Ratzinger on Truth as Essentially Uncreated

As described in the introduction, for Vico truth is convertible with the made. Ratzinger explicitly denies the reductionist aspects of such a claim. For Ratzinger, truth is essentially not made because God is Truth Itself, and in him there is no inner creation. At the same time, however, Ratzinger affirms a created aspect of intraworldly truth. Ratzinger, therefore, rejects Vico's definition of truth, while acknowledging a dimension of his thought that is compatible with Christian belief. In this chapter, I will demonstrate how Ratzinger attempts to rectify Vico's position on truth by utilizing a particular understanding of the analogy of being. This leads him to affirm that humanity's historically conditioned expressions of truth have the capacity to correspond analogously with uncreated divine truth.

Correspondence and the Analogy of Being

To demonstrate how Ratzinger corrects Vico, we will first focus on how Ratzinger understands truth in its divine state, to which all truth accessible to humankind corresponds in an imperfect way. Then we will examine how Ratzinger, by relying on the law of analogy as developed throughout the Catholic tradition, views humanity as corresponding to truth by participating in uncreated truth, as opposed to Vico's perception of humanity corresponding to truth by imitating the generation of the second person of the Trinity, which is the ultimate paradigm of truth's convertibility with the made.[1]

Greek Ontology and God as One and Triune

While the theme is not absent in his other works, the main work where Ratzinger defends the priority of the true over the made in opposition to Vico is in *Introduction to Christianity* (1968). He does this in the following manner. In accordance with his 1959 lecture *Der Gott des Glaubens und der Gott der Philosophen*, Ratzinger argues that ancient Greek ontology is providentially part of a Christian concept of truth.[2] Since there are a variety of ancient Greek ontologies, it is necessary to pinpoint which aspects of the various Greek ontologies Ratzinger deems as compatible with Christianity, so as to differentiate what he considers as supportive of Christian faith from what Vico,

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1. Giambattista Vico, *On the Most Ancient Wisdom of the Italians*, trans. Jason Taylor (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), chap. 1, 17, p. 19; chap. 1 , 28, pgs. 27–29.
2. Ratzinger, *Der Gott des Glaubens und der Gott der Philosophen* (Bonn: Paulinus, 2006), 29: "Dann bedeutet dies, daß die von den Kirchenvätern vollzogene Synthese des biblischen Glaubens mit dem hellenischen Geist als dem damaligen Repräsentanten des philosophischen Geistes überhaupt nicht nur legitim, sondern notwendig war, um den vollen Anspruch und den ganzen Ernst des biblischen Glaubens zum Ausdruck zu bringen...Das aber bedeutet, daß die philosophische Wahrheit in einem gewissen Sinn konstitutiv mit in den christlichen Glauben hineingehöft, und dies wiederum besagt, daß die analogia entis eine notwendige Dimension der christlichen Wirklichkeit ist, deren Streichung zugleich die die Aughebung des eigentlichen Anspruchs wäre, den das Christentum zu stellen hat."

as explained in the introduction, does. The various theories can be differentiated by how they explain constancy and stability present in reality. A few main theories describe this relationship in the following manner. According to Stoic ontology, which recognizes only material "bodies [*somata*] as genuinely existent beings [*onta*],"[3] God, as a material being, is present throughout the world "as its organizing principle."[4] As an internal activity, God provides order in the world characterized by change. The divine being does this since, for the Stoics,

> God is identical with one of the two ungenerated and indestructible first principles (*archai*) of the universe. One principle is matter which they regard as utterly unqualified and inert. It is that which is acted upon. God is identified with an eternal reason (*logos*, Diog. Laert. 44B) or intelligent designing fire (Aetius, 46A) which structures matter in accordance with Its plan.[5]

For Parmenides (510–470 BCE), the founder of the Eleatic school of philosophy, all of reality is a single being that does not admit any change, even though it appears that change occurs.[6] In contrast, Heraclitus asserted that being, which resembles fire, is in a constant state of change.[7] Plato attempted to reach a synthesis between

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3. Brad Inwood, *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 210.
4. Ibid., 371.
5. Baltzly, Dirk, "Stoicism," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2010 edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/stoicism/.
6. Parmenides, *The Fragments of Parmenides: A Critical Text*, ed. A. H. Coxon, trans. Richard McKirahan (Las Vegas: Parmenides Publishing, 2009), 78: "Since now its limit is ultimate, Being is in a state of perfection from every viewpoint, like the volume of a spherical ball, and equally poised in every direction from its centre. For it must not be either at all greater or at all smaller in one regard than in another. For neither has Not-being any being which could halt the coming together of Being, nor is Being capable of being more than Being in one regard and less in another, since it is all inviolate. For it is equal with itself from every view and encounters determination all alike."
7. Heraclitus, *Heraclitus: Fragments*, trans. T. M. Robinson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1987), 25: "<The ordered?> world, the same for all, no god or man made, but it always was, is, and will be, an everlasting fire, being kindled in measures and being put out in measures."

Parmenides and Heraclitus with his theory of forms. According to Plato there are stable, eternal forms in heaven that earthly beings faintly image.[8] In an effort to correct Plato's idealism, Aristotle denies that universal forms exist apart from the individual matter that they inhabit.[9] Nonetheless, Aristotle still affirms that a constant element persists throughout the change of a being. He explains this with his hylomorphic (Greek *hylo*, matter, *morphe*, form) theory, in which the essence of the compound is the substantial form and not the ever-changing matter.[10] We will now determine which of the above elements, according to Ratzinger, Christianity appropriated. Ratzinger's difference in this respect with Vico will also be pointed out.

