

differentiations.⁶⁰ His perspectives and insights are invariably conditioned by his immediate circumstances. And above all, his creaturely character of man is most radically expressed by the fact that he has to die. Like any other animal, man is totally powerless before the face of death: "Man is mortal. That is his fate."⁶¹ The finiteness of man is what ultimately distinguishes man from God. It is actually God's plan of creation.

The Biblical view is that the finiteness, dependence and the insufficiency of man's mortal life are facts which belong to God's plan of creation and must be accepted with reverence and humility.⁶²

Consequently, Niebuhr insists that the finiteness of man is good, and never evil, "for God created it."⁶³ This affirmation of the goodness of man's creaturely nature is

⁶⁰Niebuhr is particularly conscious that ethnic particularity and racial differentiations have been the basis of social and economic structure (FH, pp. 74-78).

⁶¹BT, p. 28.

⁶²NDM, I, 167. Niebuhr admits that even Paul sometimes failed to be faithful to the Biblical affirmation of death as one element of finiteness (Ibid., pp. 173-174). But Paul's essential position that the "sting of death is sin" (I Cor. 15:56) definitely points to the authentic Biblical view of death that "the ideal possibility would be that a man of perfect faith would not fear death because of his confidence that 'neither life nor death . . . shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'" That is to say, death should not be identified as the consequence of sin; the obvious mark of sin is man's fear of death (Ibid., p. 174).

⁶³Ibid., p. 169.

extremely important in Niebuhr's estimation, for without it man's existence always becomes a dualistic one in which the mind is regarded as good and the body as evil. The trouble with such a dualistic view of man is that it cannot, in the final analysis, hold man responsible for his sin. The goodness of man's creatureliness must be maintained at all costs. Niebuhr expresses this point as follows:

The dualism has the consequence for the doctrine of man of identifying the body with evil and of assuming the essential goodness of mind or spirit. This body-mind dualism and the value judgments passed upon both body and mind stand in sharpest contrast to the Biblical view of man and achieve a fateful influence in all subsequent theories of human nature. The Bible knows nothing of a good mind and an evil body.⁶⁴

b) Man as spirit

Though man is a child of nature, he is not simply a child of nature. What is just as certain is that he is more than nature. Niebuhr stoutly maintains that this aspect of man also belongs to common human experience. The spirit of man can be most concisely defined as his infinite capacity for self-transcendence. It is to be noted that here Niebuhr has developed a new concept of the greatest importance for his whole system. Let us examine how Niebuhr has finally arrived at his understanding of man as spirit.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 7.



In Moral Man and Immoral Society, Niebuhr, for the first time, defines the essential nature of man. Man is here termed as a "nucleus of energy."

Human beings are endowed by nature with both selfish and unselfish impulses. The individual is a nucleus of energy which is organically related from the very beginning with other energy, but which maintains, nevertheless, its own discrete existence.⁶⁵

The selfish impulse includes drives to "preserve and perpetuate itself and to gain fulfillment within terms of its unique genius."⁶⁶ The altruistic impulse includes the ability to "see himself in relation to his environment and in relation to other life."⁶⁷ Man's self then is divided into two impulses, selfish and unselfish, and they are held to be constantly at war with each other in him.

His natural impulses prompt him not only to the perpetuation of life beyond himself but to some achievement of harmony with other life. Whatever the theory of instincts which we may adopt, whether we regard them as discreet and underived, or whether we think they are sharply defined only after they are socially conditioned, it is obvious that man not only shares a gregarious impulse with the lower creatures but that a specific impulse of pity bids him fly to aid of stricken members of his community.⁶⁸

From what does human energy receive its direction? According to Niebuhr, the direction comes from two sources: (1) the order immanent within the impulses and (2) reason.

⁶⁵MMIS, p. 25.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 26.

⁶⁸Ibid.

Niebuhr then goes on to focus his attention upon the latter of the two sources, reason. The principle of reason is harmony, coherence, and universality.

Reason . . . analyses the various forces in their relation to each other and, gauging their consequences in terms of the total welfare, it inevitably places the stamp of its approval upon those impulses which affirm life in its most inclusive terms.⁶⁹

Since reason always supports the altruistic impulse and seeks to enhance it in human relationships, it has positive roles to play in human life. Therefore, Niebuhr concludes that "it is fair . . . to assume that growing rationality is a guarantee of man's growing morality."⁷⁰

The trouble with reason, however, continues Niebuhr, is that by itself it is incapable of carrying out its own demands. It must get its initiative through cooperation with the altruistic impulse. But the selfish impulse is far more powerful in man than the altruistic impulse. Therefore, nothing in the world, be it reason or religion, is capable of overcoming egoism. The force of the egoistic impulse is so overwhelmingly strong that both religion and reason are made instruments to serve egoism. Niebuhr is quite explicit at this point.

Reason may not only justify egoism prematurely but actually give it a force which it does not possess

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 27.

⁷⁰Ibid.

in non-rational nature. . . . The animal kills when it is hungry and fights or runs when it is in danger. In man the impulses of self-preservation are transmuted very easily into desires for aggrandizement.⁷¹

Thus, in Moral Man and Immoral Society Niebuhr has begun to develop his understanding of man's essential nature. But it is defined largely in terms of the egoistic and altruistic impulses. Furthermore, reason is equated with the most unique quality of man. Although even here reason is obviously regarded as more than man's analytical power, its scope is too limited to do justice to Niebuhr's mature understanding of man's self-transcendence.

In The Reflections on the End of an Era, Niebuhr first coins the word, "spirit." But he does not break a new ground, because he identifies it with altruistic impulse. "Spirit," writes Niebuhr, "is the impulse to subject the individual or social ego to the universal even to the point of self-annihilation or absorption."⁷²

It is in The Nature and Destiny of Man that Niebuhr has finally arrived at his mature understanding of man as spirit. Spirit is no longer defined as the demand for logical universality or the drive toward infinity. He now sees it as man's infinite capacity for self-transcendence. This

⁷¹Ibid., p. 41.

