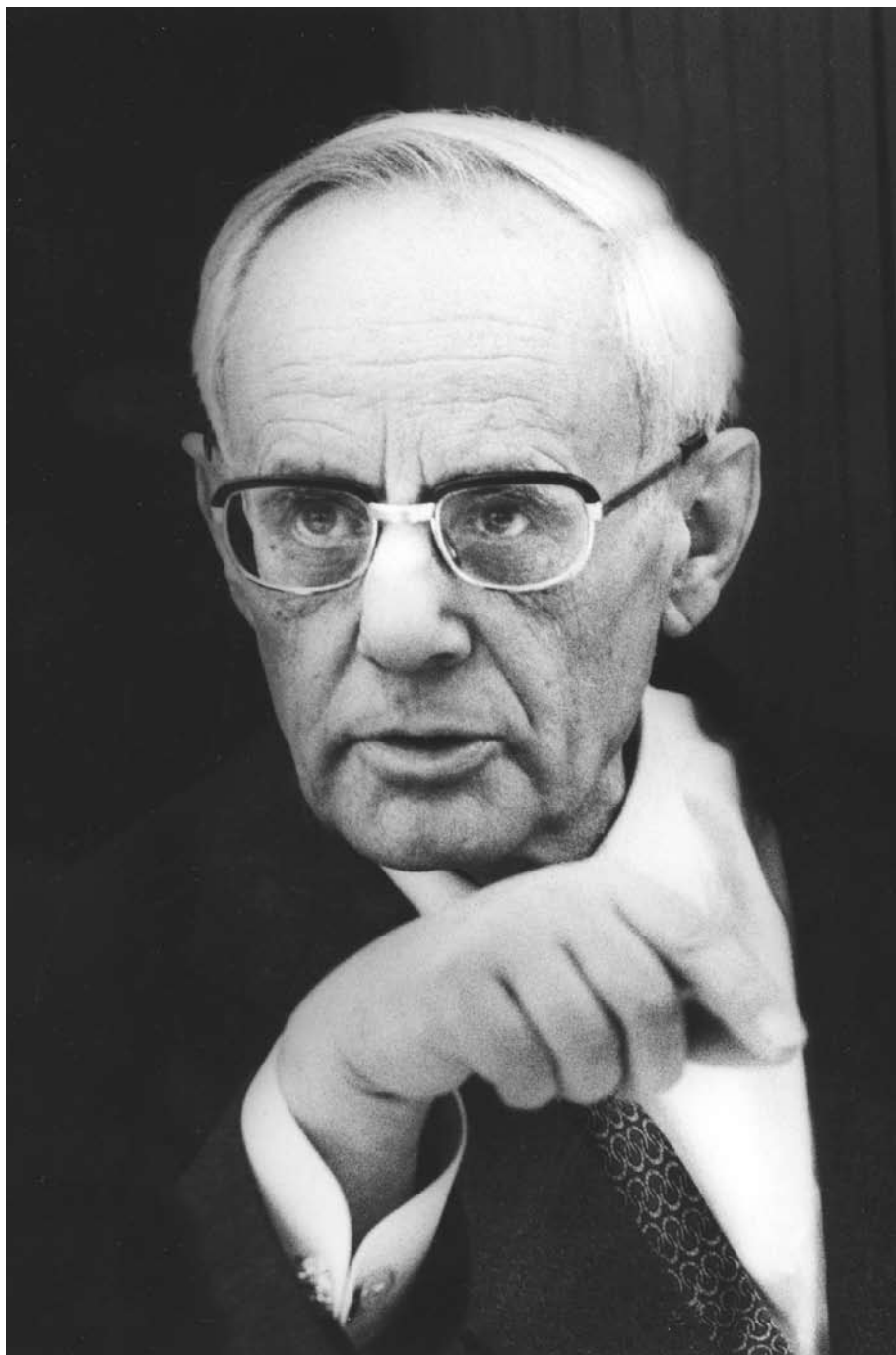


God in the World



Karl Rahner

God in the World

A Guide to Karl Rahner's Theology

THOMAS F. O'MEARA, O.P.



