Nature and Institution:
Luther's Doctrine of the Three Orders
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I Order and Mobility

No ethicist uses today the word "station" or "order" (*Stand*) to denote the nucleus of his or her work. It implies the antithesis of the mobility which is characteristic of modern society.

The old concept of station began to break down by the middle of the nineteenth century at the latest, and developed into a historical and sociological concept of classification such as in "corporate state" (*Ständestaat*) and "corporate society" (*Ständegesellschaft*). In the contemporary vernacular, it serves to differentiate professional groups from one another and to name "class interests" (*Standesinteressen*) as special interests. In the German language, the former meaning of *Stand* lives on only in the words *Standesethos* (class ethos) and *Familienstand* (marital status), and in the associated *Standesamt* (registry office).[1] When sociologists speak of "status," they mean the position *acquired* in social ascent or descent, in contradistinction to the position once *ascribed* by birth.[2] The social status of the individual is no longer a matter of inheritance, but of individual achievement.

If the word "station" formerly denoted "ethics" which, in accordance with the meaning of this word, ἠθικὴ θεωρία, was concerned with the ἦθος, one's abode and habits—in short, with the stability and continuity of action within traditional parameters— then in recent times this has been superseded by the concept of "change," which has to a large extent become an all encompassing category. Rapid social change is the principal characteristic and central concept of an orientation modifying itself. Change is what endures; impermanence is permanent.

Nevertheless, it is not just impermanence which is permanent; there are constants. Basic needs such as hunger, thirst, and sexual

urges demand satisfaction and cannot, given their source, be sat-
isfied arbitrarily.[3] The special biological position of human beings,
which has been impressively expounded by Arnold Gehlen,[4] offers
considerable scope for their own formation; the answers which
may be found are many, but they are not infinite. Because of the
unchanging sources of these needs, certain constants endure in the
form of the satisfaction of needs.

Language, as a comprehensive process of symbolization, is a de-
cisive factor in shaping the fluid human nature. Language gives
nature a constitution, demarcates characteristics and certainty, im-
poses order upon courses of action, and thus makes human life
possible as a life in the perspectives of memory and hope.[5] It was
this issue which Martin Luther addressed with his doctrine of the
three orders (*Dreiständelehre*).

The main point here is the indissoluble interweaving between
"element and institution." If we are to relate Luther's views criti-
cally to the concerns of contemporary anthropology and sociology,
then the dual concept of "nature and institution" seems appropriate.

In order to penetrate to the core of Luther's position, I shall give
a short introduction to Luther's doctrine of the three orders (II),
followed by an analysis of its place in his theology and its relation-
ship to the doctrine of the two governances (III). The doctrine
itself will then be examined on the basis of Luther's theological
legacy, the *Confession* of 1528 (IV–X).[6]

In this latter part, the polemic necessarily bound up with the
theory of the orders is presented (IV), followed by its criterion,
love (V). Focal points in the history of Luther's ethics are investi-
gated (VI), and the question of the relationship of love and order
is taken up afresh (VII). The next section can then take as its theme
the indissoluble bond between "element and institution" (VIII).
The correspondence between station or order and sacrament
which thus comes to our attention, will then be considered in its
problematic nature as well as in its justification (IX). In the final
section the relationship between pagan-philosophical ethics and
Christan ethics, the problem of "natural" theology, in the context
of theological ethics, is examined in detail (X).

An appendix discusses the concepts of "discipleship ethos" (*Nachfolge-Ethos*) and the "table of duties ethos" (*Haustafel-Ethos*), and their significance for the elaboration of contemporary social ethics.

II The Doctrine of the Three Orders in Outline

By Luther's "doctrine of the three orders" we mean the way in which he interprets theologically and ethically the biblical narratives about primordial times in their aspects of creation, sin, and social organization, and how he applies his interpretation to his contemporary situation. The doctrine of the three orders was of fundamental significance for Luther, who said that "these divine stations continue and remain throughout all kingdoms, as wide as the world and to the end of the world."[7] He could therefore make it the first principle of scriptural exegesis.

> First, the Bible speaks and teaches about the works of God. About this there is no doubt. These works are divided into three hierarchies: the household [*oeconomiam*], the government [*politiam*], and the church [*ecclesiam*]. If a verse does not fit the church, we should let it stay in the government or the household, whichever it is best suited to.[8]

The most trenchant summary of his mature view is to be found in his 1535 exposition of Genesis 2:16f.,[9] the history of which can be traced back to 1520.[10] Here Luther speaks of three fundamental forms of life which God has provided for human existence; in keeping with tradition Luther calls these "orders" (*Stände*).

(If we examine medieval interpretations of the Bible, we can see that it is not so much the traditional doctrine of the three orders which is new, but Luther's use of it as an aid to interpretation in his exegesis of biblical primordial narratives. Luther found a successor in Johann Georg Hamann. Hamann, expounding the "dominion over the earth" of Genesis 1:28 in the course of his debate with Herder's anthropology, went back to Aristotle and observed

"that the true character of our nature lies in the judicial and governmental dignity of a political animal.")[11]

The basic order or station is that of a person addressed by God and capable of free and grateful response. The humanity of a human being lies in the fact that he or she is so addressed and can, therefore, hear and speak in response, while also having to take responsibility and to be accountable. It is this divine address and the expectation of human response which underlies the primeval character of worship and cult, of religion and of the church, understood as an order of creation;[12] this embraces all humanity and all religions. Every human being as a human being belongs—and this defines him or her as a human being—to the ecclesial order of creation, which is, it is true, corrupted by human ingratitude, that is, by sin.

Inserted into the basic order of the church, into the basic order of Word and belief (or Word and unbelief), and pervaded and encompassed by it, is the order of creation of the household, or of economy. Luther here addresses the relationships between parents and children, between husband and wife, and between the human being and the soil, that is, labor: the human struggle with nature and the fight for subsistence, for daily bread.

Luther did not recognize the third order—government or politics—as an order of creation, seeing it rather merely as an expedient made necessary only by the fall, although Luther was definitely aware that politics is grounded in economy, and thus has to be considered from the outset as a consequence of the household order of creation, so that in a sense it belongs to it and to its governance.

The fall not only gave rise to the state, with its coercive devices for the maintenance of law and order; sin also corrupted the two unambiguous orders of creation, the basic order of the church, and the household or the economy. All their corruption notwithstanding, they are not destroyed; even when corrupted, they are embraced by God's promise and thus sanctified. We must penetrate this corruption to perceive in them, and to have faith in, the power of the creative and forgiving Word of God.[13]

III Orders and Governances

In his foreword to the *Smalcald Articles,* Luther expresses the self-understanding of the Reformation with the utmost brevity:

> By God's grace our churches have now been so enlightened and supplied with the pure Word and the right use of the sacraments, with an understanding of the various callings of life, and with true works, that we do not ask for a council for our own sake, and we have no reason to hope or expect that a council could improve our conditions.[14]

The proper perception of the Word as sacrament and of the sacrament as Word on the one hand, and of the orders on the other, as the two major factors, are also emphasized at various points in the Table Talk[15] with the same lapidary brevity as in the *Smalcald Articles.* It is extolled by Luther as the very essence of his "Reformation."[16] Both Luther's *Confession* of 1528[17] and the Augsburg Confession[18] concentrate on these two factors. The two emphases of the catechisms are also to be mentioned alongside with them; *On the Councils and the Church* ends significantly in a dual climax corresponding to the first and the second table of the decalogue.[19]

All this shows that in Luther's own witness the doctrine of the three orders is of much greater significance than that of the two governances, which is absent from these summary and testamentary texts.[20]

If this were to be taken into account in contemporary reception of Luther,[21] then many fruitless discussions could be avoided. With regard to Luther's doctrine of the two governances, for instance, there is a danger that a "political" sphere—abstracted from sexuality, marriage, family, education, school[22] and economy—might be opposed as a "temporal" governance to the "spiritual" governance, or that this opposition might be even reduced to an opposition between state and church.

To identify the "temporal" governance with "society," in opposition to the "church," gives rise to similar difficulties, even if

"society" is nuanced with differentiations, thereby coming nearer to the point.

The distinction between the spiritual and the temporal,[23] as commonly employed, usually overlooks the fact that the spiritual is not only inwardly, but also outwardly, temporal, and that the temporal, in turn, is spiritual—insofar as it is the governance of *God* on earth.

On the other hand, the distinction between the two governances ensures that the *status ecclesiasticus* is perceived not only as a temporal order, which indeed it also is, but also as the basic spiritual order, as the order of creation of the church, which encompasses and pervades the other two orders—both in belief and in unbelief.

(In view of the strict distinction between the spiritual and the secular or temporal in the doctrine of the two governances, it is most astonishing that in the doctrine of the three orders Luther places the spiritual order in the same rank as the other two orders, thus lumping it together with the "temporal" which he otherwise clearly distinguishes from the spiritual. By doing so—essentially opposing the rigid polarities of dialectical theology—he makes it possible, and indeed necessary, to consider Christianity as a religion, as an institution and as a temporal phenomenon.

Hence, the basic order, the church, must be distinguished from the other two orders—which in themselves are not unconnected: the *oeconomia* is more fundamental than the *politia*. The basic order deals with the relationship with God, with belief and unbelief. Nevertheless, the *status ecclesiasticus* is not identical with the spiritual governance. For after the fall and before the *eschaton,* the Christian church is not the pure kingdom of God as the church invisible is; rather, visibility and invisibility permeate one another. In this world and age, the *status ecclesiasticus* is also a governmental order [pastors are paid, dismissed according to a disciplinary procedure, etc.]. To this extent the spiritual governance is also temporal and as such it is not totally kept apart from the inherent ambiguity of the works which will be subject to judgment.)

