

LOVE AND THE SEXUAL SPHERE:  
A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN  
LOVE AND SEXUALITY IN  
KAROL WOJTYŁA'S *LOVE AND RESPONSIBILITY*

A Thesis Submitted  
to the College of Graduate Studies and Research  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Arts  
in the Department of History  
at the University of Saskatchewan

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## Abstract

Spurred on by the controversy over contraception, the twentieth century became one of most eventful for the history of Catholic thought on human sexuality. The Catholic Church in this century experienced the rise and eventual dominance, at least at the level of the Magisterium, of a *personalist* approach to marriage and sexual ethics, an approach which sought to treat of these subjects from the perspective of their relation to personal values, especially the value of love. Of those figures who were most crucial in the development of such a personalist approach, one was Karol Wojtyła. As bishop, archbishop, cardinal and finally pope, Wojtyła (John Paul II) would be involved in some of the most important events of this history, such as the drafting of Vatican II's *Gaudium et Spes* and the controversy surrounding Paul VI's *Humanae Vitae*.

This study is intended to further an understanding of Wojtyła's role in this history by investigating his thought on human sexuality. Accurate interpretation of his actions would require knowledge about his convictions, beliefs and reasons for them. This study, however, limits itself to investigating only one of Wojtyła's works, *Love and Responsibility*, and to asking one specific question of it, what relation is understood to exist between love and sexuality.

This investigation leads to several important conclusions. First, Wojtyła has a definite and reasoned belief that sexuality is necessarily related to love. Second, his understanding of sexuality and its relation to love depends on his belief about the nature of love. Third, Wojtyła believes that human sexuality is related to love because a) it is the sexuality of a person and a person is the sort of entity which is able to love and ought to be loved, b) by virtue of the sexual urge attraction (a form of love) arises very

easily, c) by sex (male and female) being a limitation or imbalance a special basis is created for love-as-desire (another form of love), and finally d) by sexual intercourse being a union of bodies, intercourse both expresses “betrothed love” (yet another form of love) and gives it an added perfection.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would to thank the members of my thesis committee: Dr. Carl Still and Dr. Alan Reese, and especially my supervisor, Dr. Peter Burnell for all the helpful guidance received throughout both the years of the study for my Master's degree and those before. With gratitude I would like to acknowledge the assistance, and particularly the financial assistance given in the form of a scholarship, which I received from the University of Saskatchewan's Department of History. Finally, I would like to thank my friend and fellow graduate student, Charles Robertson. It was in innumerable conversations with him that many of the ideas to be found in this study were worked out.

## Table of Contents

PERMISSION TO USE	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE: PASTORAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND	18
CHAPTER TWO: LOVE AND THE PERSONALISTIC NORM	34
CHAPTER THREE: LOVE	47
CHAPTER FOUR: HUMAN SEXUAL NATURE	67
CONCLUSION	90
APPENDIX: TIMELINE	95
BIBLIOGRAPHY	98

## Introduction

On December 7, 1965 Paul VI promulgated the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, the document commonly known, by virtue of its opening words, as *Gaudium et Spes*. A wide variety of issues were addressed in it; one of these was marriage. In preparation for the document the bishops at the council, despite some opposition, rejected certain aspects of traditional terminology and chose to cast their treatment of marriage in what might be called “personalistic” terms.<sup>1</sup> *Gaudium et Spes* spoke of marriage as an “intimate union”<sup>2</sup> rather than a contract<sup>3</sup>, and repeatedly stated that it was created by the mutual self-giving of the spouses.<sup>4</sup> Within the relatively short section dedicated to marriage, the term *love* appeared forty-seven times.<sup>5</sup> *Gaudium et Spes* did not pass over marriage’s orientation towards procreation, but attempted to integrate it with the personal values and ends inherent in marriage.

Two and a half years later on July 25, 1968 *Humanae Vitae* was published. Commenting on the modern context surrounding the problem of contraception, Paul VI noted that among the changes of “considerable importance” were “a new understanding... of conjugal love in marriage and the relationship of conjugal acts to

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<sup>1</sup> Theodore Davey, “Marriage and Sexuality” in *Modern Catholicism: Vatican II and After* ed. Adrian Hastings (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991) 267.

<sup>2</sup> *Gaudium et Spes* 48 as found in *The Documents of Vatican II* second edition, trans. Joseph Gallagher (New York: Guild Press; Association Press, 1966).

<sup>3</sup> Davey 267.

<sup>4</sup> *Gaudium et Spes* 47-52

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

love.”<sup>6</sup> The pope then proceeded to reassert the Church’s condemnation of contraception and provide a “personalistic” explanation. The procreative significance of sexual intercourse was inseparably bound with the unitive significance (love); to contradict the former was to contradict the latter.<sup>7</sup> The encyclical also continued to use *Gaudium et Spes*’s terminology; marriage was referred to as a union of persons which was the result of mutual giving of self.<sup>8</sup>

The emerging “personalistic” approach to marriage and sexuality, an approach which above all was characterized by a desire to give love a central place in marriage, was cemented by John Paul II. His pontificate began with a five year long series of general audiences which developed a “theology of the body”. The depth of personalistic analysis given within the series to marriage and sexuality was staggering. In the years that followed, the pope would speak frequently on marital and sexual issues. The document regarded as the most important and authoritative on marriage was, however, promulgated within the timeframe of the “theology of the body series”; this was the 1981 apostolic exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*.<sup>9</sup> Personalistic emphasis on love, gift of self, and (comm)union of persons occurs throughout it.

Finally, Benedict XVI in his first encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* continued the modern papal tradition of associating love with sexuality. Considering “the vast semantic range of the word ‘love’”, he noted that among the wide variety of meanings “one in particular stands out: love between man and woman, where body and soul are

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<sup>6</sup> Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae* 2, <[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/paul\\_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_enc\\_25071968\\_humanae-vitae\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae_en.html)> (24 July 2006).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* 12

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* 8

<sup>9</sup> Ronald Lawler, Joseph Boyle, and William E. May, *Catholic Sexual Ethics: A Summary, Explanation, and Defense* second edition (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 1998) 25.

inseparably joined and human beings glimpse an apparently irresistible promise of happiness. This would seem to be the very epitome of love; all other kinds of love immediately seem to fade in comparison.”<sup>10</sup> He then proceeded to examine the relation between *agape* and *eros*, arguing that Christian *agape* rescues and elevates *eros*.<sup>11</sup> While Benedict employed a terminology different from that found in *Gaudium et Spes*, *Humanae Vitae*, and John Paul II’s writings, the continuity of the association of love with sexuality is unmistakable.

In their brief review on the history of Church teaching on marriage and sexuality, Ronald Lawler, Joseph Boyle and William E. May, claim that “[t]oday it has become clearer than ever before that Christian sexual morality is no more and no less than the implication of the logic of love.”<sup>12</sup> That a change in the way that the Church speaks about marriage has occurred during the twentieth century seems fairly evident. To confirm it one only needs to compare any post-Vatican II papal document on the subject with the treatment of any nineteenth century Catholic theologian. Vatican II’s *Gaudium et Spes*, of course, was not the spontaneous source of this new approach; it was rather the point at which acceptance of the approach began to rapidly accelerate.

The immediate origins of the present personalistic approach are to be found largely in the first half of the twentieth century, but these in turn are due to nineteenth century developments. The dominant figure in nineteenth century Catholic moral theology was Alphonsus Liguori.<sup>13</sup> During his lifetime (1696-1787) Alphonsus was the

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<sup>10</sup> Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est* 2, <[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_20051225\\_deus-caritas-est\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est_en.html)> (24 July 2006).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* 3-11

<sup>12</sup> *Catholic Sexual Ethics* 67

<sup>13</sup> This is a constant impression given by John T. Noonan in Chapters 12 and 13 of *Contraception* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1966). Alphonsus’ critical importance for 19<sup>th</sup> century moral theology is commonly admitted, though sometimes indirectly. Adrian Hastings says that

subject of bitter conservative criticism, but after his death he became “unassailable.”<sup>14</sup> A lawyer by training, Alphonsus was not so much an innovator, as he was an ardent and intelligent defender of opinions proposed by other theologians.<sup>15</sup> When it came to sexual matters, he rejected traditional Augustinian doctrine,<sup>16</sup> and particularly its claim that sexual intercourse could be free of sin only if procreation was being consciously sought, and instead supported theologians like the Jesuit Thomas Sanchez (1550-1610).<sup>17</sup> Due largely to Alphonsus’ post-mortem authority, Augustinianism in sexual ethics was, at least according to John T. Noonan Jr., “banished”<sup>18</sup> and the anti-

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Alphonsus was the “supreme master” of the manual tradition of moral theology which “dominated Catholicism to an extraordinary extent between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries” (“Morality” in *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*, 450). L. Vereecke writes that “Among the major events of the history of the Church in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the progressive rallying of moralists and the clergy to the moral thinking of St. Alphonsus” and “It can be said that the influence of St. Alphonsus on Catholicism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was very generally and very deeply felt” (“Alphonsus Liguori, St., in *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. vol. 1, 311-312). Servais Pinckaers presents Alphonsus as the highpoint of the manualist tradition and the hero who resolved the dispute over probabilism. He also draws attention to the Church’s approval of Alphonsus’ theology for any confessor, the declaration of Alphonsus as a Doctor of the Church in 1871 and Alphonsus’ status as patron of moralists (*The Sources of Christian Ethics*, trans. Mary Thomas Noble, Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1995, 276-277).

<sup>14</sup> John T. Noonan, Jr., *Contraception: A History of Its Treatment by the Catholic Theologians and Canonists*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1966) 396.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* 320

<sup>16</sup> “Augustinian Doctrine” in the history of Catholic theological treatment of marriage has its source in Augustine’s writings but is not necessarily to be identified with his thought. “Augustinianism” in sexual and marital matters is generally characterized by a strong emphasis on the good of procreation, the good which married couples ought to be seeking when they are engaging in intercourse. This rational and good end makes up for the means. The only other rational good which may be adopted as a motive for engaging in intercourse is the avoidance of infidelity through the quieting of sexual desire. Generally Augustinians have found this motive to involve venial sin if the potentially unfaithful person is oneself, but virtuous if it is one’s spouse. Pleasure itself, as opposed to the quieting of desire through pleasure, does not qualify as a good end and is regarded, with varying severity, as an illicit motive for seeking intercourse.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* 321-330

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* 329. Liguori’s contribution to the disappearance of Augustinianism in sexual ethics probably bore some connection to his role in the decline of Jansenism. L. Vereecke says that Alphonsus “gave Jansenism in its practical form a blow from which it could not recover” (“Alphonsus Liguori, St.” in *The New Catholic Encyclopedia* vol. 1, 312). Jansenism stemmed originally from Bishop Jansenius’ work *Augustinus* and was generally characterized by moral rigorism. Jansenists usually took the Jesuits as their enemy; Blaise Pascal, a Jansenist writer, attacked Jesuit moralist for their treatment of marriage and sexuality (*Les Lettres provinciales* in *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Fortunat Strowski, vol. II, Paris 1926, 9).

Augustinian approach to marriage and sexuality which had been growing since the beginning of the seventeenth century<sup>19</sup> became standard.

Of those opinions of Thomas Sanchez supported by Liguori one was that sexual acts short of intercourse and ejaculation were, even if there was the risk of ejaculation, lawful between spouses “whenever there was an urgent need for showing signs of affection for the fostering of mutual love.”<sup>20</sup> While neither Sanchez nor Liguori suggested that the fostering of mutual love could also be a lawful motive to sexual intercourse, the idea seemed to logically follow. In 1852 John Gury, S.J., took this step in his *Compendium of Moral Theology*; one of the lawful motives for seeking intercourse was declared to be “the desire of fostering or bringing about decent friendship, of manifesting or promoting conjugal affection, and so forth.”<sup>21</sup> In the 1874 edition the term *friendship* was replaced by *love*.<sup>22</sup> This was the first time a Catholic theologian directly associated love with sexual intercourse.

The nineteenth century also contained the origins of that controversy which would frame so much of the discussion of marriage and sexuality in the following years. In 1798 Thomas Malthus, an Anglican clergyman, published *An Essay on the Principle of Population* in which he argued that population left unchecked would grow geometrically while food production would only grow arithmetically.<sup>23</sup> Although Malthus did not advocate artificial birth control of any kind, his essay would soon become the foundation for a birth control movement which promoted various forms of

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* 323

<sup>20</sup> Alphonso Marie de Liguori, *Theologia Moralis* (Paris: Ludovicum Bives, 1872-1875) 6.934. My translation of “aliquando adsit urgens causa ostendendi indicia affectus ad fovendum mutuum amorem”.

<sup>21</sup> John Gury, *Compendium of Moral Theology* (Turin, 1852), “Marriage,” no. 688 as quoted in *Contraception* 491.

<sup>22</sup> Noonan 492

<sup>23</sup> Thomas Malthus, *Population: The First Essay*, ([Ann Arbor]: University of Michigan Press, 1959), 5.

contraception. The movement was particularly English in its origins; it bore significant ties to the Utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill and publicly advocated birth control in England in 1820 and the United States in 1830.<sup>24</sup> While the movement enjoyed varying success during the three quarters of the century, the last quarter marked a major turning point and it was then that its major victories in public acceptance began to be made.<sup>25</sup>

The Church's concern over contraception for the first three quarters of the century was largely limited to France where the practice of *coitus interruptus* (withdrawal from intercourse before ejaculation) was "rampant"<sup>26</sup> and "widespread".<sup>27</sup> So as not to destroy the good faith of ignorant penitents, a policy of silence generally prevailed.<sup>28</sup> Arguments against contraception continued to appear in theological works but these arguments were "traditionalist rather than closely reasoned"<sup>29</sup>, "perfunctory and undeveloped."<sup>30</sup> Matters changed in the last quarter of the century as a result of the pontificate of Leo XIII, the revival of Thomism, the success of the birth control movement, and the defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian war, a defeat which was regarded by some in the Church as the consequence of a low population stemming from the widespread contraceptive practices. It was at this time that the Church became the

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* 392-393

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* 406-407

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* 416

<sup>27</sup> Andrew Dutney, "Contraception" in *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought* ed. by Adrian Hastings, Alistair Mason, and Hugh Pyper (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 134

<sup>28</sup> Noonan. 400-405. *Coitus interruptus* was so widespread that priests could usually assume that a married penitent was practicing it. If the penitent did not confess to it, the priest, suspecting its presence, could either interrogate the penitent or remain silent. The danger with interrogation was that if the penitent was practicing *coitus interruptus* but was ignorant of its sinful nature, then the new knowledge of its sinfulness could lead to serious marital conflict and have the result that the penitent ceased to come to confession anymore. A policy of silence was generally taken with the hope that by progress in the spiritual life the practice of *coitus interruptus* would be eventually abandoned.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* 405

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* 406

“active and tireless adversary of contraception.”<sup>31</sup> In 1880 Leo XIII issued *Arcanum Divinae Sapientiae*. This encyclical was a sort of “opening move”. Contraception was never explicitly mentioned; the pope focused his attention rather on asserting the sacredness and divine origin of marriage and establishing the Church’s competence to speak on marital matters.<sup>32</sup> Direct papal denunciation of contraception in an encyclical would have to wait until December 31, 1930 when Pius XI issued *Castii Conubii*. Four and a half months earlier the Anglican Church at its Lambeth Conference had allowed for the use of contraception under certain circumstances.<sup>33</sup> In the years that followed other protestant denominations followed the Anglican lead. By 1960 virtually all had accepted contraception as morally licit.<sup>34</sup>

Within the Catholic Church the controversy would reach its famous climax in 1968 when Paul VI issued *Humanae Vitae*. While *Castii Connubii* had explicitly condemned contraception, there was some question as to what Pius XI particularly had in mind; certainly *coitus interruptus* and the condom, and probably diaphragms and postcoital douches as well.<sup>35</sup> Not included was the not yet invented progesterone pill. When it did emerge in the mid fifties, a discussion extending from 1957-1963 began among theologians over whether the pill qualified as contraception.<sup>36</sup> In the latter half of 1963, however, there began to appear Catholic writers who challenged the Church’s

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* 404 The Church of course always condemned contraception. The change which occurred at the end of the nineteenth century was a change in “pastoral approach”. The previous “silence” of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, brought about by concern for not destroying the good faith of a penitent, ended and the Church became more and more outspoken about its age-old teaching on contraception.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* 415-416

<sup>33</sup> The Lambeth Conference, 1930, Resolution 15

<sup>34</sup> Dutney, “Contraception” 134

<sup>35</sup> Noonan. 429

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* 468-475

entire teaching on contraception.<sup>37</sup> This challenge increased even more in 1966.<sup>38</sup> In the minds of many Paul VI, in response to the work of the commission on problems of population, the family and natality, was not just going to issue a determination on the status of the pill, but was going to radically change the Church's stance on contraception in general. Neither happened; the Church's condemnation of contraception was reasserted and, while not explicitly mentioned, the pill was fairly obviously rejected as a legitimate means of regulating birth. Dissension among theologians followed the encyclical, but as far as the Magisterium was concerned the issue was settled.

Although the Church's position on contraception did not change, the controversy contributed greatly to the development of doctrine. Because it was felt to be such a pressing issue much more intellectual vigor was directed to the subject of marriage and sexuality than had been previously. When the Church's teaching was re-examined it was also done so within a new context. Several factors contributed to this context. The nuclear family had emerged as the form of the family most commonly met in the Western world.<sup>39</sup> There had been advancement in scientific knowledge; notable discoveries included the human ovum (1827), the fertility cycle in mammals (1845), and the human fertility cycle (1924 and 1929).<sup>40</sup> Psychology had also advanced, allowing for more speculation on the relation between sexuality and personality.<sup>41</sup> For the development of personalism in sexuality ethics, though, the most significant aspect of the new context was probably that, due largely to the increased status of women, the

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<sup>37</sup> Noonan 512 and Janet E. Smith, *Humanae Vitae: A Generation Later* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1991) 8.

<sup>38</sup> *Catholic Sexual Ethics* 64

<sup>39</sup> Noonan 479

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* 439-443, Two dates are generally given for the discovery of the human fertility cycle because Kyusaku Ogino's 1924 data was also arrived at independently Hermann Knaus in 1929.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* 481

possibility of marriage being a meeting of equals was much greater and as a result Western society had become the first in which individual decision had a major role in selection of a marriage partner.<sup>42</sup>

While there had been some development among late nineteenth century theologians concerning the relation between love and sexuality,<sup>43</sup> the personalistic approach really only began after World War I, taking root in Germany under the influence of the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl and Max Scheler.<sup>44</sup> *Personalism*, it should be said, is a somewhat loosely used term in philosophy; in general it refers to “a philosophical perspective or system for which person is the ontological ultimate and for which personality is thus the fundamental explanatory principle.”<sup>45</sup> When applied to the area of sexuality, personalism usually signifies an intention to view sexuality from the perspective of its significance for the person, and to put personal values like freedom, goodness, truth, and especially love at the center and to discover the relation that sexuality bears to them. Understood in this way the label “personalism” may be applied to theologians and philosophers from a variety of schools. Among the early Catholic “personalists”, the most prominent and important was the phenomenologist Dietrich von Hildebrand, student of Edmund Husserl and close friend of Max Scheler. Phenomenology, with its interest in describing the experience of a given phenomenon, was particularly prone to moving the perspective on sexuality away from the objective

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<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* 478 and 532

<sup>43</sup> Francis X. Linsenmann, for example, in 1878 distinguished the subjective purpose of intercourse from the objective. Objectively procreation was the primary purpose; subjectively the purpose was that “through the ordered appeasement of the natural drives the spiritual union of the spouses be consolidated”. Francis X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie* (Freiburg im Breisgau: 1878) 630, as quoted in Noonan 494.

