

CHAPTER ONE

On Stage

New Words for Ancient Truths

The present pope has caught the imagination of many throughout the world—Christians or not. And he has done it by playing out the drama inherent in the world's oldest elective office, often in new ways. From the Chair of Peter he has poured his energies above all into the task of universal teacher, the voice at the center of the Catholic Church; his actions for the most part flow out of that teaching. It has been his intention to build up the Church from within, by word and deed; but it is clearly also his hope to stand with Christ at the center of the events that shape all mankind. The formative elements of his instruction and action can be traced as they have grown out of the intuitions of a rather remarkable young man from Wadowice. I purpose in these lectures to sketch some of those elements and that formation—simplifying by necessity, if not out of ignorance, but attempting to stay near the main lines of development, especially with regard to his philosophical ideas. For they have articulated his religious sensibilities and contributed to his theological reflections.

Although the central intuitions matured in their proper time, they seem already to have received a certain shape and impetus when in 1939 the young Karol Wojtyła set about his higher studies at the Jagiellonian University—Copernicus's university—in Cracow. For he took up the study of Polish letters, language, and history. As you know, the period 1940–45 coincided with some of the darkest years of that nation's dark yet glorious history. Wojtyła's interest leaned toward the record of that history as it was given expression by poets and national heroes. The dramatic energy of his later works and deeds no doubt found early expres-

sion in this interest. He did not fail to notice the interplay of word and deed in that national record. But his religious interest was caught also by an older history—biblical history. His first works for the theater gave dramatic expression to the blending of themes played out in those different histories. In these first dramatic works and in a time of great national suffering, he forged a convergence that deliberately overrode the difference in times between the events in ancient Israel, those in Poland's past, and the terrible events during the dreadful Nazi occupation.

A first play, no longer extant, was entitled *David*.¹ The second (Spring 1940) took up the theme of *Job*, and the third (Summer 1940) that of *Jeremiah*, sub-titled *A National Drama in Three Acts*. I have the impression that in Polish culture, as in some other cultures, more perhaps than in our own, the word has a special weight. It may be the particular genius of the language, or because the language was the last bastion the nation could fall back upon in defense of its cultural identity—I do not know. What is certain, at any rate, is that the young Wojtyła was fascinated by the word—spoken, written, and declaimed. Less than a month after the end of hostilities and the beginning of the occupation of his native land, he wrote to a fellow thespian: "Let theater be a church where the national spirit will flourish."²

Wojtyła worked at this time in a quarry (and later in a chemical plant) while he pursued his university studies covertly. During this time he joined forces with Mieczysław Kotlarczyk in a clandestine theater of the "living word." Gathered in cramped domestic quarters in the sparse conditions of occupied Poland, the Rhapsodic Theater Company (as it came to be known) produced seven plays during the years 1941 to 1944, gave twenty-two performances, and held over a hundred rehearsals under the most dangerous conditions. Of this time, Wojtyła was later to remark: "Of all the

1. For a more detailed discussion of Wojtyła's early theatrical activity—as dogsbody, actor, prompter, director, playwright—and his continuing interest in the theater, see the introduction by Bolesław Taborski (ed.) in Karol Wojtyła, *The Collected Plays and Writings on Theater* (Berkeley: U of California Press, 1987), pp. 1–16; hereafter, *CP*.

2. Quoted by Taborski, in *CP*, p. 5, from a letter of the nineteen-year-old Wojtyła to Mieczysław Kotlarczyk, written on Nov. 2, 1939, in which he urged Kotlarczyk to come to Cracow in order to form a theater company.

complex resources of the theatrical art, there remained only the living word, spoken by people in extrascenic conditions, in a room with a piano. That unheard-of-scarcity of the means of expression turned into a creative experiment."³

A theater critic has referred to the Rhapsodic Theater as "a theater of the imagination, a theater of the inner self."⁴ Even after the war, Wojtyła's own plays continued to employ severe staging, symbolic background music and dance, and a chorus that gives emphasis to the ethical implications at decisive points;⁵ but all of these extra-verbal accoutrements are subordinated to the inner discipline of the word and its meaning. Indeed, he distinguishes the theater of the word from more traditional theater by the different roles played out by the word in each: "The position of the word in a theater is not always the same. As in life, the word can appear as an integral part of action, movement, and gesture, inseparable from all human practical activity; or it can appear as 'song'—separate, independent, intended only to contain and express thought, to embrace and transmit a vision of the mind."⁶

In traditional theater, the word accompanies the other elements which surround it as part of the total theatrical action, whereas in the theater of the word it is the word that frames the whole. And it is the word that draws out of its own meaning whatever movement, gesture, and background complements its expression. That is why, as far as possible, the staging and music, and every gesture of actor, chorus or dance group, turns upon and synchronically with the turn of the words. Whereas traditional theater tells a story through the impact of event upon character, the theater of the word

3. "Drama of Word and Gesture" (1957) (CP, p. 379).

4. Maria Bojarska, a contemporary drama critic; cited by Taborski, CP, p. 7—In *The Jeweler's Shop* (1960), act 3, scene 4 (CP, p. 316), Monica imagines her forthcoming wedding day "like rehearsals in a theater: the theater of my imagination and the theater of my thought."

5. In "Rhapsodies of the Millenium" (1958) (CP, p. 386), Wojtyła remarks: "The Rhapsodic Theater asks young actors to subordinate themselves to the great poetic word. This can be felt particularly when the word is developed in immaculately spoken choruses. A group of people collectively, somehow unanimously, subordinated to the great poetic word, evoke ethical associations; this solidarity of people in the word reveals particularly strongly and accentuates the reverence that is the point of departure for the rhapsodists' work and the secret of their style."