Neither the doctrine of the two governances nor that of the three orders may be invoked at the expense of the other. Any reference to Luther must—at least to a minimal degree—reflect

the astonishing versatility with which Luther placed, and then shifted, the emphases of his interpretation of Scripture, conceiving of interpretation as the instruction of conscience in a concrete situation. Such a versatility is also reflected in the way in which he works within the framework of the distinction between the two governances on one occasion, and on another uses the concept of the three orders. Often, however, he combines the one with the other.[24] In any event, Luther's versatility prohibits any simple and schematic limitation of his understanding of ethics to, say, the doctrine of the two kingdoms or rather, the two governances. On the other hand, one should not fall into the trap of espousing a glib integration of the doctrine of the two kingdoms with that of the three orders.[25]

IV Polemical Contexts

Luther's doctrine of the three orders cannot be divorced from its polemical contexts. This is demonstrated in exemplary fashion in the theses of the disputation on Matthew 19:21 of 9 May 1539.[26] The Luther reception of the present century has paid much less attention to these[27] than to On Temporal Authority (1523) or the weekly sermons on the Sermon on the Mount. Nonetheless, these theses represent the historical and systematic fulcrum of Luther's ethics, its matrix, like no other text.[28]

True, these theses were formulated in a dramatic situation,[29] yet they were not—even in the concluding section—the product of a moment. Rather, they embody over twenty years of Luther's conflict with the Roman Church and raise it to a new level of intensity. Their position, which consists in an acutely formulated dialectic of obedience to the first and the second table of the decalogue, the dialectic of future and creation, discipleship ethics and the ethics of the table of duties,[30] is not solely derived from the negation of the monastic understanding of discipleship, the inconsistency of which has been demonstrated by these theses, as well as its contempt for the spiritual temporality of the economic and the political order. Nevertheless, Luther's position is indissolubly bound

up with that negation—as it is with the negation of the "desertion" of the world by the "fanatics" and the "Anabaptists" which, in a certain sense, accords with monasticism.[31] Luther's theology and with it his ethics cannot be understood except by reference to the polemical attack upon these two sides; he sees these in direct correspondence to one another and his own stance as the "middle course"; he wishes to fall "neither to the right nor to the left."[32]

This necessary polemic is derived from the heart of soteriology; this is clearly demonstrated by the *Confession* of 1528. Institutionalized attempts to follow a self-chosen path, and to regard that path as the way to salvation, are to be condemned as sinful.[33] Such institutions, including "all monastic orders, rules, cloisters, religious foundations, and all such things devised and instituted by human beings beyond and apart from Scripture"[34] are false, and rebel against the will of God.[35]

In opposition to these, Luther professes "the holy orders and religious institutions" which are "established by God."[36] They are "these three": the "office of priest," "the estate of marriage," and "the civil government." These are the orders which are pleasing in the eyes of God as the locus of responsibility—the realm of faith acting through love, a realm not self-chosen, "devised"[37] or dreamt up, but one willed and created by God. But they are no means of salvation, no *media salutis,* even though they are "sacred" (sanctified by God's word of "institution").[38] The sole *medium salutis*[39] is Jesus Christ, the "only Savior and Mediator"; it is "impossible that there should be more saviors, ways or means to be saved."[40]

V Love as Criterion

The salvific faith which relies on the Word of the only Mediator produces the love which fulfills all the Commandments. Determined by faith, love is free and above worldly things. As such, can it find its space and time *in* the three orders? Are these not too restrictive? Does it not, as the fulfillment of the law, split asunder all philosophical order and "civil ethics"?[41] As that which abides (I

Corinthians 13:13), as the ultimate, can it endure the penultimate? Must it not surge out wildly beyond it, to change all that is?

This question, which has been inescapable since the first Easter, since the beginning of Christianity—let us call it the question of the relationship between discipleship ethos and the table of duties ethos[42]—underlies the aforementioned theses *De tribus hierarchiis,* and it is answered, even if only briefly, in the *Confession.*[43] As Luther's approach to this most important problem of Christian life and theological ethics emerges initially from the history of his theology, we must remind ourselves of a few relevant points.

VI The Spiritual Significance of the Worldly

There is no question that, before his reforming turning-point, Martin Luther's life and theology as those of an Augustinian monk were shaped by the strictest discipleship ethos. He considered all worldly and natural things solely in terms of the demand for escape from the world: as space, time, and the means to deny himself and to mortify sin as the urge to seek himself and his own in everything. The radical demand, concentrated in the monastic vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, makes all worldly and natural things a means of turning negatively back on oneself to lead one to reflect to one's own nothingness in daily penance. The worldly and the natural have no inherent dignity, let alone positive spiritual weight.

Until now, Luther research has, amazingly, failed to explore the question of how this discipleship ethic and its rejection of the world gave way to that impressive affirmation of all worldly and natural things which shines out more and more from Luther's writings after 1520.[44] The difference is, after all, scarcely less than that between Kierkegaard, who perceived all worldly and natural things only in terms of rejection and escape from the world, and Hegel, with his affirmation of the world and its institutions.

If we pursue the question of this change in Luther, then his later writings—not only the catechisms[45]—lead us, with hindsight, to the following assumption: *after Luther, with his new understanding*

of Word and Sacrament, became aware of the essentially worldly—not only in the negative, but also in the positive sense—mediation of the spiritual, the spiritual significance of all worldly things in the positive sense was revealed to him.

The worldly is never emancipated from the spiritual. Just as in the sacrament the elements of water, bread and wine are only spiritual to the extent that they are encompassed and pervaded by God's word of institution,[46] so all worldly things are only spiritual inasmuch as they are founded in God's word of institution, revealing and administering it. Only in this way are nature and culture creation; creation is instituted world and thus a promise.[47]

The astonishing feature of Luther's pre-Reformation theology is not, however, the lasting importance of the spiritual, but the increasing significance of the worldly, primarily of marriage and parenthood,[48] but also of the law and worldly government.

The history of Luther's discovery of the positive significance of the worldly and the natural has not yet been written;[49] we can, however, note a few of the milestones along the way. We find these if we consider Luther's reception of the traditional doctrine of the three orders.[50]

Significantly, we find the first evidence of its influence in the sermon on baptism (1519). Here Luther says of the temporal dimension, which he now distinguishes from the divine dimension that he has not done before, that God

> has instituted many estates in life in which men are to learn to exercise themselves and to suffer. To some he has commanded the estate of matrimony, to others the estate of the clergy, to others the estate of temporal rule, and to all he has commanded that they shall toil and labor to kill the flesh and accustom it to death.[51]

This orientation in the relationship of the new person with the old, who is increasingly to be destroyed in the daily process of ascetic self-formation, is also proclaimed in the treatise *On the Freedom of a Christian.*[52] The initial maintenance of the distinction between the necessity of mortifying and governing one's own body and the necessity of interacting with one's fellow human beings throws some light on the history of Luther's ethics.[53] This distinc-

tion is, however, corrected as the discussion proceeds in favor of
an undivided bodily devotion to the neighbor in need.[54] The one
who is liberated by faith from all worldly compulsion[55] lives apart
from oneself in God alone. He then uses this freedom of faith to
renounce and transcend himself in the love of others.

Asceticism exists solely for the sake of others. It liberates the
other, not me, since I am already free. Labor does not liberate;
rather, those who are free labor. Thus the works of Christians are
necessary not for salvation, but all of them are free service in favor
of the will and the amendment of the others.

> Of the same nature are the precepts which Paul gives in Romans 13:1–
> 7, namely, that Christians should be subject to the governing author-
> ities and be ready to do every good work, not that they shall in this
> way be justified . . . but that, in the liberty of the Spirit, they shall by
> so doing serve others and the authorities themselves and obey their
> will freely and out of love. The works of all institutions, monasteries,
> and priests should be of this nature. Each should do the works of his
> profession and station, not that by them he may strive after right-
> eousness, but that through them he may . . . submit his will to that of
> others in the freedom of love.[56]

This free, spontaneous dedication of oneself to service could set
its own laws, "make new decalogues."[57] This might seem to pre-
figure an "autonomous morality" and "situation ethics";[58] the con-
temporary use of Augustine's "love and do what you will"[59] seems
to be legitimized in Luther's ethics of freedom. In remarkable con-
trast to such invocations of Luther stands the fact that, from the
very beginnings of his Reformation theology, Luther himself fol-
lows the New Testament exhortations in seeing the commandment
to love one's neighbor as being structured in individual command-
ments, taking up, for the first time in the sermon "On Good
Works" (1520),[60] the exegetical tradition of the Fourth Com-
mandment in particular.[61] Love is indeed itself a formative power,
but it finds a pre-formed space in the tradition. Luther preserves
historical continuity throughout his "reconstruction of morality."[62]
But these pre-existing and affirmed elements of order never be-
come autonomous.[63] God's self-presentation, together with the
First Commandment and the respondant faith, remain the basis,

boundary, and criterion of any fulfillment of the commandment to love in concrete social form. They pervade everything, as the Small Catechism impresses upon us with its constant repetition: "We should so fear and love God, that. . . ."[64]

It is this "theonomy" in which Luther's "autonomous" ethics of freedom remains grounded. Word and faith bring with them freedom and love. Luther presents an extremely illuminating and impressive summary of his position in his polemical *Commentary on 1 Corinthians 7* (1523), which is directed against the high value placed by Rome on the state of celibacy:

> Faith and the Christian life are so free in essence that they are bound to no particular order or estate of society, but they are to be found in and throughout all orders and estates. Therefore you need not accept or give up any particular estate in order to be saved. On the contrary, the estate in which faith and the Gospel find you, there you may stay and find your salvation. Therefore it is not necessary that you give up marriage and leave your non-Christian spouse for the sake of your faith and salvation. On the other hand, it is not necessary for you to be married, either to a Christian or a non-Christian spouse, for the sake of faith and salvation. And finally, if you are married, whether to a Christian or non-Christian, a virtuous or an evil mate, you are not on that account either saved or condemned. If you are unmarried, you are also on that account neither saved nor condemned. All this is free, free. But if you are a Christian and remain one, then you will be saved; and if you remain unchristian, then you will be condemned.[65]

The "state" of the Christian in faith and love is "over, in and throughout all orders and estates." The *Confession* of 1528 says: "none of these orders is a means of salvation. There remains only one way above them all, namely, faith in Jesus Christ."[66]

This interpretation of I Corinthians 7:17 demonstrates yet again that a certain polemical element is a necessary component of Luther's doctrine of the three orders. This is a polemic against the favoring, as a matter of principle, of one particular order as a special spiritual station over the temporal stations, which allegedly are of lesser value in terms of their importance for salvation. No order is a means of salvation.