<sup>44</sup> Noonan 494

<sup>45</sup> John H. Lavelly, “Personalism”, in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* vol. 6 (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1967) 107.

teleology of the generative act and toward the effect which it exerted on the person as a whole. Von Hildebrand's earliest and best known work on marriage and sexuality, *In Defense of Purity* [*Reinheit und Jungfraulichkeit*], was published in 1928. In it he spoke of sexual intercourse as "perfect self-surrender and self-revelation"<sup>46</sup>, claimed that any other use of it was "desecration of the other person"<sup>47</sup>, and distinguished between its meaning (love) and its end (procreation).<sup>48</sup>

*Castii Connubii* followed a few years later. It did not reject von Hildebrand's work and for the first time in a papal document love was linked to sexual intercourse.<sup>49</sup> The personalistic approach developed steadily after this point. The next major figure was Herbert Doms who in 1935 published *The Meaning and End of Marriage* [*Vom Sinn und Zweck der Ehe*] which was a development of von Hildebrand's thought. Doms' work was both influential and heavily criticized. Significant works from theologians such as Bernard Häring (1954), Joseph Fuchs (1960), and Paul Quay (1961), followed. With respect to the contraception controversy these writers and those like them characterized contraceptive acts "as selfish, as an exploitation of the spouse, as a denial of love, [and] as a destruction of the natural meaning of coitus".<sup>50</sup> They also all "appeared to assume that the only lawful intercourse was that in which the person gave himself totally".<sup>51</sup> It was their work which culminated in *Gaudium et Spes*.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Dietrich von Hildebrand, *In Defense of Purity* (New York, 1931), 36.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* 20-22

<sup>49</sup> Pius XI, *Castii Connubii* 59 <[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-xi\\_enc\\_31121930\\_casti-connubii\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_31121930_casti-connubii_en.html)> (24 July 2006).

<sup>50</sup> Noonan 523

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* Noonan published *Contraception* in 1965, three years before *Humanae Vitae*. The personalists which he groups together did not all take the same stance in the controversy which followed the encyclical. Von Hildebrand became one of the first public defenders of *Humanae Vitae* (Dietrich von Hildebrand, *The Encyclical Humanae Vitae: A Sign of Contradiction in Why Humanae Vitae Was Right: A*

Interestingly, Augustinian thought, having been “banished” in the nineteenth century, returned in the work of many twentieth century personalist writers, although it was employed in a very different way than it was previously.<sup>53</sup>

Perhaps the easiest way to misinterpret the modern historical development of Catholic teaching on marital and sexual matters and particularly their relation to love, is to see the changes exclusively, or almost exclusively, as the result of a desire to appease modern sentiments, as a concession to the stance taken on contraception. Environmental factors played an important role, as did the desire for “aggiornamento”<sup>54</sup>, both in its orthodox and unorthodox forms, but the changes also depended to a significant extent on the convictions of certain individuals. That Dietrich von Hildebrand was a philosopher, not a theologian, a phenomenologist, not a Neo-Scholastic and “the first married layman to make a substantial contribution to Catholic doctrine on marriage”<sup>55</sup>, owes something to the modern context in which he lived. But as modern as he was, he was also “anxious never to say anything that was not in perfect harmony with the teachings of the Church”.<sup>56</sup> The approach he proposed for sexual ethics cannot be seen as a move from traditional rigorism to modern laxity; contraception is utterly condemned, and because love is at stake sexual sins of all kinds take on a seriousness which is not to be found in

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*Reader*, ed. by Janet E. Smith, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993, 49-82). Bernard Häring, by contrast became one of the main opponents of the papal position.

<sup>52</sup> Enda McDonagh, “The Church in the Modern Work (*Gaudium et Spes*)”, in *Modern Catholicism* 105. McDonagh says that *Gaudium et Spes* is “an excellent expression of the theology of marriage that had been developing in the Church since the 1940s”.

<sup>53</sup> *Catholic Sexual Ethics* 55 and Noonan 522-523

<sup>54</sup> Aggiornamento, Italian for “updating” was a term used by John XXIII to describe the task of Vatican II, the renewal and updating of the Church’s teaching for the modern world.

<sup>55</sup> Noonan 494-495

<sup>56</sup> Alice von Hildebrand, *The Soul of a Lion: Dietrich von Hildebrand* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000) 212.

most previous writers. Von Hildebrand would later become one of the first public defenders of *Humanae Vitae*.<sup>57</sup>

Von Hildebrand's concern to be orthodox had one especially interesting historical consequence. Aware of the novelty of his work, he checked his thought with his friend Eugenio Pacelli, the Nuncio to Germany. Pacelli endorsed his views and encouraged them. Von Hildebrand's influence probably played a significant role in Pacelli's treatment of marital and sexual matters when Pacelli became Pope Pius XII. It was he who first, and quite unexpectedly, lent papal support for the regularization of birth through the use of the infertile period.<sup>58</sup> Pius XII also condemned artificial insemination on personalistic grounds and spoke of sexual intercourse as "the expression of the reciprocal gift" which spouses make of themselves to each other.<sup>59</sup> His pronouncements on marriage and sexuality show that it would be wrong to view the papacy's role in twentieth century development of doctrine as simply that of begrudging concession, a final assent to what had become universally accepted.

Dietrich von Hildebrand is undoubtedly one of the most significant individuals in the development of personalism in the Catholic Church. If his influence and effect on this history is rivaled by anyone, it can only be by Karol Wojtyła. The role which Wojtyła played was, of course, very different from that of von Hildebrand. Whereas von Hildebrand's importance primarily lies in his originality, Wojtyła's lies primarily in

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<sup>57</sup> Dietrich Von Hildebrand, *The Encyclical Humanae Vitae: A Sign of Contradiction* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1969).

<sup>58</sup> Support was first publicly given on October 29, 1951 in an address to the Italian Catholic Society of Midwives. Up to this point it was commonly accepted that intercourse during the infertile period was lawful, but there was disagreement over whether *regularized* use of this period could be employed for the purpose of the spacing of births. Pius XII, "Discours Aux Participants du Congrès de l'Union Catholique Italienne des Sages-femmes" (29 October 1951) in *Documents Pontificaux de Sa Sainteté Pie XII: 1951*, ed. R. Kothen (Paris: Labergerie, 1952), 470-498.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

his authority. The history of Catholic sexual ethics shows that authority, no less than originality, is necessary for development. Augustine combines both elements in himself. Thomas Aquinas, however, makes only a few original contributions, but is roughly of equal importance because of the authority attributed to him. Alphonsus Liguori, mentioned earlier, played the crucial role he did by giving his support to theologians like Thomas Sanchez; only through the authority attributed to Liguori during the nineteenth century did Sanchez's original thought come to play the role that it did. A parallel can certainly be drawn between Sanchez and Liguori on the one hand and von Hildebrand and Wojtyła on the other.

Wojtyła was an authoritative figure in this field because of the fact and the quality of his papacy. Extending from 1978 to 2005, his reign was the third longest in the Church's history. His papacy covered much of the period of theological dissent that followed Vatican II and *Humanae Vitae*, and he was one of the most crucial figures in the struggle over the interpretation of the council. As far as sexual matters were concerned, he was a novelty; no other pope went out of his way to address such issues to the extent that he did. Marriage and sexuality were more than just objective concerns which were to be addressed only when controversy demanded it; Wojtyła brought to the papacy an ardent personal interest in the subject. This is seen best in that he began his pontificate with a five year long series of Wednesday addresses on marriage, sexuality and the body which was written before his election and intended to be a book.<sup>60</sup> The *Theology of the Body* series was to have a twofold effect; first, being such an intense personalistic investigation of sexuality, it thoroughly confirmed the development which had taken place during the twentieth century, and second, it in turn sparked a new

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<sup>60</sup> Weigel. 336

excitement on the topic which would result in a wide range of works by Catholic writers.<sup>61</sup>

Wojtyła's contribution to twentieth century development of doctrine did not, however, begin with his election to the papacy. Before he was John Paul II, he was Cardinal Wojtyła, "one of the best-known churchmen in the world to his peers in the higher leadership of Roman Catholicism."<sup>62</sup> The renown which he had in upper hierarchy of the Church was gained during the Second Vatican Council<sup>63</sup> and the document to which his primary contributions were made was none other than *Gaudium et Spes*.<sup>64</sup> A few years earlier, in 1960, Wojtyła had published a book entitled *Love and Responsibility*. Its teaching on marriage and sexuality accords very much with that *Gaudium et Spes*.

A bishop and then archbishop during the council, Wojtyła was made a cardinal by Paul VI in 1967. According to George Weigel, Wojtyła was "well-known to the Pope as the author of *Love and Responsibility*."<sup>65</sup> A few year earlier Paul VI had assigned him to the Papal Commission for the Study of Problems of the Family, Population, and Birth Rate; however, due to the Polish government's refusal to issue him a passport, Wojtyła had been unable to be present at the crucial June 1966 meeting

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<sup>61</sup> George Weigel seems to claim the opposite. He sees *Theology of the Body* as a "theological time bomb set to go off, with dramatic consequences, sometime [sic] in the third millennium of the Church" (343) and claims that it has not received the serious attention it deserves and has not been fully assimilated by Catholic theology (342). But his criteria for what proper dissemination would consist of are fairly demanding and his evident enthusiasm and unbridled praise only supports my contention. His enthusiasm is typical of Catholic writers who have read *Theology of the Body*. This can be seen in writers like Janet E. Smith, "Pope John Paul II and *Humanae Vitae*" in *Why Humanae Vitae Was Right: A Reader* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993) 231-250; and Christopher West, *Good News about Sex and Marriage* (St. Anthony Missionary Press, 2000). One indication that there is popular interest in *Theology of the Body* is Christopher West's recent publication of a commentary on the work, *Theology of the Body Explained* (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 2003).

<sup>62</sup> Weigel 219

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* 158

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* 166

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.* 207

from which the famous “Majority Report” calling for acceptance of contraception was derived.<sup>66</sup> This did not stop him from playing a decisive role in the formation of *Humanae Vitae*. Within his own diocese he set up a commission, in which he participated actively, to study the issues being debated by the Papal Commission.<sup>67</sup> It was with the memorandum of this commission and not the “Majority Report” of the Papal Commission that Paul VI sided. If the claim that sixty percent of the encyclical was owing to Wojtyła’s commission is too exaggerated, there are elements within *Humanae Vitae* which almost certainly come from it.<sup>68</sup> In addition to all of this, Paul VI was reportedly reading *Love and Responsibility* while he wrote the encyclical and was, according to biographer Paul Johnson, heavily influenced by it.<sup>69</sup>

Theodore Davey claims that beneath the debate about the terminology which was to be used in *Gaudium et Spes* to speak of marriage there was this fundamental question: “has human love a central place in marriage, or is procreation its justifying and overriding value?”<sup>70</sup> The personalism which has developed in the Church’s teaching on marriage is above all else the result of reflection on the relation between sexuality and love. The great changes in the Church’s approach to sexuality which occurred during the twentieth century were not simply the result of environmental, sociological factors. As we have already seen from the case of Paul VI, who under intense pressure from both sides of the contraception debate had to make a final choice of great consequence, the changes derived to a great extent from individual decisions and actions. Personal

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<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.* Father Bardecki’s suggestion of sixty percent dependence is rejected by Weigel.

<sup>69</sup> Paul Johnson, *Pope John Paul II and the Catholic Restoration* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Servant Publications, 1981), 32-33.

<sup>70</sup> “Marriage and Sexuality” in *Modern Catholicism* 267

forces no less than impersonal ones must be given consideration. To understand a person's actions one must understand what motivated and guided them, and a crucial factor in this is what that person believed. Karol Wojtyła had a critical impact on the development of personalism in the Church and personalism was above all a question of what place love has in the sexual sphere. What did he believe to be the relationship between love and sexuality? Interpretation of his actions in the formation of *Gaudium et Spes*, in the *Humanae Vitae* controversy, and during his pontificate, depend to a great extent on the answer to this question.

This study is intended to further the question, so necessary for a proper interpretation of Wojtyła's actions, of what he believed about sexuality. A full answer to the question would require an investigation into a number of works, not least among which would be *Theology of the Body* and *Familiaris Consortio*. Such an investigation would be extensive. This study will restrict its inquiry to asking what understanding of love's relation to sexuality is present in *Love and Responsibility*. This will allow us to get at the heart of the matter since the question of love's relation to sexuality is the central concern in the development of personalism, and *Love and Responsibility* is his most important work on precisely this subject; while his papal writings, because of the authority associated with them, have more potential for influencing the future of the Church, *Love and Responsibility* is more revealing about his understanding of the subject because it gives greater attention to the nature of love than any subsequent work, and, being published before Vatican II and the *Humanae Vitae* controversy, helps reveal the understanding of sexuality he was to bring to them.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> The Polish original was *Miłość I Odpowiedzialność* (Krakow: Wydawnictwo, Znak, 1960). Subsequent Polish editions appeared in 1962 and 1965. I unfortunately do not know Polish and so for the present

Moreover another reason why *Love and Responsibility* deserves attention is that while its importance is widely admitted by writers concerned with Karol Wojtyła/John Paul II's life and thought, there have been only a few scholars who have done work specifically on his thought on sexuality,<sup>72</sup> and for those who have, for example Richard Hogan and Daryl J. Glick, the focus has been on his papal writings.<sup>73</sup> Most treatments of *Love and Responsibility* can be found within works which take as their subject either his thought in general, for example Rocco Buttiglione's *Karol Wojtyła: The Thought of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II*, or his whole life, for example George Weigel's *Witness to Hope*. Treatment may be chapter-long at most. None directly investigates the question of how he understands love to be related to sexuality.

The present investigation will be divided into four chapters. In the first we will examine the pastoral and academic background of *Love and Responsibility* so that through knowledge of its sources its teaching on love and sexuality can be more fully understood. The second chapter will take up the text of the work and concentrate on the "personalistic norm", the obvious centerpiece of the work's ethical analysis and the element which most indicates that sexuality has something to do with love. The third chapter will focus on love itself, on what Wojtyła understands to be its essence and on the forms it may take and the elements which may be incorporated into it. In the fourth and final chapter we will take the conclusions about Wojtyła's understanding of love and examine his understanding of human sexuality in their light.

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study will rely on the one English translation done by H. T. Willetts (Karol Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, trans. H. T. Willetts, San Francisco: Ignatius press, 1981).

<sup>72</sup> Janet Smith, *Why Humanae Vitae was Right: A Reader* 249

<sup>73</sup> Their works are respectively "A Theology of the Body", *The International Review of Natural Family Planning* 6, no. 3. (Fall 1982): 227-312; and "Recovering Morality: Personalism and Theology of the Body of John Paul II", *Faith and Reason* 12, no. 1 (1986): 7-25.

## Chapter One: Pastoral and Academic Background

*Love and Responsibility* is the work of a spiritual advisor. If it seems to be that of a philosopher—since “[t]he book is, by and large, of a philosophical character”<sup>74</sup>—this is because a spiritual advisor’s “task is not only to command or forbid but to justify, to interpret, to explain”<sup>75</sup>, and philosophy is the tool by which the latter ends must be sought. Of this twofold task, it is the second part with which this work is principally concerned. As important as commanding or forbidding are, they do not particularly interest Wojtyła here. His intended reader is the Catholic who already knows the Church’s teachings on sexual morality and holds them to be true.<sup>76</sup> Drawing up a set of rules for Catholics is fairly easy<sup>77</sup>; it is explaining them in a way graspable by natural reason that requires the real effort from the spiritual advisor. This is what this work was written for. Its successes and failures, as well as its innovativeness and originality, will lie not so much in the conclusions, but rather in the arguments which are given to support them. These arguments, which are meant to justify, interpret and explain Catholic doctrine, are the result of philosophical reflection on experience. For Wojtyła, a celibate priest, this experience is not of the direct personal sort. His experience, he says, “is certainly less immediate” than that of the person living a conjugal life, but it is “at the same time very much wider” since in the diversity of his pastoral work he has encountered

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<sup>74</sup> *Love and Responsibility* 16-17

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* 16

<sup>76</sup> That Wojtyła addresses a reader whom he clearly assumes to be a faithful Catholic does not change the fact that this is a work of philosophy, not theology. While his conclusions were obviously first suggested by revelation, the arguments he proposes for these conclusions are understood by him to be based in principles perceivable by natural reason alone.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

“particular problems so often, and in such a variety of circumstances and situations”.<sup>78</sup> *Love and Responsibility* is, we may say, the product of the coming together of experience and a philosophically trained mind, all for the pastoral purpose of putting “the norms of Catholic sexual morality on a firm basis, a basis as definitive as possible, relying on the most elementary and incontrovertible moral truths and the most fundamental values or goods.”<sup>79</sup>

This chapter examines the biographical background relevant to the creation of *Love and Responsibility*. As indicated above, this background is to be largely found in two areas: pastoral experience and philosophic influences. Wojtyła’s understanding of the relationship between love and human sexuality is the specific object of investigation for this thesis, and so we will attempt, as best we can, to discover the source of this understanding within the work’s more general background.

The pastoral experience relevant to *Love and Responsibility* began twelve years before the book’s publication. Wojtyła’s first pastoral assignment came in the latter half of 1948. While he had already been a priest for two years, he had spent these two years working on a dissertation in Rome. After a brief but significant stop in France, he returned to Poland and was assigned by Cardinal Adam Stefan Sapieha, the Archbishop of Krakow, to Niegowic, a village fifteen kilometers east of the city. Holding himself to a promise made in Ars, France, he sought to make himself a “prisoner of the confessional”, just as the famous Curé of Ars, Jean Vianney, had.<sup>80</sup> It may be assumed

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<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.* 15

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.* 16

<sup>80</sup> George Weigel, *Witness to Hope: the Biography of Pope John Paul II* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005) 91-92.

that much of Wojtyła's second-hand experience of the problems of sexual morality occurred during his time in the confessional.

In addition to Niegowic's being the beginning of his career as a confessor, it was also here that he "took his first steps in ministry to engaged couples and newlyweds."<sup>81</sup> This ministry would be greatly expanded in his next pastoral assignment. In 1950, Cardinal Sapieha, seeking to secure the Church's future in the face of communist pressure, decided to expand the ministry to the students at the Jagiellonian University.<sup>82</sup> Wojtyła was numbered among the priests who would be used for this end. He was assigned to St. Florian's, a parish near the university, and he became a student chaplain. In that same year he began Krakow's first ever marriage-preparation program.<sup>83</sup> At the time such a program was a rarity. Wojtyła intended it to be a systematic preparation for young couples for Christian marriage and family life. This end was sought through "religious reflection, theological education, and a frank exploration of the practical and personal difficulties and opportunities of married life and child-rearing."<sup>84</sup> The next year he expanded the program, inviting doctors, nurses and lay associates to help him. While he remained at St. Florian's for a total of only 28 months, he managed to bless 160 marriages, an average of more than one a week.<sup>85</sup>

It was also during his short stay at St. Florian's that *Srodowisko* began to be formed. *Srodowisko* was the term that Wojtyła later used to refer to the "environment" or "milieu" (two literal renderings of the word *Srodowisko*) which was created by the "fusing together of several networks of young adults and young married couples" with

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<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.* 93

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.* 94

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* 97

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.* 98

whom he worked.<sup>86</sup> The crucial influence that this network of friendships had on Wojtyła's ideas and ministry is, according to George Weigel, "indisputable."<sup>87</sup> Wojtyła "thought of his chaplaincy as a ministry of accompaniment"<sup>88</sup> and this accompaniment often took the form of trips, usually for skiing, hiking or canoeing.<sup>89</sup> These trips were occasions for extended spiritual direction, and for almost all of his young friends the most important transition in life was marriage. It was from *Srodowisko* that Wojtyła's 'second-hand' experience of marriage was most significantly derived. As a spiritual advisor wrestling with the "need to validate [the] rules"<sup>90</sup>, the majority of his extended encounters with young couples occurred here, both in and out of the confessional. The 'second-hand' experience of marriage which he gained produced in 1960, not only *Love and Responsibility*, but also *The Jeweler's Shop*, a play published in the journal *Znak* and subtitled *A Meditation on the Sacrament of Marriage, Passing on Occasion into a Drama*. Several members of *Srodowisko* recognized themselves in it, both in terms of personality traits and events that had happened to them.<sup>91</sup>

The academic training relevant to the creation of *Love and Responsibility* had begun a little earlier than did the pastoral experience. In 1942 Wojtyła entered Krakow's underground seminary. At the time he had already spent several years at the Jagiellonian University since the fall of 1938, but had been primarily a student of literature and drama.<sup>92</sup> His first serious encounter with philosophy occurred only after his entrance into the seminary. He was assigned to read Kazimierz Wais's *Metaphysics*,

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<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.* 100

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.* 102

<sup>90</sup> *Love and Responsibility* 16

<sup>91</sup> Weigel 116-117

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.* 40

a work which was “written in the dry, dense, highly abstract formulas of early twentieth-century neo-scholasticism.”<sup>93</sup> Accustomed to literary reading, he found this a very difficult work. According to Wojtyła, the effort was well repaid: “What intuition and sensibility had until then taught me about the world found solid confirmation.”<sup>94</sup> Weigel interprets this “solid confirmation” as an inoculation “against the infection of radical skepticism”.<sup>95</sup> In addition to this introduction to the realist philosophy of the Thomistic tradition, one may suspect that it was during his seminary years that he was first given a detailed exposition of the Church’s doctrinal teachings on marriage and sexuality.

