

Crisis and Change

Crisis and Change:
Religion, Ethics and Theology
under Late Modern Conditions

Edited by

Jan-Olav Henriksen and Tage Kurtén

**CAMBRIDGE
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P U B L I S H I N G

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This book first published 2012

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ISBN (10): 1-4438-3749-0, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-3749-1

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INTRODUCTION

RELIGION, ETHICS AND THEOLOGY UNDER CHANGE

JAN-OLAV HENRIKSEN AND TAGE KURTÉN

It is said that the Chinese sign for a crisis is a combination of the two signs for danger and possibility. Given that this is the case, the changing societal and cultural conditions in what may be called the late modern condition of Western societies also pose new challenges for how established religion and theology think about themselves: Not only does religion itself appear to be in some kind of crisis, but also many of the established ways of understanding and doing religion, theology and ethics appear obsolete, inadequate or dated.

Against such a backdrop, the articles in the present volume represent attempts to rethink theology and religion under the crisis (in the above sense) that late modern conditions present to us. The project out of which these contributions have emerged was accordingly called KRIS—which in Swedish is both an acronym for the phrase “Christianity in new contexts” and also the word for “crisis”. Established religion finds itself in crisis—a crisis that implies both a danger of not understanding its own role, impact and conditions, and an opportunity when it comes to developing new modes, more in accordance with the empirical situation that still needs investigation and research. Accordingly, the following is the result of a joint undertaking of two research groups, one based in Åbo, Finland, and the other in Oslo, Norway, which have since 2006 focused on exploring the contextual character of theology in understanding both Christian belief and Christian ethics.

The challenge of the idea that Christianity appears in new ways—and in “new” contexts”, and of investigating what that means, can be met in different ways. A common basis for the project on which this volume is based is that one cannot understand religion and ethics without paying attention to the different contexts in and by means of which religion and ethics express themselves. This makes both religion and ethics liquid, and

allows us to see them as based on specific contingencies rather than as expressions of some essential features. Theoretically, this approach is underscored when we view religion and ethics in the light of the philosophical insights that have emerged in the wake of Wittgenstein's late philosophy. Among the lasting points in this philosophy is the one that no proposition can be understood outside its context of use. Hence, the context in which it is used determines the meaning of a religious or theological statement. This is of vital importance for the understanding of what we call religion, as well as for understanding Western religion's reflective mode, i.e., theology (including some parts of ethics): neither theology nor religion can be seen as mere cognitive, doctrinal or theoretical approaches, but must be understood in the light of how they express themselves in, and as, specific human practices.

Furthermore, Wittgenstein tells us that contexts are always specific, always related to and partly constituted by different practices. Religion and ethics, accordingly, always interact with a diverse field of social and cultural practices. In order to understand religion and ethics one has, accordingly, to identify how they express themselves within, and in relation to, such practices. Furthermore, the pragmatic dimension implied in all religious and ethical discourse needs to be considered more than is often the case in theoretical treatises. To reduce religion—or ethics for that matter—to issues of theory or belief only, is, as a consequence, understood here as a severe under-determination.

In a classic modern setting, religion was delineated and regulated or referred theoretically to specific institutions and groups that were defined as religious. In the Nordic countries, religion was considered as something that first and foremost was handled by the main churches, and came to expression in clearly delineated rituals and practices that could be differentiated from what did not count as religious. The differentiation and the separation of the religious sphere from other spheres made it possible to keep religion at arm's length, and to understand its position as something slowly waning due to the ever increasing secularization of the societies in question.

In many ways, this is a picture of religion that is long outdated, and that is in need of correction for a number of reasons. The borders between religion and society cannot any longer be understood adequately in this way or along such lines. Hence, in the present volume, we intend to show by diverse studies that the situation is in need of being described somewhat differently.

We are not questioning the established fact that the Nordic countries, including the two countries out of which the following studies emerge

(Finland and Norway), are highly secularized. However, we question an understanding of secularization that implies that religion is disappearing from society, or that religion and religious questions are only handled within specific contexts and have a correspondingly limited impact. Hence, the interaction between a society that is not so much modern but rather late modern (or even post-modern, as some of the authors in the following chapters would argue) and religion and theology needs to be investigated further in order to trace some of this wider impact. In general, then, the development in Western countries during the twentieth century can be considered a process of growing secularization. Nonetheless, during the latter part of the century the situation changed and new religious and moral voices in society and personal life emerged. Sociological findings and philosophical reflections on the use of religious and moral language suggest that society today is now undergoing complex new changes in moral and religious discourses. During the 1960s and 1970s, explicit discussion in religious and moral terms was largely missing from public discourse in the Nordic countries. Since then, however, both morality and religion have regained a more visible role in the public sphere. In such a situation, it is important that theologians attempt to understand the new roles religious and moral understandings of life may play.

That our societies may be more aptly described as post-secular than secular does not, as indicated, imply that we are directly arguing against claims about ongoing processes of secularization. Rather, we would like to contribute to describing religion in late modernity as a complex system of symbols and practices which interact with a vast variety of other symbols and practices that are not usually identified as religious. The complexities that emerge out of these interactions cannot be restricted to those that take place within the field of a clearly delineated religious field or sphere, but they play out in many different parts of society and culture. This situation indicates that, on a public and organizational level, our societies may still appear as secularized in the established meaning of the term. However, researchers have recently also described the contemporary situation as one of resacralization, where the modern differentiations between the religious sphere and other spheres are becoming increasingly less differentiated, and religion and ethical discourse loses its centre in established, traditional religiosity and comes to the fore and is negotiated elsewhere. That, however, is only part of what we are after in the following. What concerns us more is to identify how the above-mentioned interactions make it hard to describe religion as restricted to influencing specific spheres, or delineated to a specific and easily identified religious or ethical discourse:

it is not something that is any longer only taking place within, or internal to, theology.

On the empirical level, these different interactions between religious symbols/practices and other types of practices, modes of reflection and so forth, are testimony to, and part of, what we may call the increasing religious (and ethical) pluralism in the Nordic countries. The decreasing influence of the main churches on the way people believe and reason, and the still continuing influence of the churches in terms of rituals and manifestations of (national) community, suggests a kind of decentring of religion in some ways, and not in others. The churches do not have the same religious and/or ethical hegemony as previously, but this does not mean that the modes of reflection that have been developed within the borders of ethics and theology of the church are not without impact on the wider society, and in different ways. We do believe, however, that this situation may not be specific to Nordic countries only, but it may relate to and shed light on the situation of religion and ethics in many post-traditional, late-modern societies.