Nevertheless, this negation enhances the temporal orders, even though they are not means of salvation. To give concrete significance to the obedience of baptism, Luther reaches into the fullness of his life-experience. In so doing, he is not fabricating, but taking up definitions offered above all by the catechetical tradition, particularly in the interpretation of the Fourth Commandment.

This tradition links Luther with Aristotelian and Thomistic social theory, whose starting point is the "home."[67] Luther however does not take up their vision of a hierarchy of the natural and the supernatural, of a subordinate and not directly spiritual "temporal" order and the higher "spiritual" order as a *status perfectionis* nearer to God. According to Thomistic thinking, in order to be more perfect, one has to follow the *consilia evangelica,* as distinct from the *praecepta.*[68] Rather, he destroys this in favor of an equally direct and indirect relationship of all worldly and natural things to God, which are perceived either in belief or in unbelief.[69]

Based on the one faith by virtue of the one baptism of all Christians, Luther saw the temporal orders as having a dignity which they had certainly not enjoyed before in theory, and in fact had it only to a limited extent. Now the "judges, civil officers, state officials, notaries,"[70] who had gained importance in late medieval urban culture and at court in the context of the diversification of "vocations" (*Berufe*)[71] and with them the lowest and most despised estate of the "male and female servants"[72] are also a "sacred" order.[73] "I would take the work of a faithful, pious jurist and clerk over the holiness of all the priests, monks, and nuns, even the very best."[74]

However, the new naturalness and worldliness can immediately become enthusiastic—even if this is a different form of enthusiasm than that of monasticism. Luther had just preached the "Freedom of a Christian" and the equality of all in baptism, in the dignity of their temporal, and therefore (by virtue of baptism) spiritual "vocation,"[75] when the "element," the natural human being as a kind of "human being-in-one's-own-self," was then abstracted from the divine "institution."[76] The distinction drawn by Luther between the person (before God) and the office (in the relationship to one's

neighbor) was then demanded by some to apply *within* the social sphere. They wanted the person to be distinguished from the office in the human sphere also. They raised the question: "Why should I think more of this person than of others?"[77] Luther attacks this separation of person and office, of "element" (for example, the father as a "natural" human being like any other) and "institution" (according to God's blessing in Genesis 1:28 and the Fourth Commandment) as a metaphysical distinction.[78]

The abstraction inherent in such a separation is at the same time linked with a Donatist view of the orders corresponding exactly with sacramental Donatism: "How can an evil person be a prince or a lord? How can an evil woman be the wife of a holy man?"[79] Just as the separation of the Spirit from the Word in the sacrament[80] is regarded by Luther as enthusiasm, so concerning the station is a separation or abstraction of the "nature" of a human being from the concrete "word of institution" given by God also enthusiasm.

Enthusiasm dominates fanaticism (*Schwärmertum*) as it does the papacy. In both cases the concrete *Word* of God and the definition and qualification given with it are not truly perceived. Thus, although the papacy and fanaticism appear on the surface to be very different, in fact they are merely different manifestations of one and the same enthusiasm.[81] Its essence is a desire to make the spiritual bodily and the bodily spiritual.

> The Pope has . . . made spiritual things bodily . . . This sectarian spirit [Karlstadt], on the other hand, is mostly concerned about making spiritual what God makes bodily and outward. We therefore proceed between the two, making nothing spiritual or bodily, but keeping spiritual what God makes spiritual, and bodily what he makes bodily.[82] We however take the middle course . . . neither to the right nor to the left. We are neither papistic or Karlstadtian, but free and Christian, in that we elevate or do not elevate the Sacrament, how, where, when, as long as it pleases us, as God has given us the liberty to do. Just as we are free to remain outside of marriage or to enter into marriage . . .[83]

A glance at the history of Luther's ethics, only a few salient points of which are noted here, must provoke some surprise. On

the one hand, Luther responds—albeit dynamically—to the historical situation of early bourgeois society, continuing the tradition in social ethics of linking the Bible and natural law in its orientation towards a primarily "paternal" world.[84] On the other hand, he does so in the context of an unusually critical attack on tradition which must—in theological and socio-historical terms—be seen as a "revolution." These two aspects—continuity and contradiction—must be viewed together if one is not to misunderstand Luther's great theological and historical achievement. This is to be found in the *indissoluble bonding of the ethics of the table of duties and the ethics of discipleship and having them guard one another.* The ethics of the table of duties permits and demands a far-reaching worldly and historical unfolding which remains clear and comprehensible, thanks to the threefold structure of the doctrine of the three orders.[85] The ethics of discipleship ensures concentration on the commandment to love as a clear criterion.

VII Love and Order

Having recalled at least some of the salient points in the history of Luther's ethics, we are now in a position to examine more closely the brief passage in the *Confession* dealing with the relationship between love and order:

> Above these three institutions and orders is the common order of Christian love, in which one serves not only the three orders, but also serves every needy person in general with all kinds of benevolent deeds, such as feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, forgiving enemies, praying for all human beings on earth, suffering all kinds of evil on earth, etc.[86]

Such a relativization of the orders does not make them unimportant. The theses on Matthew 19:21 (1539) deal with the points which are not further developed in the *Confession*. These show that the superordination of love and the necessary closer—but not exhaustive—definition of it through life in the orders are necessarily related. The relativization of the orders through love in the *Con-*

fession is not, despite the brevity of the text, merely incidental; it is a constituent element which is confirmed by the fact that the table of duties in the Small Catechism ends with the commandment to love.[87] The same combination of concentration and expansion is to be found in Augsburg Confession 16: One must practice love in the orders (*in talibus ordinationibus exercere caritatem*).[88] Once again, the last word is the First Commandment as the basis and limit of Christian life: ". . . we must obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29)."[89]

The brief passage quoted from the *Confession* is very remarkable inasmuch as it shows forth Luther's general orientation, according to which the "wisdom-like" aspect of the table of duties is not excluded from the radical commandment to love, but rather represents its concrete expression, its embodiment. This general orientation is repeated in the definition of the lasting criterion, the settlement of love. The bond between wisdom and the Cross, general morality and Christian particularity, applies not only in the relationship of the order to love. It also applies within *love* itself.

The proof is to be found in our passage from the *Confession*. Here Luther places love for one's enemies,[90] which is usually regarded as "extraordinary" and "special" (Matt. 5:47), almost as a matter of course alongside that which can "normally" be expected of every human being: "feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty."

According to Luther, there is no qualitative difference at all between such "charitable works" (Matt. 25:31–46) and the "special ones." Here Luther is following Matthew, who says the same about the Golden Rule as about the commandment to love, namely that all the law and the prophets hang upon them (cf. Matt. 7:12 and Matt. 22:40).

It is scarcely possible to over-estimate the importance of Matthew's equation and co-ordination of the extraordinary and the self-evident as adopted by Luther. This makes it impossible to discern levels of ethos within theological ethics—a "natural" level, for example, corresponding to common humanity, and a particular Christological level on which occur extraordinary phenomena such as loving one's enemies. On this level of life and reflection, too, the overcoming of the traditional distinction between nature

and grace, between the temporal and the higher and more perfect spiritual existence, is sustained. Only two criteria apply: belief and unbelief. One lives either enclosed in oneself, in unbelief, or in faith, transcending oneself, living in God and in one's neighbor.[91]

The institutional mediation of love and the contingent encounter with one's neighbor outside established institutions are not mutually exclusive.[92] They depend on one another to ensure that institutions do not become rigid and blind and that contingent encounters do not remain empty and ineffective, mere good will.