As stated in the introduction, Vico argues that the Christian concept of truth stands midway between an Epicurean relativistic view, in which humans' formulation of truth is determined by chance events in history, and the Stoic static concept in which humanity encounters truth throughout history, as determined mechanically by fate. According to Vico's middle position, humanity knows truth by causing it historically, while being directed by providence.[11] He denies the existence of an a priori known unchangeable human nature.[12] Instead of viewing human nature as unalterable, Vico maintains that human nature undergoes incremental changes as humanity progresses through history. These changes, asserts Vico, are neither determined by humanity in a haphazard manner according to

8. Plato, *Phaedo,* trans. David Gallop (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1996), 68–71.
9. Aristotle, *The Metaphysics*, trans. John H. McMahon (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1991), 156–61.
10. Ibid., 142. "But I mean by form the essence or very nature of each thing, and the first substance."
11. Vico, *The First New Science*, trans. Leon Pompa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), bk. 2, chap. 1, pgs. 38–39.
12. *The New Science of Giambattista Vico*, trans. Thomas Goddard Bergin (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1948), section 1, chap. 1, 374, p. 104.

chance events of history, since history is directed by providence, nor, due to human beings' free will, are they entirely predictable.

Essential Elements of Greek Ontology Wedded to Faith

Ratzinger, in contrast with Vico's evolving concept of nature, maintains a more stable idea of nature. This is evident in his insistence that one Greek ontological element that is perennially valid and providentially married with faith comes from Stoicism. As described above, for the Stoics the natural order of the world is pervaded with divine reality called *logos* that provides the ever-changing world with constant, unchanging truths. In this way the Stoics can be understood as prioritizing what is constantly true over that which is changed by being made. As Ratzinger writes in an earlier work, this led the Stoics to consider "the overriding moral norm to be nature; a thing was right if it was 'according to nature.'"[13] The fathers of the c, as described by Ratzinger, built upon this Greek concept of God's being by relating *logos* with Christ. By so doing, Christianity transformed, without eliminating, the definition of *logos* as constant unchanging truth by also seeing truth as personal and dynamic, since truth ultimately is defined by the love relationships of the Trinitarian persons, in which the shared love of the Father and the Son is the nonstatic, energetic power of the Holy Spirit. According to Christianity, therefore, the person of Christ is the word (*logos*) spoken by the Father in the love of the Holy Spirit. As described by the Gospel of John, Christ as *logos* relates to the Father as a mission in the Holy Spirit.[14] Understanding *logos* in relationship to Trinitarian mission is the "new dimension" of relationality that

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13. Joseph Ratzinger, *Theological Highlights of Vatican II*, trans. Thomas P. Rausch (New York: Paulist, 2009), 237.
14. Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, trans. J. R. Foster (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1990), 135.

Christianity brings to the concept of *logos*, which to the Stoics simply meant "the eternal rationality of being."[15]

Summarizing the relational meaning that truth acquires through Christianity, Ratzinger writes, "'*logos*'-Christology, as 'word'-theology, is . . . the opening up of being to the idea of relationship."[16] Because all creation exists through its participation in the being of God, all of creation has, through Christ as the Word of God, relational meaning. In addition humankind, since it has an intellect, by being made in the image and likeness of God "can re-think the *logos*, the meaning of being, because his own *logos*, his own reason, is *logos* of the one *logos*, thought of the original thought."[17] Since humanity's mind is made in the image and likeness of God's mind, it has the ability "to re-think the *logos*" and thus intellectually grasp and, to some extent, correspond in a constant manner to truth.

Another Greek ontological element that Ratzinger sees as part and parcel with Christian faith, and that distinguishes his perception of truth and nature from Vico's, is the hylomorphic theory as developed by Aristotle and appropriated by Christianity. Ratzinger describes how Christianity transformed this theory by writing,

> To Aristotle it was among the "accidents," the chance circumstances of being, which are separate from substance, the sole sustaining form of the real. The experience of the God who conducts a dialogue, of the God who is not only *logos* but also *dia-logos*, not only idea and meaning but speech and word in the reciprocal exchanges of conversation—this experience exploded the ancient division of reality into substance, the real thing, and accidents, the merely circumstantial. It now becomes clear that the dialogue, the relation, stands beside the substance as an equally primordial form of being.[18]

15. Ibid., 136.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid., 32.
18. Ibid., 131.

As explained by Ratzinger, Christianity, without doing away with the Aristotelian ontological concept of substance, which prioritizes form (*morphe*) over matter (*hylo*), placed this element of constancy amidst change equally alongside with the dynamic category of relation as ultimately present with the Trinity. That these two elements, one constant, the other dynamic, are considered as "equally primordial" by Christianity by being loved based, is a paradox to be believed in faith and then gradually understood as the ground that provides meaning for humans.[19] Ultimately, this mystery stems from the belief in God being one and, at the same time a Trinity of love relationships. Doctrinal errors result when one side of this mystery is stressed to the detriment of the other. A Christian concept of being retains both of these elements without trying to resolve them in favor of one or the other.