6. "On the Theater of the Word" (1952) (CP, p. 372).

sets forth a problem, an issue of import: "The problem itself acts, rouses interest, disturbs, evokes the audience's participation, demands understanding and a solution."⁷ The word and its meaning "mature in spare, simple, rhythmic gesture," and the movement, sounds, and staging arise out of the reservoir of meaning contained in the words and in the problem they articulate. To be sure, the drama of the word is frankly intellectual: "The new proportions between word and movement, between word and gesture, doubtless reach even further, in a sense beyond theater and into the philosophical concept of man and the world. The supremacy of word over gesture indirectly restores the supremacy of thought over movement and impulse in man."⁸

Such a theatrical presentation is not static, however, but moves rather with the dynamics of thought, and with the dynamics of the issue at stake, which "the living human word grasps and makes into a nucleus of action." The theater of the word, he tells us, "does not infringe on the realist standpoint but enables us to understand the inner base of human action, the very fulcrum of human movement."⁹ Such inner dramas must draw upon concrete and relevant issues and refer them to the world of thought—and he underscores the last word: not fantasy but thought.¹⁰ Indeed, in his last play, *Radiation of Fatherhood* (1964), which he subtitles *A Mystery*, the figure of the mother says: "At no point can the world be fiction, the inner world even less than the external world. . . . It is no metaphor, but reality (that is played out on stage). The world cannot depend on metaphor alone, the inner world even less than the external world."¹¹ And so the theater of the word aims

7. Ibid. (CP, p. 373).

8. In "Drama of Word and Gesture" (CP, pp. 380–82), Wojtyła further insists that in the theater of the word, while the word is freed from externals to a large degree, it must not be divorced from thought, since thought provides the basis for the unique theatrical realism of the theater of the word.—In "On the Theater of the Word," no. 2 (CP, p. 375), he is careful, moreover, to distinguish the deeper symbolic realism of the theater of the word from the surface realism of naturalism.

9. "Drama of Word and Gesture" (CP, p. 380).

10. In "Rhapsodies of the Millenium" (1958) (CP, p. 383), he insists that the Rhapsodists "not only derive the word from the immediate needs of concrete life but also refer to that life from the world of thought. Not—it must be stressed—the world of fantasy, but the world of thought."

11. *Radiation*, part 1, scene 5 (CP, p. 341). She affirms that, as the radiation

at being a theater of reality—if I may so put it—at “symbolic realism.”

By slowing the pace of the action and reducing the external surroundings, such a drama intends to effect a catharsis, as all drama must; it is a catharsis not primarily of feeling, however, but of meaning. And indeed, at their best, Wojtyła's own dramas reach high dramatic effects. Paradoxically, such a reduced external structure permits the dramatic presentation of themes too broad for a traditional stage, even though the traditional stage is physically more spacious than the setting of the theater of the word. The traditional stage achieves marvellous effects in its own way, but it is bound inextricably to the particularities of its setting and plot, so that it proves too narrow to do justice to the large, even eternal, themes that only a drama of thought can embrace with the freedom adequate to their treatment.¹²

Let us select several themes that are prominent in the dramas and important to my purpose. There can be no doubt that *Job* was composed in the first anguish of a brutal occupation, yet the script of the drama remains faithful in substance to the biblical text as its subtitle declares: *A Drama from the Old Testament*. The inscription on the title page forges the convergence of past, present, and future times under the eternal word of God:

The Action Took Place in the Old Testament Before Christ's Coming.
The Action Takes Place in Our Days In Job's Time For Poland and the World.
The Action Takes Place in the Time of Expectation, Of Imploring Judgment, In the Time of Longing For Christ's Testament, Worked Out In Poland's and the World's Suffering.¹³

of the Fatherhood of God, creation is neither fiction nor metaphor. The primacy of truth as normative principle of reality recurs throughout the plays; but also the caution not to separate truth from love.

12. In “Drama of Word and Gesture” (CP, p. 382), he remarks: “The word, however, must not be divorced from thought. The specific base of theatrical realism discovered by Mieczysław Kotlarczyk with his company opens wide the horizons of theatrical practice to encompass works that by their nature could not otherwise be the object of theatrical production. . . . Perhaps other great works of the human mind, for instance the works of philosophers, could thus be adapted for at least some audiences.”

13. *Job*, title page (CP, p. 25).—Already in a letter of Nov. 2, 1939, to Kot-

No doubt, then, that Poland is borne in mind as a collective Job. The Epilogue repeats what the Prologue chants: "Behold, my people—and listen to the Word of the Lord, you who are downtrodden, you who are flogged, sent to the camps, you—Jobs—Jobs."¹⁴

At the point in the biblical text, however, at which Elihu enters (Job 32), the close adherence to the biblical text breaks off. With the conclusion of the argument between Job and his erstwhile friends, the young man Elihu is seized with the spirit of prophecy and the drama turns to the vision of the coming of Christ, His passion and death: "He is coming—I know He lives. . . . I see that the Redeemer lives."¹⁵ In place of the speeches of Yahweh in the biblical text, we hear a Voice which can be none other than that of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane. And with that, suffering takes on a positive inner meaning.¹⁶ As the first light of a new dawn begins to break behind the stage curtain, Elihu promises that a New Covenant shall arise from the Suffering. And the drama comes to a close with the counsel:

Take these words against the storm; hold them when darkness descends. They will be for you like the silent lightning cutting the sky above Job. . . . Thus God's waves wash over us, overthrowing one, raising up another. Watch the waves—watch the waves. Nourish your heart today, brother. This is a tragedy of suffering—the sacrificial circle is closed. Depart—with a song on your lips. Depart from here—remember.¹⁷



In the next drama, *Jeremiah*, the connection with Polish history is made even more explicit.¹⁸ It is ostensibly set amid the great

larczyk, Wojtyła had written: "I think that our liberation ought to be a gate for Christ. I think of an Athenian Poland, but more perfect than Athens with all the magnitude of Christianity, such as our great poets imagined, those prophets of Babylonian captivity" (quoted by Taborski, in *CP*, p. 75).—For some details of the occupation, as well as later events, see the personal memoir of a friend: M. Małiński, *Pope John Paul II. The Life of Karol Wojtyła*. trans. P. S. Falla (New York: Crossroad, 1981).

14. *Job*, "Prologos" (*CP*, p. 29); repeated in "Epilogos" (*CP*, p. 72).

15. *Job* (*CP*, p. 68).

16. Cf. the apostolic letter *Salvifici Doloris: On the Christian Meaning of Human Suffering* (11 Feb. 1984; Vatican trans., Boston: Daughters of St. Paul).

17. *Job*, "Epilogos" (*CP*, p. 73).