On the more theoretical level, the following contributions seek to develop a focus that addresses theology and ethics as praxis and praxis-related, and not only as theoretical. They understand religion and morality as modes of being in the world by means of, or mediated by, different symbolic resources and practices. Moreover, this also allows for a way of doing theology that is more explorative than dogmatic and authoritative: the religious and moral sphere can be seen as open to different types of theoretical construction, given what type of interests is behind the investigation in question.

Historical, cultural, and social contexts have always been important in theological reflection and religious expressions. Within theological reflection, awareness of the importance of such contexts has risen during the past few decades, resulting in a revitalized interest in the contextual conditions of theology. However, this has also resulted in a growing awareness of the temporary and finite character of all theological expressions and thus an increased willingness to compare different perspectives, but, as indicated, without according any one perspective absolute normative authority.

In Western societies today, many traits that have been taken for granted in so-called modernity have become less obvious and, thereby, possible objects for severe criticism or radical re-thinking. Such critical awareness can be perceived as ushering in a new, late modern situation. The widespread consensus amongst most sociologists of religion, philosophers and systematic theologians is that such a tension between

modernity and late modernity exists. Nevertheless, scholars disagree as to how they emphasize the importance of the late modern challenges to modernity. In order to illuminate in what ways such features can influence people's manner of orientating themselves in the world, as both moral persons and Christian believers, the project behind the present volume has striven to address some of the important aspects of the late modern situation. The research group here writing has found that the majority of literature on this subject is biased with a modernity outlook. Therefore, in order to gain a new perspective on the situation, the late modern challenge must be taken seriously, both theoretically and empirically.

Firstly, it can be empirically acknowledged that the general conditions for communicating the Christian tradition as something known and obvious in peoples' understanding of life has eroded. Thus Christian belief and theology can no longer be communicated through commonly shared and self-evident conditions and thinking. The traditional Christian frame of reference cannot be taken for granted in that parts of the pragmatic frames within which Christian theology used to operate in Western societies either no longer exist or are shared by fewer and fewer people. The plurality of life views in Western societies contributes largely to the vast exchange of diverse ideas and attitudes. This, however, does not only pertain to different religious views of life, but is also related to a tendency amongst many Westerners not to build individual convictions on religious traditions. Furthermore, the privatization of religion characterizes life for many in Western societies. Such development poses a serious challenge to traditional churches and their (ecclesiological) self-understanding.

Secondly, as indicated previously, religion and morality have received greater attention during recent years. The project has focused on religious beliefs and assesses such beliefs, relating them to their various political and/or societal functions, emphasizing the importance of religion as a social and cultural force that must be reckoned with. The underlying thesis is that statements made about religion and religious proclamations can no longer be valued only within a definable doctrinal framework without clear connections to practical consequences in a broader context. Accepting that morality and ethics have simultaneously experienced an evident renaissance in late modern society, new research on how religion and morality find expression and to what extent they are related to one another in people's private and public (political) actions becomes possible.

Thirdly, religious and moral themes in modern times tend to appear in "new" cultural arenas; they no longer appear to be institutionally anchored or defined and ensconced in the "religious sector" of modernity. Furthermore, their relevance outside the church is not merely restricted to a socio-

political sphere. Today, religious themes appear in literature, films and visual arts in a manner which twenty years ago was impossible to imagine. Nowadays, branches of philosophy and legal science discuss themes with theological relevance and so on.

Thus the current cultural situation seems to require self-critical re-articulation of some central conditions and themes related to Christian traditions by all religious believers. These re-articulations will demonstrate how people are facing new contexts and horizons that theology can relate to and address. These new horizons will expose both scarcely noticed problems and new possibilities for formulating and communicating general insights, something that is the duty of theology to propose and pass on.

The book begins with some articles focusing on changes in ethics that are taking place, or that seem to be needed, when modernity and secularity cease to define the framework and views taken for granted in current culture and society.

In his article, "Lutheran Moral Thinking – its Dilemma in a Late Modern Setting", Tage Kurtén discusses the mainstream Lutheran understanding of the life of the church and the religious life of the individual Christian, on the one hand, and society and the everyday life of all humans on the other. The traditional Lutheran view has been expressed through the idea of God's two ways of ruling in the world, in the church through the Word, and in the worldly state with the Sword. Kurtén seriously challenges this so-called two kingdom doctrine. One important point he makes is that the emerging talk of a post-secular condition radically changes our understanding of secular modernity and thereby the way religion is understood. The differentiation between a religious and a worldly sphere, expressed for example in the Lutheran talk of two kingdoms, fades away. Accordingly many contemporary ideas concerning the role of religious tradition lose their validity. According to Kurtén this calls for self-critical reflection on the part of the traditional Lutheran Church.

Phenomenology can be seen as a critique of scientific rationality and ontology made absolute. Eskil Skjeldal elaborates some aspects of this in his contribution "'Am I My Brother's Keeper?' Postmodern Conditions for Theological Ethics." He starts by presenting Zygmunt Baumann's postmodern ethics, and proceeds to explore some of the ideas implicit in Baumann through analyzing central features in the ethics of Emmanuel Levinas. Skjeldal shows that Levinas' non-ontological understanding of God – God seen as an implicit consequence of the moral relation to another human being–has features that can be traced back to Martin

Heidegger's critique of onto-theology. Levinas sees ethics as a precondition for understanding God. This leads Skjeldal to political theology in a way that comes close to the perspective presented by Kurtén above. Skjeldal's study of what he calls postmodern ethics results in an understanding of moral life as more profound than, and prior to, human knowledge, human consciousness and human freedom. The talk of metaphysics is thus seen as a way of stressing the absoluteness of the other as conditioning human and thereby moral life. According to Skjeldal, this is as close as we can get to a meaningful talk of God. He thereby presents a way of talking about a religious dimension in contexts that normally are understood as totally secular and thereby non-religious.