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Abbreviations

- BR Karl Neufeld, *Die Brüder Rahner. Eine Biographie* (Freiburg: Herder, 1994)
- DKR Andreas Batlogg et al., *Der Denkweg Karl Rahners. Quellen—Entwicklungen—Perspektiven* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald, 2004)
- F Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith* (New York: Crossroad, 1978)
- FW Karl Rahner, *Faith in a Wintry Season* (New York: Crossroad, 1989)
- GB Hans-Dieter Mutschler, ed., *Gott neu buchstabieren* (Würzburg: Echter, 1994)
- GM Bernd Jochen Hilberath, *Karl Rahner. Gottgeheimnis Mensch* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald, 1995)
- GP Elmar Klinger, ed., *Glaube im Prozess. Christsein nach dem II. Vatikanum. Für Karl Rahner* (Freiburg: Herder, 1984)
- HPT Karl Rahner, ed., *Handbuch der Pastoraltheologie* (Freiburg: Herder, 1964–1972)
- IR Karl Rahner, *This I Remember* (New York: Crossroad, 1983)
- JC “Jesus Christ,” *Theological Dictionary* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965) 236–42 (revised translation)
- KRB *Karl Rahner, Bilder eines Lebens* (Freiburg: Herder, 1985)
- KRD Paul Imhof and Harvey Egan, *Karl Rahner in Dialogue. Conversations and Interviews, 1965–1982* (New York: Crossroad, 1986)
- KRG Paul Imhof, Hubert Biallowons, eds., *Karl Rahner im Gespräch*, 2 vols. (Munich: Kösel, 1982)
- MS *Mysterium Salutis*, 5 vols. (Einsiedeln: Benziger, 1965–1978)
- R “Revelation,” *Theological Dictionary* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965) 409–13 (revised translation)

- SGG Herbert Vorgrimler, ed., *Karl Rahner. Sehnsucht nach dem geheimnisvollen Gott. Profil—Bilder—Texte* (Freiburg: Herder, 1990)
- SGW Nikolaus Schwerdtfeger, *Gnade und Welt* (Freiburg: Herder, 1982)
- TEG Mario Delgado, Matthias Lutz-Bachmann, eds. *Theologie aus Erfahrung der Gnade. Annäherungen an Karl Rahner* (Berlin: Morus, 1994)
- TI Karl Rahner, *Theological Investigations*, 1–23
- TS *Theological Studies*
- VGG Karl Lehmann, ed., *Vor dem Geheimnis Gottes den Menschen verstehen. Karl Rahner zum 80. Geburtstag* (Munich: Schnell & Steiner, 1984)
- VKR Herbert Vorgrimler, *Understanding Karl Rahner: An Introduction to His Life and Thought* (New York: Crossroad, 1986)
- WT Herbert Vorgrimler, ed., *Wagnis Theologie* (Freiburg: Herder, 1979)

Chapter 1

A Guide to Karl Rahner's Theology

In a time of change, in a time of renewal, Karl Rahner's theology has taught believers around the world. Stimulated by what was occurring in church and culture, he employed and tamed modernity, rejected restorations of the recent past, and liberated the present for the future. Particularly in the years after 1960, his theology touched churches and schools, social activists and mystics, and countless theologians. Johann Baptist Metz wrote: "Karl Rahner renewed the face of our theology. Nothing is now as it was before him. . . . Even those who criticize him are fueled by his insights, insightful and moving perceptions about the world of life and faith."¹ Through an outpouring of theological investigations, he led others to think creatively and traditionally about God, Christ, the human person, and the church. Recently a German theologian looking at him from the perspective of new generations wrote:

Rahner was a figure of destiny for theology in the twentieth century in Germany and beyond. He took up anew the modern world which many wished to ignore. Divine providence gave him various gifts for accomplishing great things. He was the most gifted speculative mind of the past century . . . , and yet he was unambitious to the point of forgetting about himself even as he pursued an inexhaustible production of writings and lectures. . . . He launched a landslide in theology because he was at the right place at the right time.²

An American observer of recent decades of intellectual life in the church concluded that the Jesuit was "one of the most outstanding and venturesome theologians of our times."³ In 2004, a flood of books and articles celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of his birth.⁴

I. AN IMPORTANT THEOLOGIAN

Karl Rahner has been the most important Catholic theologian of the years since the 1960s. Yves Congar was an extraordinarily important thinker before the ecumenical council, Vatican II, for the council to some extent pursued Congar's own agenda of the church's renewal and Christian unity.⁵ Rahner became well known in German-speaking Catholicism in the 1950s, and a wider influence began with the years during and after the council. The lives of the Dominican and the Jesuit in terms of thinking and publishing were different (both theologians went rapidly from the condition of being condemned by Vatican officials to being nominated by popes as advisers at the ecumenical council). As a young man, Congar had published pioneering works on ecumenism and ecclesiology, while Rahner's productivity surfaced more slowly; Congar's writings after the council were largely drawn from his past work, while Rahner, after he was seventy, still brought his creativity to dozens of topics in Christianity. The years after the council gave Rahner not only a wider audience but stimulated more and more books and articles in an effort lasting up to his death.