18. For helpful details regarding the historical figures and situation see Taborski, *CP*, pp. 75–91.

events of the seventeenth century, but it also resonates with the Poland of 1940 and with Jeremiah's plaint: "The city has fallen. . . . The enemies have struck Judah. . . . For the temples of Zion have been entered by the unclean band of armed heathen."¹⁹ The theme of the primacy of truth is once again played out. We learn that to be chosen by God means to be "chosen to proclaim God's truth." And, following upon the playing of the *Miserere* (Psalm 51), Jeremiah's cry is surely heard against the propaganda that filled the airwaves of 1940: "One must throw truth across the path of lies. One must throw truth into the eye of a lie."²⁰ For "in truth are freedom and excellence," but in untruth, only slavery.

And yet for all the importance attached to words, the seventeenth-century Jesuit priest, Father Peter Skarga Paweski, warns that "words are not enough, not enough"; he continues: "One must catch hearts to kindle them, furrow hearts as with a plough, and root up the weeds—root them out."²¹ The crown Hetman, Stanisław Żółkiewski, adds, "At the feet of truth one must erect love; at the foundations, low in the ground, it will take root even in a wilderness, will build, uplift, and transform all things."²²



The postwar plays intensify and deepen the religious theme. The accent is even more consciously upon the "inner space" of the drama. The path within is meant to search out the truth about humanity in the maze of Stalinist realism with its clichés, and beyond that, to touch upon the central character's "spiritual strug-

19. *Jeremiah*, act 3: "The Lamentations of Jeremiah" (CP, p. 130), broadly paraphrased in the drama after the fashion of monastic chant.

20. *Jeremiah*, act 1 (CP, pp. 101–3, 109).

21. *Jeremiah*, act 1 (CP, p. 98); act 2 (CP, p. 121).

22. *Jeremiah*, act 2 (CP, p. 121), adding: "In your speeches you call for truth. . . ." To which Father Peter replies: "A call of despair is in my speeches. Mine is not a voice of revelation. . . ." This is a reference to Father Peter's jeremiad against the injustices of his day and the prophecy that Poland would fall because of them. In act 3 (CP, p. 137), he warns: "The ship sways but still sails on impressively," but "worms already hatching, though, eat her from within." And yet the drama sounds a note of hope. The Hetman speaks (CP, p. 138): "What is beyond is God's. There man will not dare. One man cannot sway the hearts of a people. He can sow the seed, graft a seedling, but does the plant grow as man wills it to grow? It grows as God wills, for God's is the harvest."

gles and his progress to sanctity."²³ Wojtyła tells us, however, that the intention is not to recount the psychological experiences of the characters but to follow up a line that is "inaccessible to history . . . an extrahistorical element in man lies at the very sources of his humanity."²⁴

The third extant play, *Our God's Brother* (1945–50; published in 1979, first staged in 1980), is a study of Adam Chmielowski (1845–1916), a partisan fighter and an artist, who later as Brother Albert worked with the poor of Cracow and founded congregations of religious brothers and sisters dedicated to that work.²⁵ The forces of the drama swirl about and within Adam.

A major topic of conversation in the circle around Adam addresses the question of the social responsibility of art. A colleague protests against subjectivism in art because it betrays the true nature of artistic creation: "For in reality something slowly grows around you (during the process of artistic creation), gathers momentum, widens. Of course, though you have a part in it, you are not the only originator of this mystery. That much is clear." And indeed, some of the circle consider Adam to be a seeker who is drawn out of himself.²⁶ Adam remains unconvinced, however, at least as it applies to his own artistic work. Instead, he sees his

23. Comment by Taborski, *CP*, p. 152.—In his own introduction to *Our God's Brother*, Wojtyła remarks (*CP*, p. 159) that "this will be an attempt to penetrate the man . . . the fact of humanity—and concrete humanity at that."

24. From Wojtyła's own introduction to *Our God's Brother* (*CP*, p. 159). This does not mean that one abstracts from the historical situation of the characters, but only that a human being is not exclusively historical. In this search, one arrives at probability: "Probability, however, is always an expression of the truth one has searched for; what matters is how much real truth it contains. And that depends on the intensity and integrity of the search." The aim is "to participate in the same multifarious reality in which [the character] participated—and in a way similar to him."—In *Forefathers' Eve and the Twentieth Anniversary* (1961), referring to the Rhapsodic Theater, Wojtyła insists that the drama's inwardness is not an "epic of introspection," and that "the drama does more than analyze [the heroes'] experiences and recreate the stream of their 'dramatic consciousness'" (*CP*, p. 390).

25. He was canonized by the pope in 1983.—For a correlation of the various characters in the drama with Chmielowski and his circle, see Taborski, *CP*, pp. 147–57 and footnotes.

26. *Our God's Brother*, act 1 (*CP*, p. 169): ". . . a typical seeker. Not one who rummages for petty things, but a vigorous, even boisterous seeker."

painting as a means of running away from something or someone indefinable.²⁷

Another painter friend, Max, defends subjectivism. He argues that it is sufficient that an artist explore his own selfhood and give it expression; if it interests others, that is beside the point. Max will admit that he has a public persona, but he dubs this public persona "the exchangeable man," since it is subject to the barter of social life. The genuine and inviolable person, he insists, is private; he dubs that persona "the non-exchangeable man," withdrawn behind the fortress façade of an inaccessible loneliness.²⁸ A fellow artist protests that such an attitude diminishes the meaning of art and its creative power, and the discussion continues.

Adam cannot accept the isolated loneliness advocated by Max, but neither can he be satisfied with the safe routine of social life: "Yes, we are hiding; we escape to little islands of luxury, to the so-called social life, to so-called social structure and feel secure. But no. This security is a big lie, an illusion. It blinds our eyes and stops up our ears, but it will shatter in the end."²⁹

Several rather mysterious protagonists enter into the discussion. A principal character is called the Stranger, without further identification; but he seems to represent in some way the revolutionary,

27. "... something, or rather someone, in oneself and in all those people" (*Our God's Brother*, act 1 [CP, pp. 182-83]). Adam protests that "something in me keeps opening up . . . it's chasing me." It is a painful, "gradual elucidation," which a theologian friend thinks may be a vocation; yet when Adam asks, "To what?" the reply is given, "I don't know. You must keep running away." Cf. Francis Thompson's *The Hound of Heaven*: "I fled Him, down the nights and down the days; / I fled Him, down the arches of the years; / I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways / Of my own mind. . . ."

28. The theme of loneliness in modern life and the fragmentation of society will recur again and again in Wojtyła's later writings. Cf. *Radiation of Fatherhood* on loneliness and the theme of fragmentation in his social encyclicals.