VIII Element and Institution

We have already spoken of the indissoluble bond between "element" and "institution." We must now discuss in more detail what we mean by this. This will elucidate the fundamental thesis of the *Confession,* namely that "these three [religious] institutions or orders are found in God's Word and commandment; and whatever is contained in God's Word must be holy, for God's Word is holy and sanctifies everything connected with it and involved in it."[93]

It is hardly likely that this is said without some association with I Timothy 4:1–5; the whole context and the explicit reference to this passage[94] give rise to the assumption that Luther is consciously following it. By doing so, he demonstrates that he sees his situation as parallel to that in which the pastoral epistles were written. If the author was in combat with an anti-bodily gnosis,[95] then Luther— also within an apocalyptic view of his time[96]—was fighting against the double-sided enthusiasm of papist monasticism and fanaticism.[97]

Although I Timothy 4 illuminates Luther's position on the orders, as shown by the passage in *On Councils and Church* which corresponds to that in the *Confession,*[98] this passage and its use by Luther by no means tell the whole story. We must look to the very heart of his understanding of the sacraments, following the lead given by the formulation "contained in God's Word."[99]

Luther frequently uses a saying of St. Augustine to articulate the core of his understanding of the sacraments: *Accedit verbum ad elementum el fit sacramentum.*[100] However, he in no way understands

the Word as an accident; accordingly, he changes the tenor of the sentence and its verb. Rather, the Word is what first "constitutes" the sacrament, "distinguishes" it;[101] it has a "definitive" power.[102] The being of the sacrament is the gift in which God manifests himself completely to us;[103] everything depends on the given Word, the Word of gift.[104]

In Luther's understanding of the "Word," the important thing is an indissoluble bond which he states in the distinction and attribution of element and word of institution. Without the Word, the element is blind;[105] without the element, the Word is empty.

The situation is admittedly still more complicated inasmuch as the "element," because it is spoken and effected by God, is in itself "Word"—although it is by no means univocal. Its clarity and definiteness arise only from a particular institution.

What is in Luther expressly reflected with regard to the sacrament is true, according to Johann Georg Hamann, of every word: Every word is, as sound and letter, also element, from which an "actual" meaning is inseparable. Element and institution, sensuality and spirit, belong together.[106]

This is not only a linguistic-philosophical and hermeneutical thesis; as such, it is also an ontological thesis. The being of the world—as Creation—is element and institution, institution and element, simultaneously. Indeed, we must say the same even of the being of God, if it is true that God is human.

Luther projected the doctrine of the orders into this innermost nexus of theology. This seems to involve some danger that ethical issues might be elevated on to a theological plane and thus made immune to criticism.[107] However, if Luther bases his doctrine of the orders on the innermost nexus of theology, then it seems reasonable to assume that this apparently dangerous idea itself harbors critical potential. The criticism it embodies is directed against enthusiasm. Put in a nutshell: Luther's socio-ethical formula of the bond between element and institution, institution and element, is directed equally against legalism and moralism. If the former absolutizes element, then the latter does the same with institution; if the one sanctions uncritically that which is, then the other criticizes it in an abstract fashion—which is the same as being uncritical, because by invoking pure spirit it seeks what is totally other.[108]

Luther gives an illuminating analysis of his "war on two fronts" in *On the Councils and the Church.*[109] He describes his original struggle with the superstition directed toward the "elements"—which can go hand-in-hand with legalism and with commitment to ceremonies and rites—and the one which followed immediately afterwards against the spiritualism of Karlstadt and others, who cited Luther's own struggle against the superstition of the "elements" in their own defense, and claimed only to be waging a logical and radical continuation of that battle. The "war on two fronts" was directed both against materialism and against spiritualism or idealism.

This is also the systematic locus from which Luther's doctrine of angels,[110] which is closely connected with the doctrine of the three orders, is to be viewed. Element cannot become autonomous; Luther learns this from Psalm 104:4: "He makes winds his messengers, flames of fire his servants" (NIV).

The idea that no element can exist without institution is expressed in the first part of the fourfold governance of which Luther speaks in his interpretation of Zechariah (1527). The first governance of God is that "in which He works by Himself alone, without the cooperation of His creatures. . . ."[111] Luther emphasizes this point to protect from the danger of absolutizing the mediating instances of God's creating action. Apart from them, however, we would have an abstract statement,[112] for in reality God speaks only *through* His creatures, as Luther makes clear in the second, third and fourth governances.[113] Of course, Luther's use of a nominalistic distinction here makes him vulnerable to misinterpretation. He says that although God *could* teach people the gospel without preaching and also does so inwardly (even as he preserves and governs all creatures inwardly and without the angels), he nevertheless does not *wish* to act in this way, "but uses the preachers outwardly by means of the Word."[114] This is the point of emphasis. Luther is concerned with God's assertiveness and self-commitment, and the resulting *concrete expression,* not with God's will *in abstracto.* This intention finds expression in the curious attitude and polemical expression with which Luther—paradigmatically in the question of the definition of the sacrament—refers to both the Thomistic and the Scotistic positions:[115]

> Therefore we do not agree with Thomas and the Dominicans who forget the Word (God's institution) and say that God has joined to the water a spiritual power which, through the water, washes away sin. Nor do we agree with Scotus and the Franciscans who teach that Baptism washes away sin through the assistance of the divine will, as if the washing takes place *only* through God's will and *not at all* [*minime*] through the Word and the water.[116]

IX Holy and Saved

No matter how remarkably closely Luther links sacrament and order and sees them corresponding to one another, he is still able to distinguish precisely between the two. The sacrament is the only *medium salutis;* it is Jesus Christ himself, the only "Savior and Mediator," as the one who is present—notwithstanding the seven and more means of encountering him in the *notae ecclesiae.*[117] The obedience that is exercised as love in the orders may well be "also" taken as "outward signs that identify the Christian Church, namely, those signs whereby the Holy Spirit sanctifies us according to the second table of Moses. . . ."[118] Thus, insofar as the element is contained in the Word of institution, an elementary life contained in and defined by seven commandments, the orders could be called "seven holy possessions"—that is to say, seven *media salutis!*[119] They cannot, however, be "regarded as being as reliable" as the seven "holy possessions" in which Jesus Christ himself is present as the church, "since some heathen too practice these works and indeed at times appear holier than Christians." Admittedly, what the godless do does "not issue from the heart purely and simply, for the sake of God, but they search for some other end because they lack a real faith in and a true knowledge of God."[120]

Thus, Luther attempts to draw a concrete distinction between creation and preservation, which God performs even through the works of the godless, on the one hand, and, on the other, redemption, whose assurance and salvation is transmitted to us by the word of Christ.

In the *Confession* of 1528, this distinction is given striking ex-

pression in the distinction between being holy (*heilig*) and being saved (*selig*): "For to be holy and to be saved are two entirely different things. We are saved through Christ alone; but we become holy both through this faith and through these divine foundations and orders. Even the godless may have much about them that is holy without being saved thereby."[121]

Thus worldly things do not lose their ambiguity through mitigation by analogical thinking, as happened in antiquity, in the Middle Ages and in the work of Karl Barth.[122]

A realistic view of the world of sin and of unbelief is retained. Nonetheless, the world of sin is also the world of God, who preserves his creation for his future despite its sin, through all its sin— and even by means of its sin.[123]

X Natural Theology?

Luther's striking differentiation of "holy" and "saved" implies a distinction between pagan and Christian ethics, between "general" humanity and Christian "particularity." More precisely, it is a question of the relationship between the reception of the traditions of classical humanity, particularly the economic and political wisdom of Aristotle and Cicero,[124] and the interpretation of the biblical creation story and the decalogue.

This relationship between—to put it briefly—philosophy and theology cannot be exempt from controversy. For Luther, theology never works in isolation, rather, it is, by its very nature, a conflict discipline. This view of theology was given classic expression in the *Disputatio de homine* (1536);[125] even the organization of the theses makes this evident: (Theses 1–19: "Philosophia . . .", Theses 20–40: "Theologia . . .").

Within the broad scope of the *Disputatio de homine,* which is nevertheless aiming more specifically at anthropology, Luther attempts to do exactly what he had done with regard to social ethics in his commentary on Psalm 127 ("Except the Lord build the house . . .") a few years previously (1532/33).[126]

The precise meaning of the statement in the *Confession* that "even the godless may have much about them that is holy without being saved thereby"[127] is elucidated by this commentary on Psalm 127. The intended distinction and attribution of heathen (although divinely ordained) humanity, and the salvation brought by Jesus Christ, is effected in the commentary on Psalm 127 by the way in which Luther approaches the scheme of the four *causae*.[128]

Insight into the material and formal cause of social life and the arts, in short, the exercise of reason, is conceded to Aristotle, Demosthenes, and Cicero.[129]

This praise, however, is not unqualified.[130] It is their failing—as it is the failing of all the godless—that they desire to be themselves the efficient cause and the final cause to create and perfect economy and politics. "This, however," says Luther, "is not for you"; yours is but to "be an instrument."[131] But anyone who is not content to be God's instrument and mandatary, anyone who is not satisfied with the ascribed "judicial and governmental dignity of a political animal,"[132] corrupts and perverts, by his arrogance and ingratitude, the exercise of the reason given to him. A *homo politicus* like Cicero spoke and acted well, but not when he wished to glorify himself by his actions, saying *"Haec ego feci. Ex hoc: feci, vere fiunt feces."*[133] "Yet [the heathens'] actions do not issue from the heart purely and simply, for the sake of God, but they search for some other [i.e. their own] end because they lack a real faith in and a true knowledge of God."[134]

But even if the godless do not fear or love God, they cannot extinguish and obscure in every respect the reason instituted by the creation, the Word of blessing. On the contrary, they fulfill the second table of the decalogue so brilliantly that they "indeed at times appear holier than Christians."[135]

As this makes clear, Luther perceives the relationship between general and Christian humanity, between natural and theological ethics, as a thoroughgoing conflict.[136] As of Luther's anthropology, we can say of Luther's social ethics "that it presents itself in the form of a controversy between the philosophical and the theological positions."[137] The conflict is not resolved as it is in the relative autonomy and immanence of Thomistic social ethics, in which nature is elevated and perfected by grace, or by the transcendental

philosophical position according to which nature is not elevated but given greater profundity by grace, so that God and his freedom are proclaimed as the condition for human freedom.