Karl Rahner showed theologians how to be Catholic and modern and helped Christians see their faith and church in a deeper and broader way. "Theology has always been devoted to giving access to the realities of faith for people who live out their lives in their own understanding of self and world in a particular age."⁶ Writings prepared for and after Vatican II, the extensive translations of his work, and his impact on foreign students who studied with him and became influential in their own countries explain the lasting influence, an influence confirmed by the honorary volumes composed for his anniversary years. In 1960 Johann Auer wrote of his "ability to draw concrete realities and truths into the sphere of an idea, to let a fruitful point of departure and source pass through a long network of thoughts and consequences into practical dimensions of life."⁷ In 1970 Herbert Vorgrimler began a volume of essays on the "risk of doing theology" by mentioning his "enormous productivity and the varied impulses given by that effort to theology and reaching far beyond theology."⁸ In 1980 the introduction to a commemorative volume of essays treating the Jesuit theologian at Vatican II began: "Karl Rahner was not only a peritus of the Council. He belongs to those who prepared for it. He found the Council to be ultimately the representative of his great concerns, to be an advocate of a theology of humanity."⁹ Recently, in 2004, Karl Neufeld gathered essays to show how Rahner's theology continues to "lead people to a responsible and

relevant reflection upon Gospel and faith, a theology within the great public life of the people of God.”¹⁰

Colloquia at Innsbruck, Austria, survey his influence through essays and bibliographies, while in North America a Karl Rahner society indicates that younger theologians who had no personal contact with Rahner are numerous.¹¹ Rahner's writings have been translated into many languages, Portuguese and Danish, Japanese, and Indonesian. Herbert Vorgrimler observes that in Europe and North America “central statements of Rahner's have become so established among interested Christians that many people do not realize how much they owe to Rahner.”¹² He gives the examples of grace as trinitarian presence, the universal will of God for salvation, and the sacraments understood as realizations of Christian existence. Despite the disdain of Vatican bureaucrats, a few bishops, and an occasional reactionary essayist, the influence of Rahner remains extensive.

II. A LASTING INFLUENCE

Karl Rahner was an unassuming figure who never sought importance or fame. He held the interest of academics and intellectuals but spoke to all kinds of people in society and church. “His theology,” Neufeld concluded,

entered in a particular way into people's lives. . . . In his own way he let the ordinariness of human life meet the Christian mystery so that every aspect of life could be penetrated by that mystery. Above all he recalled forcefully the clarity of what is Christian, of what contribution Christian faith could make to an age that often did not get beyond problematics and frameworks of questions.¹³

His importance perdures as decades pass, partly because an age distinguished by important theologians, artists, or scientists is not followed immediately by equally imposing figures, and partly because the pontificate of John Paul II encouraged an intellectually superficial Catholicism of past devotions. Neufeld sees Rahner as a contemporary theologian, indeed, a “Genosse der Zeit,” “a contemporary of time itself,”¹⁴ while Vorgrimler points out how Rahner, situating the person and her world within the presence and love of God, pursued enthusiastically new issues taking temporality and human life seriously.¹⁵

The influence of Karl Rahner in the United States is significant. Americans who studied with him in Germany and their students, along with countless readers of his books, have brought his thought to Catholic universities, colleges, and theology schools. Americans have

produced many articles and books on him, ranging from a comparison with Wittgenstein to a dialogue with Hispanic Catholicism. A North American Karl Rahner Society meets yearly and publishes the papers delivered.¹⁶ Volumes of his essays are becoming available in a CD-ROM format, while websites offer bibliographical assistance. Why has a philosophical German influenced the United States? To begin, his philosophy of existence and subject responds to the psychological world of America where philosophy is largely psychology; his acceptance of change in church forms explains the renewal of parish life, and his perspective of retaining what is basic in church forms while accepting realities of participation and diversity aids the thinking of American ecclesialogists, canonists, and pastoral theologians. Why this lasting influence? Because he honestly and creatively reconsidered many aspects of the Christian faith and church life from the point of view of the individual man or woman living amid the unseen worlds of grace and doubt.

III. RAHNER AND MUNICH IN THE 1960s: A PERSONAL ENCOUNTER

In 1963, just ordained a priest at the Dominican theology school in Iowa, I came across the first volume of Karl Rahner's collected essays, *Theological Investigations* (in German *Schriften zur Theologie*), in a translation by a British Dominican; during my seven years of seminary studies in philosophy and theology I had not heard of him. Then suddenly I was sent to Munich for doctoral studies and learned from *Time* that Rahner would be joining the faculty at the university there. In Munich I purchased Rahner's two early works. *Spirit in the World*, his dissertation analyzing a few pages from Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae* on knowing in light of Kantian philosophy, didn't interest me, for I was tired of neo-Scholastic concepts. The second book, *Hearer of the Word*, was something new, an inquiry into the conditions for a revelation from God to us: human knowing, freedom, language, and historicity compose a grammar through which the Word of God can and does speak silently even as it stimulates the emergence of human words and convictions about who God is. "The human being is that being who in the free love of God stands before the God of a possible revelation . . . , the being who opens itself in free love to this revelatory message of a speaking or silent God."¹⁷ Revelation comes to persons who are free to respond to it; arriving in their history, it becomes word and action and person in interplay with others. Revelation in the Bible is neither a celestial language nor a religious myth but an increasingly explicit narrative—its climax is

Jesus of Nazareth—of what at all times is a special, silent, constant presence. Christianity should and can take into consideration the individual, the surrounding culture, and history.