In the article by Lise Kanckos, "Using their Reproductive Autonomy or Buying their Way Out of Moral Dilemmas? The Rhetorical Construction of Cross-Border Reproductive Travel in and from the Nordic Countries", we move onto a concrete level. Due to the development of biotechnology in modern societies and due to a globally more and more open world, individuals from different countries currently have the opportunity to overcome their childlessness when the legislation in their home country forbids it. Kanckos shows that reproductive care across national borders is quite frequent in Nordic countries. On an individual level this is an expression of the desire for free choice. Kanckos further shows that different kinds of fertility treatments involve different kinds of moral questions. The phenomenon of surrogate mothers is seen as the most challenging one. Much of the discourse positive to all kinds of fertility treatments takes a quite instrumentalist view on the different persons involved. This view fits well in a modern society where social engineering is taken as an important way to resolve "moral" dilemmas. Kanckos primarily describes the situation as pluralistic. In a multicultural and multi-religious situation we can expect many different ways to cope with human reproduction. The number of legislative solutions is therefore likely to increase rather than decrease in a late modern society.

Miika Tolonen also focuses on a concrete phenomenon in "Post-Secular Alternative Politics: The Case of L'Arche". After a short reflection upon the concepts of "post-secularity" and "the return of religion", he studies the internationally known L'Arche movement as an example of religious expressions in a new frame. One important point Tolonen makes is that this movement makes religious expressions into political expressions. Thus Tolonen gives an example of how the idea of political theology as we meet it in Skjeldal's chapter can be applied in our current post-secular situation. L'Arche started in the 1960s as a small community where some cognitively disabled people were taken care of.

Today there are over 130 L'Arche communities in more than 30 countries. Life in these communities reflects a way of living totally different from "normal" life in Western societies. This can be seen in changed understandings of old concepts, like time, meal, disability, religion and so forth. Tolonen suggests that L'Arche can be taken as an interesting example of what it could mean to stop using the dichotomy secular-religious. In the life of these communities there is no line drawn between different spheres of life like those we meet in our modern societies.

Heidi Jokinen dives straight into this modern society and the role of the church in it. She takes her point of departure as the 1918 civil war in Finland with which Finland's history as an autonomous nation began. During the civil war large numbers of people were killed, and many of the deaths were not on the battlefield. The opposing sides were the "White", i.e., the right-wing landowners and bourgeoisie, and the "Red", left-wing socialists. The killing took place on both sides, but the number of deaths was higher on the Red side, and many Red partisans died in prison camps after the war, which was won by the White. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland was not neutral in the war; most of the clergy were on the White side. This historical trauma has never been quite overcome. Jokinen describes, however, how in the early 2000s there has been a discussion of whether the Church should in some way apologize for its part in this conflict ninety years in the past. Jokinen wonders what an apology could mean in this case. This leads her to look more closely both at *asking for forgiveness* and at *forgiveness* itself. She also asks to what extent asking for forgiveness and/or forgiving could be an institutional task, or if it only is meaningful when individuals and their personal relations are concerned. She emphasizes the close relation between forgiveness and responsibility, and she also points to the importance of showing in action your willingness to apologize for past wrongdoings. These features, responsibility and moral communication through action, she sees as expressions of a late modern mentality.

With the article of Vija Herefoss we take an even closer look at a living church. In "Post-Modernity and the De-Secularization of Europe: An Eastern European Perspective" she studies that part of Europe where the current talk of post-modernity and de-secularization is not so obvious. The situation in the Baltic countries, formerly parts of the Soviet Union, is still very much marked by the rather radical cultural change after "the fall of the wall". Western consumer culture, individual freedom, the free market and secularization have been important ingredients in these societies during the last few decades. In her study Herefoss shows how this has influenced the theology of the church leaders in Latvia rather

heavily. The reaction has not been a search for a post-modern personal freedom to express one's religion in public, however. Rather it has been a conservative longing for the place the Latvian Church had in the time before the Second World War. In an interesting way Herefoss explores how the attempts of the religious leaders in post-communist countries to rebuild the old churches contributed to the process of de-secularization in Europe. The picture differs radically from the one in the Nordic countries. Herefoss offers a healthy reminder of the fact that concepts important for understanding one culture or nation can be out of place in another one.

In "Post-Secularity and Post-Constantinianism: The Case of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland" Patrik Hagman discusses the current post-secular situation of the Lutheran Church in Finland using some central post-liberal theological voices. From John Howard Yoder he brings in a radical criticism of the close relation between the ecclesiastical institutions bodies and the state in Western societies. This "Constantinianism" is seen as an example of a problematic understanding of the political role of the church and its authorities. Hagman attempts to relate central features of today's Finnish Lutheran Church to Yoder's critique of mainstream Western denominations, and the Constantinian fallacy mirrored in the development of these denominations. Hagman forces us to see an interesting picture of current church life. He identifies both important possibilities and critical features in the current situation of the Lutheran Church in Finland. His suggestions concerning the kind of development that would make the Church into a post-Constantinian one can be seen as a solution which would come close to the ideas presented earlier in the volume by Kurtén and Skjeldal.

Kristin Graff-Kallevåg also touches upon the ideas presented by Skjeldal in "Contextuality and Revelation. On the Interplay between a Postmodern Focus on Contextuality and the Theological Concept of Revelation." Thereby Graff-Kallevåg can be seen as contributing to a pondering upon the same problems that occupy Hagman. She explores what the consequences of the postmodern critique of the idea of objective knowledge and absolute truth can be in theology. She analyses how a typically post-modern sensitivity for contextuality could be brought together with a belief in God's revelation somehow constituting a specific Christian context. In her search for a solution to this meta-theological issue she consults among others some Nordic theologians; Jayne Svenungsson, Ola Sigurdson and Sigurd Bergmann. Her own solution stresses the importance of those people in the world that are worst off in some sense. According to Graff-Kallevåg, such people ought to be part of the context that the Christian church must take into consideration when it tries to

express its belief in revelation. The concept of revelation is here closely related to the concept of “the other”, which we find in Skjeldal’s article. Graff-Kallevåg has also found this emphasis on the other in an article by Henriksen where this “otherness” is seen as constitutive of a religious talk of God.

The Christian tradition is seen in close relation to the church in Graff-Kallevåg’s article. It can, however, also be understood as something with a life in many other cultural contexts and in many varying forms of individual life. In traditionally mono-religious countries like the Nordic ones, religious belief and disbelief found expression in art and in written words of many kinds. Carina Nynäs presents in “‘The God of the Unfinished...’ Trust and Distrust in Finno-Swedish Poetry” how Swedish speaking poets during the twentieth century struggled with a religious language. In these struggles one can clearly see how some writers are living in a modern taken-for-granted framework, while others use a language meaningful only within a late modern frame. In the writings of Jean-Luc Marion Nynäs has found the conceptual tools that help her make this analysis. She has no difficulty in finding examples in her poetic sources. She hints at a dialectical understanding of the cultural development in Finland. In early twentieth-century poetry conventional Christian language was broken down by modern poets criticizing the Christian dogma while old religious pictures and allusions are captured in new ways by current, late modern poets. She sees this as a solution to the problem occupying theology that is critical towards traditional metaphysics: “We witness both a return to pre-modernity and something brightly new: an indifference against metaphysical and ontological broodings”.