Cardinal Sapienza accelerated the process of ordination so that his seminarian would be able to begin his doctoral studies at Rome’s Pontifical Athenaeum of St. Thomas Aquinas, the “Angelicum”.<sup>96</sup> Wojtyła was ordained on the first of November, 1946, and left for Rome two weeks later. There, under the direction of Father Garrigou-Lagrange, he worked on his doctoral thesis which was entitled *The Doctrine of Faith According to St. John of the Cross*. Father Wojtyła’s time in Rome was relevant to the creation of *Love and Responsibility* in two ways. The first concerns the Angelicum in general and Father Garrigou-Lagrange in particular. While at the time there were many Catholic intellectual circles interested in placing Thomas’ thought in dialogue with certain modern philosophies, such an interest was not to be found at the Angelicum. It had become the stronghold of the traditional neo-scholasticism of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.* 70

<sup>94</sup> Frossard and John Paul II, “*Be Not Afraid!*” 17, as quoted by Weigel 70

<sup>95</sup> Weigel 70

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.* 79

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.* 84 While it may sound awkward to speak of “traditional neo-scholasticism”, the qualifier “traditional” is meant to distinguish the neo-scholasticism of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which was carried over and maintained by the Angelicum, from the “neo-scholasticism” of certain individuals who were open to incorporating certain elements of modern philosophy into the general framework of Aquinas’s philosophy. For the purposes of this paper the term *Neo-Scholasticism* is interchangeable with *Neo-*

The “undisputed master of traditional neo-scholasticism” and the “leading figure on the Angelicum faculty” was Garrigou-Lagrange.<sup>98</sup> He would soon become fiercely engaged in a theological controversy over some of the exploratory currents of contemporary theology.<sup>99</sup> With Garrigou-Lagrange as his director and the Angelicum as his intellectual milieu, Wojtyła was well educated in traditional Thomism. This does not mean, however, that the Thomism at work in his later thought was to be of this type. By the time he came to write *Love and Responsibility*, his Thomism had been substantially shaped by a sustained encounter with the thought of Immanuel Kant and Max Scheler. The value of the Angelicum’s traditional education was, as Angelicum graduate Archbishop Jorge Mejía suggests, that it grounded one in the tradition and made one more careful when exploring creative approaches to Thomism.<sup>100</sup> Because of the Angelicum, Wojtyła knew the tradition in which he was to make innovations.

The second way concerns the doctoral thesis itself. Despite Garrigou-Lagrange’s disagreement, Wojtyła chose to completely avoid the phrase, “divine object” when speaking of knowing God. This was to emphasize the fact that God could not be known in the way that an object is known, but only in the way that a person is known, through mutual self-giving.<sup>101</sup> Presumably the concept of mutual self-giving, which is so essential to *Love and Responsibility*, developed significantly during the time that Wojtyła worked on his thesis. According to Buttiglione, this aspect of the thesis is

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*Thomism and Thomism.* From a certain historical perspective there are differences between Scholasticism and Thomism and between Scholasticism/Thomism and Neo-Scholasticism/Neo-Thomism, but generally for those writing about 20<sup>th</sup> century philosophy terms are used interchangeably.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.* 85

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> George Weigel’s interview with Archbishop Jorge Mejía, November 13, 1996. *Witness to Hope* 894, note 168.

<sup>101</sup> Buttiglione 51-53, and Weigel 85-86.

also to be connected with the development of the personalistic norm.<sup>102</sup> A person is “nonobjectivizable” both for the intellect and for the actions of another. A person must always be treated as a person, never as an object.<sup>103</sup>

Upon the completion of his doctoral dissertation, Wojtyła returned home to Poland, probably with little expectation or desire for an academic career. The next few years were spent doing pastoral work, but when Sapieha died and was succeeded by Egeniusz Baziak in 1951, Wojtyła was urged by the new archbishop to return to academic life and work on a second doctoral degree by writing a habilitation thesis, the requirement for teaching at the university level. Wojtyła disagreed with the idea, but Baziak insisted.<sup>104</sup> Father Rózycki, a former mentor, suggested that he look at the work of Max Scheler.<sup>105</sup> Wojtyła agreed and took up the question of whether Scheler’s phenomenology of ethics was a suitable basis on which to found a true Christian ethics. Ultimately, the answer was that it was not.

Scheler’s system was primarily concerned with values. Values belong to the objective world, but the person is the only subject in which they are experienced. Values also exist in a hierarchy. Morality is essentially an emotional experience that follows upon the pursuit and obtainment of values. Experience of moral goodness or moral badness depends on the place which the value occupies in the hierarchy. In this pursuit reason plays a subordinate role. It is not the judge of something’s value; that

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<sup>102</sup> Buttiglione 53

<sup>103</sup> Wojtyła, admittedly, uses the word *object* in two different ways. *Object* may be used to refer to anything which is not a personal being. *Object* and *person* are here opposite terms. This is the sense of the word *object* in accordance with which a person can never be treated as an object. But at other times a person is said to be an object. In such cases the term *object* is paired up as the opposite of the term *subject*. A person is a subject, but all subjects are also objects. To be an object in this sense is to exist in an objective way, to be part of a world composed of many entities which may interact with each other.

<sup>104</sup> Weigel 124-125

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

cognitive task is performed by emotion. Reason serves only to discover the means by which the value might be obtained.

Wojtyła frequently described Scheler's philosophy of ethics as being "emotionalist" and rejected it for two reasons. First, he disagreed with the subordinate role that Scheler assigned to reason. Reason, Wojtyła believed, is capable of determining not only the means, but also the end of one's action. Second, he thought that Scheler, for all his usual phenomenological astuteness, had overlooked the phenomenological fact that in the use of the will, the will is experienced as the efficient cause of action. By focusing so strongly on emotions as a motivation on the will, Scheler made the will appear as something purely passive.<sup>106</sup>

But Wojtyła's encounter with Scheler was not a completely negative one. In the creation of *Love and Responsibility* Wojtyła was crucially influenced by Scheler in two ways. First, there was the central role given to the concept of value. *Love and Responsibility* presents the problems of sexual morality as questions about the proper response to "the value of the person", about how one is to integrate one's reactions to "the value of the body and sex", and "the value of masculinity/femininity", into the more fundamental "value of the person". Emotion plays an important role in this. It does not perceive value but rather reacts to it and makes a person's subjective experience of a value more vivid. To some extent it is intuitive. The vividness of a reaction does not completely depend on the clarity of cognition; in many cases emotion becomes a motivation for further cognitive examination. But emotion, being essentially

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<sup>106</sup> This summary of Wojtyła's understanding of Scheler's ethics and his rejection of them is gathered from the essays which may be found in *Person and Community*, particularly those contained in "Part One: Ethical and Moral Considerations". *Person and Community* is a collection of journal articles which Wojtyła wrote during the 1950s and 1960s.

a reaction to perceived value, is also liable to deception as to the actual nature of the thing to which it is reacting. Only reason may perceive the truth about an object and be the judge of its value. Emotion must be made to accord with reason's judgment. Such a proper response to value is a certain perfection of human nature. More important for morality, however, is the response given to value in terms of one's actions, since actions, unlike emotions, are under the direct control of the will.<sup>107</sup>

Second, there was the "phenomenological method". This phrase, which refers to the method of investigation employed by phenomenology, became especially fitting for Wojtyła. For him phenomenology was a method, not an end; he was not a phenomenologist in the way that Scheler or Edmund Husserl were, but his understanding did share some things in common with theirs. Phenomenology was the study of the experiential, of anything which may be experienced. It was concerned with experience as a whole and did not discriminate between the sensory and the non-sensory as did empiricism.<sup>108</sup> Its aim was to describe, as well as possible, the experience of a given object. This much Wojtyła had in common with Scheler and his teacher Husserl. But unlike them, he always understood phenomenology as the preparation for metaphysics. While phenomenology was concerned with experiential phenomena, metaphysics was concerned with reality itself, experiential or not. The human soul, for example, would be an object of metaphysics, but not of phenomenology since it is not the object of direct experience. We may have experiential knowledge of those things which are referred to by the words "will" and "intellect", but of the human soul, which

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<sup>107</sup> *Love and Responsibility's* treatment of emotions is scattered throughout the work, though a more concentrated treatment of them can be found pages 74 and 80 ("Love as Attraction").

<sup>108</sup> Karol Wojtyła, "The Separation of Experience from the Act in Ethics" in *Person and Community: Selected Essays*, trans. by Theresa Sandok (New York: Peter Lang, 1993) 32-33.

according Thomism underlies them, no such knowledge is possible. The aim of metaphysics is to describe reality as it is in itself, not as it is experienced. But the way that metaphysical knowledge is gained is through a process of abstraction from experience; it is, we may say, through our experiential knowledge of the will and intellect, that we arrive at the concept of the human soul which we conclude must underlie them. Phenomenology, the study of the experiential, is thus the road that leads to metaphysics. This is how Wojtyła came to understand the role of phenomenology in philosophy.

*Love and Responsibility* was the first work in which Wojtyła employed it as a method.<sup>109</sup> It was not to be the last. *The Acting Person*, which was published almost a decade later, is considered to be the climax of his philosophic career and the work in which the phenomenological method and its relation to Thomistic metaphysics is most prominent. While much may be justly made of the method's use in *The Acting Person*, for *Love and Responsibility*, there is, I believe, a danger of presenting the method's use as the most important aspect of the work. The work's primary value then appears to lie in its role as a stepping stone on the way to *The Acting Person*. It is, however, extremely doubtful that Wojtyła's primary motivation for writing *Love and Responsibility* was to test out the method. Some writers have given this impression, or at least have not guarded sufficiently against it. But in the light of Wojtyła's consistent pastoral attention to marriage and sexuality, it is unthinkable that for him the subject matter was of secondary importance to the method. As the introduction to the work makes clear, the aim of the author is pastoral and he is writing in his function as a spiritual director. It is worth pointing out that the phenomenological method accords

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<sup>109</sup> Buttiglione 83

wonderfully well with the author's indicated aim and function. He desires to enable his reader to "validate"<sup>110</sup> for his or herself the truth of the Church's teaching on sexuality. The phenomenological method, which is the conscious reflection on experience, is particularly suited for this task, since for it allows the reader to judge from his or her own experience the validity or invalidity of the author's arguments.

The Scheler study also brought Wojtyła into serious contact with the thought of Immanuel Kant. The significance of Kant's ethical writings for the history of ethics was immense.<sup>111</sup> In the later decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a widespread reaction against his thought rose up in philosophy, a reaction which could be especially located in the schools of Neo-Thomism, Marxism and Phenomenology.<sup>112</sup> Scheler himself had developed his ethics in conscious and vigorous opposition to Kant.<sup>113</sup> This opposition was, we may assume, what brought Wojtyła into contact with Kant; he needed to understand him in order to understand Scheler. While Scheler was inevitably more important for the dissertation itself, Kant was roughly of equal importance for the development of Wojtyła's thought as a whole. The more Wojtyła studied the two philosophers, the more they came to exist as a pair in his mind. In the series of essays Wojtyła published in the years leading up to *Love and Responsibility*, Kant and Scheler frequently appear side by side and are understood as extreme opposites which nevertheless share a common error, the failure to treat the will as the efficient cause of

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<sup>110</sup> *Love and Responsibility* 16

<sup>111</sup> This was at least the way that Wojtyła saw it. See Karol Wojtyła, "The Separation of Experience from the Act in Ethics" in *Person and Community: Selected Essays* trans. by Theresas Sandok (New York: Peter Lang, 1993) 32.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

an action.<sup>114</sup> When the time came to write the work, Kant's thought was to be a fundamental influence.

Wojtyła found Kant's philosophy of ethics to be, like that of Scheler, ultimately unsatisfactory, but not without value. In *Curriculum Philosophicum*, John Paul II relates that the time he spent struggling with Kant's second categorical imperative ("act always in such a way that the other person is the end and not merely the instrument of your action"<sup>115</sup>) was "particularly important" for his later ethical thought.<sup>116</sup> Of all his works, *Love and Responsibility* is probably the most indebted to this aspect of Kant's thought, and in the next chapter the imperative's relation to Wojtyła's "personalistic norm" will be examined in more detail. Also associated with the struggle with the second categorical imperative are two other positive influences which Kant exerted on Wojtyła. First, Wojtyła followed Kant in relentlessly opposing utilitarianism in ethics. While Wojtyła almost certainly would have been an opponent of it even had he not studied Kant, Kant influenced the way he attacked it.<sup>117</sup> Second, while not necessarily adopting Kant's conclusions, Wojtyła followed him in making his approach to ethics "normative", an approach which was intent on "explaining and justifying morality on the basis of values and norms" rather than on "explaining it on the basis of the ultimate

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<sup>114</sup> See *Person and Community* especially those articles in "Part One: Ethical and Moral Considerations"

<sup>115</sup> This is the form of the second categorical imperative which Wojtyła attributes to Kant. *Love and Responsibility* 27-28.

<sup>116</sup> *Curriculum Philosophicum* 3. Weigel quotes from this work on page 128 of *Witness to Hope*. I was unable to locate the text itself.

<sup>117</sup> Buttiglione says that Wojtyła's "criticisms of utilitarianism are entirely drawn from the parallel Kantian critique." While I certainly am willing to believe Buttiglione that Kant's critique influenced Wojtyła, I am hesitant to believe that the criticisms are entirely drawn from it. Wojtyła's primary criticism of marital utilitarianism is that pleasure is not an objective good and so cannot serve as a basis for the unification of persons which is love; this does not seem like a typically Kantian form of thought.

end”.<sup>118</sup> If in following Kant on this point Wojtyła saw himself as departing in some way from Aquinas<sup>119</sup>, this could only be in terms of emphasis and perspective; Wojtyła always remained fundamentally in accord with Aquinas. Nevertheless, I believe that Wojtyła’s adoption of a normative emphasis was probably one of the factors that led his treatment of sexuality to be so different from Aquinas’.<sup>120</sup>

Bearing in mind the influence of Scheler’s emphasis on values and subjective experience and Kant’s second categorical imperative and normative approach to ethics, we may better discern Thomas Aquinas’ effect on *Love and Responsibility*. When Wojtyła returned to academic life and began his study of Scheler, he “came to see that the philosophical analysis of reality and its relationship to the moral life he had been taught at the seminary and the Angelicum was inadequate in the contemporary world.”<sup>121</sup> But this did not mean that he abandoned Thomism. Each of his meetings with modern philosophy was followed by a return to Thomas and, according to Buttiglione, “[this] return, upon which he meditated critically, was the means by which Wojtyła created an original philosophical construction.”<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Wojtyła, “Ethics and Moral Theology” in *Person and Community* 103. I call Wojtyła’s approach to ethics “normative” only in the sense of “explaining and justifying morality on the basis of values and norms”. I do not have in mind any other meaning which the term might have acquired in the history of philosophy.

<sup>119</sup> In his article “Ethics and Moral Theology” Wojtyła says that the “admiration we have for this “summa,” [here meaning the writing of Thomas Aquinas] however, does not have to mean—and even should not mean—that we regard it as a work complete and perfect in every respect” and then goes on to list we he judges to be positive developments in philosophy since Aquinas; one of these is the “normative” approach to ethics.

<sup>120</sup> Aquinas’ treatment of chastity, virginity and lust in the *Summa Theologiae* is to be found the Second Part of the Second Part, Question 151-154. Treatment of marriage occurs in the Supplement, Questions 41-68, which was compiled from existing material after Aquinas death, probably by Brother Rainaldo da Piperno. Treatment of sexual matters can also be found in *Summa Contra Gentiles* Book III, 122-126. I suspect that Wojtyła’s adoption of a “normative” emphasis helped him move his treatment of sexual intercourse away from being one in which intercourse is viewed primarily as a means to further ends.

<sup>121</sup> Weigel 126

<sup>122</sup> Buttiglione 44

A brief examination of the key terms employed by *Love and Responsibility* reveals the prevalence of Thomistic thought. The terms *person, body, soul, spirit, object, subject, will, intellect, virtue, and love* are all used in accord with the way Thomas uses them.<sup>123</sup> Wojtyła, however, does not, except on one minor occasion with the term *continence*, call upon Thomism to give content to these words. Rather, he expects his reader to attribute to these terms the content derivable from the experience of those realities to which these words refer, given the reader's long general familiarity with those words. From this basis he then builds their content further through reflection on experience. No initial assent is required on the metaphysical level, and yet the concepts move towards metaphysics and are never at variance with the form they take in Thomistic thought. This approach is, I believe, the "phenomenological method".

The encounter with Scheler and Kant, and the re-encounter with Aquinas began with the habilitation thesis but were sustained through the years which followed and led up to the publication of *Love and Responsibility*. Wojtyła received his degree from the Jagiellonian University in 1954, but before he was able to join the Faculty of Theology, the university was closed down by the communist government.<sup>124</sup> He was soon hired by the Faculty of Philosophy at the Catholic University of Lublin. There he joined several other philosophers who had a common vision about the mission of philosophy in Poland. Together they embarked on a project that was to be of historical significance. Its influence on *Love and Responsibility*, however, seems to be limited. More important for the work's creation were the classes which Wojtyła taught as the occupant of the

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<sup>123</sup> I believe it is better to label these terms Thomistic rather than Scholastic. While Thomas is to be numbered among the Scholastics and did employ the above mentioned terms in generally the same ways as they did, Wojtyła gives no indication that he has studied any other scholastic to a degree comparable to that to which he has studied Thomas.

<sup>124</sup> Weigel 130

Chair of Ethics. The 1954-55 upper-year lecture series was entitled “Act and Moral Experience” and was an encounter in which the philosophies of Scheler, Kant and Aquinas/Aristotle met and contended.<sup>125</sup> The next year’s was entitled “Goodness and Value” and considered the above mentioned philosophers with the addition of Plato and Augustine. “Norm and Happiness” followed in the 1956-57 academic year and involved a confrontation with the ethics of Jeremy Bentham and David Hume. “Love and Responsibility” was the title for the lecture series of 1957-58 and was continued for a second year.<sup>126</sup>

Throughout his years as the Chairman for Ethics, Wojtyła also published numerous journal articles. Many of these reflected his ongoing encounter with Scheler, Kant and Aquinas as well his continued interest in sexual ethics. In 1957 Wojtyła went on a vacation with students of medicine, philosophy and psychology. Together they discussed a draft of his book which was to bear the same name as that year’s lecture series.<sup>127</sup> In 1960, *Love and Responsibility* was finally published. The author’s academic life progressively slowed down afterwards as his administrative responsibilities as Bishop of Krakow and later as Archbishop grew. He did, however, continue to hold his position at the university during this time. He retired from the Faculty of Philosophy only in 1978 when he was elected pope.

In summary, *Love and Responsibility* is best understood as the product of Wojtyła’s pastoral experience and his philosophic training. His pastoral experience was derived from three main sources, which frequently overlapped: the confessional, marriage preparation programs, and the interpersonal network of *Srodowisko*. His

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<sup>125</sup> Weigel 137

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.* 122

<sup>127</sup> Weigel 139

philosophic training began in the seminary, but was quickened during the Scheler study. By the time he came to write *Love and Responsibility* his philosophic approach was one in which the ethics was “normative”, metaphysics was Thomistic, and the method was phenomenological.