For Ratzinger, the scholastic thought of the medieval age captured the synthesis between the Greek philosophical thought on being as constant, and the Christian belief in being as intrinsically relational, with the pithy Scholastic phrase *Verum est ens*.[20] As understood by medieval Christianity, according to this phrase truth is convertible

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19. For further reading of the importance of paradox in faith, see chapters 6 through 9 of Henri de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, trans. Geoffrey Chapman (New York: Crossroad, 1998), 101–85. De Lubac's thought had a profound influence upon Ratzinger. In *Milestones*, Ratzinger acknowledged this by stating, "Never again have I found anyone with such a comprehensive theological and humanistic education as Balthasar and de Lubac, and I cannot even begin to say how much I owe to my encounter with them." Joseph Ratzinger, *Milestones: Memoirs 1927–1977*, trans. Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1998), 143. According to Ratzinger, "in its original nature belief or faith is no blind collection of incomprehensible paradoxes. It means, furthermore, that it is nonsense to plead the 'mystery', as people certainly do only too often, by way of an excuse for the failure of reason. If theology arrives at all kinds of absurdities and tries not only to excuse them, but even where possible to canonize them, by pointing to the mystery, then we are confronted with a misuse of the true idea of the 'mystery', the purpose of which is not to destroy reason but rather to render belief possible *as* understanding. . . . The tool with which man is equipped to deal with the truth of being is not *knowledge* but *understanding*: understanding the meaning to which he has entrusted himself." Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 45–46.
20. Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 31.

with being, understood as both constant and in dynamic relation. Giambattista Vico, explains Ratzinger, broke with this understanding and instead proposed that *Verum quia factum*.[21] For Ratzinger, this formula of Vico "denotes the real end of the old metaphysics and the beginning of the specifically modern attitude of mind. The revolutionary character of modern thinking in comparison with all that preceded it is here expressed with absolutely inimitable precision."[22] This formula captures the tendency of the modern mind to define truth by what is made and not by what is constant and enduring. In other words, this formula, as understood by Ratzinger, defines truth solely according to change. Such a definition of truth is not in accordance with the hylomorphic theory as developed by Aristotle and later transformed by Christianity, but rather reflects the hylozoistic theory (Greek *hylo*, matter, *zoe*, life) of Heraclitus.[23] According to Heraclitus, as explained in the introduction, all material objects (*hyle*) contains a principle of life (*zoe*) that is not a constant, stable element, but rather is dynamic and ever in motion.

Karl Marx transformed Vico's hylozoistic formula by not simply defining truth with what is made (*verum quia factum*), but also by equating truth with that which is put into action, or in the words of Ratzinger, *verum quia faciendum*.[24] This action is future oriented, with the goal of changing the world. By being reduced to immanent making, changing, and acting, truth now has completely lost a sense of being, a constant reality independent from man's activity. Instead, truth is now seen as an "inconstant variable"[25] at the function of

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21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. John Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy* (Kila, MT Kessinger Publishing, 2003), 129–79.
24. Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 35.
25. Paulo G. Sottopietra, *Wissen aus der Taufe : die Aporien der neuzeitlichen Vernunft und der christliche Weg im Werk von Joseph Ratzinger* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 2003), 56, my translation. "Die Wahrheit besteht folglich in einer unbeständigen Variablen, sozusagen in Funktion dieser kontinuierlichen Evolution."

evolution. In contrast, according to the Christian view as presented by Ratzinger, the truth of creation is related to what is constant, since creation was first thought by the one God who is an eternally faithful reality, but not a static reality, since as Trinity he is defined by his relationships. In contrast, for both Vico and Marx, truth is not reflective of what is one, unified and constant, as it is for the Scholastics, but rather is related to an ever-evolving reality in the process of becoming.[26]

The Mystery of Ultimate Truth as Constant and Dynamic

According to Ratzinger, with the advent of Vico, and subsequent thinkers such as Marx, truth began to be understood less as a stable reality and more as a created, unstable, constantly changing reality that is created. For Ratzinger, conceiving truth as created blurs the distinction between Creator and the created. In addition, the mystery, accepted by faith, that in God truth is both unchanging, due to God's unity, and relational, by being defined by the Trinity, is consequently lost. This position of Ratzinger is more clearly evident in his writing *Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith: The Church as Communion* (2002). Here, drawing on Augustine, Ratzinger, in upholding this mystery, not only defines the Holy Spirit as the communion of the dynamic love between the Father and the Son but also as a constant truth. In describing the Holy Spirit as communion, Ratzinger writes, "If he is called by what is divine about God, what is shared by Father and Son, then his nature is in fact this, being the *communion* of the Father and the Son."[27] In relating the Holy Spirit to constant truth, Ratzinger, with reference to 1 John 4:16, identifies the Holy Spirit with what is constant and abiding and not ephemeral and passing.[28]

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26. Sottopietra, *Wissen aus der Taufe*, 50.
27. Joseph Ratzinger, *Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith: The Church as Communion*, trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2005), 41.

This means, explains Ratzinger, that the *pneuma* aspect of the Holy Spirit should not be understood as "discontinuous" but, rather, by being related to truth; it should be understood as "'abiding,'" as "enduring and creative faithfulness," and as a true love that "unites and draws into abiding unity."[29] Since Christ is also often identified with true love, by being the Word of the Father, how, then, is Christ as truth distinguished from the Holy Spirit as truth?