The conflict is, furthermore, not resolved, as it is by the strict separation of exterior and interior, or quite differently, by the abstract polarities of the dialectical theology of the young Barth; nor is it softened by the late Barthian model of analogy and difference.

As a combative discipline, Luther's theology does not confront the problem of "natural" theology by making the salvation brought by Jesus Christ into a precondition for insights which, after they have been received through the recognition of Jesus Christ, shine out so brightly from within that they enlighten even those who do not share the preconditions of their origin.

Anyone who, like Luther, views theology as a conflict discipline must take into account in their thinking the tension which exists between radical discipleship ethos and the philosophically oriented ethos of the table of duties, between wisdom and the Cross, never resolved as long as we are on the way.

Appendix: Discipleship Ethos and the Table of Duties Ethos

The distinction drawn by Ernst Troeltsch between "institutionalized churches," "sects" and "mysticism" (i.e. spiritualism) and their associated ethics still widely dominates discussion of issues in the sociology of religion and social ethics.[138] Recently, Gerd Theissen returned to these distinctions, referring to "itinerant radicalism," "the patriarchalism of love," and "gnostic radicalism."[139]

Such distinctions are futile so long as the connection between the various elements so distinguished, which is not only to be conceived, but to be desired and put into practice—and which has indeed been practiced in the most varied forms in the history of the church—cannot be articulated and realized. As long as these distinctions remain disparate strands, they vitiate understanding and place us before fatal alternatives in making ethical choices.

The context of the very words of Jesus on Earth requires a different perception from us. The same who summons people from their homes to follow him (Mark 1:14–20; Luke 14:26 ff.) preaches

filial obligations (Mark 7:9–13) and the insolubility of marriage (Mark 10:2–12).

This problem of connection is even more acute in the works of St. Paul: not to be conformed to this world and to be transformed by the renewing of one's mind through God's mercy (Romans 12:1 ff.) does not preclude the absorption of Judeo-Hellenistic ethics but, surprisingly, demands it (Romans 12 f.). Even the criterion of exhortation, the commandment to love (Romans 13:8–9), is both something new and a return to the primeval; it is nothing special which is demanded of Christians, but common humanity.

The ethos of the table of duties, therefore, does not appear first in the Deutero-Paulines, but already in the teachings of Paul and of Christ.

The term "table of duties" (*Haustafel*) was probably introduced into New Testament studies as a technical term of form criticism by Martin Dibelius. Dibelius speaks of "regulations for individual ranks in the family, husbands and wives, parents and children, slaves and masters, which we are accustomed to call Household Lists [*Haustafeln*] . . ."[140]

The word goes back to Luther and was handed down in the Small Catechism. Its centuries-old meaning can cogently be summed up thus:

The *Haus-Tafel* takes its name not simply from the subject matter of which it treats, because it contains not only such sayings as concern those living in the domestic station, but because certain *lectiones* are also prescribed therein for the other orders. Rather, it takes its name *ab usu,* from its use, because sayings were collected by Luther which should diligently be taught at home to children and servants of all ages, that they may be able thereafter properly to judge each station in human life and to pay each its due respect. As for the importance of the Haus-Taffel, it is to be found at the very end of our catechism, it is true, but because it is an appendix to the sacred Ten Commandments, it is often explained immediately after these; the main reason for this is that in the Ten Commandments all stations and all persons in them have received their *lectiones,* but without being named; but here, each station is dealt with individually, and each is shown what he has to do: teachers and listeners in the spiritual, authority and subjects in the temporal, and in the domestic station spouses, children and servants, the young, widows and widowers. For the whole human

race is divided into three great orders, being the teaching, the military and the economic orders; and Luther's Haus-Tafel is laid before these three orders, which are reminded by certain sayings of their offices and duties.[141]

The notion of the table of duties as used in New Testament studies is thus deeply rooted in tradition. Mediated by Luther and the Small Catechism, it preserves an ethical orientation going back to Aristotle, for whom "ethics," and the *ethos* with which it is concerned, are essentially based on the "home," the *oikos*. Such ethics are not rejected by Christianity, but subsumed in it—but, to be sure, in the "relation to the Lord. It is for this reason that respect for the domestic station, and the reception of the table of duties, are not accorded uncritically or unreservedly."[142] The problem created by this critical reception is one central problem in Christian ethics.

Luther's great theological achievement was to reformulate this problem, which has been solved in differing ways throughout the history of the church—the distinction between *praecepta* and *consilia evangelica* came to be of particular historical significance[143]—with matchless rigor, and to have given due significance to the necessary definitions.

We follow Luther in speaking of the indissoluble bond between discipleship ethos and the table of duties ethos, whilst taking account at the same time of the stress placed by Dietrich Bonhoeffer on "discipleship" and on "mandate."[144]

The two terms do not address different substantial ethical fields, but refer to different dimensions of one and the same thing. "Discipleship" here means the intensity and radicalism with which the commandment to love is fulfilled. The "table of duties" directs our attention to forms of existence which fulfill basic needs and the applications of which are in a constant process of renewal; the material content of these concerns Christians and non-Christians alike.

NOTES

1. *Deutsches Worterbuch*, 10/2 (1960), 1:683–727, especially 700–06; 709–24.

2. Cf. Ralf Dahrendorf, *Homo Soaologicus. Ein Versuch zur Geschichte, Bedeutung und Kritik der Kategorie der sozialen Rolle*, 4th ed. (1964). It is noteworthy that, for the sake of semantic clarity, Dahrendorf abandons the concept of "status" and adopts that of "position." His reason is that, in common linguistic use, status now means only "social status," and hence no longer an individual's position in the social system. It means, instead, the position of a position (e. g of a profession) in a scale of prestige (p. 53).

3. Cf. specially Bronislaw Malinowski, "A Scientific Theory of Culture," in *A Scientific Theory of Culture and Other Essays* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944), 1–144, as well as the works by Helmut Schelsky based thereon. For a summarized view, see Schelsky, "Zur soziologischen Theorie der Institution," in *Zur Theorie der Institution*, 2d ed., ed. H. Schelsky (1973), 9–26

4. Arnold Gehlen, *Man, His Nature and Place in the World*, trans. Clare McMillan and Karl Pillemer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).

5. Ibid., 38–42; 119–318. See also Gehlen, *Urmensch und Spatkultur· Philosophische Ergebnisse und Aussagen* (1956) Such a situation is impressively reflected in the whole of Friedrich Nietzsche's work.

6. *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House; Philadelphia: Muhlenberg and Fortress Press, 1955–86) 37·363–65. (Hereafter, LW.) This section from the 1528 *Confession* is the most representative text for the issue. It is obviously short, to the point of containing almost only theses and formulae. Hence, it is suitable to illuminate its significance through more lengthy parallel texts dealing with particular aspects. [Translator's note· The author's original footnotes supply the references in *Luthers Werke*, ed. J F. Knaake (Weimar: Bohlau, 1883 ff), hereafter cited as WA or WATR. These citations will here be included when there is no English translation available; otherwise they have been replaced by references to LW]

7. LW 13·369 (on Ps 111, 3, see LW 13.369–71), 1530.

8. LW 54:446, no. 5533 (1542–43). As an example, cf. WA TR 2, no 2762 (1532)

9. LW 1:103–04. Cf. LW 1:115 (for Gn 2, 18) and LW 1:131 (for Gn 2, 21).

10. For the history of Luther's interpretation of Gn 1, 26–8 and 2, 15ff before his "Lectures on Genesis" (LW 1–8), cf. LW 31.360 (1520); WA 16:353,34–7 (1525), WA 17 I 12,35–13,3; 17, 36–18, 14 (1525); WA 24.71,1–3 and 72,11–25 (1527); LW 13 44–5 (1530); WA 25.393,46–394,2 (1532/34). Cf. LW 22:477 (1538–40).

11 Johann G Hamann, "Philologische Einfalle und Zweifel uber eine akademische Preisschrift," *Samtliche Werke. Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, ed J. Nadler (Vienna: Herder, 1949/57), 3:37, 24–6. See also Bayer, *Zeitgenosse im Widerspruch. Johann Georg Hamann als radikaler Aufklarer* (Munich. Piper, 1988), 108–24 ("Freedom as the Basic Concept of Anthropology"), 125–37 ("Critique and Politics"). Hamann's approach expresses an understanding of theology as a conflictive science, comparable to that typical of Luther's theology: see section X below.

12 Cf. specially LW 1:103 and 106 (for Gn 2 16f), as well as the—not very persuasive—rebuttal by Karl Barth, *Ethics*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (New York· Seabury Press, 1981), 517; LW 2:197, specially the sentence starting with "The church cannot exist . ." (for Gn 10, 8).

13. Concerning the place of the doctrine of the three orders in the wider context of Luther's view of creation, see Bayer, *Schopfung als Anrede: Zu einer Hermeneutik der Schopfung,* 2d ed. (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1990), 46–61.

14. *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church,* trans. and ed. Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959, hereafter, BC), 290.10; *Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch—lutherischen Kirche,* 3rd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956), 411. 20–26. (Hereafter, BSLK.) Cf. also BC 291.14; BSLK 413 13 ff. The other orientation scheme, i. e. the distinction between "spiritual and temporal states" (BC 290–91.13), occurs in the same connection.