Johannes Hvaal Solberg continues the exploration of an aesthetical sphere and its relation to religious language in his article “Aesthetics and Language—Transcending the Dichotomy between Aesthetics and Language in the Light of the Philosophy of Jacques Derrida”. He develops the conceptual analysis and goes further than Marion, as presented by Nynäs, to Derrida’s critical discussion of Immanuel Kant’s understanding of aesthetics. Solberg thereby gives a fresh contribution to the possibilities for understanding religious talk about God. His solution, building closely on his interpretation of Derrida, questions the idea of “pure” knowledge of metaphysical objects. Our language is always context-bound, which according to Solberg seems to include an aesthetical element of faith in every statement concerning, for example, God’s reality. The idea of God is here intertwined with the idea of the “Other”, an idea that we recognize from many of the other articles in this volume. Thus Solberg can conclude

that there is a “third way” in religious/theological language, beyond affirmation and negation. The solution is to take the pragmatic use of language seriously. He thereby underscores the importance of the context for every understanding of language, supporting the findings of most of the other authors in the volume.

Asle Eikrem expresses some unease with the idea of contextuality in “Contextuality and Universality in Post-Modern Philosophy of Religion”. One key concept in many of the texts that critically assess modernity is the concept of contextuality, and one important critical reaction to this concept is that it runs the risk of making the idea of universal concepts meaningless and useless. Eikrem strives to show that there are serious problems with some uses of the concept of contextuality. In a sense one could say that Eikrem wants to go a step forward in relation to late or post modern philosophy. Or, as he himself ends his essay: “While recognizing the value of paying close attention to the particulars of meaning in an increasingly pluralistic society, I am of the opinion that something has been lost along the postmodern way. My discussion of the concept of context has been trying to indicate the need to rediscover some of the concerns of modern discourses without repeating their mistakes.” This last mentioned intention of Eikrem is in line with the way the project behind this volume understands our talk about “late-modernity”. With “late modernity” we think of a mentality highly critical of some of the main ideas in modern thinking. Late modernity does not, however, imply a total rejection of the heritage of the Enlightenment. The main point lies in revealing a series of truths as taken for granted in modernity, thereby bringing them into the field of critical discourse. For example, it has become possible to question the concept of “universality” because we have come to see the importance of the context for the interpretation of every human artefact, whether texts, thought structures or material things. Eikrem reminds us, however, that the idea of universality should not thereby be totally abandoned.

In the final article, “Old Wine in New Wineskins? On the Lasting Impact of Critique of Religion on the Understanding of God in the Theology of the Twentieth Century”, Jan-Olav Henriksen gives examples of how universality and particularity have been discussed in theology during the last hundred years. He shows that central features in the theology of the early twentieth century ought to be understood in the context of modernity. The theology in question challenged the God-talk implicit in the mainstream Enlightenment tradition – a tradition exemplified by persons critical to religion, like Freud, Feuerbach, Marx and Nietzsche. Henriksen finds such modernity-critical contributions in

the theological discussions by, for example, Karl Barth and Rudolf Bultmann. He partly accepts and partly rejects the solutions of these theological giants. He sees Wolfhart Pannenberg as an important critical elaborator of themes in the dialectical theology of Barth and Bultmann. However, he also criticizes Pannenberg for being unable to overcome the presuppositions of modern thinking. He concludes that one must distinguish between the concept of God and the expressions of Christian faith as a mode of existence. Only then, according to Henriksen, is it “possible to maintain a way of speaking of God that safeguards the insight that one cannot speak of God in an adequate manner unless one speaks of God as the unconditional condition of one’s own existence under specific contextual circumstances”. Henriksen summarizes much of the content in most of the articles in this volume when he writes: “The only way to really overcome the critique that identifies God with a human projection is to show that God must be seen as something *more* than a function of human subjectivity (affirming God’s *otherness*), while at the same time unavoidably manifesting Godself in that realm as well”.

All in all, the articles that follow in this volume testify to the ongoing struggle to deal with the resources of the Christian tradition under new and altered historical circumstances, and also within contexts that have not always been identified as specifically religious or theological. In all their variety, these articles are themselves a sign of how Christianity has to find new ways to express itself in new and different contexts than that which we usually term the “modern”.

CHAPTER ONE

LUTHERAN MORAL THINKING: ITS DILEMMA IN A LATE MODERN SETTING

TAGE KURTÉN

Introduction

In the Nordic countries during the first decade after 2000 we can identify several examples of tensions between what could be called a secular political sphere and a religious sphere represented by the established Lutheran Church or by some non-Christian religion.

There is the well known case of the cartoons picturing the prophet Mohammed in the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* in December 2005. This example involves many different features of interest. I will only point to one, recently presented by Ulrik Becker Nissen.¹ The Danish prime minister on this occasion, uttered, among other things, “Keep religion indoors!”—obviously meaning that religion is a private matter that should not have a voice in the public, political sphere. Nissen sees this as an example of how some influential political actors do not want religious voices in the public discourse on political matters. This can be seen as a consequence of a popular interpretation of traditional Lutheran social ethics.

In Finland in January 2011 the Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland made an unusual move when it published a statement listing some important points the Council thought ought to be central in the (then) coming negotiations aimed at establishing a new government after the parliamentary elections in March 2011. They pointed to a number of issues that they found to have been seriously neglected by all political

¹ Ulrik Nissen, “Lutheran Natural Law. Thought in the Nordic Countries in the Twenty-First Century,” in *Law and Religion in the Twenty-First Century – Nordic Perspectives*, ed. L. Christoffersen et al. (Copenhagen: Djøf Publishing, 2010), 422-424.

parties during the preceding years.² We could see this as a fresh initiative to make a religious voice heard in the public political discourse, i.e., as an initiative contrary to the idea of the Danish prime minister.

These two examples put an urgent issue in the current societal situation in the Nordic countries in a nutshell. How could (or should) we understand the relation between Christian (and other religious) thinking and thinking in different spheres outside the religious institutions? This question will occupy me in the following text.