⁷²REE, p. 9.

is further defined as man's "radical freedom." In short, it is a point where the self expresses the "capacity of standing continually outside itself in terms of indefinite regression."⁷³ Therefore, the capacity for self-transcendence is not wholly contained within man. It does not have its own ability to fulfill itself. It requires a principle outside itself for its completion. Because of this, man always transcends any principle of coherence the moment he makes it the object of his thinking. He is always more than the object of his thinking. He is always more than the object of his knowledge. Man's infinite capacity for self-transcendence constantly compels him to search an ever higher principle of coherence.⁷⁴

It is to be pointed out in this context that Niebuhr's concept of self-transcendence has been a major issue for his critics with rationalistic orientation. In defining reason as the highest human faculty, they regard it as the source of man's virtue. This stance of rationalists may be best expressed by Harold DeWolf.

Reason may properly be regarded as God-given. Hence the use of reason may be gratefully regarded as the employment of a divine instrument. Furthermore,

⁷³NDM, I, 277.

⁷⁴Reinhold Niebuhr, Christian Realism and Political Problems (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), p. 178. Hereafter CRPP.



any rational believer in God will certainly regard human reason as incomparably inferior to divine reason. If I were able to use the reason of God instead of my own in the making of important decisions, I should certainly be irrational, as well as vain, not to do so. But for better or worse, the reason which God has given and which He illuminates according to His own good pleasure is all that I have with which to know. The part of humility would seem to be, therefore, not the deprecating of this gift which God has benevolently provided, but rather the purifying of it by prayer and disciplined exercise, in order best to know the truth which is its proper object.⁷⁵

Here DeWolf is operating on the presupposition that anyone who is critical of reason must be an obscurantist who blindly trusts in irrational faith in place of reason. This is clear in his following criticism of Niebuhr:

But now the question must be asked: If religious faith "cannot be in contradiction to the subordinate principle of meaning which is found in rational coherence," then is it not clear that a faith which does contradict reason is not a valid faith? And if this is true, should not religious faith be "made to stand under its judgment"? Which are we to accept, the admission that a true religious faith must be rationally coherent or the assertion that religious faith must not be subjected to rational evaluation? Such perplexing questions arise concerning much current theological writing, where the irrationalistic influence has left its mark but has not been able to dislodge the rational heritage of the long-established habits of critical thought.⁷⁶

In his criticism, however, DeWolf fails to understand Niebuhr's position. The self's capacity for self-transcendence,

⁷⁵L. Harold DeWolf, The Religious Revolt Against Reason (New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968), p. 114.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 30, citing NDM, I, 165-166.



in Niebuhr's view, is infinite. It transcends not only natural processes but also the scope of reason. It stands "above the structures and coherences of the world."⁷⁷ This does not at all mean that the limitations of creaturely particularity are obscured; however, it does mean that the self is not bound to the norms of reason. Niebuhr repeatedly underscores the fact that man's radical freedom manipulates and uses reason to its own advantage. This explains why Niebuhr rejects DeWolf's contention that reason can be made pure by prayer and disciplined exercise. Then, too, it is precisely because of man's infinite capacity for self-transcendence that Niebuhr rejects DeWolf's simple assertion that man can be either rational or irrational. Man's radical freedom does not allow us to make such a simple distinction, because it enables man to rationalize a most irrational idea to his own advantage when his self interest is at stake.

The above analysis of Niebuhr's concept of self-transcendence enables us to understand why Niebuhr is sceptical of any kind of metaphysics. No humanly conceived structure of being, says Niebuhr, can do justice to the infinite scope of self-transcendence. Even the ontology of Paul Tillich is not an exception. "The human self in its mystery of freedom" says Niebuhr, "is certainly beyond the limits of

⁷⁷"Intellectual Autobiography," p. 17.

a rational ontology."⁷⁸ As Tillich points out,⁷⁹ this is a logical inconsistency in Niebuhr's thought, for if sin is a universal fact, it is natural that man should seek some ontological explanation. His constant use of the "essential nature" of man indicates that he has some sort of implicit ontology. But the point Niebuhr makes in his debate with Tillich must be underscored, since it is the key to his whole thought: "We cannot find a system which will do justice"⁸⁰ to the heights and depths of man's radical freedom, because radical freedom is infinite.

2. The problem of human existence

Following Kierkegaard, Niebuhr regards man as an inevitably anxious being. Anxiety follows necessarily upon the dialectical character of man; therefore, it is "the inevitable spiritual state of man."⁸¹ Put more concretely, man is anxious because he knows that he is limited by nature. But, at the same time, his anxiety is compounded by the fact that he is aware of his unlimited possibilities. Being a child of nature, there are definite limits imposed

⁷⁸Reinhold Niebuhr, "Reply to Interpretation and Criticism," Kegley and Bretall, editors, op. cit., pp. 432-433. Hereafter "Reply."

⁷⁹Paul Tillich, "Reinhold Niebuhr's Doctrine of Knowledge," Ibid., pp. 39-42.

⁸⁰"Intellectual Autobiography," p. 19.

⁸¹NDM, I, 182.



upon him, but being spirit, he transcends those limits by making them the objects of his thought. Thus, in no sphere of activity can man rest with equanimity. Man is insecure, because he is both bound and free, limited and limitless. Niebuhr uses the following simile to illustrate the point:

It is the condition of the sailor, climbing the mast (to use a simile), with the abyss of the waves beneath him and the "crow's nest" above him. He is anxious about both the end toward which he strives and the abyss of nothingness into which he may fall. The ambition of man to be something is always partly prompted by the fear of meaninglessness which threatens him by reason of the contingent character of his existence.⁸²

Anxiety, therefore, is the best psychological proof that man is not omnipotent. His insecurity means that he does not possess within himself the basis of his own life. He is incapable of fulfilling himself. In short, "we are men and not God."⁸³ It is in this context that Niebuhr relates anxiety to the problem of human existence. The perilous insecurity forces man to seek ways to overcome it. But in his search for overcoming his precarious position, man is faced with the possibilities of either surrendering himself to God in complete trust or making himself the source of his own security. Thus, anxiety is the root cause of the problematic character of human existence. And yet,

⁸²Ibid., p. 185.

⁸³Reinhold Niebuhr, Essays in Applied Christianity, ed. D. B. Robertson (New York: Meridian Books, 1959), p. 168.



as we shall see later, Niebuhr refuses to make anxiety the cause of sin, though it certainly is the matrix out of which sin arises.

