattern which removes from us any responsibility. Entropy may need to increase, theology and morality will ever be exploring and reconstructing.

The venture will constantly open up new vistas to the theological eye.

One further question remains, however, as to the morality of a system including such randomness. Dostoevsky has one of his characters reacting to such apparent randomness experienced in the form of indiscriminate suffering, by returning to God the ticket for such a life.<sup>20</sup> God there may be, but such a perverse God is not one with whom he would wish to relate. Or again, Thomas Hardy sees all in terms of the fates; evil powers dominate the universe, and so, at the end of 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles', after Tess's death, he can note, 'The president of the Immortals had ended his sport with Tess'.<sup>21</sup> To such charges, the Christian theologian has no easy answers. For many Christians, the only answer is to say that, at that point, their awareness of God's love within the universe is sufficient to hold these other horrors in tension. In the end, however, this is less of an answer that a rejoinder within the individual's own consciousness. But then no-one expects an answer to the problem of evil in ten lines.

The conclusion, which this entire enterprise is likely to provoke, is that it raises as many questions as it solves. What has become of the Platonic/Augustinian view of an ordered world? Are there any signposts or guidelines which can lead us through this confusion and disorder? Indeed, what is the net result of our reflections?

The initial conclusion is simple enough. Randomness and increasing disorder are two concepts to be taken with greater seriousness in the process of theological exploration.<sup>22</sup> In practical terms, this means that the course of God's world is not predetermined, but instead the various paths which we trace are open.<sup>23</sup> Brian Hebblethwaite appears to assume the point in a recent paper:

'If . . . we can accept that God has made a genuinely open world, in which the precise course of events is not predetermined, and in which the emergent human creature is genuinely free to make or mar his world, we avoid attributing the world's ills directly to the divine causality – though, of course, we believe God is ultimately responsible for making such a world.'<sup>24</sup>

Man is thus allowed freedom and response. There is still, however, a further question raised by this whole approach. Have we now opened up the world to total chance, in the sense of absolute randomness? To put it more explicitly, by suspending any defined notion of purpose, do we suspend any defined notion of goal? Can we have our cake and eat it? We return to the child's bricks. It seems that the only fixed commodity is the number and variety of the bricks. It will be up to the child to select just those he wishes. He may not use them all. This is bound to mean that the final goal is affected by the process of building.

The central theological question is: is it merely the path which is unclear, or is the destination unclear as well? Following from our analogy, it would seem that the latter must be the case. God's final purpose may not have been fixed prior to all time and before all creation. Instead it may be evolving with his world.<sup>25</sup> To suggest anything else seems first of all to be attempting to enter the mind of God. How can we know his plan for his creation? Also it seems to make any notion of God's interaction with his world purely apparent or theoretical. If God is affected by the world, then this seems bound to affect the final result.

Now all this may seem highly disquieting. Indeed it may ask of us, how could we commend to others or even to ourselves a theistic context to life which had to hold in suspense what the final outcome might be? Are there any logical or moral grounds which could permit us to take such a gamble? It seems perhaps that there are two illuminators which may persuade us to take the risk. The first is hinted at in the child's bricks once again. We accepted that the number and variety of bricks was limited, and so, consequently, must be the possible number of targets. So with our world, we receive it as given, and despite the myriad random possibilities, there is still a limit imposed by this givenness. We can only work with this world and our reflections and experiences within and upon it. The paths and goals are still countless, but not infinite. This is effectively the point of accepting Farrer's 'prior actuality' of God. God comes first and the givenness of the world is rooted in the transcendent creator.

The second constraint is hinted at within our quotation from Vanstone. We assume God to be loving. This assumption in itself is a gamble, but for the Christian, presumably, the signs are seen as sufficient in this world to take it on trust. The logic underlying this assumption is well stated in this remark by the process theologian Schubert Ogden:

'Logically prior to every particular religious assertion is an original confidence in the meaning and worth of life, through which not simply all our religious answers, but even our religious questions, first become possible or have any sense.'<sup>26</sup>

In itself, the assertion that God is all-loving can too easily collapse into the worst sort of religious cliché, for where is the evidence for such love? Perhaps two clues might be suggested. The first lies simply in our own experience of the world. Often tragedy and evil appear to triumph, but intermittently, shafts of light may break through. Evil is transformed – love seems to be the ultimate victor. On its own, this clue is not sufficient; it merely hints at the possibility of a loving God. The second clue for the Christian lies in the point of focus found in Jesus. The overarching theme discernible in the New Testament reflections upon Jesus is one of self-emptying, self-denying love. Of course, it is recorded in so many different ways. This we might expect from the varied personalities of those who experienced its power. This, however, does not weaken the claim for the centrality of such love in God. This reaches its culmination in the manner of Jesus' death and the transformation it effected and still effects. God seems to lie at the centre of this paradigm of inexhaustible love. In the final analysis, there is no objective proof of these assertions, but for the Christian they are sufficient to allow him to take the necessary gamble of faith.