My main thesis is as follows: In modern society there has been a rather clear distinction between secular matters and things belonging to a religious sphere. Sociologically this can be (and has been) shown to be an important feature of the highly differentiated modern society. This secularization process has, in the Nordic countries, taken place during the last hundred years. Religion, in this process, was marginalized as a public institution, and religious life and religious deliberations were reduced to the private sphere. The public became secular, and a religious point of view lost very much of its public validity.

In the strongly Lutheran Nordic countries this development was, among other things, supported by Martin Luther's idea of the "two kingdoms", the spiritual and the worldly. The popular understanding of this dichotomy has been a rather clear cut distinction between a secular political sphere and a religious, spiritual sphere where the Church has a role to play. This situation has also been coloured by a modern development where religious questions have been seen as private matters, with a very limited role to play in the public sphere.

However, when we try to relate Christian life today, be it in the church or as a personal way of life, to public life and political questions, it is important to take notice of the radical changes in society and culture due firstly to the secularization process in modernity, and secondly due to changes labelled as "post secular".³

² "Kirkon hallitusohjelmataavoitteet korostavat heikoimpien asemaa ja ennaltaehkäisevää perhetyötä" published 20.1.2011, i

<http://evl.fi/EVLUutiset.nsf/Documents/9746924BC90CBB7AC225781D00490E36?OpenDocument&lang=FI> – Accessed 12 August 2011.

³ My argument is closely in line with Jan-Olav Henriksen in "Pluralism and Identity: The Two-Kingdoms Doctrine Challenged by Secularization and Privatization," in *The Gift of Grace. The Future of Lutheran Theology*, ed. N.H. Gregersen et al. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 277-290. However I will go a step further by emphasizing the critical assessment of secularity (as an ideological view taken for granted) expressed in the current talk of "post-secularity". I am thereby more critical towards the traditional view of the two kingdoms than Henriksen in the article mentioned.

In the time of Luther the idea of living in God's world was taken for granted. That means that a kind of religious outlook on life was the natural background for the whole society and its culture.⁴ To a certain point a religious tradition had to be taken into account in a rather concrete way also outside religious institutions in a more strict sense (i.e., the Church). Belief in God was still of importance when defining the agenda in the "secular" sphere. A religious aspect, in the sense of living in a world conditioned by God was taken for granted. Secular viewpoints had to be defended before this theistic view. In modernity the relation became the converse. In modernity most people have taken for granted that they live in circumstances where daily life is led *etsi Deus non daretur* (as if God does not exist). This secular view of life is now taken for granted. Secular language and secular thinking are also defining the understanding of religious faith and life, and the place of religion in a modern society.

This modern situation is currently under debate. In order to understand the new coming of religion into the public sphere, and the talk of "post secularization" in current Nordic societies, I suggest that we must stop using the secular-religious dichotomy altogether. The reason is that otherwise we remain stuck in concepts that obstruct our ability to grasp things anew.

I will argue that Lutheran theology must seriously rethink the way Lutheran social ethics is understood. I am not alone in taking up this challenge. I will, however, try to show that what we perhaps could call a mainstream interpretation of the Lutheran tradition is very much coloured by lines of thought important in modernity. Concepts like the two kingdoms doctrine, (natural) law, three estates etc. are understood by these scholars within a modern framework. This has bearings on their understanding of state and church. I will point out some important traits in what could be called late modernity or a post-secular situation. The changed situation is evident, for example, in the talk of the return of religion in the public sphere.⁵

One important point is that the concepts of religion and the secular will change in this development. In a similar way the understanding of the public and the private also seems to be changing in this late modern development. And these changes are, I will argue, profound in the sense that they concern deep seated ideas taken for granted by the modern mind.

⁴ This idea of taking God for granted can still be heard among many theological voices discussing a fresh understanding of the Lutheran ethical tradition.

⁵ For a recent overview of many important features of this ongoing development in a Nordic context, see *Law and Religion in the Twenty-First Century – Nordic Perspectives*, ed. L. Christoffersen et al. (2010), op. cit.

Implicit in the picture so drawn is a holistic view of the human being which will overcome the split understanding of human life and human identity in modernity.

This could therefore be said to present conditions that make the initiative by the Finnish Lutheran church leaders intelligible while they challenge the view by the Danish prime minister.

I will start with a presentation of what we could call the mainstream, and popular, theological understanding of some ideas in the Nordic Lutheran tradition. I see this understanding as a modern phenomenon. I will then briefly mention some theological voices which are more or less critical to this mainstream understanding. In a third part, relying on the work of William Cavanaugh among others, I will further develop the critical discussion of the way Lutheran tradition is expressed in modernity, given current changes in culture and society.

Traditional Lutheran ethics in modernity

Teija Tiilikainen, a Finnish scholar in political sciences, in an interesting doctoral thesis, presented at Åbo Akademi University in 1997, has pointed at the way the different Christian traditions in Western Europe seem to have influenced the developments in different European countries. Although her study is not primarily historical she discusses some differences between Lutheran, Calvinistic and Roman Catholic traditions in a way relevant to my problem.

Tiilikainen finds three different political cultures in modern Western Europe; a Catholic Counter-Reformative (*sic*), a Lutheran, and a Calvinist one.⁶ The main points in her interpretation of the historical development and the role of the three religious traditions are the following.⁷ She sees these traditions as still very important and as contributing to the difficulties of uniting Europe in a more profound way. According to Tiilikainen, the reformed cultures represented a changed idea of the citizen and of the state in relation to the medieval Catholic view. Of these, the Calvinist political heritage was individualistic while the Lutheran political theory came to emphasize the importance of the civil authorities (the Prince). “When the highest Christian duty of a good Lutheran was to be a humble servant of the civil authorities, a good Calvinist had to arrange his

⁶ Teija Tiilikainen, *Europe and Finland. Defining the Political Identity of Finland in Western Europe* (Åbo Akademi, Turku, 1997), 22-23.

⁷ For the presentation in this paragraph, see Tiilikainen, *Europe and Finland*, 50-52.

own life into a system of good works as an indication of his faith.”⁸ Although Counter-Reformative Catholicism shared with Lutheranism an emphasis on a collective political culture, the former came to stress the Church as a political factor in a way foreign to Lutheranism, according to Tiilikainen.