Thus far, we have stated that spirit and nature are the basic components of the essential nature of man. And yet, from the Christian perspective, the assertion of man as limited and limitless does not exhaust the entire meaning of the essential nature of man. Christian faith proclaims that man, who is nature and spirit, is God's most precious creation. The essential nature of man is therefore theologically expressed as the child of God. In short, our true understanding of human nature must presuppose the existence of a gracious God. According to Niebuhr, this is exactly what the doctrine of "original righteousness" intends to affirm. Its content is expressed by the traditional concept of natural law and the Biblical affirmation of faith, hope, and love. The former corresponds to man as nature whereas the latter defines man as spirit. Natural law expresses the finiteness of man by defining man's limits as a creature imbedded in the natural order. Obviously here Niebuhr's understanding of natural law is radically different from its traditional doctrine that refers to the inherent and universal structures of human existence which can be discerned by unaided reason. He rejects the Catholic doctrine of natural law from the vantage point of man's infinite capacity



for self-transcendence. The Catholic view, according to Niebuhr, fails to recognize that "all statements and definitions of justice are corrupted by even the most rational men through the fact that the definition is coloured by interest."⁸⁴ Niebuhr's concept of natural law is a very narrow one. It refers strictly to man's limitations of the natural order.

It is the law which defines the proper performance of his functions, the normal harmony of his impulses and the normal social relation between himself and his fellows within the limitations of the natural order. Since every natural function of man is qualified by his freedom and since a 'law' defining normality is necessary only because of his freedom, there is always an element of confusion in thus outlining a law of nature. It has nevertheless a tentative validity; for it distinguishes the obvious requirements of his nature as a creature in the natural order from the special requirements of his nature as free spirit.⁸⁵

Faith, hope, and love, on the other hand, correspond to man as spirit. Faith means man's trust in the infinite goodness of God. It is the affirmation that the world is ruled by God, not by chance or fate. Hope is man's faith in relation to the future. Love is a derivative of faith and hope and takes a concrete form in man's relationship with others in the I-Thou encounter. Niebuhr explains the inner relationships among faith, hope, and love as follows:

⁸⁴ Reinhold Niebuhr, "Christian Faith and Natural Law," Theology, XL (February, 1940), 87.

⁸⁵ NDM, I, 270-271.



Faith in the providence of God is a necessity of freedom because, without it, the anxiety of freedom tempts man to seek a self-sufficiency and self-mastery incompatible with his dependence upon forces which he does not control. Hope is a particular form of that faith. It deals with the future as a realm where infinite possibilities are realized and which must be a realm of error if it is not under the providence of God; for in that case it would stand under either a blind fate or pure caprice. . . .

Love is both an independent requirement of this same freedom and a derivative of faith. Love is a requirement of freedom because the community to which man is impelled by his social nature is not possible to him merely upon the basis of his gregarious impulse. In his freedom and uniqueness each man stands outside of, and transcends, the cohesions of nature and the uniformities of mind which bind life to life.⁸⁶

In other words, theologically speaking, original righteousness can be defined as man's constant overcoming of his intrinsic sense of insecurity through his absolute trust in the infinite goodness of God. It is essential for us to note here that, in Niebuhr's way of thinking, original righteousness is never a constituent part of man, because it is always experienced by man as a lack, not as a possession. Original righteousness exists only as a constant corrective in man's conscience by which his self is always judged.

The Biblical assertion that original righteousness is experienced as a lack, not as a possession, is substantiated by man's psychological experience of an uneasy conscience.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 271.

No man, however deeply involved in sin, is able to regard his sinful state as normal in a moment of his self-transcendence. He cannot do what he thinks he should do. This awareness of the discrepancy between what he is and what he ought to be seems to resound perennially in man's conscience. Niebuhr maintains that the story of the Rich Young Ruler expresses precisely this point.

The explicit and implicit views of human nature which this story yields, may therefore be summarized as follows: (a) Man as sinner is not unmindful of the ultimate requirements of his nature as free spirit. He knows that any particular historical concretion of law is not enough. (b) He is not fully conscious of the nature of these ultimate requirements, and (c) he is not ready to meet these requirements once they are defined.⁸⁷

We have underscored the fact that the dialectical relation between self-transcendence and creatureliness is the principle that runs throughout Niebuhr's entire anthropology. We have seen how effectively Niebuhr uses it to elucidate the essential nature of man. As we shall see later, it also furnishes grounds for his discussion of sin and salvation. Here it will suffice to point out that everything Niebuhr says about man is based upon the presupposition that man stands at a juncture between spirit and nature. His discussion of man, therefore, is largely concerned with analysing how man always dissolves his anxiety.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 288.

prematurely by making himself the source of his own existence and with why Christianity alone can emancipate him from this perilous predicament. In this sense, Niebuhr can be described as an apologetic theologian. This assumption receives direct support from Niebuhr himself who writes that his theological interest has always been "the defense and justification of the Christian faith in a secular age."⁸⁸ In our examination of Niebuhr's concept of human sin and salvation, we shall make a special effort to delineate how effectively and concretely the paradoxical nature of man is related to these important areas of human life.

B. The sin of man

In this section, we seek to probe in detail Niebuhr's concept of sin and to show how concretely the paradoxical character of man is involved in sin. For this purpose, our discussion is divided into the origin, nature, and various forms of sin.

1. The origin of sin

Niebuhr's analysis of sin is empirical, pointing out how pride manifests itself in various forms in the realms of international and domestic scenes. Thus, throughout his writings, the following assertion is always taken for granted: ". . . the idea of a universal inclination in the

⁸⁸"Intellectual Autobiography," p. 3.

human heart or self is not only meaningful but is empirically verifiable."⁸⁹ But in his magnum opus, The Nature and Destiny of Man, I, Niebuhr goes beyond this stage and uncovers the meaning of the Biblical concept of the origin of sin and relates it to common human experience. Throughout his discussion, man is always held responsible for his sin which is related to the paradox of the self-transcendence and creatureliness of man.

The origin of sin, in Niebuhr's estimation, is closely related to the inevitable spiritual state of man, that is, anxiety. Within anxiety sin finds root, because man always fails to refrain himself from stifling its discomfort; he seeks security for himself apart from God and at the expense of others' humanity. What Niebuhr wants to make explicit here is that although anxiety is the soul out of which sin arises,⁹⁰ it is not the cause of sin. Following Kierkegaard almost word for word, Niebuhr writes of anxiety thus: "Anxiety is the internal precondition of sin. . . . Anxiety is

⁸⁹ Reinhold Niebuhr, "Sin," Handbook of Christian Theology, Marvin Halverson and Arthur A. Cohen, editors (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1958), p. 350. Also see The Self and the Dramas of History (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), p. 232. Hereafter SDH.