29. In *Our God's Brother*, act 1 (CP, p. 179), Adam remarks: "Each of us goes his own way. Each builds his own nest. Meanwhile, for so many people the road has become too narrow. They have nowhere to stand. They have no patch of ground they can call their own, no slice of bread they can earn, no child they can bring into this world without the certainty that it will be in everybody's way. And in the midst of all this we move, arrogantly confident in the strength of a general system that makes us ignore what cries out to be heard and suppress a justified outbreak."—The whole section resonates with social comment.

who counts on the anger of the poor to break open the circle of poverty in the name of justice denied.³⁰ Nowhere in the play is there any indication that the playwright disagrees with the justice of this anger, and in several places he has given it eloquent expression through the mouth of the Stranger.³¹ Adam rebukes the Stranger for exploiting the just anger of the poor, but he too recognizes the justice of that anger. Going against its grain, however, and in the name of an at-this-point unnamed love, he calls upon the poor to "Be one of us!" He also asks the poor to acknowledge a wider and deeper poverty that lies beyond the lack of material goods; it is the poverty of values. For man is meant to aspire to *all* goods, to the "whole vastness of the values to which man is called." And the greatest good calls not for anger but for love. *Ubi caritas, ibi Deus.*

On the other side of the discussion taking place within Adam—within his dramatic inner space—is a voice simply dubbed "The Other." The Other seems to represent in some way the mind of the Enlightenment intelligentsia. It calls Adam to a kind of human

30. At one point (*Our God's Brother*, act 2: "In the Vaults of Anger," scene 8: "A Collector for Charity" [CP, p. 230]), angered with what he takes to be Adam's sentimentality, the Stranger accuses Adam of leaving the poor doubly deprived: by their own poverty and his handout charity, so that they are robbed of the power to reclaim their dignity.

31. The Stranger harangues Adam: "Ah, charity. A *złoty* here, a *złoty* there, for the right to secure the possession of the millions invested in banks, forests, land, bonds, shares . . . who knows what else. This is what it boils down to in practice. For a *złoty* here, a *złoty* there, marked and accounted for exactly—while at the same time others toil animal-like, ten, twelve, sixteen hours a day for a miserable penny, for less than the right to live, for the hope of a dubious consolation up above, a consolation that changes nothing but has for centuries fettered the mighty, magnificent eruption of human anger—creative human anger." Adam: "Is it possible that you may be right in so much that you have said? . . . But you know, all that is terrible, terrible!" (*Our God's Brother*, act 1 [CP, p. 192]).—"A dubious consolation up above": A union orator expresses a similar anger in George Eliot's *Felix Holt* (London: Penguin, 1866) p. 397: "They'll give us plenty of heaven. We may have land there. That's the sort of religion they like—a religion that gives us working men heaven, and nothing else. But we'll offer to change with 'em. We'll give them back some of their heaven, and take it out in something for us and our children in this world."—We find the recognition of injustice also in his papal social encyclicals and in his national addresses (such as those of his Mexican and Canadian visits). But, while he has experienced hunger, cold, and persecution, he—like Adam—has transmuted that suffering not into anger but into the reality of Christian love.

maturity. Adam, however, finds it to be a truncated sort of maturity, because it rests everything upon merely understanding the world as it is without shouldering its burdens.

At this point, Adam finds his own salvation, instead, when he helps a poor man whom he notices leaning wretchedly against a lamp post in the cold dark street. For in that man Adam comes at last to see an image. It is not an easy vision, however, and Adam struggles against the awareness that he must give himself up if he is to identify with this image. He cries out: "How can I cease to be who I am?"³² Nevertheless, it is through this discovery that Adam is at last able to say, "I am not alone."³³

The newly discovered image is not, however, the visual image to which his art has given expression, not even the image of *Ecce Homo*, the subject of his latest and best painting. It is not that art does not count. On the contrary, Adam's priest-confessor reassures him that "God regards your art with a father's eye," since it brings people nearer to God through its reflected glory. But Adam has seen a deeper image than art can shape: it is a non-pictorial image, "imperceptible to my eye but that preys upon my soul."³⁴ Indeed, it is clear that it is the very image of God that is struggling for recognition and realization in his own soul, and in that of the poor man. Calling out to The Other, to the voice of the Enlightenment, Adam shouts with joy over having given up "the tyranny of intelligence," of an intelligence without love, with its "clear image of the world." Instead, he has found a different, deeper, mysterious image. The Other does not or cannot understand him, however, and Adam experiences an exultant liberation: "You don't know! So there is a sphere in my thought that you do not possess."

Is it too much to see here an autobiographical undercurrent in

32. Later (*Our God's Brother*, act 3, "The Brother's Day" [CP, p. 249]), a member of Brother Albert's religious community, the cook, says, "We didn't come here to have an easy time."

33. *Our God's Brother*, act 1 (CP, p. 185).—Cf. the image of the double tree trunk as the presence of the parent in the child (*Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 2, scene 2 [CP, p. 345]); also, how, as Monica enters the stream, the Source embraces her (scene 3 [CP, p. 351]).

34. *Our God's Brother*, act 2, scene 2 (CP, pp. 204–5).

which the drama plays out, not only the Christian response to both socialist collectivism and to Enlightenment individualism, but also Wojtyła's own renunciation of art as his principal way of life?³⁵ It is not that others should not pursue art as a vocation, but that Wojtyła himself was called to enter upon another path.

Near the end of the drama Adam, now Brother Albert, speaks to a postulant of a "different sort of art,"³⁶ the art of serving God through being one with the poor. It is an art prompted by the generosity of God, who has changed the slavery of the fall into the freedom of the Cross. As the play comes to a close, the brothers report an outbreak in the city, an outbreak of that long-repressed, just anger, an act of collective awareness turned against oppressors. Brother Albert recognizes it for what it is and that it is an anger that will last as long as injustice itself. But—and this is one of his last days in a life devoted to the poor—he says quietly, almost to himself: "I know for certain, though, that I have chosen a greater freedom."



The best known of his plays, at least in English, is *The Jeweler's Shop* (published in 1960 under the pseudonym Andrzej Jawień), modestly subtitled: "A Meditation on the Sacrament of Matrimony, Passing on Occasion into a Drama."³⁷ The structure of the drama is interesting in itself. In addition to the Old Jeweler, the Chorus, and the Christ figure of the Bridegroom, the chief protagonists are seven: three couples and a somewhat mysterious figure, a Chance Interlocutor, who we learn is named Adam and who represents a sort of modern Everyman. He is recognized at the very end as "a common denominator of us all—at the same time a spokesman and a judge."³⁸ The Old Jeweler is also a shadowy fig-

35. It may be that Wojtyła had taken up the study of Polish philology as a preparation for a lifelong career in theater. See Taborski, *CP*, p. 3.