However impenetrable, then, the final goal may seem, we assume it to be guaranteed by the love of God. This makes the journey no less daunting, hair-raising and at times insecure, but it does give meaning to life. Meaning then is fixed in love and not in order and design. Love in all human life is perhaps the most random of all our experiences. Relationships spring up when least expected and they require immense risk and often result in great hurt and disorder. The final goal or union in such relationships may often be an experience of ultimate disorientation and

apparent total disorder, but the worth of the journey and destination are hardly in question. Might not the journey with God be so too?

1. J. Monod, *Chance and Necessity*. (E.T.) London, 1972.
2. Notably: W.H. Thorpe, *Purpose in a World of Chance*. Oxford, 1978.. J. Lewis (ed). *Beyond Chance and Necessity*, London, 1974. A.R. Peacocke, *Creation and the World of Science*. Oxford, 1979.
3. *Beyond Chance and Necessity*, op. cit., espec. Warnock pp.7ff, and Lewis pp.27ff.
4. This is the main argument of Reinhold Niebuhr's classic, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*. New York, 1932.
5. Espec. W.H. Thorpe, op. cit., and note a recent revival of interest in Teilhard, an example being John Cowburn's treatment of the problem of evil in *Shadows and the Dark*. London, 1979.
6. Note Peacocke's useful analysis of what chance means to the scientists, op. cit. pp.90ff.
7. Peacocke, op. cit. p.94.
8. Note the interesting article in *The Guardian*, May 1st 1980, p.11, entitled 'The subatomic anarchy show'. This takes up Einstein's point that 'God doesn't play dice' and shows how Quantum theory and the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle have made subatomic phenomena far less predictable and more indeterminate, a point also made by Peacocke. op. cit. Ch. III.
9. 'In Defence of Disorder', *Theology*, November 1977, pp 413ff.
10. I am grateful to the Revd. Dr. Jeff Astley for pointing to an alternative image, that of an author producing a literary work. Neither image, however, is final. The author image gives a clearer picture of *creation ex nihilo*, but undoubtedly the child and the bricks is a clearer image for demonstrating *randomness*. This only serves to emphasise the general disclaimer of the Christian theologian on the question of analogy.
11. Templeton, op. cit.
12. For a good account see Peacocke, op. cit. pp.98f.
13. I am not, however, arguing in favour of A.N. Whitehead's thorough-going process metaphysic, where God seems to be reduced almost to the contingent level of man.
14. 'The Prior Actuality of God', in A.M. Farrer, *Reflective Faith*, London, 1972, pp.178ff. This receives a sympathetic discussion in an unpublished article by Edward Henderson of Louisiana State University.
15. This particularly follows from John Hick's notion of an 'epistemic distance' between man and God. See p.54 in *God and the Universe of Faiths*, London, 1973, and elsewhere.
16. Only in this logical sense might we assert God's existence apart from man.
17. Louis McNeice, 'Bagpipe Music' (Final stanza). *Collected Poems*, London 1966.
18. W.H. Vanstone, *Love's Endeavour, Love's Expense*. London, 1977. p.74. This entire chapter, and indeed the whole book, seems to imply an 'unprogrammed' universe.
19. Templeton op. cit. p.421f.
20. F. Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, Pt.I. p.276 (Penguin edition), Harmondsworth 1958.
21. Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, p.508 (Greenwood edition) London, 1967.
22. John Hick is concerned to embrace a certain randomness in his notion of mystery and suffering, in his 'vale of soul-making' theodicy. If suffering were not random, then all could be predicted and explained in terms of simple reward and punishment, which would trivialise his approach to suffering. See *Evil and the God of Love*, London, 1966 pp.369ff. and *Universe*, op. cit. pp.58ff.
23. See Frank Kermode, *The Genesis of Secrecy*, Harvard, 1979, especially the concluding words, p.145, 'For the world is our beloved codex . . .'
24. B. Hebblethwaite 'Some Reflections on Predestination, Providence and Divine Foreknowledge', *Religious Studies* 15. No. 4 (Dec. 1979) pp.432ff. At this point, Hebblethwaite is concerned with the problem of evil, but only within the context of the extent or possibility of divine foreknowledge.
25. See the argument on the 'evolution of love' in A. Elphinstone *Freedom, Suffering and Love*. London 1976.
26. Schubert Ogden, *The Reality of God and Other Essays*, London, 1967, p.34.