⁹⁰ "The temptation thus lies in his (man's) situation of finiteness and freedom" (NDM, I, 180).

the internal description of the state of temptation. It must not be identified with sin. . . ."91

There are two reasons why anxiety is not the cause of sin. First, anxiety is "the basis of all human creativity."⁹² It is morally neutral due to its propensity to compell man to seek ever higher and newer possibilities. It is, in other words, a prerequisite of man's infinite creativity. This positive function of anxiety is described as follows:

He is also anxious because he does not know the limits of his possibilities. He can do nothing and regard it perfectly done, because higher possibilities are revealed in each achievement.⁹³

Second, anxiety is not the cause of sin, because there is always the ideal possibility that its tension might be overcome by man's absolute trust in the power of God in faith, hope, and love. "The ideal possibility is that faith in the ultimate security of God's love would overcome all immediate insecurities of nature and history."⁹⁴ This ideal possibility never becomes a historical reality, because man, in his radical freedom, always makes himself the center of

⁹¹Ibid., p. 182. Kierkegaard's statement of anxiety is: "Anxiety is the psychological condition which precedes sin. It is so near, so fearfully near to sin, and yet it is not the explanation for sin" (Ibid., p. 182, citing Der Begriff der Angst, p. 89).

⁹²NDM, I, 183.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Ibid.



all values. But, at the same time, his radical freedom enables him to be aware of the ideal possibility, and this awareness makes his conscience constantly troubled.

What is clear from the above analysis of Niebuhr's concept of anxiety is this: Niebuhr wants to affirm that all men are equally sinful and that everyone is responsible for his own sin. What is also clear is that it is Niebuhr's concept of man's self-transcendence that enables him to hold man accountable for sin. The validity of the latter assertion may be made clear if we put Niebuhr in dialogue with Henry Nelson Wieman. Wieman disagrees with Niebuhr's definition of anxiety as the precondition of sin. He wants to say that anxiety is the basic symptom of sin.

Niebuhr denies that the anxiety issuing from man's refusal to commit himself completely to the power and goodness of God is sin. But if sin is alienation from God or departure from the way God would have us live, then this refusal to commit oneself in this way is sin; and the anxiety thus arising is the symptom of sin. Niebuhr says, No, it is not sin until it has issued in sinful self-assertion. But what is sinful self-assertion if it is not refusal to live as God would have us live: namely, in complete self-giving to God which would remove anxiety?⁹⁵

What Wieman fails to recognize is that, according to Niebuhr, man's radical freedom makes man pretend to be God. What Niebuhr wants to affirm is that man's infinite capacity for

⁹⁵Henry Nelson Wieman, "A Religious Naturalist Looks at Reinhold Niebuhr," Kegley and Bretall, editors, *op. cit.*, p. 349.



self-transcendence uses anxiety as an excuse for his undue self-assertion. Unless this is firmly maintained, we cannot hold man responsible for sin. Wieman's assertion that anxiety is the cause of sin does not account for human responsibility.

Niebuhr readily acknowledges that this way of speaking about the origin of sin is completely incomprehensible to a rationalist's way of thinking. But he goes on to assert that man's common experience, if not his analytical reasoning, abundantly supports his position. Therefore, the Biblical doctrine of original sin must be made meaningful to common human experience. Here again we see Niebuhr's conviction that Christian faith is superior to all other alternatives concerning the doctrine of man and that its final validity lies in common human experience. Let us therefore examine Niebuhr's understanding of the Biblical doctrine of original sin and its validity for our life.

In Niebuhr's estimation, the Biblical myth of original sin explicitly affirms the ultimate mystery of sin and human responsibility. In the Biblical myth, Adam is tempted by Eve, who had been tempted by Satan, who represents the force of evil in the universe antecedent to man's Fall. In short, the Biblical myth admits that man was tempted.

In the myth of the Fall the temptation arises from the serpent's analysis of the human situation. The serpent depicts God as jealously guarding his

prerogatives against the possibility that man might have his eyes opened and become "as God, knowing good and evil." Man is tempted, in other words, to break and transcend the limits which God has set for him.⁹⁶

From the myth of the Fall, three conclusions can be drawn. First, the sin of man is explicitly defined as man's "effort to transgress the bounds set for his life," or more concisely, "rebellion against God."⁹⁷ Second, man's rebellion against God is not entirely man's doing, because "the devil fell before man fell."⁹⁸ Finally, although evil is not an act of man's sheer perversity, man is still held responsible for his sin, because man's ontological situation becomes a source of temptation "only when it is falsely interpreted."⁹⁹ Here Niebuhr is speaking of man's infinite capacity for self-transcendence. Man, in his radical freedom, appropriates this false interpretation which is presented to him, and this corrupts all elements of human life. This dynamic relationship between freedom and destiny of which the Biblical myth speaks is described by Niebuhr as follows:

Perhaps the best description or definition of this mystery is the statement that sin posits itself, that there is no situation in which it is possible to say that sin is either an inevitable consequence

⁹⁶NDM, I, 179-180.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 180.

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹Ibid.

of the situation nor yet that it is an act of sheer and perverse individual defiance of God.¹⁰⁰

The essential meaning of the Biblical doctrine of the origin of sin is given further support from man's psychological experience. As seen in the Biblical myth, man always deceives himself into believing that evil is good before he is able to choose it. An element of self-deception is always involved consciously or unconsciously in all aspects of human sin. And this is experienced by man in general. In the following sentences, Niebuhr describes how this actually works in the psychological experience of each individual.

Since his determinate existence does not deserve the devotion lavished upon it, it is obviously necessary to practice some deception in order to justify such excessive devotion. While such deception is constantly directed against competing wills, seeking to secure their acceptance and validation of the self's too generous opinion of itself, its primary purpose is to deceive, not others, but the self. The self must at any rate deceive itself first. Its deception of others is partly an effort to convince itself against itself.¹⁰¹

This brings us to another important aspect of original sin in Niebuhr's thought: the Fall is not to be interpreted as a historical fact, but as "a symbol of an aspect of every historical moment in the life of man."¹⁰² The reason for this again lies in man's radical freedom. Niebuhr

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 181.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 203.