Relying on Augustine once again, Ratzinger explains that the Son is distinguished from the Holy Spirit by being "begotten"[30] by the Father as Word and Wisdom, while the Holy Spirit is given. In other words, the Son comes from God as begotten truth, whereas the Holy Spirit comes from God as given truth, and all else comes from God as created truth: *natus–datus–factus*.[31] Although the term *given* (*datus*) is not, explains Ratzinger, "an intermediate stage between 'begotten' and 'created' (*natus* and *factus*) and by no means blurs the distinction between creature and God, but rather remains limited to the inner reality of divinity, it does represent an opening onto history and toward man."[32]

The essential difference for Ratzinger between the Holy Spirit and creation is that while the third person is eternally given in the immanent Trinity and, in time, given in salvation history, creation is made in time and has no place within the immanent Trinity. In this way, Ratzinger, contra a certain interpretation of Vico, upholds the priority of truth over the created and made, while at the same time not reducing first truth simply to a nonvital, stationary concept of unity, in partial agreement with Vico's middle position between Stoicism and Epicurianism. Rather, Ratzinger sees truth both as one

28. Ibid., 45.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid., 48.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.

and as Triune, relational and as a result, energetic and life-giving. While upholding this essential difference in the term *datus* between the Holy Spirit and creation, with this term Ratzinger also strives to bring out a similarity between the human perception of truth and the truth in God, while not blurring the distinction between creature and God. Ratzinger argues that the term *datus* does not lead to this error, since according to *datus* God gives (does not create) his Spirit as a unmerited gift in history in order to reveal to humanity divine, saving truth.[33]

Ratzinger goes on to explain that humanity, through the church,[34] does not relate to truth solely as an ahistorical, unchanging reality but also, due to the Holy Spirit's presence in the church, relates to truth historically and personally. In this manner, Ratzinger is able to both acknowledge a constant aspect in truths of faith, since truth in God is one, and a multifaceted dimension of these truths subject to development, since God as Triune gives himself through the Holy Spirit in time to the church. He avoids confusing truth in God or as understood by humankind as subject to constant change, as he maintains Vico does, by asserting that truth has priority over the made and the created. The dynamic element of truth is not, for Ratzinger, due to being created but rather due to being, in its ultimate state, both unchanging as one and not stationary by being defined through the Trinitarian relations.

Human Correspondence to Divine Truth within the Context of Twentieth-Century Debates on the Analogy of Being

By defending the Greek philosophical concept of truth as constant and unchanging as validly describing an aspect of God, Ratzinger is then able to argue that humankind has a stable reality to which it

33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.

can identify and correspond to. For Ratzinger, as evident in *Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith*, humans corresponds to the constant divine truth through their historical participation in the Holy Spirit, who opens up history to God. This is similar to Vico's idea that humanity knows truth by creating it in collaboration with divine providence. This similarity between Ratzinger and Vico, however, is only properly understood when Ratzinger's view of humanity's correspondence to truths of faith as an historical participation in the Holy Spirit is seen in light of Ratzinger's previously mentioned characteristic of the Holy Spirit as faithful "love that unites and draws into abiding unity."[35] The identification of the Holy Spirit with the dynamics of love indicates that doctrine can be changed through development by human reason's collaboration with the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, the abiding truthful characteristic of the Holy Spirit, due to God's unity, indicates that there are elements in doctrine not subject to change. The Holy Spirit, as described by Ratzinger, brings out the mystery of ultimate truth as being both constant and as a loving, dynamic relation. For Ratzinger, this Trinitarian mystery is reflected not only ontically but also noetically, in that faith and reason in their correspondence to truth are integrated with one another, but not totally. Each has its proper sphere of autonomy. Faith's autonomy is due to its correspondence to the constant fidelity of the loving relationships in the Trinity. Reason's autonomy is related to its ability to bring the mind in accordance with the constant abiding natures in creation, which is reflective of the fidelity of its Creator, only truly known through faith.

Although the above succinctly presents Ratzinger's teaching on correspondence, as distinguished from Vico, it does not provide a reason explaining why humanity can relate to ultimate truth. For

35. Ibid.

Ratzinger this reason is due to the analogy of being, which he sees, along with the above-mentioned Greek ontological elements, as intrinsically intertwined with faith. I will, then, describe various key approaches to the analogy of being in order to locate Ratzinger's position. This will consequently shed light on how, according to Ratzinger, humankind corresponds to truth, and how through his use of the analogy of being Ratzinger further differentiates himself from Vico.

In order to locate Ratzinger's view on the analogy of being, I will present three twentieth-century Catholic theologians who had a profound influence on Ratzinger's thought: Erich Przywara (1889–1972), Gottlieb Söhngen (1892–1971), and Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905–1988). Before doing so, it will be helpful to locate the concept in history in order to pinpoint the use of the term.[36] The concept is traceable to ancient Greek philosophy, in particular Plato and Aristotle. In an attempt to reconcile the Heraclitan "flux" of "becoming" with the Parmenidian "stasis" of "being," both Plato and Aristotle proposed middle positions in which there is an analagous relation between the world of change and the constancy of being. According to Plato, the finite world of change is related to the world of eternal forms as a faint image.[37] In contrast with Plato, Aristotle posited universal forms in particular matter and not apart from them. In this way he understood the constancy of being as manifest in many ways within the physical world.[38] The various forms of being are related to one another analogously through their mutual participation in the primary analogate of being.[39] Aquinas further developed Aristotle's analogous concept of being, by

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36. John R. Betz, "After Barth: A New Introduction to Erich Przywara's Analogia Entis," in *The Analogy of Being,* ed. Thomas J. White (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2011), 44–50.
37. Plato, *Republic,* trans. B. Jowett (New York: The Dial Press, 1956), 222–23.
38. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, book 4.2 1003b, p. 66.
39. Ibid., book 4.1 1003a, p. 66.