Our examination of biographical influences has followed the indications given by the Wojtyła in his introduction. There may, and probably are, other influences. It would be unlikely that someone such as Dietrich von Hildebrand, who was a devout Catholic, a phenomenologist, a personal friend of Max Scheler, a critic of Scheler’s philosophy, and one of the most significant 20<sup>th</sup> century contributors to the Church’s theological and philosophical understanding of marriage and sexuality, had no influence on Wojtyła. Another possible influence is Augustine. Wojtyła makes much of the concepts of use and enjoyment<sup>128</sup>, and for anyone acquainted with Augustine, this immediately calls to mind Augustine’s treatment of *uti* [to use] and *frui* [to enjoy]. At one point Wojtyła mentions Augustine as the originator of these two opposed attitudes of use and enjoyment. But the strange thing is that Augustine, who notoriously gave the appearance of claiming that we should use others, is presented as if his thought were in accord with Wojtyła’s, where there is uncompromising condemnation of using persons. But Augustine’s position is in fact more subtle than it is usually presented as being.<sup>129</sup> The conclusion would seem to be that Wojtyła either read Augustine very little, and so had no knowledge of the claim that persons are to be used, or read him in depth, and so had a different interpretation than that which is commonly given.

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<sup>128</sup> H. T. Willetts’ English translation seems to be somewhat misleading at this point. The Polish word “uzjwac” can be translated, according to Buttiglione (*Karol Wojtyła: The Thought of the Man Who Became John Paul II* 83ff), as both “to use” and “to enjoy”. While present to some degree, the pairing of use and enjoyment is not as pronounced in the original text as it is in the English.

<sup>129</sup> Especially see Augustine’s *De Doctrina Christiana* 1:36-37.

## Chapter Two: Love and the Personalistic Norm

When it was said earlier that Wojtyła chose to take a “normative” approach to ethics, this meant that instead of making morality a question of how actions relate as means to an ultimate end, he made it a question of how they conform with moral principles. The principle with which *Love and Responsibility* particularly concerns itself is the “personalistic norm”. The fullest form given to it by Wojtyła is as follows:

whenever a person is the object of your activity, remember that you may not treat that person as only the means to an end, as an instrument, but must allow for the fact that he or she, too, has, or at least should have, distinct personal ends.<sup>130</sup>

This form occurs only once; usually the norm is expressed as “persons are not to be used” or some variant of this. The role that the norm plays in *Love and Responsibility* is hard to miss. It is without a doubt the centerpiece of the work’s treatment of sexual morality.

Wojtyła dedicates the very first section of the book to a presentation of it. This presentation begins with an outline of personal nature. There is, observes Wojtyła, a felt resistance to the idea that another human being can be understood simply as an individual member of the human species. This resistance, which is not experienced when one considers an object of another sort (eg. a dog, rock or car), is

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<sup>130</sup> *Love and Responsibility* 28

rooted in the recognition that there is “a particular richness and perfection”<sup>131</sup> in the way that a human being exists. The term *person* was coined to signify this.<sup>132</sup>

The source of the person’s existential richness and perfection seems to be twofold. First, there is the human ability commonly referred to as reason. Although animals possess varying degrees of cognitive abilities, in none of them does cognition take on the “spiritual” character which it does in human beings. Human cognition is, presumably<sup>133</sup>, “spiritual” because it is orientated towards something non-material, truth. This in no way means that the human person is disconnected from the world. Rather, a person is involved in the world more intimately than anything else is. Because of cognition’s orientation towards truth, a human person is able to relate not only to the “outer” appearance of an object, but also the “inner” truth, or essence, of that object.<sup>134</sup>

Second, with respect to the twofold source, is that ability which we refer to as free will. Human desire, like human cognition, may be observed as something “spiritual” since it is particularly related to the concept of goodness. That we are able to act from free choice, as opposed to instinct, is, Wojtyła believes, verifiable from experience. Another important experience is that one person cannot will for another, a person can only will for him or herself. This experiential fact is the reason why traditional Christian philosophy assigned to the person the characteristic of being *alteri incommunicabilis*, incapable of being transferred to another. From these two experiential facts, that a person may act from free choice and that willing is an action

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<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.* 22

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>133</sup> It is possible that Wojtyła has more in mind when he uses the term *spiritual*, but because he does not bring in the metaphysical division between material body and spiritual soul and because his line of argument does not seem to require this, it is better to interpret his statement in the least demanding way and not ascribe to him a heavy metaphysical claim, such as the existence of spiritual substances, which he very well may not be making.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.* 22-23

which no-one else can do for a person, it follows that a person is self-determinative, though not in an absolute sense, and that a person is self-possessive, *sui juris* as traditional Christian philosophy has it. Not only *can* a person govern him or herself, provided normal development has taken place, but he or she *must* govern him or herself, since no one else is genuinely able to do this.<sup>135</sup>

Such is *Love and Responsibility's* outline of personal nature. Wojtyła immediately follows it with an analysis of the verb 'to use'. This analysis is extremely short. First, a definition is given: "*To use means to employ some object of action as a means to an end*".<sup>136</sup> Then it is pointed out that when an object is employed as a means, it is subordinated to the end and also "*to some extent to the agent*", since the agent chooses the end.<sup>137</sup> Human beings make use of a variety of objects in order to achieve a chosen end. Sometimes the object may be a material entity, like rock or metal, or perhaps a tool crafted from such material, like a hammer, or even an animal, like a cow which one can milk. In the case of the first two types (material entities and tools), Wojtyła sees no moral problem in their being objects of use. In fact, use is the attitude which a human being *should* have towards them.<sup>138</sup> In the case of animals, use is also held to be the proper attitude, although Wojtyła notes that "since they are beings

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<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.* 24

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.* 25 The emphasis is taken from the Willetts' English translation. I assume, but do not know for certain, that it is present in Wojtyła's original Polish. Unless otherwise indicated, the same is to be understood in all other cases of emphasis in texts quoted from *Love and Responsibility*.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.* 25. Although Wojtyła does not explicitly say so, I assume that he has the understanding that use of a material object does not degrade that object, but rather is a great honor to it since, although by nature it is devoid of the perfection of rationality, by being used by a human being it is able to participate in a rational action.

endowed with feeling and sensitive to pain, man is required to ensure that the use of these creatures is never attended by suffering or physical torture.”<sup>139</sup>

A human being can also make another human being an object of use. However, unlike the previously mentioned objects, a human being is a person and a person by nature is able to determine his or her own aims and choose the appropriate means to achieve them. When a person is used, the capacity and responsibility for self-determination is denied. “Anyone,” declares Wojtyła, “who treats a person as the means to an end does violence to the very essence of the other, to what constitutes its natural right.”<sup>140</sup> The truth of this statement—this statement being one variant of the personalistic norm—is believed by Wojtyła to be self-evident to the mind once it has understood the basic terms involved and he expects his reader hold the truth of this statement as a given. Nevertheless, he also wants, and needs, his reader to gain a deeper understanding of it, for as we shall see later, a deepened, expanded understanding of the norm is necessary for the success of the work as a whole. This is why, rather than simply stating the norm immediately, he first examines personal nature and the form of action referred to as “using”. The purpose of “Analysis of the Verb ‘To Use’” is not to convince the reader but to make sense of the reader’s conviction and deepen his or her understanding of it.

After the examinations of personal nature and of use described above, Wojtyła develops his understanding of the personalistic norm in two crucial ways. The first concerns the discernment of what the opposite of use might be. When the question “Is it permissible to regard a person as a means to an end and to use a person in that

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<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.* 27

capacity?”<sup>141</sup> is first asked, Wojtyła draws attention to three problematic relationships: employer and worker, military officer and army ranker, and parent and child.<sup>142</sup> It would seem that in each case the former directs the latter to ends which the former has chosen and perhaps alone knows. Use, of the sort with which the personalistic norm is concerned, may undoubtedly occur in each case, but Wojtyła does not believe it is inevitable. In the officer-ranker relationship the use which the officer makes of the ranker ceases to be a dehumanizing and immoral use when both parties make the defense of the country the conscious end of their actions. By doing so, both subordinate themselves to that end and a fundamental equality begins to exist between them. The subordination that would otherwise have been an instance of use in Wojtyła’s (bad) sense is now not; it is something willed by two ultimately equally parties as a means to the end which they both desire. A common aim, or common good, also seems to provide the answer in the case of the employer-worker relationship, although Wojtyła is not as clear here as he is with the previous relationship. He says only that if “the employer and employee so arrange their association that the common good which both serve becomes clearly visible, then the danger of treating a person as someone less than he really is will be reduced almost to nothing.”<sup>143</sup> One may assume that he considers the problem of just organization of labour to be one with many practical complexities and therefore the best that can be done here is to point out one of the essential elements of a solution to the problem.

When one person uses another, he or she relates to that other in a way that rejects the other’s ability for self-determination. The presence of a common good, a good

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<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.* 26

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.* 29

chosen and accepted by both, excludes such an attitude. It also does something else; it creates a “special bond” which “unites the persons involved internally”.<sup>144</sup> Here we should recall something which Wojtyła said earlier: “*Inner life means spiritual life. It revolves around truth and goodness.*”<sup>145</sup> Persons are united “internally” because they see themselves as sharing the same attitude towards the truth and goodness of whatever their common good is. It is this effect which, Wojtyła claims, allows one “to catch a preliminary glimpse of... the only clear alternative to using a person as a means to an end”.<sup>146</sup> This alternative is none other than love, for love, as Wojtyła reveals later in the section, is the unification of persons.<sup>147</sup> Since love is the opposite of use, the personalistic norm is able to be given a positive form such as “A person is an entity of a sort to which the only proper and adequate way to relate is love.”<sup>148</sup>

The other way in which this opening section attempts to expand the reader’s understanding of the personalistic norm concerns “the second meaning of the verb ‘to use’”. Wojtyła points out that “[o]ur thinking and our acts of will... are accompanied by various emotional overtones or states”<sup>149</sup> and that “the emotional-affective overtones or states which are so important a part of man’s entire inner life have as a rule either a positive or a negative charge”.<sup>150</sup> The terms *pleasure* and *pain* are used to refer to these charges respectively. In Polish the word *uzjwac* can mean not only “to use” but also “to experience pleasure”.<sup>151</sup> Because of “the particular richness, variety, and intensity of those emotional-affective experiences and states which occur when the object of activity

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<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.* 28

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.* 22

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.* 28

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.* 38

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.* 41

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.* 31

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.* 32

<sup>151</sup> Buttiglione 83ff

is a person of the opposite sex”, Wojtyła sees this association between using and experiencing pleasure as especially enlightening for sexual morality. For human persons there exists the possibility, due to the power of reason, of isolating pleasure and making it the distinct end of one’s activity.<sup>152</sup> “If actions involving a person of the opposite sex,” says Wojtyła, “are shaped exclusively or primarily with this in view, then that person will become only the means to an end—and ‘use in its second meaning (=enjoy) represents, as we see, a particular variant of ‘use’ in its first meaning.”<sup>153</sup>

One uses another whenever one disregards the other’s self-determining ability and employs the other as means to an end which one has oneself alone appointed. Pleasure is able to be designated as an end and so there obviously exists the possibility of using a person for pleasure. But this is not what Wojtyła has in mind when he connects the pursuit of pleasure with using; it is simply taken for granted. The association he draws here between the two meanings of *uzjwac* has to do rather with the nature of pleasure itself. “Pleasure,” he says, “is, of its nature, a good for the moment and only for a particular subject, it is not a super-subjective or trans-subjective good.”<sup>154</sup> The solution to the problem of use proposed earlier was the adoption of a common aim, or common good, but here such a solution is not possible because pleasure, being a subjective experience, cannot be a common good, one which is sharable because it is objective. In the case of a couple who make “mutual pleasure” their goal, the “special bond” which is the beginning of love is not brought about. Mutual pleasure fails to unite the two persons “internally” because it is not actually one good, but the artificial

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<sup>152</sup> *Love and Responsibility* 33

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.* 37

combination of two separate subjective goods. Since love and use are mutual opposites, such a relationship must be one of “mutual use”.

This line of thought forms the basis for Wojtyła’s criticism of utilitarianism. Since pleasure is a “purely subjective good”<sup>155</sup>, the utilitarian imperative to seek the maximum amount of pleasure for the maximum amount of people can have no other motivational force on a person beyond being a generally efficient way to obtain the most amount of pleasure for oneself provided others practice it as well. Because of the nature of the good which motivates a person’s activity in such a case egoism is unavoidable and love can never be anything more than “the harmonization of egoisms”.<sup>156</sup>

It is in the context of this criticism of utilitarianism that the previously mentioned statement, “*Love is the unification of persons*”<sup>157</sup>, is made. *This is the most important statement about love in the entire work.* The unification of persons is not an aspect of love, it is the essence of it and all that is said about love throughout the whole of *Love and Responsibility* should be understood with this in mind. The reason for identifying this as the essence of love is twofold. First, there is no other statement about love made in the work that would seem to be an expression of love’s essence.<sup>158</sup> Second, by taking this as the essence, it is possible to understand why Wojtyła seemingly has no problem in identifying attraction, desire, goodwill, friendship and betrothed love as all being genuine forms of love, even though some of them—goodwill and love-as-desire especially—are opposites in a certain respect.

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<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.* 38

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.* 38

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.* 38

<sup>158</sup> Compare “*love is the unification of persons*” to other “love is...” statements like “*Love is exclusively the portion of human persons*” (29) and “*love is always a mutual relationship between persons*” (73).

“Analysis of the Verb ‘To Use’” asks what the proper attitude is which one must take towards another person when that person is the object of one’s activity; it answers that love is the proper attitude and use its opposite. The proper/improper relationship ascribed to love and use signifies that the two are opposites in the sense that one is the ontological privation of the other.<sup>159</sup> While *Love and Responsibility* initially seeks to shed light on love through an analysis of its opposite, this approach can only go so far; strictly speaking it is only through knowing love that one can know use. Because of the being/non-being relationship between love and use, a positive definition for use can only ever be a partial one. Use, as it appears in *Love and Responsibility* as the opposite of love, signifies more than the mere employment of another person as an ignorant means to an end which one has appointed. Such a definition is contradicted by the claim that a relationship based on a common pursuit of pleasure is still one of use. It is also contradicted by the brief treatment of the parent-child relationship. “Do not parents,” asks Wojtyła, “who alone know the ends for which they are rearing their children, regard them in a sense as a means to ends of their own, since the children themselves do not understand those ends, nor do they consciously aim at them?”<sup>160</sup> While the possibility and danger of use in this relationship is recognized,<sup>161</sup> no universal condemnation of parenting is given and one must assume the obvious, that Wojtyła believes that parenting is not intrinsically immoral, that while a parent may direct a child

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<sup>159</sup> By *ontological privation* I wish to signify that in the pair concerned in such a case one has being and the other a lack of this being; light and darkness, one and zero, and hot and cold are examples of this type of relation. It is in this sense that Christian philosophy, or at least the tradition which follows Augustine and Aquinas, understands evil as a privation of the good. But there is another way in which privation can be understood. Male and female are opposite and each implies the privation of the other. In such a case “ontological privation” is mutual. This is not the way Wojtyła understand love and use to be opposites; love is not the privation of use in the same sense that use is the privation of love.

<sup>160</sup> *Love and Responsibility* 26

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.* 27

to an end which the child is ignorant of, there is a way this may be a form of love rather than use. A little reflection will reveal that the parent-child relationship differs from the officer-ranker and employer-worker relationships in that the child, as opposed to the ranker and worker, lacks the personal development needed for proper self-determination. When one directs a soldier or worker towards a good end but does so against his or her will, one “does violence to the very essence of the other, to what constitutes [his or her] natural right”,<sup>162</sup> specifically because the other’s ability for self-determination is being denied and rejected. The same cannot be said of the direction of a child since self-determination has yet to be fully developed and one cannot deny or reject what is not yet present. True education, I believe Wojtyła would say, does not deny the truth about the other’s ability for self-determination, but rather, by seeking to foster its development, affirms it.

Use is the opposite of love and love is the unification of persons. Relating to a person in a way in which that other is only a means to one’s own ends is the *necessary consequence* of a failure of genuine unification of persons. Use, the failure of unification, may have a variety of causes. It may be caused by the outright denial of the other as an equal whose own self-determination should be respected. It may be caused by the adoption of an end which by its nature cannot unify the two persons; the subjective good of pleasure is such an end. It may also be caused by the rejection of something belonging to the truth about the other person. Love depends on truth.<sup>163</sup> In its absence there can be no real unification of persons. This is the key to understanding Wojtyła’s judgment that artificial contraception, employed for whatever reason by the

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<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.* 123 “Love in the full sense of the word is a virtue... it is an authentic commitment of the free will of one person (the subject), resulting from the truth about another person (the object).”

married couple, is always wrong while periodic continence is not. In the former case a truth about the other is rejected; in the latter this truth is not present, because of the woman's fertility cycle, and so temporally is not even there to be rejected.<sup>164</sup>

Here ends our investigation into the personalistic norm. The importance given to this principle in *Love and Responsibility* is, as mentioned at the beginning of the present chapter, easily discernible by any reader. The norm is absolutely central, and sexual morality, in as much as it is treated in *Love and Responsibility*, is treated from the stand point of this norm. Since the norm in its positive form is "persons are to be loved", there obviously must be some implication for the question of the relationship between love and sexuality. In light of the nature of the norm and the function which it plays in the work we may say that love is related to sexuality as a moral demand made of the person whenever that person takes as the object of his or her activity a person of the opposite sex.

Three things should be noted about this relation. First, by making sexual morality a question of loving and using another, Wojtyła has done something significant with respect to the tradition he is writing in. While the belief that sexual sins were offenses against the person who was the object of the act has been a common element in the writings of Catholic personalists like Dietrich von Hildebrand, Herbert Doms and Paul Quay,<sup>165</sup> in none of them is this idea worked out to the extent that it is in *Love and Responsibility*. Wojtyła provides a clear philosophic basis for this belief, something which is not provided by others.

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<sup>164</sup> The "truth" is more or less fertility or the potential for procreation of the other, but we cannot go into more detail about this at this time since this would necessity an investigation into the nature of sexual intercourse. This will be done later in the fourth chapter. Wojtyła treatment of contraception and periodic continence can be found in *Love and Responsibility*, pp 224-44.

<sup>165</sup> Noonan 521-523

Second, the norm is indeed the principle which determines the moral value of those forms of sexual activity which the work takes up for consideration, but the range of these forms is limited. Wojtyła applies the norm to lust, fornication, contraception and adultery.<sup>166</sup> In each case the act takes as its object a person of the opposite sex. This can hardly be a coincidence. In an article entitled “The Problem of Catholic Sexual Ethics: Reflections and Postulates” which was published five years after *Love and Responsibility*, Wojtyła claims that the proper object of Catholic sexual ethics “is simply the relation between persons of the opposite sex, with particular attention to the sexual relation.”<sup>167</sup> What this means for question of homosexuality and masturbation is not explicitly stated, but the implication is clear enough: sexual actions which lie outside of the proper object of sexual ethics are immoral by default. In *Love and Responsibility* the boundary lines are seemingly the same and appear to be related to Wojtyła’s understanding of the sexual urge. The urge normally takes as its object a person of the opposite sex; when it is directed toward a person of the same sex, or toward an animal, or even toward sexual attributes considered in the abstract, this is due to an impoverishment, deviation or perversion of the urge.<sup>168</sup> It could be said then that *Love and Responsibility* concerns itself only with what its author judges to be “normal immoral acts” within the sexual sphere and not “abnormal immoral” ones. Regardless of the presence of this normal/abnormal distinction within the sexual sphere, the fact remains that the moral value of acts such as masturbation and bestiality cannot have the

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<sup>166</sup> Wojtyła treats of lust in the section “The Rehabilitation of Chastity” and fornication, contraception and adultery in the section “Marriage”.

<sup>167</sup> Karol Wojtyła, “The Problem of Catholic Sexual Ethics: Reflections and Postulates” in *Person and Community* 282. By “sexual relation” Wojtyła here means those things which have an immediate bearing on or direction towards sexual intercourse.

<sup>168</sup> *Love and Responsibility* 49

personalistic norm as their principle since another person is not the object of the act. If immorality in these cases does have something to do with love, this must be due to some other factor. The effect which the norm has on the relationship between love and sexuality is thus limited; it does not make love the determining principle of all sexual activity, but only of those activities which take another person as their object.