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 269.

insists that any attempt to locate perfection in the pre-historic state of man is bound to fail to do justice to the fact that man is always involved in evil in his self-transcendence.

. . . it is impossible to use the symbol of primeval or prehistoric innocency exactly for the reason that the uniqueness of man consists in his freedom and self-transcendence; and there is therefore no possible historical state of man, however primitive the society, or however under-developed the child, in which there is harmony without freedom. An inchoate freedom has already disturbed the harmony of nature.¹⁰³

Niebuhr therefore concludes that "where there is history at all there is freedom; and where there is freedom, there is sin."¹⁰⁴

Thus far, it is clear that in his psychological analysis of freedom and anxiety and in his examination of the meaning of the Biblical doctrine of original sin, Niebuhr locates the cause of sin in man's unbelief. With regard to freedom and anxiety, Niebuhr maintains that because of man's unwillingness to depend upon God, man, in his freedom, attempts to make himself God in order to escape the discomfort of anxiety. In his analysis of the Biblical doctrine of sin as rebellion against God, Niebuhr makes this point even more explicit. What the Biblical myth makes explicit is that

¹⁰³NDM, II, 78.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 80.



neither Adam nor Eve had sufficient trust in God in face of the serpent's temptation. In both cases, then, the essence of sin is regarded as man's lack of trust in the power and love of God. That is to say, here Niebuhr has developed the concept of unbelief as the origin of sin which really precedes pride. At one point, Niebuhr states thus: ". . . unbelief [is] the root of sin, or . . . the sin which precedes pride,"¹⁰⁵

We wish Niebuhr had consistently made this point clear throughout his treatment of sin. Instead, he often obscures the important distinction between the sin of pride and the prior sin of unbelief by defining sin solely as pride.

We have previously considered the Biblical definition of basic sin as pride and have suggested that the Pauline exposition of man's self-glorification . . . is really an admirable summary of the whole Biblical doctrine of sin.¹⁰⁶

Had Niebuhr consistently made clear his original intention to define sin as unbelief, and pride as an effect of unbelief, he could have avoided many criticisms which accuse him of oversimplifying the Biblical doctrine of sin.¹⁰⁷ In defining sin as unbelief, Niebuhr regards it as a total act;

¹⁰⁵NDM, I, 183.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 186.

¹⁰⁷Harold DeWolf, for example, says that Niebuhr's interpretation of sin as pride "seems seriously to oversimplify the Biblical view" (DeWolf, A Theology of the Living Church, New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1953, p. 184).

it is an act which determines the whole being of man. He is far from oversimplifying the Biblical view. Rather, his attempt is to make the Biblical doctrine of man meaningful to modern man for whom sin has been largely meaningless due both to his overemphasis of his creativity at the expense of his creatureliness and to the outmoded view of the historical Adam.

Niebuhr now holds that the Christian doctrine of original sin has been so closely identified with the historical Adam, as well as with the horrendous conception that sin was transmitted from generation to generation through lust in the act of procreation, that it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to make the modern mind open to the symbolic understanding of it.

It is the absurd notion of modern liberalism, both Christian and secular, that the Christian estimate of man's sinfulness is determined by the Biblical account of the fall of Adam, and that it can be dismissed by anyone who does not find this primitive account credible.¹⁰⁸

In his most recent book, Niebuhr regrets his use of the traditional symbol.

I made a rather unpardonable pedagogical error in The Nature and Destiny of Man. . . . My theological preoccupation prompted me to define the persistence and universality of man's self-regard as "original sin." . . . But my pedagogical error consisted in

¹⁰⁸"Intellectual Autobiography," p. 11.

seeking to challenge modern optimism with the theological doctrine which was anathema to modern culture.¹⁰⁹

We must recognize, however, that the error of which Niebuhr speaks is a pedagogical error, not a substantive one. He insists that the essential meaning of original sin must be preserved at all costs but now realizes that that meaning could have been expressed differently. His admission of the pedagogical error of using the traditional symbol will in no way change the substance of his concept of sin. In fact, he still maintains that the doctrine of original sin is the only empirically verifiable doctrine of Christian faith,¹¹⁰ provided that its meaning is correctly understood by modern man.

2. The nature of sin

Since sin is anxiety plus freedom, it infects the total being of man and his every act. There is nothing in man that is free from sin. It is in this context that Niebuhr introduces a new phrase in The Nature and Destiny of Man, I: sin is inevitable but not necessary. The inevitability of sin means two things. First, it means the universality of sin; all men are equally sinful, because they all transgress their vertical relationship with God in their

¹⁰⁹MNHC, p. 23.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 24.

radical freedom. Second, the inevitability of sin means that no one can will himself out of being a sinner. In short, the inevitability and universality of sin characterize the defective will of man which is the presupposition of every act.¹¹¹

Though sin is inevitable, Niebuhr goes on to say that it is not necessary for man. Sin is not a logical consequence of the human situation. Here we must recall the nature of anxiety. For Niebuhr anxiety is both the source of human creativity and the occasion for sin; therefore, anxiety is morally neutral. Furthermore, there is always an ideal possibility that anxiety may be overcome by man's trust in the power and love of God. Thus, "anxiety alone is neither actual nor original sin. Sin does not follow necessarily from it."¹¹²

This is a good place to vindicate Niebuhr of one misinterpretation of his position shared by rationalists. They have accused him of irrationalism by saying that "Niebuhr claims that reason is where sin exercises its corrupting power."¹¹³ From our analysis of Niebuhr's understanding of sin, it is clear that this accusation is false. Niebuhr has never maintained that the corruption of sin is "in reason."

¹¹¹NDM, I, 242.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 250.

¹¹³Wieman, op. cit., p. 338.

He has always insisted that man, in his radical freedom, uses reason for the enhancement of his egoism. Reason is made an instrument by which man dissolves the discomfort of his inevitable state of anxiety. Thus, sin is in the will and not in reason.

3. The forms of sin

In the preceding section we have observed that Niebuhr identifies the root of sin as unbelief, the lack of man's trust in the goodness of God. We have also seen the meaning of his famous dictum: man sins inevitably but not necessarily. In this section, we shall examine the forms in which unbelief manifests itself in human life: pride and sensuality.