explaining that analogy can be understood in two primary ways. In the first, as described by Aristotle, a multitude of things are analogously related by having a primary analogate (healthy medicine and healthy urine are healthy in relationship to a healthy body as the primary analogate). Aquinas also distinguished another analogy of one to another, or between a primary instance and a secondary analogate[40] that is similar to the previously mentioned one. These latter two related kinds of analogy were later called "analogies of attribution" by Cajetan.[41] In contrast to the attributive way of analogy, there is also, for Aquinas, an analogy of proportionality, in which two entities are proportionally similar to two other entities (king:city as God:creation).[42] At around the time of Cajetan, the concept of the analogy of being, as described by Aquinas and present before him, was made explicit in theological schools through the use of terminology that distinguished various forms of analogy.[43]

Przywara and the Analogy of Being

Przywara developed the analogy of being by going beyond the Scholastic understanding (e.g., Cajetan) of analogy as a "theory of logic" and toward seeing it as a basic ontic and noetic law, and as a "formal principle" rooted in the "original structure" of reality. Thomas F. O'Meara observes that, in Przywara's thought, "both kinds of analogy, attribution and proportionality, point to something deeper, an exposition of the structure of created being as diverse but also as participative in God."[44] This led Przywara to claim that

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40. Aquinas, *On the Power of God*, trans. English Dominican Fathers (London: Burns, Oates, and Washbourne, 1932–34), book 3, q. 7, a. 7 c. Cf. Reinhard Hütter, "Attending to the Wisdom of God" in White, *The Analogy of Being*, 235.
41. Betz, "After Barth," 47.
42. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Notre Dame: Christian Classics, 1981), Ia, q. 13, art 5.
43. Julio Terán-Dutari,"Die Geschichte des Terminus 'Analogia entis' und das Werk Erich Przywaras," *Philosophisches Jahrbuch* 77, no. 1 (1970): 163–79.

analogy defines the very structure of being.[45] In arguing this point, Przywara first defines the word analogy in relationship to *logos* (reason pervading the universe) in two ways by stating "that ἀνά, grammatically speaking, simultaneously means 'according to an orderly sequence' *and* is also concomitant with ἄνω, and so signifies an 'up above.'"[46] According to Przywara, this manner of understanding analogy stands between a "pure logic" concept of being as "identity from beginning to end" and a dialectical view of being as "identity in contradiction."[47]

In contrast, an analogical concept of being, as opposed to the logical and dialogical accounts, views being as "self ordering with a being-ordered."[48] In other words being is seen not simply as a static oneness with change only apparently occurring, according to the Parmenidian account, or in a constant state of flux, as described by a Heraclitan perspective. Instead, rooted in the principle of noncontradiction,[49] the analogous approach sees created being as containing an order (*logos*), but not as the order itself. The order within creation as a reflection of divine order is due to creation being drawn upward toward God, while maintaining its difference with the uncreated being of God.[50] The analogous similarity between these two orders is to be understood, writes Przywara, according to the "the classical formula for analogy from the 4th Lateran council: within every 'similarity, however great' is an 'ever greater dissimilarity' (*inter Creatorem et creaturam non potest tanta similitudo*

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44. Thomas F. O'Meara, *Erich Przywara: His Theology and His World* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), 80.

45. Erich Przywara, *Analogia Entis* (Freiburg: Johannes, 1996), 210. Translation provided by John R. Betz.

46. Ibid., 94.

47. Ibid., 95.

48. Ibid.

49. According to Przywara, "It is thus in the principle of non-contradiction—understood as middle—that analogy establishes itself as the foundation of all thought." Ibid., 105.

50. Ibid., 97.

notari, quin inter eos maior sit dissimilitudo notanda)."[51] As explained by Przywara, the first part of this formula on similarity refers to the analogy of attribution, and the second, on an "ever greater dissimilarity," refers to the analogy of proportionality.[52] Przywara argues that the analogy of attribution, which emphasizes that which can be identified, and the analogy of proportionality, which points to a dissimilarity between the two different proportions, are both contained in the Catholic understanding of the analogy of being. He brings this out in his definition of analogy. In the words of Przywara, "the *analogia entis*, as a principle, stands within the unity of its ἀνά and ἄνω: the ἄνω of that which is ever 'above-and-beyond' and yet–and therefore–the ἀνά of its 'inner order.'"[53] For Przywara, the analogy of being, as a principle with the element ἀνά in tension with ἄνω, is not to be understood in a merely logical manner by relying solely on the analogy of attribution as

> something originally static, "from which" everything else could be deduced or "to which" everything else could be reduced. Instead, by also referring to an analogy of proportionality, it is essentially *the* primordial dynamic as such: within it one discovers not only the oscillation of the intra-creaturely, not only that of the relation between God and creature, but that of the intra-divine itself, the hyper-transcendent expression of which is the theologoumenon that says that the intra-divine "relations" (*relationes*) simply *are* the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.[54]

Söhngen and the Analogy of Being

The fundamental theologian Söhngen furthered Przywara's defense of the analogy of being by more explicitly heeding Barth's critique of it. He did so by presenting the analogy of being as connected

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51. Ibid., 135. See Henry Denzinger, *The Sources of Catholic Dogma*, trans. Roy J. Deferrari (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1957), 171.
52. Przywara, *Analogia Entis,* 136.
53. Ibid., 223.
54. Ibid.,

to revelation and subordinate to an analogy of faith.[55] Söhngen's approach to the analogy of being is connected to his emphasis on Bonaventurian theology over Thomistic theology. "His call", writes Schenk, "to openly shift from a Thomistic to a Bonaventurian paradigm in Catholic theology as a way to deepen the convergence not just with Reformed but with patristic theology was one that found widespread Catholic support in the years that would follow."[56] Bonaventure, in contrast with Aquinas, describes Markus Graulich, can be considered the "classical theologian of the analogy of faith."[57] According to this perspective, the analogy of being is only understood within the context of faith.