15. Cf. specially WA TR 1, no. 1158; WA TR 3, no. 3889; WA TR 4, no. 4172. But also LW 54:42, no. 312; LW 54:43–4, no. 315. Cf. Luther's first criterion for biblical interpretation, documented in n. 8 above.

16. See Luther's preface to "On the Priest Marriage of the Worthy Mister Licentiate Stephan Klingebeil," 1528, WA 26, 530–31, especially 530,7–8 [cf. 531,26–7], 530,28–34.

17. That both the doctrine of the orders and the ecclesiology which emerges as the explication of the Word comprise the more extensive passages in the 1528 *Confession* is not to be seen as an accidental surplus. Rather, it happens consciously and intentionally in a text written with the ultimate seriousness of talk before God and the world. (Concerning the relationship between the *Confession* and the Smalcald Articles, cf. BC, 289.3.) BSLK 409, 20–24.

18. One central merit of the commentary by Wilhelm Maurer, *Historical Commentary on the Augsburg Confession,* trans. H. George Anderson (Philadephia: Fortress Press, 1986) is to be found already in its external arrangement, in which the dual climax—of Word and Sacrament on the one hand and of the orders on the other—is taken into consideration, and in which a separate volume corresponds to the second climax ("Part 1: Introduction and Questions Relating to Orders"). This is equally reflected in the two main emphases of my essay on the Augsburg Confession, in Bayer, *Leibliches Wort: Reformation und Neuzeit im Konflikt* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1992), 57–72, which are indicated there as "The Public Nature of Faith" and "The Freedom of Life."

19. LW 41:3–178. Cf., on the one hand, 41:148–66 (specially 165–66); and, on the other, 41:166–67. See section IX below.

20. In the testamentary texts—both in the 1528 *Confession* and in the Smalcald Articles (see above n. 14)—, but also in the catechisms—cf. BC 354.1, Table of Duties BSLK 523, 30–34; BC 379.105, BSLK 587, 6ff., Interpretation of the Fourth Commandment—, the doctrine of the three orders is preferred both terminologically and in terms of content.

21. Cf. already, however, J. Küppers, "Luthers Dreihierarchienlehre als Kritik an der mittelalterlichen Gesellschaftsauffassung," *Evangelische Theologie* 19 (1959): 361–74, especially 361–2. Maurer, *Historical Commentary,* 85, remains vague: "Luther's doctrine of the three hierarchies must be taken together with his doctrine of the two authorities."

22. For Luther, the school as the sphere of education belongs at first to the *status oeconomicus.* But it escapes the threefold scheme insofar as it is the common issue of all three orders. For this, see the particularly impressive passage in LW 41:176–77, specially its second full paragraph ("On the Councils and the Church," 1539). Concerning the placement of the school in the *status ecclesiasticus,* see R. Schwarz, "Ecclesia, oeconomia, politia: Sozialgeschichtliche und fundamentalethische Aspekte der protestantischen Drei-

Stande-Theorie," In *Protestantismus und Neuzeit*, Troeltsch-Studien no. 3, ed. Horst Renz and Friedrich W. Graf (Gutersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1984), 83.

23. Here it should be noted that Luther employs a distinction which in itself (i. e in literal terms) is traditional But he applies this traditional distinction precisely in order to attack the cause endorsed by tradition (no supremacy of the spiritual, etc.).

24. There is hardly a fixed pattern even within the doctrine of the three orders—neither in the terminology (*Stande, ordines, ordinationes, Hierarchien* .) nor in the sequence. In the "Confession." the office of priest, the state of marriage, the civil government (LW 37.364). The same sequence can be found in the Table of Duties of the Small Catechism; the "Lektionen" [T N · the term does not appear in the English translation, BC 354.1] to be learned begin with the *status ecclesiasticus*. In the Table Talk (WA TR 6, no. 6913) the church stands at the end. "The first is the household; the second the political and temporal governance ["temporal" is used here for the sake of differentiation, and not—as it is usually the case in Luther—to summarize both the *status oeconomicus* and *politicus!*]; the third the church or priestly order. . ." When Luther goes on to say, according to the record of the Table Talk, "in agreement with the three persons of the Trinity," such an association as *vestigium trinitatis* is not typical, it appears only in this one passage

25 As Kuppers does in "Luthers Dreihierarchienlehre" For Luther's doctrine of the three orders as a whole, see Werner Elert, *Morphologie des Luthertums* (Munich C Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1932), 2 49–65 ("The Doctrine of the Three Orders")

26. "De tribus hierarchiis. ecclesiastica, politica, oeconomica et quod Papa sub nulla istarum sit, sed omnium publicus hostis." WA 39 II, 34–91. From the simultaneously held Lectures on Genesis, cf specially LW 2:195–99 (for Gn 10, 8) and WA 47, 790–95 (Sermon on 1 Jo 3,14 from June 15, 1539).

27 To my knowledge, the disputation received monographic treatment only in Rudolf Hermann, "Luthers Zirkulardisputation uber Mt 19, 21," *Luther-Jahrbuch* 23 (1941 [!]): 35–93.

28 Bayer, *Freiheit als Antwort*, II 3: "Nachfolge-Ethos und Haustafel-Ethos, Luthers seelsorgerliche Ethik"

29. Cf WA 39 II, 34–5

30. Cf. below the appendix "Discipleship Ethos and the Table of Duties Ethos;" also Bayer, *Freiheit als Antwort*, II.3.

31. Cf WA 39 II, 40,9 (thesis 17 *exire de hoc mundo*) with the Augsburg Confession 16, (*deserere* = "forsaking," BC 38.4) BSLK 71.7, cf. "Notes on Ecclesiastes," 1532, LW 15:4–5, especially 15:4· "to forsake the household . to flee to the desert. . . "

32. "Against the Heavenly Prophets in the Matter of Images and Sacraments," 1525, LW 40:130. Cf. below nn. 82 and 83

33. LW 37:363. The thematization of original sin is followed by the section on the stations: "Next I reject and condemn " The search for a self-chosen path to salvation—in institutions false and distorted, because they are not willed by God—is sin as *aversio a deo* (cf. Jer 2, 13).

34 Ibid.

35 LW 37.363· "sheer deceptions and errors of the devil." Cf. BC 381.119 and BSLK 591.5 ("Large Catechism," Fourth Commandment)· "devilish perversity."

36. LW 37:364. "Orders" and "institutions," at first used in negative terms, acquire later—throughout the 1520s—an ever more positive connotation.

37. LW 37:363

38. LW 37:365

39. Ibid.

40. LW 37:364.

41. This expression became a central idiom in current discussions with reference to Martin Dibelius, *The Pastoral Epistles. A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, trans. Philip Buttolph and Adela Yarbro (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), who speaks in a trenchant sense of a "Christian citizenship" viz. a "civil" or "popular" ethics (pp. 39–41).

42. Cf. below, the appendix "Discipleship Ethos and the Table of Duties Ethos;" also Bayer, *Freiheit als Antwort*, II.3.

43. LW 37:365

44. The reasons for this failure must be explored. By interpreting Luther's theology in the sense of Kant's formal ethics of duty as a religion of conscience, Karl Holl, for example, cannot but overlook the constitutive significance of the natural and temporal for the reformatory Luther.

45. See section VIII below.

46. For documentary evidence, see section VIII below

47. Cf. n. 13 above.

48. "Most certainly father and mother are apostles, bishops, and priests to their children, for it is they who make them acquainted with the gospel. In short, there is no greater or nobler authority on earth than that of parents over their children, for this authority is both spiritual and temporal" ("The Estate of Marriage," 1522, LW 45:46). According to Luther, the fourth is "the first and greatest" (BC 379.103, BSLK 586.48F.) of all commandments concerning earthly life: "To fatherhood and motherhood God has given the special distinction, above all estates . . ." (BC 379.105 BSLK 587.7–9; cf. also BC 382.125, BSLK 592.32–44).

49. A starting point would be Gerhard Ebeling, "Das Problem des Natürlichen bei Luther," In *Lutherstudien* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1971), 1:273–85.

50. Cf. Maurer, *Luthers Lehre von den drei Hierarchien und ihr mittelalterlicher Hintergrund* (1970), specially 9–18.45–118. Schwarz, "Luthers Lehre von den drei Standen und die drei Dimensionen der Ethik," *Luther-Jahrbuch* 45 (1978):15–34, goes beyond Maurer by referring to the tripartition of philosophical ethics as handed down in basic academic studies. the "three dimensions of individual ethics, household ethics, and political ethics" (32). "Ethica oeconomica and ethica politica are the two domains of ethics that in the past were traditionally delimited from ethics in its stricter sense. Ethics in its strict sense was classified as an individual ethics, an ethica monastica" (20). The critical point of the question—to wit, to which extent this traditional background is fruitful for an understanding of Luther's doctrine of three orders—is indicated by Schwarz himself: how does Luther's view of the *status ecclesiasticus* relate to "the domain of individual ethics"(20)? Cf. also Schwarz, "Ecclesia, oeconomia, politia," mentioned in n. 22 above.

51 "The Holy and Blessed Sacrament of Baptism," 1519, LW 35:39; cf. Bayer, *Promissio. Geschichte der reformatorischen Wende in Luthers Theologie* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989), 258–59 *Here Luther sees every human being still as placed within one order only. His later understanding is determined by the fact that he perceives each and every person as simultaneously situated in all three orders.*

52. Cf. e. g. the phrase "seipsum erudire," ("to learn for himself," LW 31:359). Already in the Lectures on Romans, LW 25:244, commenting on Rom 3,21, Luther speaks of

"self-cultivation" (agricultura sui ipsius). Such talk follows the tradition of an interpretation of Gn 1,28 which is applied to the inner sphere of a "culture of the self." For this tradition of interpretation, see Udo Krolzik, Umweltkrise. Folge des Christentums? (1979), 70ff.