As he turned sixty, Rahner arrived to join the faculty of the University of Munich in May 1964 to be Romano Guardini's successor in an interdisciplinary professorship of "Philosophy of Religion and Christian World-View." This marked the ascent of a worldwide influence and an increase in productivity.¹⁸ To hear his opening lecture, I entered the university's main building and found a seat in the crowded *Auditorium Maximum*. A short figure in black suit and tie began to describe his intention to unfold the most basic ideas of Catholic Christianity. This course (open to all the university) offered a first version of his theological system, a theology taking the modern world seriously. Rahner appeared during his lecture as both meditative and energetic; he was, I would learn, unassuming but also passionate, speaking to students of theology—and the church and the world. His resonant voice expressed a respect for the subject of his course which he inevitably stated to be "that infinite, ineffable Mystery which in both silence and power is always secretly contacting each and every human being." Somehow I kept a few pages of my notes from that opening lecture in Munich in the spring of 1964. "The student," I wrote down during his opening lecture, "has a responsibility to understand courageously the intellectual and cultural powers of the time." Those lectures appeared in 1976 as *Foundations of Christian Faith*. The course and book bore the subtitle, "An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity," and the "idea" of Christianity recalled great thinkers of the nineteenth century like F.W.J. Schelling, J. S. Drey, and F. A. Staudenmaier. The course reflected on the totality of Christianity as something unfolding from a single seminal theme, what Jesus called the kingdom of God.¹⁹ To hear Rahner was to hear someone who believed deeply, someone who could think and who liked to think. You felt his words and ideas were pointing to something deeper; not to a theory but to a reality, to the self but also to the active presence of God.

On other days, down the hall from the large auditorium, Rahner held weekly seminars. These were not a dozen doctoral students discussing an overly researched paper, for in the winter semester 1965/66, well over a hundred and fifty people were seated in the large slanted classroom to learn about "The Theology of Non-Belief." Perhaps because of his obligations at the council or because he wanted to repeat his practice at Innsbruck of wide-ranging discussions, those hours were an opportunity to hear Rahner think out loud on a range of topics. Which themes should we consider? One seminal and significant topic

followed another. The thoughtful but engaging German voice pondered aloud what “sacrament” or “creed” or “penance for sins” might mean. For instance, peace has many dimensions and changing forms, while the meaning of “battle” and “war” is not so simple.

Theologians in terms of peace and war should be careful, for there have been times when Christians more or less for a peace of the grave advocated war, and other times when they developed a pseudo-Christian ideology to maintain at all cost the peace of the citizenry. There are modern anti-Christian ideologies where the only realistic form of peace is the same as terror. All this shows how changeable the form and reality of peace can be.²⁰

Theology, the mind and voice implied, is historical discovery and cultural insight.

Rahner, modest and approachable, did not fit the type of the “*Herr Professor*.” He had no interest in prestige or in power; in interviews he described his life as without anything distinctive, the life not of an academic or an ecclesiastic but of an ordinary person working to make the Gospel credible to the people he met. What I did not know was that Rahner was forthright and irrepressible, interested in people and intrigued with new areas for free theological discussion.

He wanted to help people, even if principles and regulations were violated as a result. He hated pious affectation, but self-righteous certainty even more. He was a freedom-loving man and could discover areas of freedom even where the official line had long regarded everything as regulated or prohibited. . . . Bishops approached Rahner’s superiors in the Order to make known their discontent and obtained partial prohibitions against him. Church organizers were given hints to stop inviting Rahner.²¹

In 1965 the English-speaking doctoral students in Munich founded an association for their ever increasing number. We would invite a professor to an officers’ club at a United States Army base where he would give a brief talk followed by questions. In that way the faculty would come to see that American students were serious. One time Rahner came. Toward the end of the evening his *Assistant*, Karl Lehmann, turned to me and asked if he had understood correctly that there was to be a small honorarium. I replied that there was a hundred German marks (then about twenty-five dollars). He asked if it were possible to have it that night. “You see, we are driving to Innsbruck tomorrow and we’re leaving early and we don’t have enough money for gas.” When I showed my surprise, he replied that they never had any money because all of Rahner’s salary, fees, and royalties went directly to the Society

of Jesus, and the professor never remembered to ask for money. I had the impression that the overworked and little-paid Lehmann was often providing money for gas and ice cream.

It was only after teaching for a few years in the midst of the post-conciliar renewal that I slowly came to notice what I had gained and retained, some of it unconsciously, from Rahner.²² Two aspects stood out: how to interpret the forms of a church in change, and how to glimpse grace in a wider world. The Rahnerian theology of grace illuminated my world in the United States in the 1960s as the ideologies and structures of many institutions (Catholic Church, religious life and diocese, American religion with a WASP hegemony, university, military, government, business) were being critiqued and changed. Boundaries were shifting. How to explain the similarity and synchronicity of these upheavals? What did religion serve? How was it that people sometimes became selfless precisely by leaving organized religion, while some church leaders were willing to sacrifice Christian prophets and servants to preserve the status quo? The religious identities of people in the world were complex; Catholic, Methodist, and agnostic religious stances were different, but their commitment to aspects of human and political life might be the same.