This difference between Bonaventure and Aquinas is particularly evident in how each theologian conceives of wisdom. Aquinas describes in his various works three kinds of wisdom (metaphysical, theological, and mystical),[58] from the perspective of an immanent act within the soul that perfects humanity, thus emphasizing the wisdom created being has in itself that is noetically reflected in the relatively autonomous ability of humanity to know wisdom. In contrast, Bonaventure, as particularly evident in his *Collations on the Six Day of Creation*, depicts wisdom from the perspective of that which informs the soul.[59] By so doing, he describes human

55. Gottlieb Söhngen,"Analogia fidei I: Gottähnlickkeit allein aus dem Galuben?," *Catholica* 3 (July 1934): 1–24; Gottlieb Söhngen,"Analogia fidei II: Die Einheit in der Glaubenswissenschaft," *Catholica* 3 (October 1934): 25–57.

56. Richard Schenk, "Analogy as the discrimen naturae et gratiae," in White, *The Analogy of Being*, 183.

57. Markus Graulich, *Unterwegs zu einer Theologie des Kirchenrechts: die Grundlegung des Rechts bei Gottlieb Söhngen (1892–1971) und die Konzepte der neueren Kirchenrechtswissenschaft* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006), 48. "Während in der Philosophie und Theologie des Thomas von Aquin die *analogia* entis vorherrschend ist, kann Bonaventura als der klassische Theologe der *analogia fidei* bezeichnet werden."

58. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, q. 1, a. 6; Thomas Aquinas, *The Division and Methods of the Sciences*, trans. Armand Maurer (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1986), q. 5, a. 1, c.; Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle*, trans. John P. Rowan (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company,1961), lect. 2, n. 46; Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, q. 1, a. 2.; II-II, q. 45, a. 2.

knowledge of truth primarily from the perspective as given by God. In accordance with this Bonaventurian approach, Söhngen perceives the similarities between God and creation as situated within an analogy of faith and, therefore, only given through faith. In expressing this, Söhngen writes, "That we are adapted to the mysterious God and His word, and that we have therefore the word of God to hear and to be able to understand, such fortune is not from us, but due to God's spirit."[60] According to Söhngen, humans can know truth not so much because of an immanent act within the soul, but rather because we share in God's Spirit due to the condition created by the incarnation of the Word.[61]

Söhngen's explanation of the analogy of being so pleased Barth that, in reference to Söhngen, he asserted,

> As he sees it, the knowledge of the being of God is not to be superordinated, but subordinated to the knowledge of the activity of God. In theology, therefore, the *analogia entis* is to be subordinated to the *analogia fidei*. . . . If this is the Roman Catholic doctrine of *analogia entis*, then naturally I must withdraw my earlier statement that I regard the *analogia entis* as the invention of the ant-Christ."[62]

While in seminary training, Ratzinger was at least introduced to Söhngen's approach to the analogy of being, since, according to Ratzinger, in the seminary Söhngen was one of two theologians

59. Gregory LaNave, *Through Holiness to Wisdom: The Nature of Theology according to St. Bonaventure* (Roma: Istituto Storico Dei Cappuccini, 2005), 172–86.

60. Graulich, *Unterwegs zu einer Theologie*, 49. "Daß wir dem geheimnisvollen Gott und seinem Worte angeglichen sind, und daß wir darum das Wort Gottes hören und verstehen können, solches Vermögen haben wir nicht aus uns selbst, sondern ans Gottes Geist." Quoting from Gottlieb Söhngen, "Analogia entis oder analogia fidei" *Wissenschaft und Weisheit* 9 (1942): 91.

61. Graulich, *Unterwegs zu einer Theologie*, 49.

62. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 2, *The Doctrine of God,* trans. G. W. Bromiley (London: T & T Clark, 2010), 25–27; 79–80. Also see Richard Schenk, "Analogy as the discrimen naturae et gratiae," 180–84.

"who had the greatest influence over me."[63] In describing Söhngen, Ratzinger writes,

> Söhngen had originally wanted to be only a philosopher and had begun his career with a dissertation on Kant. He belonged to that dynamic current in Thomism that took from Thomas the passion for truth and the habit of asking unrelenting questions about the foundation and the goal of all the real. . . . External circumstances directed Söhngen toward theology. Being the child of a mixed marriage and deeply concerned with the ecumenical question on account of his origins, Söhngen took up the debate with Karl Barth and Emil Brunner.[64]

Balthasar and the Analogy of Being

Along with Söhngen, Balthasar also had a foundational influence on Ratzinger's thought.[65] Similar to Söhngen, Balthasar affirmed certain elements of Przywara's account of the analogy of being, while acknowledging aspects of Barth's thought that need to be taken into serious consideration. According to Balthasar, Przywara correctly "developed his Catholic position of the analogy of being as the medial position between pantheistic naturalism on the left and theopanistic Protestantism on the right."[66] Theopanism differs from pantheism in that it grants a certain distinction between God and creation by viewing creation as emanating from God, but, similar to pantheism, sees God and the creation as ultimately one. According to Przywara and Balthasar, by rejecting the analogy of being, which at the same time affirms difference and similarity between God and his creation, Protestants fall into theopanism when they try to establish a