53. Cf. LW 31.364.

54. However, the distinction is not simply discarded. But attention should be paid to the inversion: "in order to do good to others and keep his body under control" ([T.N.: fully found only in the German version of "On the Freedom of the Christian" =] LW 31:368, especially 369) Cf. further LW 31.364, 365 ("that we should devote all our work to the welfare of others"); LW 31:366, 367, 370, 371. LW 31:371 [T. N.: "Of what benefit to you . . ."] seems to support the view that the distinction has been totally discarded. LW 31:364 [T.N.: "Let this suffice . ."] probably builds the transition. LW 31:369 [T. N.: "Each one should do the works . . "] is a back-reference to the previous section which signifies, at the same time, an ulterior correction of the relationship between mortifying one's own body and doing works towards the neighbor. Cf. the two circles (body-soul and wider circle) in the interpretation of the article on creation in the "Small Catechism," BC 345.2 BSLK 510.33ff.

55. Cf. the origin of the treatise on freedom in the excursus "De fide et ceremoniis" found in the "Operationes in Psalmos," WA 5:393, 27–408,13 (on Ps 14.1).

56. LW 31:369. The inclusion of Rom 13, 1–7 and Ti 3,1 [T.N.: only in the German version of "On the Freedom of a Christian"] shows that service to others which is free from egoism does not take place in an unstructured space.

57. LW 34: 112–13, Theses 52–57, especially "Indeed, we would make new decalogues . . ." (Thesis 53).

58. A philosophical ethos (Weisheitsethos) could be combined with situation ethics.

59. Cf. M. Honecker, "Vernunft, Gewissen, Glaube: Das spezifisch Christliche im Horizont der Ethik," Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche 77 (1980):343–44. Cf. also E. Osborn, Ethical Patterns in Early Christian Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 179–82 ("Love and do what you will"), specially 180–81. On p. 180, n. 45, Osborn relies on J. Gallay, Dilige et quod vis fac (1955), 555

60. LW 44:80–1, anticipated in the "Decem praecepta Wittenbergensi praedicata populo," 1516–17, WA 1, 394–521. Cf. "On the Freedom of a Christian," LW 31:368–70.

61. For this interpretive tradition, cf. specially Maurer, Luthers Lehre von den drei Hierarchien (see n. 50 above).

62. Only to make use of an essay title by Karl Holl, The Reconstruction of Morality, trans. Fred W. Meuser and Walter R. Wietzke (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1979).

63. A telling expression thereof is Luther's summing up the "Table of Duties" in the commandment to love ("Small Catechism," BC 356.9). BSLK 527. 16–23

64. BC 342–44.21. BSLK 508 f.

65. LW 28:39–40, on 1 Co 7,17.

66. LW 37:365.

67. Maurer, Luthers Lehre von den drei Hierarchien, specially 45–118

68 Cf. e. g. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae (New York: McGraw Hill; London. Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1964), I/2 q108 a4, as well as the interpretation by Bernhard Lohse, Mönchtum und Reformation· Luthers Auseinandersetzung mit dem Mönchsideal des Mittelalters (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1963), 150–60. Against Aquinas, see Lu-

ther's preface to the revised edition of his weekly sermons found in "The Sermon on the Mount," LW 21:3–6.

69. "The Estate of Marriage," Part 3, LW 45.35–49. In 1527 Luther preaches along the same lines about Gn 1,28, "the thunder blow against the pope's law" (WA 24:53, 17–8); faith and unbelief is also the theme of his interpretation of Gn 1,29–30 (WA 24:57–9).

70. LW 37:365.

71. In German, "profession" and "vocation" share the same etymology (*Beruf; Berufung*). For the history of the concept of "vocation," cf. O. Brunner, W. Conze and R. Koselleck, eds. *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* (1972), specially 490–99, s. v. "Beruf," by W. Conze.

72. LW 37:365. Luther can also use the word estate (Stand) completely in connection with social structures and social stratification It goes without saying that, in this case, it has a totally different meaning than in the doctrine of the three orders, which for Luther does not imply any classification according to social layers or to a scale of social status.

73. LW 37:364.

74. LW 46:241 ("A Sermon On Keeping Children in School," 1530).

75. Cf. the classical work by Holl, "Die Geschichte des Wortes Beruf," In *Gesammelte Aufsatze zur Kirchengeschichte* (Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1928), 3:189–219; also Bayer, *Freiheit als Antwort,* I.7.: "Vocation."

76. WA TR 3, no. 3868.

77. BC 439.20, within the context of BC 438.19–439.22; BSLK 694.37 to 695.26. Hans-Joachim Iwand, "Stand und Sakrament," In *Glaubensgerechtigkeit: Gesammelte Aufsatze,* ed. Gerhard Sauter (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1980), 2:240–64, takes this text as the starting point of his discussion.

78. WA TR 3, no. 3868.

79. See Luther's preface to Justus Menius, "On the Spirit of the Anabaptists," 1544, WA 54:118, 12–21. Luther objects to the Donatist view of the orders in a particularly sharp and ironic way in his Preface to the "Lectures on Galatians," 1535, LW 27:148–49.

80. Cf. especially "Against the Heavenly Prophets," 1525, LW 40:73–223.

81. Cf. specially The Smalcald Articles: BC 312.3–313; BSLK 453.16 to 456.18.

82. "Against the Heavenly Prophets," LW 40:191–92.

83. LW 40:130.

84. Maurer, *Luthers Lehre von den drei Hierarchien,* 18: "God's fatherhood is reflected in a world of paternalism, and the fear of the heavenly Father is preserved through the obedience to the earthly fathers in the household, in the temporal, and in the spiritual order."

85. The threefold structure of the table of duties can be taught catechetically and serve as a pattern to intercessional prayer. Concerning this latter point, see F. Mildenberger, "Furbitte als solidarische Weltwahrnehmung," *Zeitschrift fur Gottesdienst und Predigt* 4/3 (1986): 23.

86 LW 37:365.

87. BC 356.14. Cf. n. 63 above. BSLK 527. 16–23.

88. BC 38.5. BSLK 71. 12f.

89. BC 38.7. BSLK 71.23–26.

90. LW 37:365: "forgiving enemies" (combining Mt 5, 43–8 and Lk 23,34).

91. The still existing differences—e. g. between giving a glass of water and loving one's enemy—are not be overlooked, but do not represent a spiritual hierarchical structure.

92. The relationship of life in the institutions to contingent encounter is considered in *LW* 37:364.

93. LW 37:365.

94. LW 37:364.

95. Cf. W. Schrage, "Zur Ethik der neutestamentlichen Haustafeln," *New Testament Studies* 21 (1974/75): 1–22; *The Ethics of the New Testament,* trans. David E. Green (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 241ff, specially 257–68.

96. Cf. LW 37:364, where I Tim. 4 is expressly mentioned; also, in this connection, LW 37:367–68.

97. Luther consistently uses I Tim. 4:1–5 to identify the present as an evil age, an age of sin and apostasy; Paul foresaw this age and its wrongs—which Luther feels have now been realized. Evil and apostasy take many concrete forms. They are associated by Luther with perverse government, which one must not obey because it is exercising a wrongful function. The Pope (LW 39:84), Rome and Roman theology (LW 36:67) are particularly affected. They promote false doctrines, preach particularly worldly means to salvation, disseminate a false view of matrimony (WA 9:541; LW 41:204), and teach the fast as a law and not merely as a means of mortifying the flesh (WA 10 I:2, 20). In general, they do great harm with their human actions, their false doctrines and orders (LW 35:136; 37:364). For Luther, the central tenet is *Omnis creatura Dei bona est* (I Tim. 4:4). This sentence is often given a concrete polemical dimension, related not merely to eating and drinking, but also to the use of the worldly sword and all worldly things (LW 45:99). "*Uxor, filius, familia, domus*—all are created by God. Nihil reiciendum. Comede quae deus dedit" (LW 29:7). In particular, it is good to marry (LW 54:352, no. 4567). The Papal laws on fasting (LW 22:258)—and also astrology: "*Omnis creatura Dei bona est et non nisi boni usus a Deo; solus homo abusu suo malum facit*" (WA TR 1, no. 678)—are irreconcilable with I Tim. 4:4.

In Luther's theology on the sacraments, I Tim. 4:4 is used as an argument against Roman sacramentalism and against a purism which denies the worldly and the creaturely. True, sacramental vestments should not be consecrated or blessed unless with the general blessing sanctioned by I Tim. 4:4 (LW 53:31–2); extreme unction is also to be numbered among the sacraments "*quae nos constituimus, ut sunt salis et aquae consecratio et aspersio.*" On the other hand, though, "Neque enim negare possumus, Creaturam quamlibet per verbum et orationem sanctificari" (*LW* 36:122). And because we must give thanks for everything, the Eucharist should be seen not as a missal sacrifice, but as an offering of thanksgiving in the sense of I Tim. 4:4 (LW 38:122). Faced with their vows, ordinands should bear in mind ". . . *non solum bona creatura, sanctificati per verbum et sacramentum baptismi . . .*" (LW 53:124).