Third, love is a moral demand made of action in the sexual sphere not because of anything specific to sexuality itself, but only because it is the sexuality of the person. For the relationship between love and sexuality, therefore, the primary significance of Wojtyła's use of the personalistic norm is that it draws attention to the intermediary place occupied by "the person". Love, as Wojtyła understands it, is exclusive to persons.<sup>169</sup> Consequently, there exists a great difference between love's relation to animal sexuality and love's relation to *human* sexuality. Whatever the latter relation might be precisely, the most important factor is undoubtedly the intermediary role played by the person; human sexuality bears the relationship it does to love primarily because it is the sexuality of a person.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.* 29

<sup>170</sup> This is to say that sexuality is something which belongs to or is part of the whole which is the human person. Wojtyła's understanding of the body-soul relationship never appears to depart from the basic view of Thomism. At one point in *Love and Responsibility* he says, "A human body is the body of a person because it forms a unity of substance with the human spirit."<sup>170</sup>

### Chapter Three: Love

The intention Wojtyła had in writing *Love and Responsibility* can be described in a variety of ways. Earlier it was said that the work was written for the pastoral purpose of putting “the norms of Catholic sexual morality on a firm basis, a basis as definitive as possible”.<sup>171</sup> This description is accurate but rather broad. A more precise understanding of the intention can be discerned from something which is said in the introduction about the relationship between “the love which is the subject of the greatest commandment” and the love “that takes shape between a man and a woman on the basis of the sexual urge”. In a rare criticism of the tradition of Catholic theological treatment of sexuality, Wojtyła writes:

Manuals of ethics and moral theology tend to deal with these two kinds of love separately: with the first in discussions of the theological virtues, since love is the greatest of these, and with the second primarily within the framework of discussion of the cardinal virtue of continence, since sexual purity is connected with this. The result may be a certain hiatus in our understanding, a feeling that the second kind of love cannot be reduced to the first, or at any rate ignorance of the ways in which this can be realized.<sup>172</sup>

Often a work is written in response to a need which the author feels has not been adequately met by the works of others and often this need is identified in the introduction. Since this is the only criticism of the field of Catholic sexual ethics to be found in the introduction, there is good reason to believe that *Love and Responsibility* was written largely with the view to addressing the problem identified

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<sup>171</sup> *Love and Responsibility* 16

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.* 17

here. Even a cursory reading of the work will vindicate this suspicion. Almost everything that is said is said for the purpose of explaining how one can ensure that a sexual love is genuine love.

This problem which Wojtyła tries to address is a practical and an ethical one. Accordingly so also is the focus of his work; it is practical and ethical, as opposed to speculative and metaphysical. But while the focus is such, all that is said ultimately depends on his speculative/metaphysical understanding of the various realities of which he speaks, most significantly love, the person and sexuality. Sometimes, as in the case of his analysis the nature of the person, his understanding is made explicit; other times one must read between the lines. In this study we are attempting to determine what the relation between love and sexuality is in his thought. This requires us to draw out much of what Wojtyła leaves implicit. The previous chapter examined the personalistic norm, the functional centerpiece of the work. The norm depended on two terms, person and use, and pointed towards a third, love. It was proposed as the principle by which the moral value of sexual actions having another person as its object is to be determined. Thus love was related to the sexual sphere as an ethical demand, a demand which derives not from the nature of sexuality itself, but rather from the personal nature of those involved. But while we have discovered the primary reason why love is related to human sexuality—because humans are persons and “*Love is the exclusive portion of persons*”<sup>173</sup>—there is a felt need to press the question further. Human language seems to suggest there is some special relationship between love and the sexual relationship between a man and a woman.<sup>174</sup> In English, for example, there is gravity attached to the

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<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.* 29

<sup>174</sup> Cf. Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est* 2

phrase “I love you” when used within the context of a sexual relationship which is not present when the same phrase is used between relatives. Does Wojtyła share this sentiment? The emphasis given to marriage in his various pastoral activities, and the fact that he wrote his first book on the topic of love and the sexual relationship, suggest that he does indeed sense that there is something special here. Does he have something more than a sense? Does he have a belief as to why such importance is attached to this form of love? This is what we wish to find out and there is perhaps no better way of going about this than by examining Wojtyła’s understanding of the two forms of love of which he speaks in his introduction.

The place to look is the second chapter, “The Person and Love”. Here, after the “The Person and the Sexual Urge” which really serves as a philosophic preamble, Wojtyła begins to properly address the problem which he described in his introduction as that of “introducing love into love”.<sup>175</sup> The chapter is divided into three sections which respectively address sexual love from the metaphysical, psychological and ethical perspectives. In the first, the “Metaphysical Analysis of Love”, the love which develops between a man and a woman on the basis of the sexual urge is analyzed in terms of its constituent parts: attraction, desire, and goodwill; and in terms of the forms which it can take and encompass: friendship and betrothed love. In the “Psychological Analysis of Love” the focus is on sensuality and sentimentality. Sensual emotional reactions are declared to be those which take as their object the value of “the body as a possible object of enjoyment” and sentimental emotional reactions those which take as their object the value of the masculinity or femininity of the other person. These emotions

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<sup>175</sup> *Love and Responsibility* 17

are judged to be “the raw material of love”.<sup>176</sup> Finally in the “Ethical Analysis of Love” the necessity of love existing as a virtue in the will is propounded. For a completely genuine love to exist between a man and a woman there must be in each an ever ready disposition of the will to assert and respect the personal value of the other.

The message of the third section is echoed clearly and consistently throughout the rest of the work and so there is less of a need to focus in on it. The second section deserves a little attention. Here Wojtyła reveals how he understands sexual yearning and romantic sentiment to be connected to love. Strong sensual and sentimental reactions to another person do not by themselves qualify as love. But while such reactions do pose a certain danger to genuine love, they are not naturally opposed to it; rather they exist as a preparation<sup>177</sup> for and a perfection<sup>178</sup> of real love. When the personal value of the other is uncompromisingly affirmed, sensual and sentimental emotional reactions become an integral part of love. Wojtyła’s analysis of these emotions is fairly detailed and its depth probably owes something to Max Scheler<sup>179</sup>, but as far as we are presently concerned this is all that needs to be pointed out.

The first section is by far the most significant for us. While the focus is clearly on the “love between two persons who differ in respect to sex”<sup>180</sup>, much is simultaneously revealed about Wojtyła’s understanding of love in general. The reason for this is the explicit declaration that “[t]he love between man and woman is one particular form of love, in which elements common to all of its forms are embodied in a

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<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.* 108

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.* 109

<sup>179</sup> At the center of Scheler’s philosophy of ethics was the concept of “value”. While the term may have been a common phenomenological center piece—it certainly is in the case of Dietrich von Hildebrand—Scheler was Wojtyła’s primary phenomenological influence. Wojtyła’s choice to speak of values as the object of emotions is probably due in large part to his influence.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.* 73

specific way.”<sup>181</sup> While the term “love” has a wide range of meanings, Wojtyła does not believe that all uses are equally valid. He believes there is an actually existing reality to which the term properly ought to refer. In the “Metaphysical Analysis of Love” he is not concerned with examining the various meanings of the word *love* when applied to the sexual man-woman relationship; he is concerned rather with explaining the various aspects and forms which a genuine love between a man and a woman can have. This fact simplifies our task considerably.

The section begins with three important claims having already been made about love. These were: 1) “*Love is the exclusive portion of persons*”<sup>182</sup>, 2) “*Love is the unification of persons*”<sup>183</sup>, and 3) “Man’s capacity for love depends on his willingness consciously to seek a good together with others, and to subordinate himself to that good for the sake of others, or to others for the sake of that good.”<sup>184</sup> In the opening paragraph of “Metaphysical Analysis of Love” the first and the third, and to some extent the second, are reaffirmed: “Let us take as our starting point the fact that *love is always a mutual relationship between persons*. This relationship in turn is based on particular attitudes to the good, adopted by each of them individually and by both jointly.”<sup>185</sup> Several points can be made about these prior claims and their reaffirmation. First, the insistence that love is only possible among persons is found not only here, but consistently throughout the entire work. Wojtyła is *very* clear on this point. Accordingly, when he makes mention of the scholastic tradition of speaking of a natural love, an *amor naturalis*, which is seen in teleological tendencies, and says that to speak

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<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.* 29

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.* 38

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.* 29

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.* 73

of this as love is to speak “in a very broad sense”<sup>186</sup>, he should not be interpreted as meaning that *amor naturalis* qualifies as genuine love. Since love is something “exclusive” to persons and “always... between persons”, “in a very broad sense” must be interpreted to mean “in the sense that it bears a resemblance to real love due to some similarity”.

Second, Wojtyła consistently presents love as something mutual or reciprocal. His insistence on reciprocity, however, is different from that on love being exclusive to persons. Outside of the personal realm, love cannot exist in the proper sense of the word. Reciprocity, on the other hand, is a perfection of love, properly so called. Wojtyła writes: “Love in the individual develops by way of attraction, desire and goodwill. Love however finds its full realization not in an individual subject, but in a relationship between subjects, between persons.”<sup>187</sup> We also find the statement that “love is by its very nature not unilateral but bilateral, something ‘between’ two persons, something shared. Fully realized, it is essentially an interpersonal, not an individual matter.”<sup>188</sup> The key to understanding reciprocity’s place in love is the definition: “love is the unification of persons”. For love to be considered genuine it must satisfy the demands of this definition. A one-sided love does, but only up to a point; whether we are speaking of love in the form of desire, attraction, or goodwill, a strictly “individual love” involves a movement of one person towards another and to that degree qualifies as a unification between persons. But the difference in degree between a unification effected by a one-sided love and the unification that one finds when love is mutual is so great as to effect a difference in kind. Further, reciprocity is something which love

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<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.* 74

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.* 95

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.* 85

naturally desires.<sup>189</sup> When one loves another, one desires that the other return this love. According to Wojtyła, this desire is not selfish, but natural “since reciprocity is in the very nature of love”.<sup>190</sup> So when love remains a one-sided reality, it is not only imperfect and incomplete, but also something very unfortunate and painful.

Lastly, Wojtyła consistently speaks of love in conjunction with a person’s “attitude towards the good.” The appearance of love within the work, it may be recalled, coincides with the appearance of the concept “common good”; when two persons freely pursue an end which is good for both (hence a common good), their relationship becomes one of love rather than use. The frequent association of love with “an attitude towards the good” and the pursuit of a “common good” raises the questions of how exactly is love related these two. Does love’s existence depend on an attitude towards the good? Is this the common good which both are seeking or is it something else? With respect to marriage, is the love embodied there the result of a mutual pursuit of the traditional ends of marriage: procreation, mutual assistance and alleviation of desire? The answer to these questions will be very revealing about Wojtyła’s conception of love. They also will serve to bring us to the section “Metaphysical Analysis of Love”, for only there can the answer be found.

Wojtyła divides “Metaphysical Analysis of Love” into roughly two parts. In the first he examines love as it may exist in the individual; in the second, he looks at love as it may exist as something mutual between persons. Love may exist in the individual as a disposition which regards another person as a good and one of the forms it may take is attraction. Attraction, he claims, is primarily cognitive in structure, though not

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<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.* 85-86

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.* 86

exclusively: “To be attracted does not mean just thinking about some person as a good, it means a commitment to think of that person as a certain good, and such a commitment can in the last resort be effected only by the will.”<sup>191</sup> Since it depends on the intellect to perceive the other as a good, and the will to commit one to this stance, attraction is a phenomenon exclusive to the realm of persons. It is thus spiritual and should be distinguished from the emotional-affective responses that often accompany it. Attraction is therefore not an emotion, but emotion aids its development and also perfects it. Emotion is a spontaneous reaction to a perceived value, but also in a sense a blind one since it cannot judge whether the perceived value actually exists.<sup>192</sup> That attraction arises so easily between a man and a woman is the result of the sexual urge.<sup>193</sup> The urge particularly disposes a person to view the values connected with the sex of the other person as goods. However, for attraction to be a genuine form of love, it is absolutely necessary for it not to be limited to partial values belonging to the person, such as the values of sex, but must have a direct relation to the value of the person as such.<sup>194</sup> If the case were otherwise, attraction could not qualify as a “unification of persons” since it would draw a person not to another but merely to an aspect belonging to the other.

At the beginning of his analysis of attraction Wojtyła recalls what he had previously said about love being a mutual relationship dependent on a particular view towards the good. Speaking of the man-woman relationship, he says “[t]his attitude to

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<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.* 75

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.* 77

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.* 74

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.* 79

the good originates in their liking for, their attraction to each other.”<sup>195</sup> Attraction involves a reaction to values found in the other person. Seemingly, it does not matter to Wojtyła what these values are; attraction may encompass any value so long as that value is related properly to the chief value present in the person, the value of the person as a person. This proper relation entails that a person must be regarded as valuable because of what being a person is; a person must not be regarded as valuable because of the other values which inhere in the person. So what emerges clearly from this is that at the early stages of a man-woman relationship, where there are at best two individual loves, the good with which love is associated is not something “external”, such as defense of the country was in the officer-soldier relationship, but the other person him or herself.

Next Wojtyła turns to something which he calls love-as-desire. “Like attraction,” he says, “desire is of the essence of love, and is sometimes the most powerful element.”<sup>196</sup> He then notes that “[d]esire too belongs to the very essence of the love which springs up between man and woman.”<sup>197</sup> It is not limited to this relationship—love as desire is for example very prominent in a created person’s love for God—but is particularly associated with it because maleness and femaleness are an imbalance, an incompleteness. Because sex is a limitation, a “man therefore needs a woman, so to say, to complete his own being, and woman needs man in the same

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<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.* 74

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.* 80. Whether it is because of Wojtyła’s choice of words or Willett’s translation of them, this statement has a certain danger of misinterpretation. “Desire is of the essence of love” means that desire (here being love-as-desire or *amor concupiscentia*) is a form of love. The structure of desire is such that it contains the essentials necessary for it to be considered as love. The statement does not mean, by contrast, that desire is to be found wherever love is. “Metaphysical Analysis of Love” is concerned with presenting attraction, love-as-desire and goodwill as the forms which love may take in the individual and not as element necessarily found in all love.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.* Here “to the very essence” means what it seems to mean. The love which arises between a man and a woman on the basis of the sexual urge will always contain an element of desire.

way.”<sup>198</sup> As with attraction, the sexual urge, that “dynamic element intimately connected with difference of sex in human persons”<sup>199</sup>, plays a role; it is through the urge that a person feels his or her “objective, ontological need”<sup>200</sup> for a person of the opposite sex.

Love-as-desire, or *amor concupiscentia* as medieval philosophers called it, is not to be confused with desire itself, *concupiscentia*. Wojtyła is insistent on distinguishing the two. *Concupiscentia* involves an “awareness of some lack, an unpleasant sensation which can be eliminated by means of a particular good.”<sup>201</sup> If this were the content of a man’s “love” for a woman, if he viewed her primarily as a good by which he would satisfy his desire, then his love would be a violation of the personalistic norm. Love as desire, *amor concupiscentia*, is something different. It is a longing for the person; the desired object is not the values which inhere in the person, but the person in whom the values inhere. The individual’s experience of love-as-desire may be expressed as “I want you because you are a good for me”<sup>202</sup>, but for this to express love-as-desire rather than just desire, it is necessary that the other is not being viewed as a mere means to an end. Such an instrumental attitude will occur when the desirable values in the other are not firmly “welded” to the value of the person.

As with attraction, we again find that the good towards which love-as-desire has a particular attitude is, and must be, the other person. And while other aspects may also be desired, the sexual aspects of the other person usually play a prominent role since the sexual urge can make the objective limitation of one’s sex vividly felt. But it is the

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<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.* 81

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.* 45

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.* 81

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*

person, and not their sex or anything else about them, which Wojtyła judges to be the good which one desires. If desire were felt solely for the sexual characteristics of the other, then this desire would be *concupiscentia*, not *amor concupiscentia*, and the other person would be seen only as a means to an end.

Finally there is love as goodwill, *amor benevolentiae*. Wojtyła writes: “Love between man and woman would be evil, or at least incomplete, if it went no farther than love as desire... It is not enough to long for a person as a good for oneself, one must also, and above all, long for the person’s good.”<sup>203</sup> Goodwill is an absolutely necessary element of love; without it there can be no genuine love, only egoism.<sup>204</sup> It means willing the good of the other for the other’s sake. Goodwill depends on selflessness of intention. It ceases to be genuine when the other’s good is willed as a means to an end. This danger particularly exists because of the relation between goodwill and love-as-desire; when the other is made better (as goodwill wishes), love-as-desire is correspondingly increased. But for goodwill to be genuine, its relation with love-as-desire must not be viewed as that of a means with an end; rather, love-as-desire must be seen as a fruit of goodwill, as an effect overflowing from it. Goodwill is something greater and more unconditional than love-as-desire. “It is,” says Wojtyła, “the purest form of love... [and] does more than any other to perfect the person who experiences it”.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.* 83

<sup>204</sup> This is said with respect to a “developed” love. In the beginning stages of a relationship attraction or love-as-desire may be virtually the sole content of one’s love. If at anytime, however, goodwill is explicitly rejected, then one’s attraction and love-as-desire will cease to be genuine love. And if the relationship develops but goodwill does not, then the same will also be true.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.* 83-84

While a wide variety of goods may be involved in goodwill—since one may will many types of goods for another—all of these are willed only as means to the end which is the other person’s good. Yet again love takes the other person as the good towards which it is primarily concerned; other goods enter only in so much as they are connected with and subordinated to this good.

Recalling for a moment the questions which we have sought to answer through a review of Wojtyła’s treatment of attraction, love-as-desire, and goodwill, we may note that in each of these forms of love the good which one has a certain attitude towards is, first and foremost, the person; other goods or values may enter into these forms of love, but only if they are put in proper relation to the fundamental good, the person. This seriously challenges the idea that love, as *Love and Responsibility* conceives it, is in its essence a mutual pursuit after a good or that it is derived from the pursuit. Further, while attraction, love-as-desire, and goodwill may be found in any context, Wojtyła has the context of man-woman sexual relationship in mind in “Metaphysical Analysis of Love”. It is quite clear, then, that he does not think that the love which develops in a man or a woman on the basis of the sexual urge takes its beginnings in an attitude towards the ends of marriage; he thinks rather it takes its beginnings in the attitude one has for the other person. This much we can say at present. Since love is, in its fullness, something mutual and shared between persons, we will examine the two forms of “interpersonal” love before returning to the questions we are seeking to answer. These two forms of love are friendship and betrothed love.

Love begins to exist as friendship when the goodwill which two persons have for each other is such that each desires the other’s good as much as he desires his own.