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63. Ratzinger, *Milestones*, 55.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid., 143. Ratzinger acknowledged this by stating, "Meeting Balthasar was for me the beginning of a lifelong friendship I can only be thankful for. Never again have I found anyone with such a comprehensive theological and humanistic education as Balthasar and de Lubac, and I cannot even begin to say how much I owe to my encounter with them."
66. Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth*, trans. Edward T. Oakes (San Francisco: Ignatius 1992), 30.

relationship between God and creation, since their only option available is identity.[67] As described by Balthasar, Barth's Protestant position of theopanism inevitably leads "to the dialectical disintegration of the creature's own inherent being."[68] This is because once Protestants reject describing the relationship between God and creation as analogous, this leads to two competing options that dialectically destroy creation's "own inherent being." In the first position, rejecting analogy reduces creation to nothingness, as represented by Calvin's description of creation as totally depraved. In the second, more modern humanist stance, similar to Ratzinger's interpretation of Vico, by perceiving truth as the created, creation is exalted as everything. In both cases the only way humanity can relate to God is at the loss of its identity: either the creature loses its identity from God, or God loses any distinction from creation. In contrast, the Catholic position, as represented by Przywara and Balthasar, is able to preserve a relationship between God and creation, without creation's loss of identity while partaking in divine nature, through its proposal of an analogy of being entailing similarity and difference.[69]

In order not to fall into the above error, in defending the gratuity of grace Catholic theology has consistently held that human nature can be at least logically be understood apart from the supernatural.[70] In this way, even when human nature is understood as participating in grace, it does not lose its distinction from grace. Instead, it maintains an analogous relationship with the Creator in which identity and difference coexist. Although Balthasar, along with Przywara, accuses Barth and Protestant theology as tending toward theopanism due to the rejection of the analogy of being, he nevertheless acknowledges aspects within Barth's theology that

67. Ibid., 109.
68. Ibid., 365.
69. Ibid.
70. Ibid., 142.

Catholic theology should consider, in particular its Christocentrism and its emphasis on "the historicity of nature and the created character of worldly truth."[71]

When all of reality is seen as centered on Christ, whose life is not static, then nature, as related to Christ, is likewise understood in a life-giving, creative manner, and the created character of truth as formulated by humankind is also more readily recognized. Barth's insistence on the created character of worldly truth as different from divine truth challenges certain neo-Scholastic Catholic theologians who, in developing Suarez's analogy of being, which highlights similarity and identity, sometimes overstress the similarity between intraworldly truth and divine truth, while forgetting their much greater difference.[72] Unfortunately, writes Balthasar, "This is something that Catholic philosophy and theology only too rarely set over against the qualities of God's eternal truth."[73] As a counter to this tendency among certain Catholic theologians, Balthasar sets forth Söhngen, with his Christocentrism and integration of the analogy of being with the analogy of faith, as a model to follow.[74] While upholding Söhngen as an example, Balthasar downplays Przywara's presentation of the analogy of being as insufficiently christological, due to his depiction of analogy "even to the point of exaggeration"[75] as an "all-embracing law of being."[76] According to Balthasar,

71. Ibid., 383–84.
72. O'Meara, *Erich Przywara: His Theology*, 209. O'Meara recommends W. Bange, "Form-Einheit und Philosophie und Theologie?" *Catholica* 3 (1934): 10–20, for a "typical" neo-Scholastic presentation of the analogy of being. Also see Julio Terán Dutari, "Die Geschichte des Terminus 'Analogia entis' und das Werk Erich Przywara," *Philosophisches Jahrbuch* 77 (1970): 163–79. This work, according to O'Meara, deals "with the influence of Jesuit scholasticism and Suárez." He also recommends "for a history of analogy in treatises and manuals from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century," Bernhard Gertz, *Glaubenswelt als Analogie*, (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1969), 53–87.
73. Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth*, 384.
74. Ibid., 362; 384
75. Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama: Theological Dramatic Theory,* vol. 3, *The Dramitis Personae: The Persons in Christ,* trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1992), 220.

therefore, "it is no accident that Przywara never produced a Christology."[77] Balthasar does not intend that this phrase be interpreted as accusing Przywara's theology of not being implicitly christological, since Przywara's first book, *Eucharistie und Arbeit*,[78] by focusing on the Eucharist, is a kind of Christology, and his entire argument in *Analogie Entis* can be read christologically, as pointed out by Balthasar himself.[79] Rather, Balthasar is criticizing Przywara, especially in his earlier works, for not making the christological dimension within his work more explicit.

Ratzinger's Use of Analogy of Being, Contra Vico, in Relationship to Truth as Correspondence

In this section, it will be shown how Ratzinger's appropriation of the above ways of understanding analogy helps to explain his rejection of Vico's equation of truth with the made. I will first focus on what Ratzinger draws from Przywara that determine his approach to Vico. Then we will examine what Ratzinger draws from Söhngen and Balthasar that also shapes his reaction to Vico.

Analogy as a Fundamental Law of Being

Similar to Przywara, Ratzinger defends the analogy of being as constitutive of the structure of being. He stated this as early as 1959 in his lecture *Der Gott des Glaubens und der Gott der Philosophen*,[80]

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76. Ibid.
77. Ibid., 221.
78. Erich Przywara, *Eucharistie und Arbeit* (Freiburg: Herder, 1917).
79. Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth*, 257, 362.
80. Ratzinger, *Der Gott des Glaubens und der Gott der Philosophen*, 22. With respect to his theme in the lecture on the relationship between the God of faith the God of philosophers, Ratzinger writes that "here it is converted into a question about the essence of Christianity generally, in a question about the legitimacy of the concrete synthesis, that gives form to Christianity, of Greek and Biblical thought, in a question of the legitimacy of the coexistence of philosophy and faith, and of the legitimacy of the 'analogy entis' as much as a positive placement in the relationship of the knowledge of reason and the knowledge of faith, to be of nature

and most recently in his academic lecture in 2006 at the University of Regensburg.[81] In his definition of the analogy of being, he agrees with Przywara that it is "in the principle of non-contradiction understood as middle that analogy establishes itself as the foundation of all thought."[82] When this principle is denied, the relationship between Creator and creature, argues Przywara, becomes blurred, either in the direction of theopanism or pantheism. This, according to Ratzinger's thought, is precisely what Vico does by equating truth with what is made. Thus, it is in light of these debates concerning the law of analogy that we can see more clearly how Ratzinger views Vico's famous *verum esse ipsum factum* principle.