Not least, I Tim. 4:4 leads Luther to distinguish between thanksgiving and consecration. The *vis consecrationis* within the *actio sacramentalis* is the Word's alone. Luther views the *eucharistein* and the *eulogia* of the Communion texts not as "consecration," but exegetically correctly as grace-saying or table-blessing (LW 35:94–6; WA 16:459 and J. Diestelmann, "Konsekration: Luthers Abendmahlsglaube in dogmatisch-liturgischer Sicht," *Luthertum* 22 [1960]:21–2).

98. LW 41:168.

99. LW 37:365. Cf. BC 381.117 BSLK 590.30–33 " . . not on account of your worthiness but because it has its place within that jewel and holy treasure, the Word and commandment of God" ("Large Catechism," The Fourth Commandment.)

100. Cf specially the "Large Catechism," BC 438.18, 448.10 BSLK 694.29–33; and "The Smalcald Articles," BC 310.1 BSLK 449 18 to 450 1 For the larger context, see K. H. zur Muhlen, "Zur Rezeption der Augustinischen Sakramentsformel 'Accedit verbum ad elementum, et fit sacramentum' in der Theologie Luthers," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 70 (1973): 50–76.

101 BC 448 10. BSLK 709 22f.

102. From this perspective one could make some sense of current efforts to speak about a process of "transsignification"

103 Cf., in the 1528 "Confession," LW 37 366.

104. "Against the Heavenly Prophets," 1525, LW 40.212–13: "The Word, the Word, the Word. . . , the Word avails"

105. Or, what amounts to the same, it is simultaneously equivocal. Taken on its own, it does not speak univocally. For a closer approach, cf Bayer, *Schopfung als Anrede*, 30, especially n. 79. Johannes Brenz recognizes the problem as perceptively as Luther. Brenz, apud *Confessio Virtembergica*, art. 37, draws the same distinction as Luther: God "has certainly ordained the water at Baptism for the cleansing of the sins. This, however, does not arise from God's general creation, but is a particular order determined by God's definite word."

106 Cf. Oswald Bayer, "Metakritik in nuce. Hamanns Antwort auf Kant's 'Kritik der reinen Vernunft,' " *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie* 30 (1988):305–14

107 Iwand, "Stand und Sakrament," 248, 250, 253, has sharply cautioned against that.

108. LW 41:168ff. For Luther's "war on two fronts," see also LW 54, no. 314 and the texts quoted above in nn. 82 and 83. Concerning the significance of Luther's formula in social ethics for the current discussion, cf. Bayer, *Freiheit als Antwort*, III.B.3: "Gesetz und Moral: Zur ethischen Bedeutung des Rechts"

109 LW 41:168–78.

110. For this, see the recent article by M Plathow, " 'Dein heiliger Engel sei mit mir' Martin Luthers Engelpredigten," *Luther-Jahrbuch* 61 (1994): 45–70.

111. LW 20:169. Cf. LW 37:58 ("That These Words of Christ, 'This Is My Body,' etc., Still Stand Firm Against the Fanatics," 1527)

112. This interpretation has been challenged by A. Beutel, "Gottes irdische Gehilfen. Luthers Auslegung von Sach 1, 7 als angelologische Variante seiner Regimentenlehre," In *Spuren Festschrift für Theo Schuhmacher,* ed. H. Colberg and D. Petersen (1986), 157–90, specially in n. 19

113. LW 20:170–72.

114. LW 20·171

115. Cf Bayer, *Promissio* (see n. 51 above), 261, in the larger context of 260–73.

116 "The Smalcald Articles," BC 310.2–311.3 BSLK 450.1–8, 16–21; italics added by the author.

117 Seven *notae ecclesiae* in "On the Councils and the Church" (LW 41:3–178, specially 148–65; cf. Bayer, *Freiheit als Antwort*, II 1 : "Theologische Ethik als Freiheitsethik," 113–4, n 64), and ten (viz. eleven) in "Against Hanswurst," LW 41:185–256

118. LW 41:166. The text continues: ". . . when he assists us in sincerely honoring our father and mother. . . ," etc.

119. LW 41:167.

120. LW 41:167. Cf. the 1528 "Confession," LW 37:364. Again, Luther's whole theology is contained therein and, at the same time, the viewpoint which allows him to distinguish from each other the two times two causes (*causae*) in the interpretation of Ps 127 (WA 40 III, 202–269; see section X below: "Natural Theology?").

121. LW 37:365.

122. Barth, *Rechtfertigung und Recht* (Zurich: EVZ Verlag, 1979), 5–48; see also his "The Christian Community and the Civil Community," In *Community, State and Church· Three Essays* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1960).

123. In the wording of the "Large Catechism," BC 386.54 BLSK 600.16: ". . . God punishes one knave by means of another."

124. For a summarized assessment of this wisdom, see "Psalm 101," 1534–35, LW 13:198–201.

125. LW 34:137–140. Cf. in this respect Gerhard Ebeling, *Disputatio de Homine, 3* vols. (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1977–1989).

126. WA 40 III, 202–69 (1532/33; this interpretation should be compared to the earlier, 1524 reading found in LW 45:317–37). In the title of the 1536 translation by Georg Major one can read: "useful to all rulers and fathers, and most indispensable to know" (WA 40 III, 3).

127. LW 37:365.

128. Concerning the four *causae* and their use, see Ebeling, *Disputatio de Homine,* 2:333–59.

129. "Hanc causam pulcherrime et optime tractant." WA 40 III:, 203,24.

130. "Nam materialem et formalem causam solum tum Politiae, tum Oeconomiae norunt, finalem autem et efficientem causam non norunt, hoc est, nesciunt, unde veniant Politia et Oeconomia et a quo conserventur, item quo tendant." WA 40 III: 202,30–3. This is what shapes the organizing principle, deeply motivated by issues of content— following the understanding of theology as a conflictive science—, of the series of theses in "The Disputation Concerning Man," 1536, which is characterized by the aforementioned double structure (theses 1–19. "Philosophy. . . ," theses 20–40: "Theology. . . "). Cf. thesis 12: "Inasmuch as we seem scarcely to perceive his material cause sufficiently"; thesis 13: "For philosophy does not know the efficient cause for certain, nor likewise the final cause"; thesis 14: "Because it posits no other final cause than the peace of this life, and does not know that the efficient cause is God the creator"; thesis 15: "Indeed, concerning the formal cause which they call soul, there is not and never will be agreement among the philosophers."

131. WA 40 III: 213, 12–3: ". . . hoc non tibi comissum etc., . . . sed instrumentalis esse." Cf. ibid., 237,28–30: " 'Credo in unum deum', hoc est, Deus vult manere Deus, creator et factor omnium, nos autem vult habere cooperatores seu potius instrumenta, non auctores." This "being an instrument" is impressively enunciated in Luther's explanation of the First Commandment in the "Large Catechism," BC 368.26 BSLK 566. 12–37: "Although much that is good comes to us from men, we receive it all from God through his command and ordinance Our parents and all authorities—in short, all people placed in the position of neighbors—have received the command to do us all kinds of

good. So we receive our blessings not from them, but from God through them. Creatures are only the hands, channels, and means through which God bestows all blessings."

132. Hamann, *Sämtliche Werke,* 3:37, 24–6 (cf. n. 11).

133. WA 40 III: 222, 34f.; 223, 5–9; 225, 10–226, 1; 226, 14–227, 22; cf. also "Treatise on Good Works," 1520, LW 44:42–3.

134. LW 41:167. Cf. n. 120 above.

135. LW 41:167. Cf. n. 121 above.

136. Cf. Bayer, *Theologie* (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1994), C.6 ("Exactitude and Width"), above all 6.3 ("The Problem of Natural Theology").

137. Cf. Ebeling, *Disputatio de homine,* 1:33.

138. Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches,* trans. Olive Wyon (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1931), specially 1:448–54; 2:993–1002.

139. Gerd Theissen, "Itinerant Radicalism: The Tradition of Jesus Sayings from the Perspective of the Sociology of Literature," in *The Bible and Liberation: Political and Social Hermeneutics,* trans. A. Wire (Berkeley: 1976), 91–3.

140. Martin Dibelius, *Fresh Approach to the New Testament and Early Christian Literature* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), 220. Cf. K. Weidinger, *Die Haustafeln: Ein Stück urchristlicher Paränese* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1928), 1. J. E. Crouch, *The Origin and Intention of the Colossian Haustafel* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972), simply presupposes the concept of "table of duties" (*Haustafel*) as a classical designation of form criticism.

141. Johannes H. Zedler, *Großes vollstandiges Universal-Lexikon* (Graz: Akademische Druck und Verlagsanstalt, 1961–64 [1735]), 12: 909–10. That "the whole human race is divided into three great orders" does not correspond to Luther's teaching of the three stations according to which every human being lives simultaneously in all stations. Of course, the way in which Luther's teaching of the three stations was received—cf. e.g. Balthasar Mentzer, *Handbüchlein,* ed., G. Hoffmann (1938 [1620]), 95, c. 21, concerning question 220—could lead to it being misunderstood in the sense of a sociological and politilogical classification in the platonic tradition. In Luther, this classification is to be found too, but very seldom (e.g. WA 19:654.20-655.5).

142. Schrage, *The Ethics of the New Testament,* 131.

143. Cf. n. 68 above.

144. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics,* ed. Eberhard Bethge, trans. Neville H. Smith (New York: McMillan Publishing Co., 1965), specially 120–87 ("The Last Things and the Things Before the Last"). Concerning the theme of this appendix, cf. above all the section in pp. 127–30, where Bonhoeffer explains in which sense "Christian life . . . is a matter neither of radicalism nor of compromise."