36. *Our God's Brother*, act 3 (*CP*, pp. 256ff.).

37. Taborski (*CP*, pp. 267–75) terms it a poetic drama and suggests that the subtitle downplays the dramatic power of the work. He points also to its innovative form, and mentions similarities with Péguy, Claudel, Pinter, Eliot, and others.

38. *The Jeweler's Shop*, act 3, scene 5 (*CP*, p. 321). Curiously, without naming himself, he names each of the protagonists. And (act 3, scene 4 [*CP*, p. 318]) at

ure; perhaps he speaks for Divine Providence or is the voice of conscience.³⁹

The drama divides into three acts, each of which contains, for the most part, alternating monologues, as if spoken out loud but into a surrounding and receptive silence. In the first act we meet Teresa and Andrew during their courtship and impending marriage. It is a short but happy marriage, and the widowed Teresa keeps the presence of Andrew somehow alive within her after he is killed in battle. In the second act we meet Anna and Stefan whose marriage has been broken by a mutual disillusion and anger. In the third act we meet Monica, the daughter of the separated couple, and Christopher, the son of the first couple. The young people are planning to marry. In sum, then, we have a theme: the exploration of married love in and through a brief but happy marriage, at once both sad and joyful; a failed marriage, treated sympathetically and without facile judgment; and a forthcoming marriage, trembling with fear and hope.⁴⁰ This threefold structure provides ample dramatic space for an exploration of married love. The present purpose will be best served by emphasis upon two themes among several within the drama.

The first theme explores love as the interplay between mind and reality, between consciousness and existence: these are the noetic and the ontological dimensions of love. Love is at once something intensely conscious and very real. On the one hand, love is the conscious presence of one person in and with another.⁴¹ But it is

the wedding he takes the place of Christopher's long-dead father, Andrew, since—as Adam himself observes—he could not die for Andrew. Adam somehow embodies the human nature common to each of us.

39. Suggested by Taborski, *CP*, p. 271.

40. Reflecting upon her own marriage and the forthcoming marriage of the children, Teresa speaks to her absent yet somehow still-present husband: "You have no notion, my husband, how terrible the fear is that borders on hope and penetrates it daily. There is no hope without fear and no fear without hope" (*The Jeweler's Shop*, act 3, scene 1 [*CP*, p. 310]).—Monica, wounded by the rift in her own parents' marriage, asks, "Is human love at all capable of enduring through man's whole experience?" (act 3, scene 2 [*CP*, p. 311]). The tension between existence and love runs throughout the last two acts.

41. At the beginning of their courtship Andrew speaks of "the basis of that strange persistence of Teresa in me, the cause of her presence, the assurance of her

thereby also a union in reality. The Chorus celebrates the union of the first couple: "New People—Teresa and Andrew—two until now but still not one, one from now on though still two."⁴² Anna later recalls that Adam had spoken of love as "a synthesis of two people's existence, which converges, as it were, at a certain point and makes them one."⁴³ But the rift, the brokenness of love in Anna and Stefan, also retains these two dimensions. Anna reflects upon her separation from Stefan, a separation both in consciousness and in reality. Stefan no longer reacts to me, she says to herself: he is no longer present in me; and yet, though I now exist for myself, I am no longer at home in myself. And she ponders the pain inherent in a broken love:

It was as if I had become unaccustomed to the walls of my interior—so full had they been of Stefan that without him they seemed empty. Is it not too terrible a thing to have committed the walls of my interior to a single inhabitant who could disinherit my self and somehow deprive me of my place in it?⁴⁴

Anna is poised on the painful borderline between self-absorption and an openness that is not yet quite closed to love. She searches for the perfect companion, but when the Bridegroom comes along the street—clearly the figure of Christ—she is disconcerted to find in His face the face she hates and fears, the face of Stefan. A process begins in her, as she considers the face of Stefan as it is reflected in the Bridegroom's face and the face of Stefan embodied in her sometime husband. She cannot any longer recover that initial "girlish" infatuation and rapture, since it has "dried up like water which cannot a second time spring from the earth."⁴⁵ Nor can she

place in my ego, or what creates around her that strange resonance . . ." (*The Jeweler's Shop*, act 1, scene 1 [CP, p. 281]).

42. *The Jeweler's Shop*, act 1, scene 5 (CP, p. 290).

43. *The Jeweler's Shop*, act 2, scene 2 (CP, p. 300).—When Anna, after the separation, tries to sell her wedding ring, the Old Jeweler will not accept it: "This ring does not weigh anything; the needle does not move from zero, and I cannot make it show even a milligram. Your husband must be alive, in which case neither of your rings, taken separately, will weigh anything—only both together will register. My jeweler's scales have this peculiarity, that they weigh not the metal but man's entire being and fate" (act 2, scene 2 [CP, pp. 297–98]).

44. *The Jeweler's Shop*, act 2, scene 1 (CP, p. 294).

45. *The Jeweler's Shop*, act 3, scene 5 (CP, p. 319).—The image occurs earlier,

erase the "disproportion" between the faces, which is in fact a disproportion between existence and love.⁴⁶ Though the faces are somehow the same, she cannot bring herself to identify them. Still, some healing has begun: with a sense of her own share of responsibility for the breakup, she arrives at something a little short of forgiveness; and finally, at the sense that she and Stefan have become "less burdensome" in each other's presence. Through her suffering Anna has learned—perhaps better than Stefan—something deeper about the meaning of love. In intimate conversation with Adam—Adam, after all, is somehow in solidarity with her own humanity and with all humanity—she has come to reject her immature notion that love is "a matter of the senses and of a climate which unites and makes two people walk in the sphere of their feeling."⁴⁷ And yet, while love is not simply emotion, neither is it thought or imagination cut off from the whole of life. When Anna asks: "With what is thought to remain, then?" Adam replies: "With truth."⁴⁸ Thought plays a role in love, but in the end we cannot answer why we love; love is—in dry philosophical terms—the first principle, which gives meaning to everything else. Christopher speaks of his love for Monica:

Why does one love at all? What do I love you for, Monica? Don't ask me to answer. I couldn't say. Love outdistances its object or approaches it so

as Adam speaks to Anna on behalf of the Bridegroom (Christ): "Beloved, you do not know how deeply you are mine, how much you belong to my love and my suffering—because to love means to give life through death; to love means to let gush a spring of the water of life into the depths of the soul, which burns or smolders and cannot burn out. Ah, the flame and the spring. You don't feel the spring, but are consumed by the flame. Is that not so?" (act 2, scene 3 [CP, pp. 305–6]).