I did not, however, notice that Rahner's thinking was influencing me, although he did help me see, even in 1965, that the challenges facing Catholicism were more than absorbing some insights from the Protestant Reformers or modern philosophers. Catholicism faced ecclesial renewal, late modernity, and globalization, as the social upheavals of the 1960s, critical of the Enlightenment and of existentialism, had brought a new romanticism and communitarianism. Neufeld observed: "Rahner was independent, self-assured and for that reason always interesting. As the years passed he more strongly took up his own ideas and approaches, and his development had an unmistakably personal quality."²³

IV. A GUIDE TO A THEOLOGIAN FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

This book aspires to be a guide to the theology of Karl Rahner. (There have been many fine introductions and studies in German and a few in English.) Avoiding academic intricacies while offering some resources in English and a few publications in German, it hopes to attract beginners and disciples, to present his theology as something fresh and helpful, and to treat important but less-noticed themes like Scripture and ministry. Do his insights and theological principles still contribute

to Catholic life today? Does his thinking about the event of Jesus Christ escape the language and context of a particular time a few decades past? Topics like modernity, ministry, grace, and the world religions argue that Rahner's theology remains important. The goal of the following brief chapters is to express what is basic and original, and to inquire into how that expression of faith speaks to the beginning of a new century.²⁴

To introduce, *intra-ducere*—these pages would guide readers into and within a way of thinking about Christianity. A person meeting a theologian needs to know something of his time and culture, of his teachers, and of the people he sought to address. Theology—most great theologians described and did theology in this way—lives between God's revelation and human culture, between faith and life. As theologians from Paul Tillich to Edward Schillebeeckx point out, theology is neither dogma nor sociology but a correlation of God's revelation to men and women, accepting and describing a power and a presence in people not detected by scientific instruments. Theology expresses the Word of God in human words, makes the Good News attractive in new times. Theology is not novel terms or shocking conclusions, not secular psychology or academic theory, and Rahner's lectures and publications hold no radical statements about Jesus or the papacy, for they are inevitably about something beneath the things and texts of Christianity: the real presence of God in history. To some extent everyone is a theologian, and in his last years Rahner observed that for him writing and speaking ended not in footnoted articles but in the expression for ordinary people of what was most basic in the Gospel.

How should one read a great theologian? The wrong introduction renders a theologian dry and tedious, turns intellectual challenge into boredom. To encounter a theologian is to enter into his vision, to feel something of her energy. We do meet a thinker in past writings, although we should not hand our intellectual pursuit over to a diffident reading of printed texts. We read the pages holding the perspectives of a metaphysician or a mystic to find in them a luminous access to the real. Texts are only guides and witnesses to life. To understand a theology of some import begins with grasping its underlying themes.

A dull or misguided teacher can transform Rahner and the exciting history of Catholicism in the twentieth century into something distant or irrelevant, while a reactionary or fundamentalist mentality will turn thinking itself into something unorthodox or dangerous. There are ways not to study great thinkers. It is preferable not to study them solely on one's own, for then shallow or incorrect interpretations may replace teaching. An initial understanding of a thinker takes some time,

and a mature interpretation requires years. A great artist or physicist is more than a source of information to be stored. I once asked a class why important modern theologians and philosophers were difficult to understand. The answer came back: "Because they wrote in German!" Rahner's German is supposed to be difficult—certainly the sentences are long.²⁵ His process of thinking, however, is straightforward; the often brief and logical sentences are direct. A theologian does not have an endless string of new ideas but a few insights—insights appearing with their own language and perspective, a few new insights and terms and themes. The writings of an Aristotle or a Kant offer not so much facts as perspectives, ways of understanding self and society. Great minds are difficult because they offer a new viewpoint through a kind of code: the code is found in the thought-forms expressing ideas drawn from a culture and a time. The code offers not esoteric metaphors from the libraries of academia but insights into the real world. What makes a thinker, a theologian perduring? Their words and ideas make sense of my experience of my world, make sense of the world in its own proper historical forms at this time. A thinker is great because writings offer a new perspective about the human and the divine. How should I live on this planet and at this time in history? Where lies my destiny? Is there an unseen God, and how does a supreme being relate to me? Theologians employ philosophies, aesthetics, psychologies, or sociologies not to prove the content of Jesus' revelation but to express the Word and its words to a particular culture in a striking way. Jesus' revelation is not so much about a divine being as about God personally engaged with us, and a theologian is a theoretician of life and history within the mystery of a special divine presence. "Christology, theology and anthropology are so intimately connected that it would help bring out the true idea of anthropocentric theology by calling it 'incarnational.'"²⁶