Prior to our examination of these two forms of sin, however, the following comments concerning Niebuhr's concept of sin are necessary. Niebuhr is not obsessed with sin as he has so often been charged. Whitney J. Oates, for example, made the following observation five years after the publication of the second volume of The Nature and Destiny of Man:

Planted squarely as he is in the prophetic tradition, he [Niebuhr] has concentrated too exclusively on the fallen state of man, or to put it somewhat facetiously, has been so busy rehabilitating sin as a fact of man's nature that other and equally important aspects of Christianity suffer from under-emphasis.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴Whitney J. Oates, "Introduction," Basic Writings of Saint Augustine, ed. Whitney J. Oates (New York: Random House, 1948), I, xii.



Joseph Fletcher essentially made the same charge as late as 1966 when he wrote in Situation Ethics:

(The two older Niebuhrs, Reinhold at Union and Helmut Richard at Yale, have made deep marks on Christian ethics in America. Each has in his own way contributed. But from the point of view of situation ethics, with its stress on responsible decisions, it is Helmut Richard's work that will be permanent. Reinhold's massive emphasis on man's "fallen" nature was sobering and gave a needed corrective at a certain time; he shocked perfectionist Protestant idealism with its detheologized posture, the "social gospel." But his brother's stress on the responsible self, his reaffirmation of the prophetic conviction that men can respond to the love of God--this is the creative and enduring thing.)¹¹⁵ [Parentheses in the original.]

The implication of Fletcher's statement is that Reinhold Niebuhr overemphasizes man as a sinner at the expense of man as a responsible self.

Here it is to be underscored that Niebuhr's penetrating analysis of sin is but part of his total anthropology. As we shall see later, the central affirmation that Niebuhr makes throughout his work is the infinite goodness of God, not the wretchedness of man. He has exposed the universal corruption of human nature, not because he has "faith in sin,"¹¹⁶ but because he wants to affirm the heights and depths of the grace of God. Man's final salvation does

¹¹⁵Joseph Fletcher, Situation Ethics (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1966), pp. 151-152.

¹¹⁶Holtan P. Odegard, Sin and Science: Reinhold Niebuhr as Political Theologian (Antioch, Ohio: The Antioch Press, 1956), p. 166.

depend upon any human achievement, but it depends upon the foolishness of God which is stronger than man's wisdom. This was absolutely clear to Niebuhr even as far back as 1925 when he was a young pastor in Detroit.

Life is tragic and the most perfect type of moral beauty inevitably has at least a touch of the tragic in it. . . . What makes this tragedy redemptive is that the foolishness of love is revealed as wisdom in the end and its futility becomes the occasion for new moral striving.¹¹⁷

It is this "mystery of grace which no one can fathom"¹¹⁸ that has enabled Niebuhr to make his penetrating analysis of human sin. It is this grace that has compelled him to be a reconciler in this seemingly irreconcilable world. Therefore, we agree with Gordon Harland, who writes:

Indeed, Niebuhr's influence as a Christian apologist has been due in large measure to the richness with which he has shown the social significance of the Christian understanding and experience of grace.¹¹⁹

With this understanding of Niebuhr's motive in his delineation of sin, let us examine what the two forms of human sin actually involve.

a) The sin of pride

Niebuhr focuses his attention most of all on the sin of pride, because its impact is most conspicuously felt in

¹¹⁷LNTC, pp. 106-107.

¹¹⁸"Intellectual Autobiography," p. 7.

¹¹⁹Harland, op. cit., p. ix.

human history. Furthermore, as we shall see later, the sin of sensuality is derived from it. The sin of pride is man's disruption of harmony with God. Man, who is insecure due to his involvement in the contingencies of nature as well as to his infinite capacity for self-transcendence, wants to overcome the discomfort of his insecurity by pretending to be his God. He inevitably makes himself the center of all things. Pride means this attempt of man to be more than he is, to be God. Niebuhr believes that "all of his intellectual and cultural pursuits, . . . become infected with the sin of pride."¹²⁰

Man's disruption of harmony with God manifests itself most conspicuously in his relationship with others, that is, injustice. Thus, man's vertical relationship with God has direct impact upon his horizontal relationship with his fellow men. "The religious dimension of sin is man's rebellion against God, his effort to usurp the place of God. The moral and social dimension of sin is injustice."¹²¹ According to Niebuhr, the sin of pride can be divided into four categories in which the interaction of the religious dimension of the sin of pride and injustice is clearly observed. The four categories of the sin of pride are as follows:

¹²⁰NDM, I, 179.

¹²¹Ibid.

pride of power, pride of intellect, moral pride, and spiritual pride. Let us examine the nature of each.

(1) The pride of power

The pride of power is defined as man's ultimate trust in his own power.

There is a pride of power in which the human ego assumes its self-sufficiency and self-mastery and imagines itself secure against all vicissitudes. It does not recognize the contingent and dependent character of its life and believes itself to be the author of its own existence, the judge of its own values and the master of its own destiny.¹²²

Niebuhr further observes that the pride of power arises out of two kinds of motivation. The first is the state of being unconscious of the limitations of finite existence. Naturally, this kind of pride of power is most conspicuous among individuals, groups, and nations whose position is relatively secure.¹²³ If the first form of the pride of power has its roots in man's complacent attitude toward his security, the other is motivated by "a darkly

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Niebuhr cites Great Britain as an example. "The inner stability and external security of Great Britain has been of such long duration that she may be said to have committed the sin of Babylon, and declared, 'I shall be no widow and I shall never know sorrow'" (Ibid., p. 189). Attitudes of the privileged classes, e.g. southern whites in America, are said to share the same sort of complacency in relation to the oppressed (MMIS, pp. 113-141).

conscious realization of [his] insecurity."¹²⁴ The impact of this form is more vicious and destructive, because it always results in an attempt to acquire and maintain security at any cost.¹²⁵

In this context, Niebuhr's distinction between sin and guilt is particularly important. The purpose of this distinction is two-fold. On the one hand, he seeks to affirm the universality of sin; on the other hand, he wants to maintain the validity of making discriminate judgments in actual human life.