Tiilikainen states that these different traditions came to influence the development of democratic societies in the regions where they were strong. Due to its clear distinction between the state and the church, Lutheranism came to support the development of autonomous and strong Princes in Northern Europe.⁹ Thus it became a counter force to the new democratic and liberal ideas trying to develop. In contrast to this, both Calvinism and Catholicism gave support to more liberal and democratic ideas in the political sphere. In Tiilikainen’s interpretation¹⁰ Calvinism supported an absolutism of the individual, giving rise to liberalism, while Catholicism was more communitarian and could give rise to a republican constitutional state building.¹¹

The picture Tiilikainen gives of the three traditions and their role in the becoming of the modern democratic states of Europe can be presented as follows. All three traditions contributed to the growing secularism of state and society. In a democratic situation, however, the different traditions were functioning differently. Due to its emphasis on a sharp division between the spiritual and worldly kingdom, Lutheranism gives more space to the secular mind and allows Christian citizens to take part in political life with the help of reason alone. The Catholic tradition emphasizes the importance of the Christian individual as primarily part of the Church community, and the Calvinist tradition points to the individual with a Christian identity very much rooted in the reading of the Bible. Thus it became easier for a Christian to adjust to the secularization of the public and political debate in a Lutheran setting than in regions where the influence of a Calvinist or Catholic tradition was strong.¹² Thereby it

⁸ Tiilikainen, *Europe and Finland*, 51. I will not discuss to what extent this clear cut distinction is historically totally correct. However, I find the picture that Tiilikainen draws a helpful tool for interpreting the overall European development. For the Lutheran development, see also Svend Andersen, “Law in Nordic Lutheranism,” in Christoffersen et al., *Law and Religion in the Twenty-First Century – Nordic Perspectives*, 397-400.

⁹ To this, see also Andersen, “Law in Nordic Lutheranism”, 399-401.

¹⁰ Tiilikainen relies mostly on Robert R. Palmer and Colton, *Joel A History of the Modern World* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1984).

¹¹ Tiilikainen, *Europe and Finland*, 41-49.

¹² See Tiilikainen, *Europe and Finland*, 22-51.

becomes important to look more closely at the Lutheran idea of two kingdoms.

In the Lutheran tradition one key issue has been the so-called “two kingdoms” doctrine which Martin Luther is supposed to have developed.¹³ One important aspect of this “doctrine”¹⁴ is the fact that Luther’s context was a kind of Christian mono-cultural society, although he could imagine a situation where the ruler (the Prince) could be a non-Christian one, for example a Muslim, “a Turk”.¹⁵

The Finnish theologian and ethicist Antti Raunio¹⁶ has recently discussed the two kingdoms distinction by Luther. This distinction must, and here he keeps to a strong Lutheran tradition, be seen in the light of Luther’s understanding of creation, and of the three estates which in a sense represent the order of creation on a societal level. According to this, natural man lives related to some “givens”; *ecclesia* (i.e. the spiritual

¹³ Per Frostin, *Luther’s Two Kingdoms Doctrine. A Critical Study* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1994), 2-10. See also Antti Raunio, *Järki, usko ja lähimmäisen hyvä* (Helsinki: Suomen teologisen kirjallisuusseuran julkaisuja 252, 2007), 228-230, and Andersen, “Law in Nordic Lutheranism”, 393-411.

¹⁴ As Raunio has remarked, it would be more adequate to speak of “a conceptual distinction” than of a doctrine. See Raunio, *Järki, usko ja lähimmäisen hyvä*, 223-224. I agree. Thereby a problematic feature in the history of the Lutheran tradition can perhaps be overcome: According to Frostin, the talk of the two kingdoms doctrine among Lutheran theologians stems from a time no earlier than the period just before World War II in Germany. See also Frostin, *Luther’s Two Kingdoms Doctrine*, 1-2. This suggests that the idea of a *doctrine* clearly is a modern phenomenon, and that it perhaps should be seen as part of the way Lutheran theologians tried to adjust Lutheran tradition to the role of the Nazi state.

¹⁵ See for example Frostin, *Luther’s Two Kingdoms Doctrine*, 136-137; Andersen, “Law in Nordic Lutheranism”, 395-396.

¹⁶ Raunio is at the time of writing (summer 2011) professor of systematic theology at the University of Eastern Finland. In this article I follow a book by Raunio, *Järki, usko ja lähimmäisen hyvä*, written in Finnish. Most of the key concepts in an understanding of Luther’s social ethical thinking can also be found in a shorter article by Raunio in English, “Natural Law and Christian Love in Luther’s Theology,” in *Lidenskap og stringens*, ed. Kees van Kooten Niekerk and Nissen, Ulrik (Copenhagen: Anis, 2008), 249-261. The main ideas in Raunio’s presentation can also be found among other leading Lutheran theologians in the Nordic countries. I will make reference to some recent publications by Carl-Henric Grenholm, professor at the University of Uppsala, and by Svend Andersen, professor at Aarhus University. See Carl-Henric Grenholm, “Politisk moral i en luthersk kontekst,” in *Etisk pluralisme i Norden*, ed. Lars Østnor (Kristiansand: Høyskoleforlaget, 2001), and Andersen, “Law in Nordic Lutheranism”.

community), *oeconomia* (Luther talks of the household)¹⁷ and *politia* (which is seen as necessary because of evil). The main function of the political sphere is to work for justice in spite of evil. Thus politics combines the ideas of freedom, justice and compulsion. It does not belong to the original creation, but is mainly seen as a consequence of the Fall.¹⁸ Although the distinction between two kingdoms in Luther's writings is perhaps not always exactly the same as *ecclesia* on the one side and *oeconomia* and *politia* on the other side, I think it suffices for our purpose in this article to see these distinctions as very close.

An important feature in Luther's thought is, according to Raunio, his understanding of evil, of the world of Satan as set against the world of God.¹⁹ These two worlds are not to be confused with the two kingdoms. The latter refers to the two ways by which God is understood to rule the world and to fight against evil. In the worldly kingdom, God rules by law and with brutal force (the sword), and in the spiritual realm through the gospel and by the help of the word. Raunio shows how evil and selfishness is a feature of every human being, according to Luther. However, every human being can contribute to God's good work compelled by the (civil) law. Through these works everyone can maintain an outer righteousness. But only as a Christian, in and through faith, can an individual reach an inner righteousness which is shown through good works.²⁰ Luther's view of humankind, as we know from this, is quite pessimistic. Human beings are by nature selfish and only if they are forced will they act in a way that is to the benefit of their fellow human beings.