Curiously, the time spent in learning about one person's world somehow aids the appreciation of others. To study one great artist or thinker is to see and understand a little about other great scientists, thinkers, and artists. Rahner is never sectarian, never closed, never antiquarian; he is not interested in propping up a clerical caste or an academic society. His theology of the horizon of grace reaching out through history, prior to statues and rituals, is the opposite of any fundamentalism. His understanding of history shows how trying to restore the recent past is doomed: no one lives there, and the forms restored obscure the potential within great theologies and liturgies of the past.²⁷ The Jesuit often repeated that a theologian is really being a theologian not when he assigns dogmatic propositions places in a syllogism but when he reexperiences the depth

in Jesus teaching, when he sees how history draws forth from word and sacrament both a yes and a no because both rest over the abyss of the inexpressibility of God. As people learn about Rahner's ideas, they often mention that they themselves had thought something similar for years.

How should one approach this theology? How should one read Karl Rahner? His theology is well known for managing to be both personal and global. Christians find there variety and simplicity, a myriad of topics in a context of personal life, a history of humanity surrounded by grace leading to Jesus Christ, and an openness to diversity, ministry, sacrament, and participation in the church.²⁸

* * *

What lasts and remains great is fully immersed in its own age and yet transcends it. This theology will live on when much contemporary theological literature is forgotten.²⁹ Rahner himself is a good guide to his writings, and his writings illumine each other. His pleasure and openness in giving interviews, his tendency to explain his viewpoints in light of past and present movements in society and church, suggest approaching him through his personal comments. "Theology," he wrote,

is a reflection upon revealed Christian faith. This reflection stands in the service of the Church so that it can fulfill its job of preaching, as well as it can, so that it reaches the contemporary person. . . . Theology has the job of a dialogue with the contemporary person's understanding of self and world; beyond that it has the job of being a worldwide theology, developing a Latin America, East Asian, and African theology.³⁰

A representative of a newer generation of independent theologians learning from Rahner, Bernd Jochen Hilberath, sums up:

We can trace the significance of Karl Rahner for contemporary theology in two ways. First, research can look at the development, the conditions, the main themes and the unresolved difficult issues, drawing on basic principles and future-oriented ideas. . . . The second way begins in the world of today and asks what are the frameworks and motifs in theology being pursued today. What are the main themes and difficulties of today's theology? Then a dialogue between the historical situation and the theology of Rahner is developed.³¹

This introduction, written two decades after Karl Rahner's death, is inevitably a reexpression and at times an application drawing a past theology to the present and the future. This retelling of an influential theology cannot avoid including somewhat my interpretation, and I ask for indulgence if my words become prominent.

* * *

Someone is riding from an airport into the heart of a large city, a city like Los Angeles or New York, Lagos or Tokyo—in many classes I have pointed out the lasting importance of Karl Rahner's theology with this image and experience.

You look out through the window and see countless people busy about their lives. Are they religious? Are they Christians? Many are, many are not, depending on global geography. Many may be members of other religions, while others have left any formal religious group. And yet, are they not all seeking life, seeking meaning and transcendence? They accept and fashion the direction of their daily life by some kind of faith, love, and hope regardless of what they name these. What do I make of them? Does their church, synagogue, mosque exhaust the religious dimensions of their life? Or does their relationship to grace and sin, to God's love and God's plan for the race of planet earth lie deeper? A few Christians may follow, because it is clear and simple, a negative fundamentalism, and send billions of men and women who are not members of this or that particular church to a hell. That would be a startling decision for a God of love. Is it not more likely from Jesus' teaching that no people are left out of the force of divine? No creatures are frustrated or damned prior to their lives, and yet, there is no neutral park for people where they would exist outside of a saving history of God's presence. An alternative theology shows how all that Jesus called the kingdom of God contacts and influences people living before and outside of the Gospel even while Jesus Christ remains the light of the world.

* * *

This theology the following chapters sketch.

NOTES

1. Metz, *Den Glauben lehren und denken. Dank an Karl Rahner* (Munich: Kösel, 1984) 13.

2. Dieter Hattrup, "Karl Rahner zum Hundertsten," *Theologie und Glaube* 94 (2004) 551; see the insightful introduction of Michael Schulz, *Karl Rahner begegnen* (Augsburg: Sankt Ulrich, 2004).

3. Charles Meyer, "Karl Rahner: A Theologian for Our Time," *Chicago Studies* 43 (2004) 239; for personal reflections see William F. Bell, "Rambling with Rahner," *America* 173 (1994) 14, 15, 18; Gregory Raftery, "Rahner in the Gaeltacht," *Spirituality* 11:1 and 2 (2005) 54–9, 139–41; Barbara Finan, "Rahner's Place," *Ohio Dominican College Scene* (Winter 2001) 24–5. Melvin Michalski and Andreas Batlogg have just published a collection of several dozen interviews with Rahner's friends and students: *Begegnungen mit Karl Rahner. Weggefährten erinnern sich* (Freiburg: Herder, 2006).