46. Adam observes: "Sometimes human existence seems too short for love. At other times, however, it is the other way around: human love is too short in relation to existence—or rather too trivial" (*The Jeweler's Shop*, act 3, scene 5 [CP, p. 321]).—Cf. also, act 1, scene 3 (CP, p. 288): "A disproportion between the wish for happiness and a man's potential is unavoidable." But, then, too, the Chorus reminds us that, if the disproportion is to be remedied, "Man will not suffice" (act 1, scene 5 [CP, p. 292]).

47. *The Jeweler's Shop*, act 2, scene 2 (CP, p. 300).—Earlier Andrew had said: "I simply resisted sensation and the appeal of the senses, for I knew that otherwise I would never really leave my ego and reach the other person—but that meant an effort [of the will] . . . I wanted to regard love as passion, as an emotion to surpass all—I believed in the absolute of emotion" (act 1, scene 1 [CP, pp. 280–81]).

48. *The Jeweler's Shop*, act 2, scene 2 (CP, p. 300).

closely that it is almost lost from view. Man must then think differently, must leave cold deliberations—and in that “hot thinking” one question is important: Is it creative?⁴⁹

If the first theme plays out the relation in love between consciousness and reality, the second probes the depths of love. For love has both surface and depth. Christopher urges Monica to look more deeply into her parents in order to see the love with which they have nourished her: “People have their depths, not only the masks on their faces.”⁵⁰ Adam, too, finds a paradox in love:

There is no other matter embedded more strongly in the surface of human life, and there is no matter more unknown and more mysterious. The divergence between what lies on the surface of the mystery of love constitutes precisely the source of the drama. It is one of the greatest dramas of human existence. The surface of love has its current—swift, flickering, changeable. A kaleidoscope of waves and situations full of attraction. This current is sometimes so stunning that it carries people away—women and men. They get carried away by the thought that they have absorbed the whole secret of love, but in fact they have not yet even touched it. They are happy for a while, thinking they have reached the limits of existence and wrested all its secrets from it, so that nothing remains. That’s how it is [in their view]: on the other side of that rapture nothing remains, there is nothing left behind it.

Adam pauses, and with new vehemence, protests: “But there can’t be nothing; there can’t! Listen to me, there can’t. Man is a continuum, a totality and a continuity—so it cannot be that nothing remains.”⁵¹

The conversation turns then upon the relation between the temporal surface of love and its eternal depth. Love is less a matter of time than of eternity.⁵² It is not an adventure of the passing moment, since it is shot through with that vertical axis that “cuts

49. *The Jeweler’s Shop*, act 3, scene 2 (CP, p. 313).

50. *The Jeweler’s Shop*, act 3, scene 3 (CP, pp. 316–17): “All that [caring] cannot pass without leaving a trace.”

51. *The Jeweler’s Shop*, act 3, scene 3 (CP, pp. 301–2).

52. In *The Jeweler’s Shop*, act 1, scene 1 (CP, p. 279), Teresa notices a certain quality of eternity about love: she recalls the moment when Andrew proposed to her, and observes: “At such moments one does not check the hour, such moments grow in one above time.”

across every marriage.”⁵³ Adam’s reflection upon the source of love highlights the contrast between surface and depth, adventure and drama, the empty and the full, the part and the whole, the momentary now and the eternal forever. The contrast invites the connection of human love with its source. Adam softly says to Anna: “Ah, Anna, how am I to prove to you that on the other side of all those loves that fill our lives there is Love!”⁵⁴ And in his last speech, meditating upon the rift between Anna and Stefan, Adam observes: “The thing is that love carries people away like an absolute, although it [human love] lacks absolute dimensions. But acting under an illusion, they do not try to connect that love with the Love that has such a dimension.”⁵⁵

It is not only a matter of the connection between human love and Absolute Love. Within the sphere of human love itself, the love of the parents forms a base in the children and has a hand in shaping their love for one another. Meditating upon the relation between parents and children, Teresa notices “how heavily we all weigh upon their fate. Take Monica’s heritage: the rift of that love is so deeply embedded in her that her own love stems from a rift too.”⁵⁶ It is inevitable, then, that in order to forge their own new love, children must cross the “threshold” of their parents’ love “to reach their new homes.” It may seem to parents that their children grow inaccessible, like “impermeable soil”; but in truth, she con-

53. *The Jeweler’s Shop*, act 3, scene 3 (CP, p. 316).—Adam to Anna: “Love is not an adventure. It has the flavor of the whole man. It has his weight and the weight of his whole fate. It cannot be a single moment. Man’s eternity passes through it. That is why it is to be found in the dimensions of God, because only He is eternity. Man looking out into time, to forget, to forget. To be for a moment only—only now—and cut himself off from eternity. To take in everything at one moment and lose everything immediately after. Ah, the curse of that next moment and all the moments that follow, moments through which he will look for the way back to the moment that has passed, to have it once more, and through it—everything” (act 2, scene 3 [CP, p. 303]).—Cf. the despair over the search for the “beautiful moment” in Sartre’s *Nausea*.

54. *The Jeweler’s Shop*, act 2, scene 3 (CP, p. 305).

55. *The Jeweler’s Shop*, act 3, scene 5 (CP, p. 320). He continues: “They do not even feel the need, blinded as they are not so much by the force of their emotion as by lack of humility. They lack humility toward what love must be in its true essence. The more aware they are of it, the smaller the danger. Otherwise the danger is great: love will not stand the pressure of reality.”

56. *The Jeweler’s Shop*, act 3, scene 3 (CP, p. 314).

fides, "they have already absorbed us. And though outwardly they shut themselves off, inwardly we remain in them"—for good and/or ill.