Ratzinger indicates his dissent from Vico's constructivist principle by differentiating between the creation of God and the making of humanity, writing, "for the ancient world and the Middle Ages, being itself is true, in other words apprehensible, because God, pure intellect, made it, and he made it by thinking it."[83] Since this position could be interpreted as defining creation as an intramental reality for God rather than as *ex nihilo*, Ratzinger, in his later work *The Pilgrim*

and reality of grace; and finally also a decisive question between catholic and Protestant understanding of the Christianity." My translation. "Es wird hier zur Frage nach dem Wesen des Christentums überhaupt, zur Frage nach der Legitimität der das konkrete Christentum formenden Synthese aus griechischem und biblischem Denken, damit zur Frage nach der Legitimität der Koexistenz von Philosophie und Glaube und nach der Legitimität der analogia entis als der positiven Inbeziehungsetzung von Vernunfterkenntnis und Glaubenserkenntnis, von Natursein und Gnadenwirklichkeit, damit schließlich aber auch zur Entscheidungsfrage zwischen katholischem und evangelischem Verständnis des Christentums." In the footnote attached to this sentence, Ratzinger refers to Söhngen, Balthasar, and Przywara as providing a Catholic response to Barth's and Brunner's Protestant difficulties with the analogy of being.

81. Joseph Ratzinger, "Faith, Reason and the University: Memories and Reflections," Aula Magna of the University of Regensburg, Tuesday, 12 September 2006,http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2006/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20060912_university-regensburg_en.html. "The faith of the Church has always insisted that between God and us, between his eternal Creator Spirit and our created reason there exists a real analogy, in which—as the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 stated—unlikeness remains infinitely greater than likeness, yet not to the point of abolishing analogy and its language."

82. Przywara, *Analogia Entis*, 105. Translation provided by Betz.

83. Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 31.

Fellowship of Faith, clarifies his meaning. Here, as shown earlier, Ratzinger clearly denies any inner creation within God.[84] When God creates, his works are caused by his thought and, consequently, reflective of the truth of his being without being equivalent. Humanity is different from God in that human thought and making are not one and the same. In order for humans to make, they must first think by reflecting on created being as made by God. This first step, and not in the expression of truth, is where humans encounter truth since, writes Ratzinger, "being is thought and therefore thinkable, the object of thought and of knowledge, which strives after truth."[85] The work of humans which come after their thought, "on the other hand is a mixture of *logos* and the a-logical, something moreover that with the passage of time sinks away into the past. It does not admit of full comprehension for it is lacking in *logos*, in thoroughgoing meaningfulness."[86]

Consequently, argues Ratzinger, in opposition to Vico, "for this reason ancient and medieval philosophy took the view that the knowledge of human things could only be '*techne*', manual skill, but never real perception and hence never real knowledge. Therefore in the medieval university the *artes*, the arts, remained only the first step to real knowledge, which reflects on being itself."[87] It is not, therefore, in making but in reflective thinking of God's "creative spirit that permeates and governs his being" that humanity encounters truth as an image of God.[88]Since, in accordance with the principle of noncontradiction, which the analogy of being is based upon, human thought is not the "the thought of the original thought," humans cannot know the truth exactly as God does. In

84. Ratzinger, *The Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith*, 48.
85. Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 32.
86. Ibid.
87. Ibid.
88. Ibid.

this way, according to Ratzinger, truth as received by humans is secondarily understood as made by humans, thus conceding the relative truth of Vico's principle in a properly theological way.

In illustrating the difference between humankind as essentially a receiver of truth and God as truth, Ratzinger refers to one of Baron Münchhausen's (1720–1797) fabulous stories. In this story, the Baron rescues himself from a bog by grabbing onto his own hair. For Ratzinger, this is as impossible as the attempt to create meaningful truth by oneself. Meaning, writes Ratzinger, as "the ground on which our existence as a totality can stand and live, cannot be made but only received."[89] By describing truth as like the stable ground upon which all stand, Ratzinger, through the use of a simile, is prioritizing truth as constant over what is humanly created. He also, out of his understanding of the analogy of being as rooted in the principle of noncontradiction, is differentiating between God and humanity while upholding at the same time a similarity, with always a greater difference, between creation and God. This is in accordance with the thought of Przywara who maintains that the inner order (ἀνά)[90] of creation is always "in-and-beyond history,"[91] due to truth being "above and beyond."[92] As described by Ratzinger, the inner order and truth of reality is like the ground that humanity does not create. Although they might mold it, as Vico would argue, Ratzinger insists that humans are only capable of such "making" because humans themselves are made, and their created being is a gift given by the Creator above, who supports and upholds them, and, by so doing, gives them stability.

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89. Ibid., 43.
90. Przywara, *Analogia Entis*, 223.
91. Ibid., 41.
92. Ibid., 223.