When this happens, the ‘I’ of the one person and the ‘I’ of the other form a “moral unity”.<sup>206</sup> The two become one subject with respect to the pursuit and enjoyment of the good. Obviously not all relationships called by the name “friendship” qualify as genuine according to *Love and Responsibility*’s definition; a “friendship” based on mutual pleasure, for example, is only so called because of the semblance it bears to the real thing. Among the phenomena frequently confused as friendship, Wojtyła singles out one in particular: sympathy. While not friendship itself, sympathy is very important for friendship; sympathy nurtures its development and also perfects it by giving it a more vivid subjective presence.<sup>207</sup> Wojtyła’s particular understanding of sympathy is drawn from the word’s etymology: “experiencing together”.<sup>208</sup> Sympathy is a situation of emotional unity between two persons. The two persons may take advantage of the situation which sympathy provides and fashion a friendship out of it.<sup>209</sup> What they should not do is think that it is love itself and leave it at that. This mistake, says Wojtyła, is often made, especially in a man-woman relationship.<sup>210</sup>

Also connected to friendship is something which Wojtyła calls comradeship. Comradeship is based on “such objective foundations as joint work, common goals, shared concerns, etc.”<sup>211</sup> Examples of situations which may produce it include: attending the same class, working in the same laboratory, working for the same company, and having a mutual interest in philately (stamp collecting).<sup>212</sup> Comradeship is the closeness and sense of unity that results, or can result, from any situation in which

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<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.* 90-91

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.* 92-93

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.* 88-89

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.* 92

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.* 92

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.* 94

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*

two persons find themselves pursuing a common end. It can aid the development of love between a man and a woman. If it is present and combined with sympathy, the chances are good that a true friendship will be formed.<sup>213</sup>

As great a union of persons as friendship is, there is something still greater according to Wojtyła. This form of mutual love is “betrothed love”. It is treated at the end of the “Metaphysical Analysis of Love” and is the climax of the section. The essence of betrothed love is total mutual self-giving. In friendship, the ‘I’ of the other is joined to one’s own and a common ‘we’ results which is the vantage point from which all goods are viewed. In betrothed love, the ‘I’ of each person is surrendered to the other and each gives his or her self as a possession to the other. Since betrothed love is properly something reciprocal, total mutual self-giving also implies that each receives the other person totally.<sup>214</sup>

Much more will need to be said about betrothed love. In the next chapter we will give the concept a thorough analysis. For the present it is necessary only to note that the good with which betrothed love is primarily concerned is the person. The person is both the good which is given and the good which warrants the reception of such a gift. No good beyond the person is mentioned as being essentially connected with this form of love. Looking back at the case of friendship, we see something similar. The two friends share a common view towards the good which is the other; each sees the other as a good which is of the same value as the good which is oneself. Other goods enter the relationship only after this; they are desired for the other because the other has been judged to warrant their reception. So while both friendship and

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<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.* 94

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.* 95-100

betrothed love are properly forms of love which are shared between persons, their attitude towards the good derives from the type of love which the individual contributes to its creation. In the case of friendship this is primarily goodwill. In the case of betrothed love, attraction and love-as-desire seemingly play a more important part than they do in friendship; this would be because betrothed love involves not only total self-giving, but also total receiving of the other.

So, does Wojtyła believe that the love between a man and a woman in a marriage relationship is based on their shared attitude towards procreation, mutual assistance and the alleviance of desire, the three ends of marriage listed by him as traditional?<sup>215</sup> A proper answer to this question must take into account the tension that exists between the “Analysis of the Verb ‘To Use’” and the “Metaphysical Analysis of Love”. In the earlier section heavy emphasis is laid on the role that the common good plays in making a relationship one of love. Wojtyła even says that “love between two people is quite unthinkable without some common good to bind them together.”<sup>216</sup> He then goes on to identify procreation, mutual help and the right ordering of desire as the “common goods” specific to marriage.<sup>217</sup> However, in the latter section, which outlines the objective development of love between a man and a woman, no mention is made of a common good. Wojtyła continues to talk about a relationship of love being based on a particular attitude towards the good,<sup>218</sup> but this good is clearly the other person. All the

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<sup>215</sup> Wojtyła speaks about these, using the Latin terms *procreatio*, *mutuum adiutorium*, and *remedium concupiscentiae*, in *Love and Responsibility* 66-67.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.* 28

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.* 30. Wojtyła actually uses the phrase “objective purposes” despite the fact that they clearly play the role of the “common good”. His choice of language is conditioned by the traditional Catholic distinction between the “goods of marriage” and the “ends of marriage.” The ends or purposes of marriage are what he is concerned with here and it is they, and not the “goods of marriage”, which correspond with his concept of the “common good”.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.* 73

other goods which love may encompass depend on their connection to this one primary good. Not only is the concept of the common good not mentioned, but the accounts given of friendship and betrothed love seem sufficient in themselves and do not require an implicit understanding of a common good.

This tension can be resolved to some degree. It can be noted that Wojtyła speaks of the common good at a time when he is intent on opposing a utilitarian understanding of love. This understanding holds pleasure to be the mutual goal of a “love” relationship. While such a goal does remove use to some extent—because it has been mutually agreed upon—it does not remove it completely. Pleasure is a subjective experience, not an objectively existing good. It therefore cannot be something “between” persons; it is a subjective goal which happens to coincide with that of another. The relationship is thus based on the usefulness which this coincidence provides for the pursuit of one’s own unsharable end.

If we turn again to Wojtyła’s explanation of friendship, we can note that while there is no mention of a particular common good which unites the two friends, there is an idea that the two share a “communion in the good”. Because of the attitude each one has towards the other as a person, all goods become sharable; what is directly good for one, is experienced as a good by both. There is no specific common good which unites the two, but rather the two are united with respect to the good in general. Friendship viewed in this way is the inverse of comradeship. In comradeship there is first something which two persons share in common. This common task or interest draws the two together and provides a situation favorable for friendship. In friendship there is first a communion of persons, then an interest in goods other than those persons.

Friendship and comradeship therefore start, as it were, from different ends of the spectrum: the former beginning with an attitude towards the other person which consequently leads to a joint attitude towards the other's good, the latter beginning with an attitude towards a specific good which consequently leads to an encounter with the other person. Importantly, friendship is declared to be love but comradeship is not; the difference obviously lies in that the essence of comradeship does not specify the attitude one has towards the other person as person.

In light of all this it would seem that love, as *Love and Responsibility* understands it, bears a necessary connection to the common good, but this connection is something secondary, a consequence flowing from the essence of love, rather than being of the essence itself. Love is in essence the unification of persons. In its interpersonal existence, love is what exists between two people uniting them as persons; in its individual existence, it is what is in a person drawing him or her toward the person of another. The "Metaphysical Analysis of Love" confirms this; if unification of persons is understood as the definition of love then it makes sense why both love-as-desire and goodwill can both be considered to be love even though from a certain perspective they are opposed to each other. By contrast, "Two persons pursuing a mutually chosen common good", is never proposed as a definition of love and it certainly cannot be used to make sense of how attraction, love-as-desire and goodwill are all forms of love. The "Metaphysical Analysis of Love" indicates that love depends primarily on an attitude toward the other person. If we take this as our starting point, we can look back on "Analysis of the Verb 'To Use'" and see that the beginnings of love occur in the case where two people adopt and pursue a common good, not because of the common good

itself, but because by mutually adopting it, rather than one adopting it and imposing it on the other, there is an implicit affirmation of the value of the person. This affirmation of the other as one who is equal to oneself with respect to desired good, is the reason why love, even if in a very minimal form, can be said to be present.

What all this means for the relation between married love and the ends of marriage is this: married love, in as much as it is love, derives not from the mutual attitude towards the ends of marriage, but from the attitude each has towards the other; their mutual attitude towards these ends comes from their mutual attitude towards each other. This being said, we should not forget that Wojtyła links married love with the goods of marriage in a way which he does not link it to any other common goods. He views the love between the two as depending, in a way not to be confused with the dependency explained above, on their attitude towards these goods; if they reject these goods, love cannot be said to exist between them.

Given the preceding review of “Metaphysical Analysis of Love”, a summary of Wojtyła’s understanding of love as present in *Love and Responsibility* should be easily attainable. Love is, in its metaphysical essence, the unification of persons. It is exclusive to persons and is bound up with the specifically personal powers of intellect and will. It is dependent on the attitude which a person adopts towards the good. This good is, first and foremost, the person. Love always affirms the goodness of the other person, and it is from this affirmation that it is then able to draw other goods into its orbit. In the case of attraction these goods are the values which inhere in the person, in the case of love-as-desire those values which are good for oneself, and in the case of goodwill those which one judges to be good for the other person. While love has its

foundations in the attitude which the individual adopts towards the truth and goodness of the other, it reaches its objective perfection only when it is reciprocated and becomes something which exists, as it were, between the two persons.

Love also has a subjective profile. This profile consists in emotional reactions to values perceived in the other. These reactions favor the development and are often referred to by Wojtyła as the “raw material of love”. They also perfect it by giving it subjective vividness and “warmth”. Emotional-affective reactions are an important part of love, but they can only be part of it if love in its metaphysical reality is present and if the reactions are properly integrated.<sup>219</sup> No amount of emotion can substitute for the affirmation of the person effected by the intellect and will.

Does Wojtyła’s understanding of love suggest some special relation between love and sexuality? If one considers love as it may exist in the individual, love as attraction and desire stand out as having great potential to be affected by a person’s sexual nature. Love-as-desire is based on an objective need and sexuality provides such a need. Sex is “a limitation, an imbalance”<sup>220</sup> and “[a] man therefore needs a woman, so to say, to complete his own being, and woman needs man in the same way.”<sup>221</sup> Not only does sexuality furnish an objective need, it also makes it “keenly felt” thanks to the sexual urge.<sup>222</sup> Because of the place sex has in the objective make up of a human being and because of the intensity of the sexual urge, it is most likely that Wojtyła sees the sexual love between a man and a woman as the exemplar of this form of love. To a

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<sup>219</sup> Proper integration especially demands that the various values which one reacts to “must be firmly welded in the consciousness and the will to the value of the person” (128), and that the value which cause an emotional reaction be actually present (113).

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.* 81

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.* 48 and 81

lesser degree something similar may be said about love as attraction. Among the different types of human relationships, the man-woman relationship stands out because of the ease with which love as attraction occurs in that relationship. This ease according to Wojtyła is due to the sexual urge.<sup>223</sup> The emotional reactions which attraction encompasses help create sympathy and this in turn can foster friendship.

If we consider love as it may exist between persons, betrothed love stands out as bearing some important association with sexuality. The name itself suggests this. This relationship will be the subject of the next chapter.

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<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.* 74 “That the two parties so easily attract each other is the result of the sexual urge”.

## Chapter Four: Human Sexual Nature

Up to this point our focus has largely been on love. With the exception of the sexual urge mentioned at end of the last chapter, not much has been said about sexual nature itself. The decision to pursue matters in this way, with love being examined before sexuality, was not arbitrary. At the beginning of “Metaphysical Analysis of Love” Wojtyła states, “Love between man and woman is one particular form of love, in which elements common to all of its forms are embodied in a specific way.”<sup>224</sup> Implicit in this is one of the basic assumptions of the work: love may exist independently of sexuality. This independence signifies that love, if *Love and Responsibility* is to be consistent, should bear no essential relation to sexuality and that one should be able to arrive at an understanding of it without reference to, or even knowledge of, sexuality, however enlightening such a reference and knowledge might be.

The same is not the case with sexuality’s relation to love. Late in the work Wojtyła associates sexual intercourse with betrothed love: “Marital intercourse is in itself an interpersonal act, *an act of betrothed love*.”<sup>225</sup> The statement is decisive. It shows that the author does not believe sexuality to be understandable solely from an empirical-scientific perspective, or even from a philosophical one which both assumes such scientific knowledge and takes into account the existential significance of procreation. Rather he believes that just as sexual morality must be understood in connection with love, so too must sexual nature itself be thus understood. This will be

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<sup>224</sup> *Love and Responsibility* 73

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.* 233 My emphasis.

the guiding principle for our inquiry into *Love and Responsibility*'s understanding of sexuality.

The proper place to begin is with Wojtyła's basic philosophic anthropology, which from all appearances involves no significant departures from traditional Christian philosophy. "A human body," he writes, "is the body of a person because it forms a unity of substance with the human spirit."<sup>226</sup> Sex is an attribute of the body and has its origin there, not in the human spirit, however much it might influence a human psychological or spiritual life. Wojtyła does not state this explicitly in *Love and Responsibility* but it may be assumed because 1) this was the common view of the Christian philosophic tradition, the opposite being rare or even unheard of, and if he held that opposite view, he would have most likely made an effort to argue for it, which he does not, 2) he is generally, or even exclusively, a Thomist when it comes to metaphysics and Thomas gives no indication that he believes sex originates and inheres in the human spirit, but quite the opposite, and 3) in the series of Wednesday addresses which make up *Theology of the Body* he states that male and female "are two ways of being a body".<sup>227</sup> Sex therefore is understood as a bodily reality which is at the same time a reality of the person, since the body is an essential attribute of that substantial unity which is the human person.

It seems likely that a Thomistically minded person like Wojtyła would hold that the full understanding of a given thing is impossible apart from a recognition of its participation in the substance (assuming it is not itself the substance) in which it exists. This is in fact the way that *Theology of the Body* approaches the body: the relation

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<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.* 54-55

<sup>227</sup> *Theology of the Body* General Audience, November 21, 1979

which the body bears to the person is what reveals the body's ultimate significance. From such a perspective it would be erroneous to think that the full significance of *human* sexuality can be discovered by the empirical sciences alone, without there being any question of what it means to the person as a whole. That *Love and Responsibility* does indeed see the contributions of science as being insufficient in themselves for providing a complete understand of sexuality—as they are likewise insufficient with respect to the determination of sexual morality<sup>228</sup>—is confirmed by Wojtyła's claim that sexual intercourse is an act of betrothed love<sup>229</sup> and his insistence that the sexual urge has an “existential” significance rather than a merely biological one.<sup>230</sup>

Acknowledging the limitations of empirical science is, for Wojtyła, a prerequisite for making proper use of it. This is especially necessary when dealing with issues of sexuality because here scientific knowledge does play a very crucial role; sex is, after all, a “bodily reality”. The importance which Wojtyła attributed to the contribution of the sciences can be seen at least as far back as the time when he set up Krakow's first marriage preparation program. In its second year he invited lay doctors and nurses to help him run it. This was “a bold pastoral stroke in its time.”<sup>231</sup> In *Love and Responsibility*, despite the reminders that science is not sufficient in itself, he devoted an entire chapter to the bearing which the findings of “sexology” have on marital ethics. Originally, this was an appendix and apparently there was suggestion

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<sup>228</sup> *Love and Responsibility* 18

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.* 233

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.* 52

<sup>231</sup> Weigel 97

that the author remove it, presumably because the subject matter was unfitting for a priest to discuss; Father Henri de Lubac “strongly emphasized” that it be retained.<sup>232</sup>

Thus *Love and Responsibility* clearly considers scientific knowledge important and, at times, even necessary for the determination of the morality of an action, as is the case with the use of periodic continence which will be discussed later. “Sexology and Ethics” indicates that Wojtyła was well informed about the “sexology” of his day. We may assume that what was known then was basically equivalent to what is known at the time of the composition of the present study, roughly forty-six years later. While the field has undoubtedly advanced in some respects, there has been no major discovery comparable to that of the ovum in 1827 and those concerning the human female fertility cycle in 1930. Perhaps the only area that demands some attention is that of fertility symptoms. Early discoveries about the fertility cycle led to the development of the so called “rhythm method”, but because the irregularity of the cycle found between different women and also between different cycles of the same woman, it was often inaccurate. In the years that followed various indicators of fertility/infertility were discovered, most notably changes in the viscosity of vaginal mucous, the basal body temperature, and to a lesser extent the position of the cervical head. At the time Wojtyła was writing he was probably at least familiar with the first two of these. At one point he comments that “there exist objective scientific methods known to biology and medicine which help us to determine the moment of ovulation, i.e. the beginning of the fertile period”<sup>233</sup> and so indicates that his understanding of methods of periodic continence extends beyond the simple rhythm method.

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<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.* 143, Weigel here draws on John Paul II’s *Curriculum Philosophicum*.

<sup>233</sup> *Love and Responsibility* 280

Almost all that Wojtyła says about human sexuality presupposes a basic biological knowledge of it. This knowledge specifically includes: the anatomical differences between male and female, the biological nature of sexual intercourse, the role of sperm and ovum in reproduction, and the existence of the female fertility cycle. The only aspect of human sexuality to which Wojtyła feels it necessary to devote an extensive analysis is the sexual urge. The motivation for doing this seems to be that although it may be a phenomenon subject to scientific inquiry, its significance is not limited to the biological or even psychological sphere. The first reason for this, and the one which Wojtyła is most explicit about, is the nature of the ultimate end to which the urge is directed. This end is procreation, the continuance of the species *homo*, and it is a good of no small importance, but is in fact *the* primary good, for in order to possess any other good a given thing must possess the good of existence. Because its end is existence, the sexual urge has not merely a biological character but an existential one.<sup>234</sup> “Existence itself,” writes Wojtyła “is a subject for philosophy, which alone concerns itself with the problem of existence as such. An overall view of the sexual urge... is therefore the prerogative of philosophy.”<sup>235</sup> We may assume that for Wojtyła the ultimate conclusion that philosophy can arrive at when it examines the relation between the urge and its end, is what is already held by Christian faith, that the sexual urge calls one to participate in God’s continuing work of creation.<sup>236</sup> If we take this and apply it to

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<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.* 52

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.* 52

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.* 54-57 Wojtyła’s presents the Church’s interpretation of the urge after declaring that understanding the urge is the prerogative of philosophy. While many may adopt this interpretation on faith, Wojtyła gives no indication that faith is absolutely necessary, as it would be the case with the Trinity or Incarnation. It is fair to assume here that we have something parallel to belief in God, which according to Vatican I is often held through faith but is also attainable through philosophic knowledge.

sexuality as a whole, we can say that for *Love and Responsibility* sexuality represents a potential for co-work with God in creation.

If we were to look only at the ultimate end of the urge, *procreatio*, we would not discover the urge to bear any an intrinsic relation to love.<sup>237</sup> However, the dynamism of the urge involves not only a direction to its final end, but also to the means by which this end is to be achieved. Generally, however, the sexual urge is not experienced as an urge towards procreation. While its objective end may be procreation, its direct object, according to Wojtyła, is “a human being of the opposite sex.”<sup>238</sup> In identifying this as the urge’s direct object, he rejects other possibilities such as “the psychological and physiological attributes of the other sex as such”<sup>239</sup> and sexual pleasure.<sup>240</sup> The sexual urge draws one towards another concrete person, not masculinity/femininity or the possibility of pleasure, and for this reason bears a relation to love. Love as understood by *Love and Responsibility* is the “unification of persons” and may be said to exist, in the individual at least, whenever one person is drawn toward another spiritually, that is by the activity of intellect and will. While the force which the urge exerts on the person (drawing him or her to another) does not qualify as love, since the drawing is not the result of the spiritual powers of intellect and will, it nevertheless provides a great potential for love because its direct object is identical with that of love. With the person itself being the object, the sexual urge, because it furnishes a vivid experience of the value of the sexual attributes of the other person<sup>241</sup> and the incompleteness which the

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<sup>237</sup> Something could certainly be made of the parent-child relation which results but this would go beyond the scope of what is contained in *Love and Responsibility*.

<sup>238</sup> *Love and Responsibility* 49

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>240</sup> See “The ‘Libidinic’ Interpretation” 61-66

<sup>241</sup> *Love and Responsibility* 48

difference of sex entails<sup>242</sup>, provides excellent material out of which love as attraction and love-as-desire may respectively be formed. It is with respect to this that Wojtyła's statement that "love grows out of the sexual urge and develops on that basis and in the conditions which the sexual urge creates in the psycho-physiological lives of concrete people"<sup>243</sup> is to be understood.

Far more attention is given to the sexual urge than to the sexual differences between men and woman. Sexual differences are touched upon here and there, but Wojtyła gives the impression that he sees knowledge about them as being the prerogative of psychology and physiology. He does for instance speak about the psychological difference in the experience of intercourse where the man may be more inclined to experience it as conquest or possession and the woman as surrender.<sup>244</sup> But when he does draw attention to this the purpose is not to claim that things are such, but to say that even if they are, the reality is that this is equally an act of self-surrender for both. There is, however, one aspect of sexual difference which is ascribed a philosophic significance; it was briefly mentioned at the end of the last chapter. Wojtyła states at one point that "Sex is also limitation, an imbalance"<sup>245</sup> and this clarifies what he says earlier in the section on the sexual urge. There he speaks of how the sexual urge can make one feel a keen need to "supplement [one's] own attributes with those of a person of the other sex" and how "[i]f man would look deeply enough into his own nature through the prism of that need it might help him to understand his own limitation and inadequacy, and even indirectly, what philosophy calls the contingent character of

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<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.* 49

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.* 98-99

<sup>245</sup> *Ibid.* 81

existence (*contingentia*).”<sup>246</sup> Sex, maleness or femaleness, is an attribute of the person which signifies a certain lack of and need for the opposite sex; each considered in itself is something incomplete. But a human person’s “self-insufficiency” or “self-incompleteness” is rooted much deeper than in its sex; ultimately it originates in the person not being his or her own cause of existence.<sup>247</sup> Sex, being a limitation, serves a positive function for the human person in that it signifies the profound reality that he or she is a creature whose existence derives from a creator.