Children are marked by the quality of their parents' love for one another. On the one hand, Christopher has been given an "idea of Father"⁵⁷ through his mother's continuing love for her dead husband, but he himself has no actual memory of his father. He therefore lacks ready models of manhood, and he does not know "what a man ought to be." Nevertheless, he is called to fatherhood by his love for Monica. Monica, on the other hand, is at first afraid of Christopher and afraid *for* herself; but as she falls more deeply in love with him, she reverses the order, and now becomes afraid of her inability to love adequately, and becomes afraid *for* Christopher. She warns him: "You are taking a difficult girl, sensitive to a fault, who easily withdraws into herself and only with effort breaks the circle constantly created by her ego."⁵⁸ Christopher can only reply that "love is a constant challenge, thrown to us by God," and in going forward together they must take upon themselves the risk of separation through death (as with Andrew, Christopher's father) or even through estrangement (as with Monica's parents). In his last speech Adam agrees that

every person has at his disposal an existence and a love. The problem is how to build a sensible structure from it. But this structure must never be inward looking. It must be open in such a way that, on the one hand, it embraces other people, while, on the other, it always reflects the absolute Existence and Love; it must always, *in some way*, reflect them. That is the ultimate sense of your lives.⁵⁹

57. *The Jeweler's Shop*, act 3, scene 2 (CP, p. 311). The reference is to God the Father.—See also *Radiation*, part 1, scene 2 (CP, p. 336), where a still defiant Adam worries, "Would people merely associate me always with the idea of the Father?"

58. *The Jeweler's Shop*, act 3, scene 2 (CP, pp. 311–13).—Teresa had already remarked (act 3, scene 1 [CP, p. 309]): "She was a shy and delicate child—made on me the impression of a being enclosed in herself—whose true value gravitates inward so much that it simply ceases to reach other people."—But Monica's love for Christopher begins to take her out of herself somewhat. Unlike Teresa and Andrew, however, the children take no notice of the Old Jeweler. Monica explains: "We were taken up with each other. . . . All the beauty remained in our own feeling. . . . I was absorbed by my love—and by nothing else it seems" (act 3, scene 3 [CP, p. 315]).

59. *The Jeweler's Shop*, act 3, scene 5 (CP, p. 321).

With that he names each of the six characters personally by name: Teresa! Andrew! Anna! Stefan! and yours: Monica! Christopher!

Meanwhile, Anna and Stefan seem to have made some progress. Through the pain of their separation, each has come to a deeper realization of the demands of love. Anna regrets that she and Stefan have destroyed so much of the basis of trust within Monica. On the other hand, Adam tells us that Anna's encounter with the Bridegroom has awakened in her a new sense of love, a sort of "complementary love," unlike ordinary love. The last speech is left to Stefan, who confesses that he does not understand what it means "to reflect . . . absolute existence and love," but he does realize that he and Anna have in fact reflected love very badly and that their daughter Monica has paid a terrible price for their lack of love. With sudden insight, he turns to Anna and says plaintively: "What a pity that for so many years we have not felt ourselves to be a couple of children. Anna, Anna, how much we have lost because of that!"⁶⁰



The last drama is entitled: *Radiation of Fatherhood. A Mystery*.⁶¹ It undoubtedly represents the maturation of Wojtyła's efforts at inner drama. The mystery of humanity evokes the emblem of his own theater of the word and augurs his later anthropology. In a scene between father and child (Adam and Monica) that mystery is embodied in a double image of dense vibrancy. The child is at the edge of a forest in which paths wander, crisscrossing one another, leading to hidden places and mysterious encounters. The father presents himself to his child as carrying about within himself an all-but-impenetrable thicket. Monica asks him: "When will

60. *The Jeweler's Shop*, act 3, scene 5 (CP, pp. 319–22).—The theme "You must become as little children . . ." has already emerged in *Our God's Brother* (act 2, scene 2 [CP, pl 205]).

61. In 1964 *Znak* published a short piece of poetic prose by A. J. entitled: *Reflections on Fatherhood*. The full drama (written somewhat earlier) under its present title was published in the same journal in Nov. 1979; the drama was performed in Warsaw in June 1983 (See Taborski, CP, pp. 323, 327).—Many passages are common, even verbatim, to the prose *Reflections* and the dramatic *Radiation*, and in what follows I will treat them as substantially the same in theme and intent, while noting the source in these notes.

be spoken what is contained in you and me, what lies in the depth of consciousness and must wait for words? Being together, shall we find one day the moments for such words that bring to the surface what really is deep down?"⁶² The double image of forest and thicket gives way in the next scene to that of a stream whose current can carry father and child to the inexhaustible Source from which the Fatherhood of love radiates.⁶³ Józef Tischner remarks that *Radiation of Fatherhood* "attempts to lead us to the origins of all human drama . . . the great metaphysics of a sad physics of our world," "the beautiful but also cruel physics of this world."⁶⁴

It is not misleading, it seems to me, to characterize the three parts of the drama as follows: In the first we see humanity embodied in Adam as he struggles with his fallen condition. In the second we glimpse the revelation of the trinitarian love within God as it begins to shed its light within the conversation of father and daughter (Adam and Monica), and as it introduces a new energy into their relationship. In the third part we participate with the Mother in humanity's struggle with the hope that has been generated by the promise of fulfillment.

We begin with Adam—the common denominator of humanity—who finds himself exiled from himself, from his deeper personality, and "yet condemned to probe it."⁶⁵ The stage is crowded with people, each absorbed in themselves, passing each other by without notice. Adam senses in each person, as well as in himself, the substance of an unrealized humanity; and yet he fears the loss of his own selfhood in the world about him. He fears the loss of self in the transience of the historical process and the anonymity of mass and number that so dominate our modern world. Adam realizes that he must probe the self not from without but from within. And later he insists that "it is not enough to look from the

62. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 2. "The Experience of a Child," scene 2. "The Child's Sanctuary" (CP, p. 346).

63. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 2, scene 4 (CP, pp. 352ff.).

64. From his program notes to the Warsaw production, "Radiation of Creative Interaction," quoted by Taborski, CP, pp. 326, 331.

65. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 1 (CP, p. 335). Also in *Reflections on Fatherhood* (CP, p. 365).

outside," to approach oneself and others as so many objects; but that one must enter within.⁶⁶ It comes to this: Adam complains that God might have left him like the other animals, to multiply and flourish on the earth, instead of inflicting upon him something of God's own spiritual personality.⁶⁷ But there it is, and we must now take humanity from the inside, from its experiences and not just from its external behavior. Later still, his daughter Monica recalls her father's belated complaint that "too many of the bonds between us are external; there are too few inner bonds."⁶⁸ Authentic fatherhood entails an intimate relationship with one's child.