This Lutheran view of humanity raises the question whether we could think of any individual deed or political solution that is not, in the last resort, an effort to win advantages for a party and an individual person. Raunio points to the social and political structures as the way through which, according to Lutheran thinking, non-Christians are compelled to contribute to a common good. He connects this view of Luther's with

¹⁷ However, for example, Oswald Bayer, one of the leading Luther scholars, interprets *oeconomia* as covering, "in our economically and socially differentiated situation" three different spheres: marriage and family, business, education and academic study. See O. Bayer, "Three Estates and Two Kingdoms," in *Lidenskap og stringens*, ed. van Kooten Niekerk and Nissen, 155.

¹⁸ Raunio, *Järki, usko ja lähimmäisen hyvä*, 223-227.

¹⁹ Raunio, *Järki, usko ja lähimmäisen hyvä*, 228.

²⁰ Raunio, *Järki, usko ja lähimmäisen hyvä*, 230-231. In Nordic theology there is a consensus on these points among theologians, see for example Grenholm, "Politisk moral i en luthersk kontext", 244-247; Nissen, "Lutheran Natural Law", 420; Andersen, "Law in Nordic Lutheranism", 395; Henriksen, "Pluralism and Identity", 277-279.

Luther's distinction between *Person* and *Amt* (person and ministry/office). A Christian does righteous things (which benefit his neighbour) both as a person and in his ministry/office – like the executioner who as an official puts offenders to death during his working time, but who as a person forgives his wife her offending tone at home in the evening. A non-Christian, however, seems to be able to do right and good deeds only in her office, where the structures force her to do just that. Left on her own her selfishness and other weaknesses will prevail.²¹

But there is also a slightly more optimistic line in Luther's understanding of humankind. It is coupled to human reason. Reason represents an instance in every human being which, according to Luther, seems to contribute to actions and deeds which can be seen as morally good and right on the human level (*coram hominibus*). Reason defines what is right in normal day-to-day life.²²

Raunio finds that the golden rule, in line with Luther's thoughts, can be seen as a universal norm which he seems to presuppose that every human being is willing to accept.²³ Raunio's main points concerning Luther and the golden rule can be summarized in the following way: Raunio sees Luther's view of the golden rule as the content of the natural law in a monistic not a dualistic way. That means that a distinction between nature and spirit becomes obsolete. The golden rule is written in the heart of all people and it demands God's self-giving love of all humans.²⁴ But in our

²¹ Raunio, *Järki, usko ja lähimmäisen hyvä*, 232-234.

²² Raunio, "Natural Law and Christian Love in Lutheran Theology", 256. See also See Grenholm, "Politisk moral i en luthersk kontext", 252-259, and Frostin, *Luther's Two Kingdoms Doctrine*, 129. Per Frostin (professor of systematic theology at Lund University, 1990–1992) has made a more detailed study of the role of reason in the works of Luther. He starts with a statement in WA 40 I, 305, 7-8, written in 1535 (in Frostin's translation): "*Ratio* defines the right in the temporal regiment". With the temporal regiment Luther thinks both of *politia* (the state) and *oeconomia* (the family/household), according to Frostin (*Luther's Two Kingdoms Doctrine*, 129). Frostin then scrutinizes whether Luther perhaps means that a Christian reason is apart from a general human reason. Through some examples where Luther preaches against a certain war and against usury, he finds that the answer is no. Luther's arguments are on a general human level. He does not need any references to a revealed will of God going outside non-religious reasoning (Frostin, *Luther's Two Kingdoms Doctrine*, 143). This strengthens the traditional understanding of the Lutheran heritage: In moral and political questions all humans have the same ability to know what to do.

²³ Raunio, *Järki, usko ja lähimmäisen hyvä*, 112-115, 328.

²⁴ Here Raunio differs from Carl-Henric Grenholm, who stresses the unique character of the Christian idea of love, see Grenholm, *Bortom Humanismen. En studie i kristen etik*. Stockholm: Verbum 2003, 263-267.

fallen state, this is, anyhow, not obvious to all, and it cannot be directly seen in the way people do behave. The demand of the rule is therefore a demand of a changed motivation for action. Raunio sees that Luther's idea must be understood as not compatible with modern liberalism and the high value it gives to every rational being acting out of self interest. Raunio also observes (establishes) that the golden rule sees moral behaviour as related to God, because truly moral deeds are a service to the God who has made the self-giving love possible. A last aspect of Raunio's interpretation comes in the idea that self-giving love can be fulfilled through participation in the divine love, and this happens, according to the current Finnish school of Luther research, in faith when Christ dwells in the Christian ("*in ipsa fide Christus ad est*").²⁵

Influential Lutheran thinking in Nordic theology is marked by terms and dichotomies like natural law, spiritual and worldly kingdom, *coram deo* and *coram hominibus*, public office and private person, and so forth. In addition Finnish Luther research has introduced the idea of *in ipsa fide Christus ad est*, and Finnish mainstream Lutherans stress the golden rule as the centre of Lutheran understanding of morality.

The main idea is a kind of natural law thinking, where all humans are thought to share a common understanding of morality, and of a normative ethics. Reason is seen as the common denominator keeping all humans together in a common moral understanding of life and its challenges, although the role of reason is rather obscure due to the Fall and the element of sin in every human being. Thus for example Raunio presupposes that moral Christian life consists of both natural elements (the golden rule and secular rationality) and Christian ones in a Lutheran framework.

This way of thinking has both reflected and had impact on modern secular thinking, with its cleavage between religion as something private and social ethical life as something public. In the modern Nordic societies moral questions are primarily seen as questions where religious faith and religious beliefs have no place.

Theologically the idea of God the Creator who rules the whole of humanity through reason defines a background taken for granted. To what extent Christians are thought to stand for something more than what a non-

²⁵ See Raunio, "Natural Law and Faith: The Forgotten Foundations of Ethics in Luther's Theology," in *Union with Christ. The New Finnish Interpretation of Luther*, ed. Carl E. Braaten and Jenson, Robert (Grand Rapids MI & Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1998), 122. This leads to the old theological question of sanctification (or as it is also called in the Eastern Orthodox tradition, theopoiesis) and its place in the life of a Christian. I will not go further into that in this text.

Christian person can accomplish, differs in the positions taken by different Lutheran scholars.