While need and inadequacy are not essential to love, since God loves without having an inadequacy that he is thereby fulfilling, they are significantly tied to it. Love is always a movement of one person towards another and self-insufficiency is often a cause for this. The limitation of sex, while it contains something negative itself, is something positive for the person as a whole for it prompts the person to move beyond the boundaries of his or her self and seek another, and provided the personalistic norm is not violated this movement is love. Love, it must be recalled, is not merely an ethical norm but also a fulfillment of the person.<sup>248</sup>

If one looks at the whole of the work, these reflections about sexual difference appear as mere side-comments. The focus in the first three chapters is on the sexual urge which even in discussion of the contingent character of sex take precedence since it is through the urge that the limitations of sex impinge on the consciousness of the subject. There are probably multiple reasons why Wojtyła gives so much attention to the urge. It was mentioned above that the end of the urge has an “existential”, hence philosophical, significance and so needs to be rescued from the common merely

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<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.* 48

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.* 54

<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.* 82 and 135

biological interpretation. Another probable reason is that the urge, as compared to sexual differences, is more directly tied to morality since it is the urge with which a person must contend in his or her inner conscious life, motivating him or her towards actions which may or may not be in conflict with certain values. Also, the choice to center the treatment in this way reflects something which is said in one of Wojtyła's articles "The Problem of Catholic Sexual Ethics" written five years later. He asks "whether only actions connected with the sexual relation (sexual intercourse) itself, including all that leads up to or results from it, are the material object of sexual ethics or whether this object is simply the relation between persons of the opposite sex, with particular attention to the sexual relation"<sup>249</sup> and then decides for the latter. When it comes to relationships between persons of the opposite sex the sexual urge is a factor which must be contended with in a wide variety of cases, far beyond those of sexual intercourse; it makes sense then that so much attention is given to it in *Love and Responsibility*.

But if it is the relationship between persons of opposite sexes, and not sexual intercourse itself, which is the object of sexual ethics in general and *Love and Responsibility* in particular, intercourse nevertheless plays a decisive part. Most of what Wojtyła has to say about it is reserved for the fourth chapter, "Justice Towards the Creator". The essential statement made there has already been mentioned: "Marital intercourse is... an act of betrothed love".<sup>250</sup> For the sake of clarity the term *marital intercourse* is used here rather than *sexual intercourse*. Very often Wojtyła employs the latter but intends it to be understood within the context of a marriage. This context is

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<sup>249</sup> "Catholic Sexual Ethics" in *Person and Community* 282

<sup>250</sup> *Love and Responsibility* 233

important; outside of marriage sexual intercourse is not an act of love, but an act of use.<sup>251</sup> The reason for this is that the presence of love or its opposite depends on the attitude which persons adopt towards each other. Marriage signifies a certain attitude—the only one which, according to Wojtyła, “justifies”<sup>252</sup> sexual intercourse. This attitude is betrothed love and it is the essence of marriage. A relationship of betrothed love is one in which two persons “give themselves each to the other.”<sup>253</sup> Marriage is such a relationship. Wojtyła expresses this in a variety of ways. He writes that “the institution of marriage [is one] in which two people belong each to the other”<sup>254</sup>, that there is a “reciprocal gift of self implicit in the institution of marriage”<sup>255</sup>, that “[t]he love of two persons, man and woman, leads in matrimony to their mutual dedication one to the other”<sup>256</sup>, that “[f]rom the point of view of each individual person this is a clear surrender of the self to another person, while in the interpersonal relationship it is surrender of each to the other”<sup>257</sup>, and that “what happens in the marital relationship is that the man simultaneously gives himself [as the woman likewise gives herself to him], in return for the woman’s gift of herself to him.”<sup>258</sup> That Wojtyła does indeed see this love as the essence of marriage rather than something following from it is confirmed by the following statement: “The inner and essential *raison d’être* of marriage is not simply

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<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.* 221 “Sexual relations outside marriage automatically put one person in the position of an object to be used by another.”

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.* 216 “‘Justify’ here means ‘make just’. Nor does this have anything to do with self-justification, pleading mitigating circumstances to excuse something intrinsically bad.”

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.* 96

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.* 221

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.* 224

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.* 98

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.* 99

eventual transformation into a family but above all the creation of a lasting personal union between a man and a woman based on love.”<sup>259</sup>

Sexual intercourse considered apart from the attitude of the persons engaging in it can never be determined to be an act of betrothed love, or of any love for that matter. Love is in essence something spiritual, something dependent on the spiritual powers of intellect and will. Without betrothed love existing on the “spiritual level” there can be no question of a physical act of intercourse being one of love. This line of logic raises an intriguing question: Is it more accurate to say that marriage morally justifies intercourse or that betrothed love does? What has been said so far indicates that the answer would be the latter and yet if this were so it would seem that intercourse should be morally acceptable outside marriage provided there is betrothed love. To begin solving the problem at issue here it is necessary to recognize that Wojtyła firmly holds that for sexual intercourse “marriage is the only proper place”<sup>260</sup> and that he is equally firm in holding that some acts of intercourse between married persons, such those in which artificial birth control are used, are not morally justified and not acts of love. The logical consequences are respectively that marriage alone is not enough to justify intercourse and that the betrothed love which does justify it is not possible outside marriage.

This forces us to take a closer look at betrothed love. What sorts of relationship would Wojtyła see as possessing betrothed love? What is its range? These questions are in effect proposed in *Love and Responsibility*.<sup>261</sup> Attention is brought to several types of relationships: mother-child, doctor-patient, teacher-pupil, and pastor-parish.

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<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.* 218

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid.* 127

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.* 98

Wojtyła leaves aside the first and says that in the others the question of “how far genuine dedicated love is involved is no easy matter” and that even if the relationship did “resemble a complete surrender of the self and so establish[] its claim to be love, it would still be difficult to apply the name ‘betrothed love’ to it.”<sup>262</sup> The mother-child case is never subsequently taken up and so while Wojtyła does say, “As for the particular manifestations of this form of love, they can I think, vary greatly”<sup>263</sup>, he does not give a very clear answer to the question he proposes. Fortunately, he does provide enough material for us to derive from it something of an answer. After speaking of the above relationships, he states that “[t]he concept of betrothed love implies the giving of the individual person to another chosen person”<sup>264</sup> and then associates this form of love with “the relationship between man and God”<sup>265</sup> and marriage, in connection with which “[w]e have also the best possible grounds for speaking of betrothed love”.<sup>266</sup> While it is quite likely that Wojtyła understands the relationship between a person and God as the archetype of the love in which one person gives oneself to another, the choice to call this form of love *betrothed* love signifies that the marriage relationship holds a special place with respect to this love. The most probable explanation is that among the various human relationships possible in this world, none is more, by its nature, apt to convey the reality of betrothed love than is the marriage relationship. Put another way, marriage is the natural “educator” of betrothed love.

It seems that Wojtyła sees the association of various relationships to betrothed love as existing on a spectrum. At one end there is the marriage relationship which is

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<sup>262</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>263</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>265</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid.*

most definitely a genuine form of betrothed love. Where exactly on the spectrum the expression *betrothed love* is applied on the basis of mere similarity, rather than of proper analogical relationship, is difficult to determine.<sup>267</sup> The best that we can do is point out some perfections which a given relationship may be lacking in comparison to marriage. Reciprocity is one such perfection. While it is certainly possible to love one's enemies in terms of Wojtyła's explanation of love, it is a greater thing when one's enemy ceases to be an enemy and loves one in return. Without reciprocity something is lacking in the "objective fullness"<sup>268</sup> of love. When we consider the mother-child relationship it must be admitted that while dedicated love may be present to a great degree, this love is to be found only in the mother's attitude towards the child who at present is incapable of returning it. Another perfection is permanence. The human person is a being whose existence is extended through time. Self-giving is lacking in something when it is intended only for a set period of time or only for as long as it is desirable. Marriage from the Church's perspective must possess the perfection of permanence; a real marriage comes into being only if the man and the woman both intend it to be permanent. The same is true with the intention for exclusivity; if either the man or the woman enters into the "marriage" without the intention of being faithful, there is no marriage. While marriage as an institution may be said to impose exclusivity on a

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<sup>267</sup> Thomistic language is employed here for precision and also for the purpose of remaining close to Wojtyła's way of thinking. This terminology may not be familiar to all. The idea I wish to convey is that while a term may be applied to wide range of phenomena, not all applications are necessarily equal. If it is the case that some application are more proper than others, a spectrum can be made with phenomena to which the term is applied least properly on one end and phenomena to which the term is most properly applied on the other. With some terms there is a point on the spectrum where the term can no longer be applied in the strict sense of the word; application can only be metaphorical. Such a point was encountered with the term *love*. According to Wojtyła love in the proper sense of the word can only be applied to interpersonal relationships. If one were to speak of love between two animals, or even a person's love for an animal, the word would necessarily be used in a loose or improper sense.

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.* 85

couple, exclusivity does not originate from something outside but rather from the love of the couple. Exclusivity is a perfection of betrothed love. If in this form of love one makes oneself the possession, the “property”<sup>269</sup>, of the other, there is inevitably a lessening of the self-giving when one gives oneself to more than one person; in that case it is more accurate to say that possession is divided rather than shared.

That exclusivity and permanence are perfections of betrothed love is never explicitly stated in *Love and Responsibility*. What is said is that monogamy and indissolubility are demanded by the personalistic norm in a marriage relationship.<sup>270</sup> Since marriage is identified with betrothed love<sup>271</sup>, monogamy and indissolubility, and the exclusivity and permanence they respectively imply, are seemingly associated with this form of love as aspects necessary for its completion. While it is possible to object that exclusivity and permanence might be consequences not of betrothed love itself but rather of the context of sexuality in which betrothed love is operating, it is not hard to show why, as was just done above, these aspects agree with the nature of betrothed love and how their absence makes this love something less than it could be. Admittedly there is a difficulty with exclusivity, for Wojtyła seems to suggest that all persons ought to have a betrothed love for God<sup>272</sup> and yet he is very clear that betrothed love ought to exist between married couples. I think it is possible to overcome this difficulty and I believe the answer can be found in the concept of “loving others in God”, but here is not the place to take up such an involved question. While the matter is still open for discussion, I believe that there are sufficient grounds for seeing exclusivity and

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<sup>269</sup> *Ibid.* 97

<sup>270</sup> *Ibid.* 211-216

<sup>271</sup> *Ibid.* 99

<sup>272</sup> *Ibid.* 98 and 251

permanence as perfections of betrothed love. In addition to what has been said, there is also Wojtyła's treatment of consecrated virginity in which he locates its value in the way it expresses that a person belongs first and foremost to God. In this, the exclusivity found in the choice to refrain from the betrothed love implicit in a married relationship, adds something to one's betrothed love for God, if perhaps only in a symbolic way, and so is arguably a perfection.

There is one final, possible perfection of betrothed love to which we must draw our attention: bodily giving and receiving. *Love and Responsibility* is not explicit about it and we may initially arrive at it only through philosophic reflection. The hypothesis which is produced by such reflection must then be tested to see whether the text indicates agreement or disagreement and whether such an idea makes sense of what is said. We begin by proposing the possibility of betrothed love between two men, or two women, in which the previously proposed perfections of reciprocity, permanence and exclusivity are all present. How does such a relationship compare with marriage? Are there any ways in which a married relationship might more perfectly embody that love in which two persons give themselves totally to each other? Love, if we accept *Love and Responsibility's* interpretation of it, is essentially a spiritual matter, and between two men there seem to be no obstacles on the spiritual level. However, a person is not spirit alone; if he is not exclusively a body, at least he is one in some important way. The betrothed love possible between a man and a woman seems to excel that between two persons of the same sex in that giving and receiving and the consequent unity is, for the former couple, able to exist on the physical level in a way which is not possible for the latter.

The difference lies in the possibility for sexual intercourse. In intercourse two bodies unite in a way designed by nature for the facilitation of the biological function of reproduction. Here two bodies are unified in terms of spatial proximity (closeness), of inherent design (i.e. the bodies in as much as they are male and female are intended for sexual union by nature), and of working together towards the common goal of reproduction. This degree of bodily union is not possible between two persons of the same sex. There may indeed be some sort of bodily giving and receiving in organ or blood donation and physical union in the case of Siamese twins, but in such cases giving, receiving and union are accidental with respect to the nature of the body. In general, union in terms of physical closeness is all that is obtainable between two bodies of the same sex. Since betrothed love implies total giving of the self and the human person is body and spirit, it would seem to follow that among human persons betrothed love is most perfect where there is both spiritual and physical union, and that sexuality facilitates this perfection of betrothed love.

What matters here is not that this proposed hypothesis is philosophically valid, but whether or not it is a line of reasoning likely to underlie *Love and Responsibility's* understanding of sexuality and betrothed love. We will take this question up shortly, the answer obviously being very relevant to the relationship between love and sexuality. Before doing so we should recall the problem proposed earlier about betrothed love and marriage. The text of *Love and Responsibility* declared that the fact of being married is not enough to justify sexual intercourse and that outside marriage there is no intercourse which is morally justified. We asked whether betrothed love was what justified intercourse and to this we must now respond that it is indeed this love which justifies it,

but only when understood in a certain sense. *Love and Responsibility* says that outside marriage intercourse is necessarily immoral, but this must be because the entry into marriage coincides with the necessary degree of betrothed love. The love necessary to justify sexual intercourse is one which is mutual, permanent, and exclusive. This is basically the definition of marriage. All that is lacking is the aspect of public declaration, but this is not absolutely essential, for the Church recognizes the possibility of marriage without public declaration in cases where such declaration is not possible (an otherwise deserted island for example). Logically, what is necessary is the desire or intention for public declaration. According to Wojtyła “[l]ove demands this recognition”<sup>273</sup>. Without it justice is not fully done. The easiest to see why this is so is to compare terms such as ‘mistress’, ‘concubine’, and ‘kept woman’ on the one hand with ‘wife’ and ‘fiancée’ on the other.<sup>274</sup> If a man intends his relationship with a particular woman to be exclusive and permanent, but does not publicly declare this, then in the view of the society which surrounds them the association connected with the first set of terms, which is essentially that she is being treated and is letting herself be treated as an object of use, will be applied to her. The contrast between these terms signifies that without public declaration of betrothed love, society will justifiably assume that the relationship is one of injustice, of two people using each other. Obviously a genuine love will desire that the other person not be seen as a “user of persons” (or a person used by another) when he or she is in fact not. Without public declaration a misinterpretation

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<sup>273</sup> *Ibid.* 220

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid.*

is fostered and injustice is done to the other, and without justice there can be no question of love in its proper sense.<sup>275</sup>

The betrothed love which justifies sexual intercourse therefore cannot exist before marriage because it is what creates marriage. This resolves the first half of the problem. The second half is solved by the existence of marriage as an institution. While marriage is created by betrothed love and is meant to embody it, it cannot guarantee the persistence of this love since this depends instead on the wills of the two spouses. What marriage as an institution does “guarantee” are boundaries which spouses are not to cross. While permanence and exclusivity ought to be imposed by the love which the spouses have for each other, these aspects must not be violated even if love has waned, for then one person would be treated as an object of use.<sup>276</sup> The institution of marriage is an institution of justice whose particular restrictions concerning monogamy and indissolubility exist so that in the sexual relationship, the personal value of the other is affirmed and that he or she is not treated as an object who can be enjoyed only for as long as one wishes.<sup>277</sup> But betrothed love is more than permanence and exclusivity; it is a total giving of the self. There is, therefore, no necessary contradiction in saying that only betrothed true justifies (makes just) intercourse and that marriage, though created by this love and deriving its structure from it, is not enough in itself to ensure that intercourse is morally good.

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<sup>275</sup> *Ibid.* 225

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid.* 215

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.* 214

But why are the demands of betrothed love imposed on intercourse in the first place? To argue, as some have done<sup>278</sup>, that intercourse is a specifically marital activity and therefore subject to the demands of the love which produces marriage is to put the philosophic cart before the horse. Wojtyła does not take this approach. Marriage is presented in *Love and Responsibility* as an institution created in response to sexual intercourse. While it was said above that intercourse is only an act of betrothed love if betrothed love exists on the spiritual level between the two persons, this specifically applies to the metaphysical (ontological) and ethical perspectives. From these perspectives it is not an act of betrothed love, but this does not necessarily imply that it is completely divorced from betrothed love. To make sense of why Wojtyła believes intercourse to be necessarily subject to the demands of betrothed love, I believe it is best to begin by looking at his later thought. In *Theology of the Body* John Paul II speaks at length about the “language of the body”. The body has a natural language of its own; it expresses realities regardless of the will of the person. In sexual intercourse the body speaks the language of total giving of the self and total receiving of the other.<sup>279</sup> While he does not use the term *betrothed love*, it can easily be inserted since the above is its definition. Intercourse, then, is an act of betrothed love in the first instance because that is the reality which it signifies; the ethical demand that there be betrothed love in the spiritual sense exists because otherwise this act would be a lie. To my knowledge John Paul II does not give an explicit explanation as to why intercourse has this language, but from two clear themes in the work it is possible to piece together an explanation. The

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<sup>278</sup> This is the way the John Kippily argues in *Sex and the Marriage Covenant*. He claims that both bible and to common language indicate an understanding that sex is only morally justified in marriage. He then imposes the elements of intention necessary for marriage onto the marriage act, and claims that each and every act must be a renewal of the marital vows.

<sup>279</sup> *Theology of the Body* 398

first is that the body expresses the person, the second that in intercourse there is a “real bodily union”<sup>280</sup>, a genuine two in “one flesh”.<sup>281</sup> When John Paul II speaks of the body expressing the person, he does not understand the body as one means of expression among many, but as *the* means of expression. We may say that in the expressive or “phenomenological” sense it is the whole person; while a person may be metaphysically a combination of body and soul, our experience of another person never touches the soul of the other, the invisible element of the person, without passing through the intermediary of the body. If the body is the expression, the symbol, of the whole person and sexual intercourse is a union of bodies, a union of persons in the full sense is signified. To put this another way, in intercourse there is a union of bodies which from the individual perspective involves the body of oneself being given and the body of the other received; if the body is the symbol of the whole person, the giving and receiving of the body symbolizes the giving and receiving of the whole person. Such total giving and receiving of the self is the definition of betrothed love.

If we turn to *Love and Responsibility*, we can note that the idea that sexual intercourse expresses a union of persons, a mutual giving and receiving of the self, is essentially taken for granted. Often Wojtyła feels it necessary to remind his reader of the “more or less pronounced tendency to interpret the ‘gift of self’ in a purely sexual, or sexual and psychological, sense.”<sup>282</sup> He emphasizes that marriage involves a mutual surrender and not just “surrender in the physical sense.”<sup>283</sup> It seems that the concern is not so much that the reader will not associate intercourse with giving and receiving of

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<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.* 47

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid.* 99

<sup>283</sup> *Ibid.* 98

the person, but that he or she will believe it accomplishes this giving and receiving in and of itself.

The presence of the belief that intercourse involves a “real union of bodies”—and this recalls what was said earlier about physical union being a possible perfection of betrothed love—is easier to establish. Wojtyła does not hesitate to refer to intercourse as that in which “[a] man and a woman can become ‘one flesh’”.<sup>284</sup> He also comments that “marriage is not only a spiritual but also a physical and terrestrial union of persons” and that “spiritual union can and should continue even when physical union is at an end.”<sup>285</sup> But as for other possible forms of physical union and a comparison between them and sexual intercourse, he is silent. This silence, however, is most likely the result of the assumption that, from a purely philosophical, that is, natural perspective,<sup>286</sup> there are no other forms of bodily union. I would find it very difficult to imagine Wojtyła regarding the physical union involved in sodomy as anything remotely comparable to sexual intercourse.

Just before Wojtyła claims that marital intercourse is an act of betrothed love he writes that “[m]arital intercourse is, and should be, the result of reciprocal betrothed love between spouses, of the gift of self made by one person to another.”<sup>287</sup> At another point he writes that “there can be no question of a sexual giving of oneself which does not mean a giving of the person—and does not come in one way or another within the orbit of those demands which we have a right to make of betrothed love.”<sup>288</sup> Betrothed

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<sup>284</sup> *Ibid.* 184 and 237

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.* 212

<sup>286</sup> It is quite possible that Wojtyła would consider the Eucharist as representing a possibility of physical union, but such a consideration belongs to theology and not philosophy.