Orthodox Christianity has held fairly consistently to the Biblical proposition that all men are equally sinners in the sight of God. . . . Yet it is quite apparent that this assertion imperils and seems to weaken all moral judgments which deal with the "nicely calculated less and more" of justice and goodness as revealed in the relativities of history. It seems to inhibit preferences between the oppressor and his victim, between the congenital liar and the moderately truthful man, between the debauched sensualist and the self-disciplined worker, and between the egotist who drives egocentricity to the point of sickness and the moderately "unselfish" devotee of the general welfare.¹²⁶

¹²⁴NDM, I, 189. The pre-World War II Germany is a good example of this. "Germany on the other hand suffered from an accentuated form of inferiority long before her defeat in the World War. Her boundless contemporary self-assertion which literally transgresses all bounds previously known in religion, culture and law is a very accentuated form of the power impulse which betrays a marked inner insecurity" (*Ibid.*). The proletarian class and Negroes in America share the same danger (MMIS, pp. 142-168).

¹²⁵NDM, I, 190.

¹²⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 219-220.

Niebuhr solves this difficult problem by defining guilt as the "objective and historical consequences of sin."¹²⁷ Niebuhr finds the validity of this definition of guilt in the Bible. In the Old Testament, it is always the mighty and the rich whom God denounces most vehemently. The same can be said of Jesus' strong condemnation of the Scribes and the Pharisees.¹²⁸ Thus, "it is important to recognize that Biblical religion has emphasized this inequality of guilt just as much as the equality of sin."¹²⁹

It is perfectly possible to criticize Niebuhr, as does W. J. Wolf, saying that his definition of guilt does not adequately cover those serious sins hidden in the human heart which may never become openly exposed in objective conditions.¹³⁰ However, Niebuhr's basic intention that lies behind his definition of guilt must be understood: the distinction between the good man and the bad man is important to the human situation and must be made explicit. Niebuhr's position is clear: although the definition of guilt as the

¹²⁷Ibid., p. 222.

¹²⁸Ibid., pp. 223-225.

¹²⁹Ibid., p. 222.

¹³⁰W. J. Wolf writes, "But may there not be sins for which man feels or should feel guilty that have almost no determinable objective and historical consequences? What about bad motives for acts that happen to result in good consequences? Is there not here a need for further definition to relate degrees of responsibility to the persons concerned?" (Wolf, op. cit., p. 240).

objective and historical consequences of sin does not always do justice to the scope of human sin, theology must be sensitive to what our everyday experience informs us.

He [W. J. Wolf] is right in criticizing my idea of "equality of sin and inequality of guilt" as elaborated in The Nature and Destiny of Man. I have been convinced for some time that this was an error. I sought to do justice to the fact that there is in fact great distinction between forms of evil, that the saint and the criminal are not at all alike but that yet in the ultimate instance it is true that "In God's sight no man living is justified." It is not, however, adequate to explain this situation in quantitative terms. I remain baffled in my search for an adequate description of the situation which will allow for discriminate judgments between good and evil on the one hand, and which will, on the other, preserve the Biblical affirmation that all men fall short before God's judgment.¹³¹

What is involved in Niebuhr's discussion of the pride of power is man's attempt to overcome the discomfort of the inevitable spiritual condition of anxiety by relying solely upon his own power. The more powerful man becomes, the more destructive becomes his power. Ghingis Khan slaughtered thousands, but America and Russia today can destroy the whole world by their hydrogen bombs in just a few minutes. The ironic fact is that the pride of power is bound to fail in providing true security, because man's capacity for self-transcendence, since it is infinite, does not allow man to be content with his own finite power, no matter how strong and secure it may seem. Man's radical freedom, Niebuhr is

¹³¹"Reply," p. 437.

convinced, is fulfilled only by the gracious God of Jesus Christ. Thus, Niebuhr concludes that "there is no level of greatness and power in which the lash of fear is not at least one strand in the whip of ambition."¹³²

(2) The pride of intellect

Intellectual pride means man's attempt to ignore the historical and cultural limitations of his own knowledge.

All human knowledge is tainted with an "ideological" taint. It pretends to be more true than it is. It is finite knowledge, gained from a particular perspective; but it pretends to be final and ultimate knowledge.¹³³

Intellectual pride, therefore, always involves both man's uneasy awareness that his knowledge may not be final and his effort to obscure this awareness by absolutizing his own limited knowledge.

A particular significant aspect of intellectual pride is the inability of the agent to recognize the same or similar limitations of perspective in himself which he has detected in others.¹³⁴

This fascinating psychology is best illustrated by Marxism. Marxism fails to apply the same criticism which it makes against the bourgeois civilization. Its inability to engage in self-criticism, in Niebuhr's estimation,

¹³²NDM, I, 194.

¹³³Ibid.

¹³⁴Ibid., p. 196. cf. "Descartes, Hegel, Kant, and Comte, to mention only a few moderns, were so certain of the finality of their thought that they have become fair sport for any wayfaring cynic" (Ibid., p. 195).

exemplifies the height of the pride of intellect. For this failure eventually causes unspeakable suffering among those who have to live under the "dictatorship of the proletariat," a system "which gives some men absolute power over other men" and therefore "results in evils which are worse than injustice."¹³⁵

(3) Moral pride

Moral pride is the absolutization of man's conditional value. It is "the pretension of finite man that his highly conditioned value is the final righteousness and that his very relative moral standards are absolute."¹³⁶ Again, the paradoxical character of man is involved. Man, in his self-transcendence, recognizes that his moral standards are limited by the vitalities of his own culture. This sense of relativity does not allow him to be the center of all values. In order to overcome this insecurity, he pretends as if his conditioned value were unconditional.

Moral pride, furthermore, invariably manifests itself in acts of self-righteousness. In moral pride, the other is always condemned because he fails to conform to the highly arbitrary standards of the self. Since the self judges itself by its own standards, it finds itself to be good and

¹³⁵CRPP, p. 34.

¹³⁶NDM, I, 199.

blameless. It judges others by its own standards and finds them evil, when their standards fail to conform to his own. The entire history of mankind, with its racial, national, religious, and social struggles, has been characterized by the destructive and persistent character of self-righteousness. Again Niebuhr finds a good illustration of moral pride in the self-righteousness of Marxism.