Luther's view of the two kingdoms can thus be seen as giving legitimacy to the modern development of the secular in sharp contrast to the religious, giving support both to secular politics and to secular morality by Christians. Svend Andersen, leaning on the modern philosophers John Rawls, Jürgen Habermas and Ronald Dworkin, has argued even more clearly than Raunio for the idea that the traditional Lutheran thought of a universal secular common ground in ethical questions is still valid. Reason can unite humanity to a certain degree, according to him.²⁶ To my mind this position is meaningful, given the modern presuppositions of a secular realm, common to all people, a realm understood through a common secular language. However, the position seems to miss at least two things in the modern framework: the radical change in the understanding of humanity in modern secular time in relation to Luther's time, and the radical limiting of the religious perspective due to the modern differentiation between public secular spheres and religious institutions.

In political thinking the modern secularization became obvious in the social contract thinkers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These philosophers were the founders of modern liberal thinking. Building on Josef Wieland, Raunio has presented an interesting view according to which a difference in liberal thought between North America (or perhaps the whole Anglo-American world) and Europe can be traced back to two of these thinkers, Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. Both thinkers represent the liberal idea that the primary obligation of the state is the rule of law, with the task to protect the freedom, rights and property of every citizen. However, due to their different understanding of the nature of the state Hobbes has given support to the development of European welfare states, where the state is considered to have a positive and constructive role to play, whereas Locke's view has coloured liberalism in, for example, the USA, with a much more restricted understanding of the role of the state. Raunio stresses the different use of the golden rule by Hobbes and Locke. Both take their point of departure in the idea of self love as a primary feature of every human being. In this light the person's relation to other people must be understood, but the way these relations are restricted by the golden rule is differently understood by the two, in Raunio's interpretation. In Hobbes's view the individual person is restricted by the demand to accord as much freedom and rights to other persons as one wants to claim for oneself. According to Locke, human beings ought first to protect their own life and property, thereafter they should be ready to

²⁶ Andersen, "Law in Nordic Lutheranism", 407-409.

protect the lives and property of other people also.²⁷ Both of the views presented by Raunio presuppose, however, that the question of how to shape the good society is a rational, or as Hobbes even calls it, a “scientific” task. We can get an objective knowledge of what is right through human nature. Human reason is the key to the building of the best of societies.²⁸ Thus, these liberal thinkers can easily be combined with the modern Lutheran tradition. We have a key to describe Christian life in the world, according to this Lutheran tradition. This is in accordance with the aim of Raunio’s own project, when he defines his task as follows: “I will in this book strive to defend a view of Lutheran Ethics, according to which the golden rule is not purely formalistic, i.e. a rational principle without [material] content, but it really expresses something concerning what moral acting and a realized love really is.”²⁹

Antti Raunio’s book from 2007 is important because he tries to explicate the character of a Lutheran moral tradition in discussion with current critics and new philosophical challenges. He takes as his task to show that a leading principle in Lutheran ethical thinking, the golden rule, is a normative rule from which we really can deduce solutions to concrete problems.³⁰

²⁷ Raunio, *Usko, järki ja lähimmäisen hyvä*, 246-248.

²⁸ The British philosopher Peter Winch points to some of these features concerning Hobbes, while contrasting him with Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s quite different approach. Peter Winch, *Ethics and Action* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), 90-109. Winch seems to be much more sceptical towards Hobbes than Raunio is. The reason is perhaps the calculative character of Hobbes reasoning which Winch finds problematic. Winch characterizes Hobbes as follows: “For Hobbes all practical questions arising from my relation to the world – including the world of other men – has the form: what are the obstacles to my desires and how can I remove the obstacles and avail myself of instruments to my advantage?” Winch, *Ethics and Action*, 97. Perhaps this point also illustrates a problem with the modern versions of the golden rule: they make the principle into a calculus and the human being into a calculative person.

²⁹ Raunio, *Usko, järki ja lähimmäisen hyvä*, 26. My translation.

³⁰ Raunio, *Usko, järki ja lähimmäisen hyvä*, 26. Raunio’s treatment of the golden rule can be traced back to his dissertation written in German, *Summe des Christlichen Lebens. Die ‘Goldene Regel’ als Gesetz der Liebe in der Theologie Martin Luthers von 1510 bis 1527* (Helsinki: Reports from the Department of Systematic Theology, University of Helsinki, 1993).

Critique of modern Lutheran thinking

After this look into some important features in the modern Nordic discussion of Lutheran social ethics I will now turn to the current late modern situation and critically study the validity of these modern Lutheran interpretations in that setting.

Raunio has himself found that his view is somewhat opposed to the standpoints of some other Finnish theologians.³¹ One of the differing views he discusses critically is the idea that the current pluralism makes it very hard to maintain the idea of one universal ethic common to humankind. Raunio's answer to this is theological, not philosophical. He points to the Christian thought of the fall of man, and how that has weakened the human's ability to see clearly in moral questions. According to this, the want of consensus in ethical questions between different people would be due to a lack of moral knowledge following from the fall.³² Here we come across one of the paradoxes in traditional Lutheran thinking. On the one side there is this pessimistic view of the human and his or her moral ability when left on his or her own. On the other side there is an optimistic view of natural law thinking and of the role of *ratio* in communal human life.

For my part I see a fundamental problem in the concept of morality by many of the Lutheran scholars. Common to most of the Lutheran interpreters presented so far seems to be the idea that moral questions ought to have answers which are objective in the sense that people ought to agree to them. This consensus is thought to be possible both on a universal and on a more particularistic level. What is problematic in this kind of moral thinking, typical of modernity, is the idea that moral questions have universal answers which all rational beings ought to agree upon or at least try to reach. We also find this understanding of human life in the European tradition after the Reformation outside theology. Thomas Hobbes and John Locke are, as we have noted, two central representatives of political philosophy in the centuries subsequent to the Reformation and the Thirty Years War in Europe. These two thinkers are often considered as key figures in the development of rationally coloured, liberal thinking, and this liberal thinking has to a great extent influenced Western understanding of democracy. I will return to this in the next section.

In this section I will in a very sketchy manner present some Lutheran voices that question the normal Lutheran view presented so far. The voices

³¹ He mentions, among others, Jaana Hallamaa, professor at Helsinki University (Raunio, *Usko, järki ja lähimmäisen hyvä*, 22-25).

³² Raunio, *Usko, järki ja lähimmäisen hyvä*, 22.