<sup>287</sup> *Ibid.* 233

<sup>288</sup> *Ibid.* 100

love is clearly connected with sexual intercourse as a moral requirement. While Wojtyła does not make absolutely explicit the reason for this connection, the above explanation, that intercourse has its own “language” provides not only a possible answer, but also one which is likely because 1) it helps make coherent sense of his thought, 2) it is partially supported by more overt expressions of his thought found in *Love and Responsibility*, and 3) it is derived from what he says in a later work. While there is good reason to believe that this idea underlies what Wojtyła says about intercourse, I think it would be important to add that the idea was probably not clearly formulated in his mind. If the idea was clearly formulated, it is hard to see why, considering its value from a philosophic perspective, he would have chosen to remain silent about it.

Connected with all this, and specifically related to what was said earlier about sexual intercourse as a perfection of betrothed love, is one final aspect of intercourse which *Love and Responsibility* is fairly clear about. After speaking of this act as one in which “[a] man and a woman become ‘one flesh’” Wojtyła adds that this “oneness will not be a form of shamelessness but only the *full realization* of the union of persons, which results from reciprocal conjugal love.”<sup>289</sup> Elsewhere he writes that “[l]ove is a union of persons, brought about in this instance by physical intimacy and intercourse.”<sup>290</sup> Concerning the role of intercourse in the creation of a marriage he writes that “there can be no doubt that the physical relationship between two people is of decisive importance to the institution (hence the old Latin adage *matrimonium facit copula* [intercourse makes a marriage]).”<sup>291</sup> The indication from these passages is that sexual intercourse not only symbolizes a betrothed union of persons, but also

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<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.* 184 My emphasis

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.* 180

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid.* 216

completes/realizes/perfects this union. In what way does it do this? Wojtyła does not say but the easiest explanation here is probably the most likely and that is that, as described above, sexual intercourse allows love, the unification of persons, to extend to the physical level and so encompass the human person in his or her totality.

To summarize, then, we may say that sexual intercourse as understood by *Love and Responsibility* creates a special relation between love and sexuality. Intercourse is meant to be an act of betrothed love and is morally governed by the demands of this love. Since Wojtyła imposes this demand on *all* acts of intercourse, we are led to suppose that there must be some inherent connection between intercourse and betrothed love. A symbolic/expressive relationship seems the reasonable explanation: sexual intercourse, which is the union of bodies, expresses/symbolizes love, which is the union of persons. Further, intercourse, provided betrothed love exists on the spiritual level between the spouses, serves to fulfill or realize of this love. Here is it easy to feel as if we were on the verge of theology for we have something which is able to *accomplish what it signifies*. While Wojtyła, at least not in *Love and Responsibility*, does not pursue this line of reasoning, I believe that to view sexual intercourse as the natural sacrament of human love would be to remain very much within the spirit of his thought.

## Conclusion

In 1954 Dietrich von Hildebrand visited the Dominican convent in Salamanca with a group of American students. When the prior recognized his name he asked, “Are you this ‘heretic’ who has introduced the dangerous view that love is of essential importance in marriage?”<sup>292</sup> From the perspective of the upper Church hierarchy, von Hildebrand was anything but a heretic; Pius XII, we are told, had informally called him a twentieth century doctor of the Church<sup>293</sup> and Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger wrote the foreword for his biography.<sup>294</sup> But the incident reveals an aspect of Church’s twentieth century history which is seldom noticed. The standard division of the Church, especially in the post-Vatican II era, into liberal and conservative camps makes it difficult to appreciate the enormous differences among the “conservatives”. While Benedict XVI is often regarded by the media as an ultra-conservative, a quick search on the internet, at least as of 2006, will reveal that there are a number of people who regard him as a liberal heretic, particularly because of his views on ecumenism. A number of people regarded John Paul II in the same way. The label depends on the one giving it. The terms liberal and conservative become useful when they are recognized as being relative. To claim that Karol Wojtyła/John Paul II was a liberal or conservative on sexual matters helps understand his role in modern development of doctrine very little; it is far more helpful to know what the liberal and conservative forces relative to him were

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<sup>292</sup> Alice von Hildebrand 212

<sup>293</sup> “Biographical note” in Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Marriage: The Mystery of Faithful Love*, (Manchester, New Hampshire Sophia Institute Press, 1984), 81.

<sup>294</sup> Joseph, Cardinal Ratzinger, “Foreword” in *Soul of a Lion*

and how he reacted to them. But in order to know what his place was on this spectrum, to know which forces he had to contend with on liberal and conservative sides, it is necessary to know what he actually thought.

Our study has been limited to *Love and Responsibility* and to the question of how Karol Wojtyła understood love to be related to sexuality. It has not been a complete assessment of his thought on marriage and sexuality; nevertheless, the heart of the matter has been examined. Wojtyła as a philosopher was many things: a humanist, a phenomenologist, a Thomist. But above all else he was a personalist; almost all his pre-papal writings testify to his intense interest in “the person”. While some explanation may be needed to show why the works of von Hildebrand, Doms or Fuchs ought to be categorized as “personalist”, very little is needed for *Love and Responsibility*; concern for “the person” is explicit and dominates the work from beginning to end. Since personalism in the area of sexuality and marriage is generally characterized by concern about love, it was fitting to ask of *Love and Responsibility* what connection love bears to sexuality.

What was discovered was that human sexuality bears the relation it does to love first and foremost because it is the sexuality of a human being, a person. Love, according to Wojtyła, is exclusive to persons. The sexuality of an animal cannot bear the same sort of relation to love as human sexuality does; if there is any relation, it is very remote. Since sex in a human being is the attribute of a person, actions within the sexual sphere which take another person as their object must be subject to the moral demand governing all interpersonal actions. This demand is stated by the “personalistic norm” which in its positive and simplified form is: persons are to be loved.

Love, from *Love and Responsibility*'s perspective, is essentially the unification of persons. It is the movement of one person towards another where unification is effected primarily through the affirmation of the other's value as a person. This affirmation must derive from the intellect and will and not from emotional reaction. Emotions, which in the sexual sphere may be divided into those which are reactions to the other's body seen as a possible object of enjoyment or those which are reactions to the whole person as masculine or feminine, play an important role in love; although they do not constitute its essence they help foster it, acting as the "raw material of love", and perfect it by giving it a subjective vividness.

Sexuality itself belongs to the "natural order", but it enters into the "personal order" in a variety of ways. The sexual urge is a dynamic force in the human person and has an intensity which is proportionate to the importance of the end for which it exists: the existence of the human race. But because the urge, in order to achieve its ultimate end, takes a person of the opposite sex as its immediate object, it enters into the sphere of love. As a means to an end the urge leads a person to desire sexual union with another. This creates a problem: against the blind orientation of the urge is the awareness that it is not morally right to treat another person as a mere means to an end. The solution is love, the mutual affirmation of the value of the person and the joining together of two persons in a common outlook on the goods connected to sexuality. But the sexual urge is not related to love simply as a problem to be resolved by it. While love is not its goal, it necessarily has the effect of leading a person towards love. Like love it takes the person, and not associated values, as its object. It helps a person appreciate the other's personal value by making associated values especially attractive.

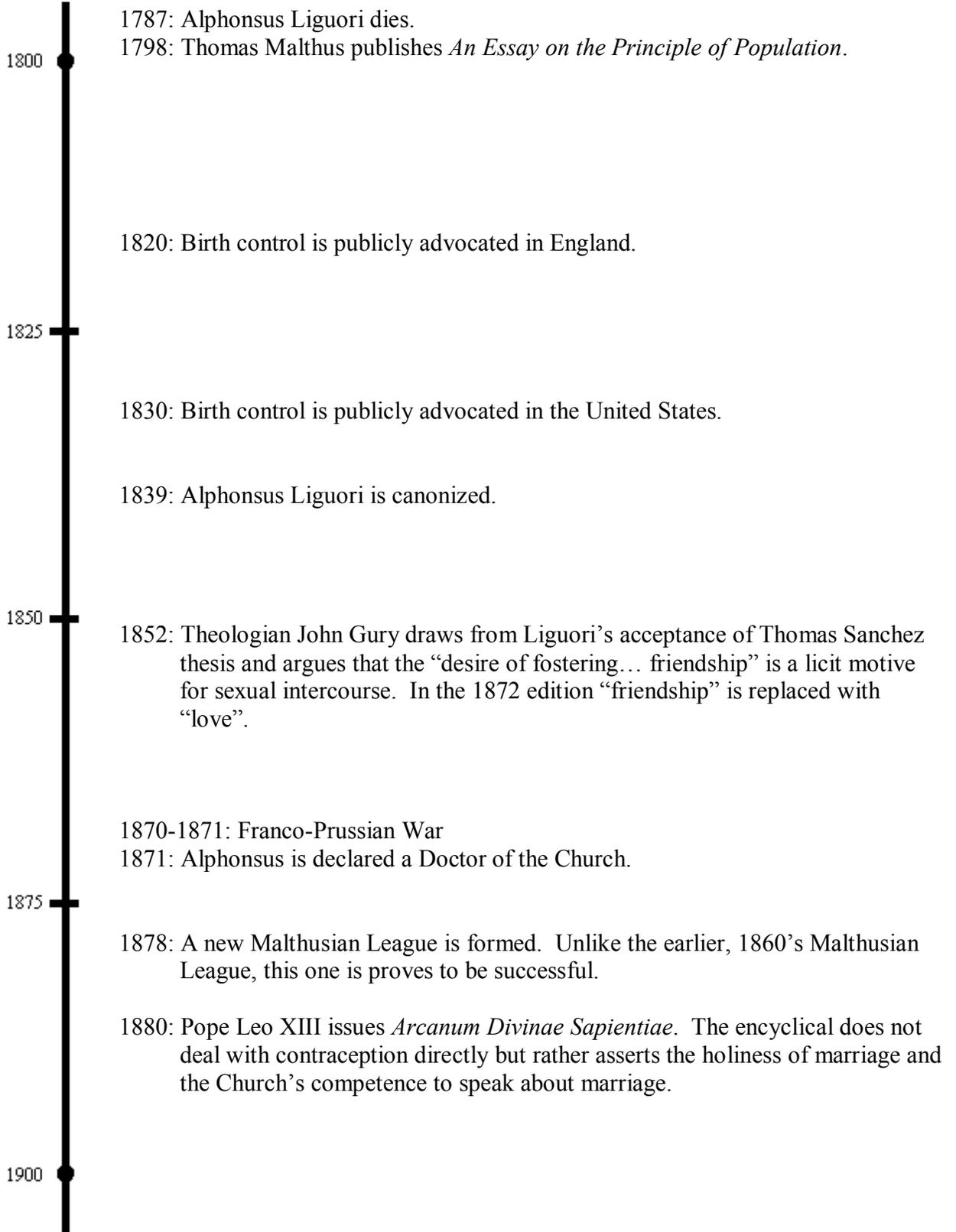
Making one keenly feel the inadequacy inherent in sex, it provides the objective basis for love-as-desire. And finally, the urge makes a person desire sexual union with another. Love is the unification of persons and therefore bodily union, made possible by the sexual division of the species, becomes a unique potential for love. Love, an essentially spiritual reality, is able to incorporate into itself not only emotion but the whole person, body and soul. Through its natural structure, sexual intercourse becomes the expression of betrothed love, the highest form of love in which the self is given to the other.

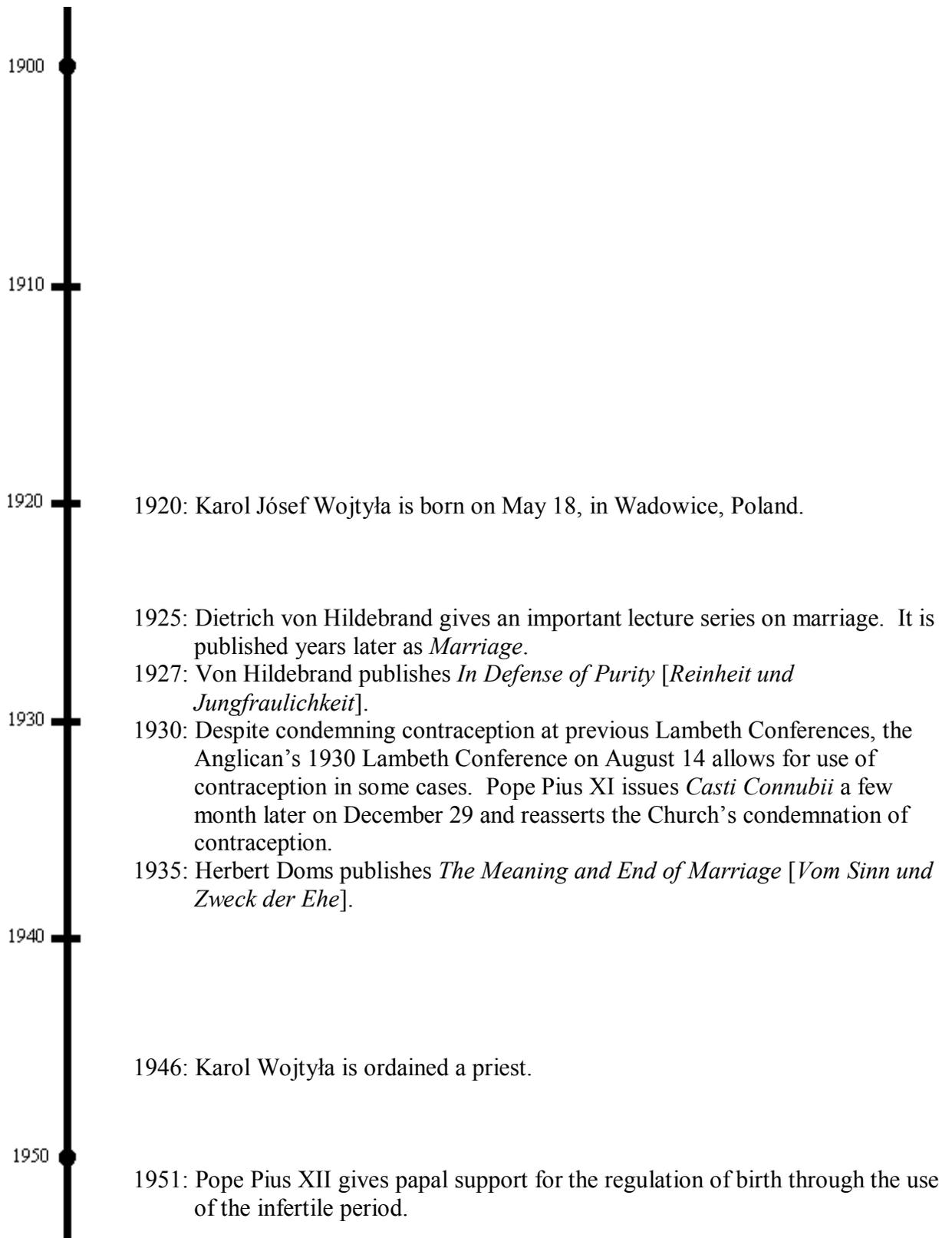
While detailed knowledge of Wojtyła's understanding of love's relation to sexuality is important for interpreting his actions as bishop, cardinal and pope, perhaps the most important finding of our study is simply that he had a clear answer to the question of how and why the two are connected. In the context of the modern western world it is easy to speak of love and sexuality in the same breath, easy to link them together, but it is rare to find conscious reflection on this relation and a reasoned answer to whether their relation is necessary or accidental. A theologian or pope might be tempted to make love a part of the discourse on marriage and sexuality simply because this is the way the matter has come to be spoken of. But *Love and Responsibility* shows that Karol Wojtyła did not say what he did simply because it was expected by the modern world; right or wrong he came to specific, reasoned conclusions as to why the two were related.

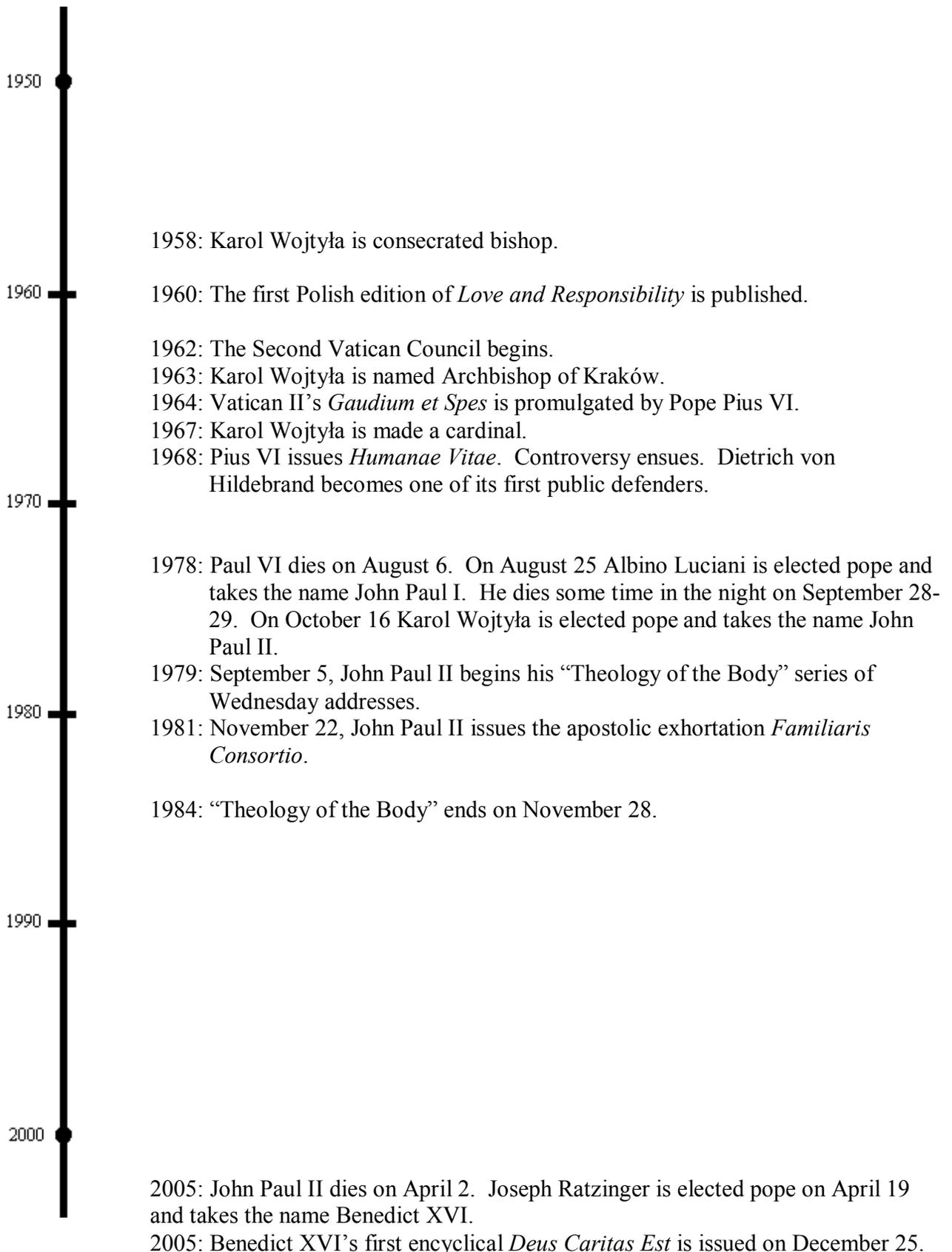
Wojtyła's clear conviction about love's place in the sexual sphere derived from his clear conviction about the nature of love. Just as it is easy to make an unreflected association between love and sexuality, it is easy to speak at length about love without

having any clear definition of it in mind. The wide range and haziness of meaning which the term *love* has is perhaps a testimony to its importance in human life, but it is also a danger for philosophic discussion when the undefined, mercurial term threatens to render everything meaningless. With the explicit attention given to the nature of love, *Love and Responsibility* represents for the development of personalism in Catholic sexual ethics a step in the right direction, at least from the philosophic perspective.

## Appendix: Timeline







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