

**Outline of Lecture**  
Chapter One: Ray Anderson, *On Becoming Human*  
TOWARD A THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

p3-4: "Are we little less than God, or not much more than animals?" Different anthropologies answer this question in different ways, both implicitly and explicitly.

Naturalism: we are "higher animals" and therefore biologically determined.

Freudianism: we are the venue of fierce, unconscious intra-psychic conflict w.r.t sex and aggression. Note F's psychological model: id, ego, superego.

Rationalism: we are defined by our capacity to reason. (See handout.)  
Aristotle: "Man is a rational animal."

Marxism: we are the venue of lethal class struggle born of economic inequities.  
"Dialectical Materialism" -- (i) we are the product of social forces rooted in matter, (ii) this materialism is driven by laws of history whose outcome is a classless society (but not before revolution.)

Existentialism: the self is a self-*choosing*; the opposite of essentialism. There is no 'human nature.'

Platonism: we are essential mind, which mind grasps the transcendent world of forms; in this pursuit the body is an encumbrance to our grasping pure intelligibility.

"Little less than God but virtually God": New Age Movement, Panentheism: no sin or evil.

(WHAT IS A HUMAN PERSON)

Philosophy is concerned with being (-itself): that which is.

Hebrew thought is concerned with He who acts. Here "human" has more to do with concrete action than with abstract being: we are what we do.

[A] God himself is ceaseless *activity* in the inner life of the Trinity.

[B] We are agents, *act*-ors. Sin is what we do.

Driven out of Eden by God's action, we (a) try to hide, (b) kill each other.

[C] Jesus Christ, the Word incarnate, is God's *act* (not thought).

[D] We fulfil God's intention for our humanness by responding to his invitation, thereby *acting* as his servants, soldiers, ambassadors, etc. [NB: in philosophy the primary grammatical unit is the noun; in scripture, the verb.]

p5 "person": onto-relationality. To be human is to-be-in-relation-to-God, unbelievers included.

p5 Augustine: first autobiographer, with attention to his inner life. For the Greeks the inner life wasn't the essential person. Today we assume that our innermost feelings are the "real me". This is false from a theo'l perspective.

p6 NB the tendency of PROT and RC thought to adopt a strongly individualistic and rationalist view of the self. But "individual" isn't "person", and "rational" should be subsumed under "spiritual".

p7 NB *Enlightenment* distinction between "Natural Man" and "Religious Man" (=Superstitious Man)  
[Where does "Christian" differ from "religious"?]

*Renaissance* view of the human was rich; *Enlightenment* view was relatively shrivelled. [Shepherd: theological 'view' alone can preserve the human.]

## (THE PROBLEM OF A NON-THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY) p8

**I: Mythical Anthropology:** myths are narratives that give us insight into our situation.

- a closed cycle of nature: goes nowhere, nothing is resolved.
- history is insignificant.
- humans are captives of the cyclical "trap." (e.g., Sisyphus)
- illusion: that humans are agents who affect their environment and alter their destiny.
- humans are helpless victims of forces beyond them.
- human person is continuous with nature.

NB the extent to which Freudianism (and other 'isms') are myth while claiming to be scientific.  
Progress is a myth.

**II: Philosophical Anthropology:** a discontinuity between nature and the human person.

**-Plato:** dualism between matter and spirit (mind). Goal: to escape the body and apprehend the realm of pure forms.

**-Aristotle:** the mind can grasp form only as form is instantiated.

Self: (i) has nothing to do with the body in which it is housed, (ii) there is nothing in the mind which wasn't first in the senses.

**-Descartes:** there is much in the mind that isn't first in the senses.

To be human is to be a thinking thing. The self isn't a *world*-explaining subject since everything in the sense world can be doubted. (The senses can deceive.)

**-Hegel:** the self is self-thinking thought, or thought thinking itself, in which the subject-object dichotomy is overcome. Philosophically any one person can rise metaphysically to the level of the "Absolute Standpoint": your mind is one with cosmic mind.

**-Kant:** the self we are aware of presupposes a self that is the condition for and the subject of this reflection, and *this* self we can't know.

This noumenal self is located in the "categorical imperative": "Always treat others...not merely..."

Kant is a moralist: (i) God is unknowable, (ii) there is no radical evil, evil for the sake of evil.

**-Tillich** p12 -- disagreed with autonomous anthropology. (we inform ourselves of who we are) and heteronomous anthrop. (an "other", alien to us, informs us), and supported "theonomous" anthrop. (God, who isn't alien to us,...) But Tillich's "God" is non-transcendent.

Problems: Tillich never saw (i) God infinitely transcends us and is therefore 'other', (ii) this God is *for us* and therefore doesn't merely transcend us: in the Incarnation. God 'humanizes' himself, thereby 'humanizing' us.

**III: Scientific Anthropology:**

[1] it can be the natural or the social sciences, [2] this is ultimately reductionist, [3] science usually operates with a latent, unacknowledged phil'l presupposition. Still, science *can* accurately describe *some* aspects of the human.

In all of this 'scientism' must be avoided.

Non-theol'l anthropologies discuss and describe aspects of our humanness, but can't come to terms with our humanness since (1) 'human' is a predicate of Christology, (2) it has to be revealed rather than discovered.

Non-theol'l anthrop's always point to more than they can deliver, and are therefore 'tragic'.

## (THE BEGINNING OF A THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY) p16

-a theol'l anthrop *can* start with man as long as it's the God-man; other 'man' is depraved.

-in JC we see (1) *the* human covenant partner of the Father, (2) the fact, nature and scope of our self-perversion in the Fall.

I: p16 --only by faith can we understand "human"

II: the cross is *the* revelation of the Word of God, our sin, and our creatureliness.

NB: "sinner" is purely optimistic.

III: -- by beginning with Christ crucified we learn the true order of humanity contained in the R'n.

-- in the R'n, Jesus is revealed as (1) the new being, (2) Lord of the new being. (Rev. V. Shepherd)