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4. For instance, *The Courage to Risk Everything. Essays Marking the Centenary of Karl Rahner's Birth*. Louvain Studies 29 (2004); *Karl Rahner 100 Jahre Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie* 126 (2004); and special issues of *Stimmen der Zeit* for 2004 and of *Gregorianum* (2005).

5. On his early sense of a vocation to renew the church through historical and ecumenical work see "Letter from Yves Congar, O.P.," *Theology Digest* 32:3 (1985) 213. At the end of Vatican II, he wrote in his diary: "I left the Basilica slowly and with difficulty; a number of bishops congratulated me, saying that this was very much my work. Looking at things objectively, I did do a lot to prepare for the Council, to elaborate and diffuse the ideas the Council made its own. At the Council itself I worked a lot." He lists the sections of Constitutions on the Church and Revelation that are from him, the introduction and the conclusion of the documents on Ecumenism, non-Christian, foreign missions, priests, and religious liberty. "In short, this morning, that which was read came very extensively from me" (Congar, *Mon Journal du Concile II* [Paris: Cerf, 2002] 510f.).

6. "Grundsätzliche Überlegungen zur Anthropologie und Protologie im Rahmen der Theologie," *MS* 2 406.

7. Johann Auer, "Das Werk Karl Rahners," *Theologische Revue* 60 (1964) 147.

8. "Ein Brief zur Einführung," *WT* 11.

9. Elmar Klinger, "Vorwort," *GP* 5.

10. Neufeld, "Erinnerung," *Karl Rahner 100 Jahre. Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 126 (2004) 1f.

11. Roman Siebenrock, ed., *Karl Rahner in der Diskussion* (Innsbruck: Tyrolia, 2001) summarizes the influence of Rahner's theology around the world. From meetings held in 1993 and 1999 in Innsbruck, the volume holds over twenty essays on topics such as church office, Maurice Blondel, ecclesiology, neo-Scholasticism, etc., by figures like Reisenhofer, Möbs, Rulands, Tourenne, and others; see, on the contemporary dialogue with Rahner, Andreas Batlogg, "Karl Rahner im Gespräch," *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie* 121 (1999) 431ff. In 1989 a decision was made to issue a new edition of much of Rahner's writings. This would publish better editions of some writings and first editions of unpublished works. Since then a number of volumes have appeared (not in their numerical order), volumes on pastoral theology, on creation, on the church fathers (see Albert Raffelt, "Was will die Karl Rahner-Gesamtausgabe?" *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie* 121 [1999] 413–30).

12. VKR 110; see Declan Marmion and Mary Hines, *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Rahner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). For Rahner's influence in Francophone theology, see Jean-Claude Petit, "La Réception de la pensée et de l'oeuvre de Karl Rahner dans la théologie française," *Science et Esprit* 53 (2001) 353–73. On Rahner's influence in Croatia see Živan Bezić, "Nezaboravljeni Rahner," *Ephemerides theologicae Zagrabnenses* 74 (2004) 289–96; in the Czech Republic, Michael Altrichter, "Die Rahner-Rezeption in Böhmen," *Stimmen der Zeit* 131 (2006) 196–201; in Russia, P. Modesto, "Transzendentalanthropologie und Materialismus. Aufnahme und Kritik Karl Rahners in der Sowjetunion," *WT* 132ff. A collection of essays in Spanish appeared for his seventieth birthday, A. Vargas-Machuca, ed., *Teologia y Mundo Contemporaneo* (Madrid: Ediciones Cristiandad, 1974), and for the anniversary of his death, *Estudios Eclesiásticos* 80 (2005). For

Asia there is Tamás Nyíri, *Theologie in Ost und West. Karl Rahners Beitrag* (Frankfurt: Lang, 1996) and pages on Rahner's presence in India and Japan in *KRB*, 153–7, while on Africa see René de Haes, "Einfluss auf die Jungen Ortskirche in Afrika," in Paul Imhof and Hubert Biallowons, eds., *KRB*, 150–3.

13. Neufeld "Karl Rahner—Zeitgenosse," *GB* 35.

14. *Ibid.*, 14.

15. Herbert Vorgrimler, "Zur bleibenden Aktualität Karl Rahners," *Theologische Revue* 100 (2004) 91–100; see *Gotteserfahrung in Leben und Denken* (Darmstadt: Primus, 2004). For a survey of Rahner literature in the last decade see Bernhard Nitsche, "Bilanz-Umbrüche-Desiderate. Rahner-Forschungsbericht 1995–2004, 2 Teile," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 185 (2005) 303–19; 186 (2006) 4–15.