All statements and definitions of justice are corrupted by even the most rational men through the fact that the definition is colored by interest. This is the truth in the Marxist theory of rationalization and in its assertion that all culture is corrupted by an ideological taint. The unfortunate fact about the Marxist theory is that it is used primarily as a weapon in social conflict. The enemy is charged with this dishonesty, but the Marxist himself claims to be free of it. This is, of course, merely to commit the final sin of self-righteousness and to imagine ourselves free of the sin which we discern in the enemy.¹³⁷

(4) Spiritual pride

Spiritual pride is moral pride crowned with divine sanction. When man's partial moral standards and relative achievements are explicitly identified with the unconditioned good and the will of God itself, moral pride becomes spiritual pride. Therefore, spiritual pride is the most explicit form of self-righteousness. "The most grievous sin of pride is always committed by religion and in the name of Christ, the sin of identifying sinful human purposes with the

¹³⁷Niebuhr, "Christian Faith. . . ." p. 87.

perfection of Christ."¹³⁸ In short, spiritual pride is man's audacious claim that he has appropriated the ethical and spiritual truth of God. Since he possesses the whole truth and nothing but the truth in regard to the matter of ethics and religion, no one who differs from him is justified. In this respect, Niebuhr maintains that Luther is perfectly right in calling the Pope Anti-Christ.¹³⁹ But it must be pointed out, at the same time, that Luther's attitude toward Schwenkfeld was an epitome of spiritual pride. Calvin was Anti-Christ in his attitude toward the execution of Servetus. Even Karl Barth characterized "a peculiar quality of personal arrogance and disrespect" for Emil Brunner in his Nein!.¹⁴⁰ The sober reality is that no one is exempted from such pride. "There is no final guarantee against the spiritual pride of man. Even the recognition in the sight of God

¹³⁸ Reinhold Niebuhr, "The Arrogance in the Name of Christ," The Christian Century, LIII (September 2, 1936), 1157.

¹³⁹ Niebuhr's criticism of the Roman Catholic Church is primarily aimed at its claim that it possesses, in fact, the whole truth of God which is necessary for the salvation of man. "A Vicar of Christ on earth is bound to be, in a sense, Anti-Christ. The whole contemporary political situation yields evidence of the perils of the Catholic doctrine of the church. Everywhere the church claims to be fighting the enemies of God without realizing to what degree these enemies are merely the rebels against a corrupt feudal civilization" (NDM, I, 202).

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

that he is a sinner can be used as a vehicle of that very sin.¹⁴¹

b) The sin of sensuality

Sensuality can be adequately analysed only when set in the total framework of nature and spirit. While pride is defined as an attempt of the self to absolutize spirit, sensuality is an attempt by the self to center and identify life with nature.

If selfishness is the destruction of life's harmony by the self's attempt to centre life around itself, sensuality would seem to be the destruction of harmony within the self, by the self's undue identification with and devoting to particular impulses and desires within itself.¹⁴²

That is to say, sensuality is always caused by both man's undue attempt to assert himself apart from God and his desperate effort to escape his freedom by plunging himself into the vitalities of nature. The point is vigorously underscored by Niebuhr in his reply to E. A. Burt, who, out of his sympathy for Buddhism, questions Niebuhr's understanding of the Biblical doctrine of sin.

Professor Burt raises the question whether there is a Biblical view of sin, and points to the fact that there are at least two views, one of them being derived from the body-spirit dualism, which attributes evil to the body and regards ascetic flagellations of physical passion as means of salvation.

¹⁴¹Ibid., p. 202.

¹⁴²Ibid., p. 228.

Professor Burtt thinks this dualism is derived from the Pauline concept of the "flesh warring against the spirit." I think he is in error in this contention. At least the best Biblical scholarship seems agreed that Paul means by "cardinal minded" the self-seeking itself. The two great Pauline theologians of Christian history, Augustine and Luther, certainly never interpreted the Pauline concepts in terms of Platonic dualism, whether they defined sin as amor sui or as concupiscentia, as self love or as lust. Even lust, according to Luther, is not simply physical passion but self-regard. I think there is a consistent interpretation of sin in the Bible from the story of the Fall through the prophets to the Pauline definition in Romans I: "They [men] change the glory of the incorruptible God into the image of corruptible man and worship the creature rather than the Creator."¹⁴³

Here Niebuhr answers one criticism which is constantly directed to his doctrine of sin: Niebuhr omits the sins of the weak man. Carl Rogers, for example, reviewing Niebuhr's The Self and the Dramas of History, declares that most of the people he sees as patients have something quite different wrong with them. They think too little of themselves. They have given up or lost all their esteem. They may even hate themselves.¹⁴⁴ Rogers is joined by W. J. Wolf, who writes, "Niebuhr's categories fail adequately to account for the sins of the weak man as they do so forcibly for those of the strong man."¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³"Reply," p. 449.

¹⁴⁴Carl R. Rogers, "Niebuhr on the Nature of Man," The Nature of Man in Theological and Psychological Perspective, Simon Doniger, editor (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1962), p. 56.

¹⁴⁵Wolf, op. cit., p. 241.

Niebuhr's answer to the above criticism is that man seeks to overcome the anxiety of his paradoxical nature either by seeking the basis of his security in himself, or through dissolving the tension of his position by forfeiting his freedom. The relationship between the sin of pride and the sin of sensuality is extremely subtle and complicated. But whatever it may be, both pride and sensuality involve man's freedom. Niebuhr illustrates this two-fold motivation of sensuality in terms of drunkenness and sex. Man intoxicates himself in order to feel the sense of power, no matter how illusory that sense might be. But, at the same time, it must be pointed out that this man is obsessed with the desire to forget himself.

The drunkard sometimes seeks the abnormal stimulus of intoxicating drink in order to experience a sense of power and importance which normal life denies him. This type of intoxication represents a pathetic effort to make the self the center of the world to a degree which normal reason with its consciousness of the ego's insignificance makes impossible. But drunkenness may have a quite different purpose. It may be desired not in order to enhance the ego but to escape from it. It would not be inaccurate to define the first purpose of intoxication as the sinful ego-assertion which is rooted in anxiety and unduly compensates for the sense of inferiority and insecurity; while the second purpose of intoxication springs from the sense of guilt, or a state of perplexity in which a sense of guilt has been compounded with the previous sense of insecurity.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶NDM, I, 234-235.