16. Wide-ranging articles on Rahner appear in the special yearly issue of *Philosophy & Theology*; see Michael Fahey's address to the Catholic Theological Society that documents his influence in the United States ("Presidential Address: 1904–1984, Karl Rahner, Theologian," *Proceedings, Catholic Theological Society* 39 [1984] 84–98); John Padberg, "Einfluss auf die Theologie in den Vereinigten Staaten," *Karl Rahner. Bilder eines Lebens*, 114–7. Recent studies with original perspectives include Miguel Diaz, *On Being Human. U.S. Hispanic and Rahnerian Perspectives* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2001); Terrence W. Klein, *How Things Are in the World. Metaphysics and Theology in Wittgenstein and Rahner* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2004); Michael Purcell, *Mystery and Method. The Other in Rahner and Levinas* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1998); Michael Petty, *A Faith that Loves the Earth: The Ecological Theology of Karl Rahner* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1996); John J. O'Donnell, *Life in the Spirit* (Rome: Editrice Gregoriana, 2004). Recently there have appeared too the papers of the conference, "Rahner at the Pacific Rim" (Franklin, WI: Sheed & Ward, 2005).

17. *Hörer des Wortes* (Freiburg: Herder, 1963) 133, 9; see T. O'Meara, *A Theologian's Journey* (New York: Paulist Press, 2002) chs. 6 and 7.

18. Bernhard Welte, "Ein Vorschlag zur Methode der Theologie heute," *Gott in Welt* 1 (Freiburg: Herder, 1964) 285.

19. *F* 1, 4. Mark Fischer has published a helpful abridged version, an accessible English paraphrase of *Foundations of Christian Faith* with introduction and indices, *The Foundations of Karl Rahner* (New York: Crossroad, 2005).

20. "The Peace of God and the Peace of the World," *TI* 10, 372.

21. *UKR* 87.

22. In 1970 I published a theology of that volatile time, *Loose in the World*, some of which was a popularization of Rahner. Later a reviewer noticed how the underlying structure of some of the chapters of *Theology of Ministry* was indebted to him. On Rahner and teaching theology, see the essays in *Philosophy & Theology* 11 (1998) 191–205; Georg Baudler, "Göttliche Gnade und Menschliches Leben. Religionspädagogische Aspekte der Offenbarungs- und Gnadentheologie Karl Rahners," *WT* 35–50; Roman Bleistein, "Mystagogie und Religionspädagogik," *WT* 51–60.

23. Karl Neufeld, "Karl Rahner—Zeitgenosse," *GB* 20.

24. Robert Kress offers helpful suggestions in "How to Read Rahner," *A Rahner Handbook* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982) 93–7; see George Vass, *Understanding*

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Karl Rahner in Two Volumes: The Mystery of Man and the Foundations of a Theological System and *A Theologian in Search of a Philosophy* (Westminster, PA: Christian Classics, 1985). Essays guiding the student through the *Foundations* are found in Leo O'Donovan, ed., *A World of Grace* (New York: Seabury, 1980).

25. Did Rahner have some poor pedagogical habits? There was the assembly of qualifications, the distracting repetition of a phrase or idea over a few pages, the move from one topic to a different one. That style, in Franz Mayr's view, is a proper and positive aspect of Rahner's writings: The German language tends to a mode of thinking and speaking both synthetic and cyclical. Regardless, Rahner's style of writing and speaking is very much his style of thinking (Franz K. Mayr, "Vermutungen zu Karl Rahners Sprachstil," in *WT* 143, 137); see Karl Neumann, "Sprache und Stil," *GB* 24–39; Herbert Vorgimler, "Zum Sprachstil," *S* (Darmstadt: Primus, 2004) 5–9. If this style can hinder Americans, the impression should not be given that abstract phrases are theology. Lehmann notes the interplay in his thought between a questioning and a seeking spirit. The many essays with their long introductions look at topics and their histories from different directions. In the relationships of the divine and human, the historical and the personal, the philosophical and the pastoral, categories and systems are tested to see if they can illumine contemporary questions. Inevitably a liberating idea appears, an insight to be followed to its consequences ("Karl Rahner zum Gedächtnis," *Stimmen der Zeit* 212 [1994] 147–50).

26. *KRD* 19.

27. Rahner mentions two dead ends; a narrow fundamentalism and an esoteric theatricality; both fixate on language or ritual in a superficial way of conceiving the church's mission in the world ("Church and the World," *SM* 1, 348–51).

28. See the pastoral topics treated in Karl Neumann, *Der Praxisbezug der Theologie bei Karl Rahner* (Freiburg: Herder, 1980) 7–12.

29. As Joseph Ratzinger observed in a review of *Foundations* when it first appeared (*Theologische Revue* 74 [1978] 177ff.).

30. *KRD* 324.

31. *GM* 13; on new generations of theologians drawing on Rahner, see Andreas Batlogg, "Generationenwechsel oder: Wem gehört Karl Rahner?" *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie* 115 (1993) 451–3.