Adam describes himself as Everyman, as the common denominator for that loneliness which humanity has chosen.⁶⁹ Indeed, this loneliness is a specific condition, a condition of the species, the elective fate of humankind. We have here, it seems to me, nothing less than a dramatic representation of the fallen situation of man.⁷⁰ A certain lethargy sustains this loneliness; Adam finds it easier to feel lonely than to contemplate his actual situation, for that requires him to confront his mortality.⁷¹ He tries to evade his true origin and the call to fatherhood.⁷² Excusing himself before God, he pleads: Did I not call from the start, "Leave me my loneliness?"⁷³ Poised on the border between fatherhood and loneliness,

66. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 2, scene 3 (CP, p. 347).

67. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 2 (CP, p. 337): "Did You have to touch my thought with Your knowledge that means giving birth? Did You have to touch my will with the love that is fulfillment?"

68. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 2, scene 5 (CP, p. 356).

69. *Reflections on Fatherhood* (CP, pp. 365-66): "Although I am like the man who can be placed apart and then made a common denominator for all men, I still remain lonely." Such objective universality leaves Adam "still a common denominator for everyone, which can be substituted for anyone or a common word that can be put outside the brackets."—In *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 4 (CP, p. 339), Adam, speaking to the Father: "When Your Son came, I remained the common denominator of man's inner loneliness."

70. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 2 (CP, p. 336); *Reflections on Fatherhood* (CP, p. 365).

71. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 2: "The Analysis of Loneliness" (CP, p. 336): "It is easier for me to feel lonely than to think about death. . . . I find it easier to feel lonely than guilty of sin."

72. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 2 (CP, p. 338). Adam admits to "continually evading Your Fatherhood and gravitating toward my loneliness."

73. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 2 (CP, p. 337).

Adam has sought to be more like God; but by this likeness he means: insofar as God is "independent of everything."⁷⁴ The conflict is then, if I have understood it correctly, not between an Adam-with-God and an Adam-wholly-without-God, for no creature can exist in the total absence of God. Ultimately Adam's quarrel with God is over two images of God that may define Adam: the image of self-subsistence and the image of relatedness. Adam insists upon choosing the version of self-subsistence. He chooses his own version of what it is to be in the image of God, rather than accepting the actual image that God has conferred upon Adam. Adam chooses the ideal of self-sufficiency and autonomy, rather than the community of shared love realized in the trinitarian Godhead.⁷⁵ Later, Adam concedes that his eyes were too fixed upon himself.⁷⁶ He wants to have everything through himself and not through God, even though he knows that such absolute independence is not possible.⁷⁷

At one point Adam tenders God a bargain: Why not split man up into a worldly, outward Adam and an inward, lonely Adam? Into public object and private subject? Into organism and psyche? That, he tells God, would leave the outward Adam to nourish the offspring God seems to desire, while the inward Adam could nurse his own loneliness. And that, Adam concludes, would cleave man in two without touching his inner loneliness.⁷⁸ It seems to me that

74. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 2 (CP, p. 336); also *Reflections on Fatherhood* (CP, p. 365).—In *Radiation*, part 1, scene 2 (CP, p. 336): Adam "stopped once on the frontier between fatherhood and loneliness. . . . What if he became lonely of his own free will?—In the *Original Unity of Man and Woman* (1979–80) John Paul II discusses the "original solitude" of Adam at length (see chap. 4, below); here in the drama Adam hankers after that solitude but on his own terms.

75. Józef Tischner remarks: "The God of Christianity is not an Absolute Solitude but an Absolute Interaction" of divine Persons (cited in CP, p. 327).

76. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 4: "Between Meeting and Fulfillment" (CP, p. 339).

77. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 2 (CP, p. 337). Indeed, Adam pronounces his wish "nonsense," but observes wryly that that has not stopped people from pursuing it.

78. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 2 (CP, p. 337) and scene 4 (CP, p. 340).—Cf. (above) Max's "exchangeable" outer man and his inner "non-exchangeable" man in *Our God's Brother*, act 1 (CP, pp. 164ff.).

this separation of public externality and private inwardness is pretty much the conventional wisdom put forth by many in our modern world.

Adam finds a strange ambiguity in the word "mine." In its negative sense it means "not yours"; and in the final analysis that means "not God's." The very word itself is relational, even correlative. When it is applied, not simply in an external fashion to the possession of property, but inwardly to the relation between persons, the very word cancels loneliness, because it cannot exclude from its meaning a reference to what is not mine, to what is "yours." And so, against his will, Adam is forced to realize that the very word leads him back towards God. At this point he defiantly decides to abandon the term itself; only to find that the private self is thereby imperilled.⁷⁹ For Adam's loneliness is disclosed as a nullity that loses the very sense of self, either by being driven back into an absolute isolation beyond what is mine or yours, or by being poured out into a common denominator that is neither exclusively mine or yours.

If Adam is lonely by choice, still—as the common denominator of humankind—his loneliness is contagious. Indeed, the emptiness of that common denominator is the basis for the contagion of loneliness. Yet such loneliness is not what God intended when he created human nature. Rather, Adam grafts his loneliness upon others.⁸⁰ Later, the figure of the Mother will observe that Adam's children "walk naked from within." Outwardly they are clothed

79. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 2 (CP, p. 337): "I am afraid of the word 'mine,' though at the same time I cherish its meaning. . . . An analysis of the word 'mine' always leads me to You. And I would rather give up using it than find its ultimate sense in You" (*Reflections on Fatherhood* [CP, p. 366]).—Cf. Psalm 49. It is interesting that the dialectic anticipates, even while it proposes an answer to, the current critique by Derrida and other Deconstructionists, who attack the very notions of the self, authorship, and authority.

80. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 2 (CP, p. 336–37); Adam speaks: "When I give birth, I do it to become lonely among those born, because I pass on to them the germ of loneliness. In the midst of a multitude, are they not more and more lonely?" The use of the word "graft" indicates that the loneliness is an imposition upon human nature and not of its essence: human nature is wounded but not destroyed (also *Reflections on Fatherhood* [CP, p. 365]).—Yet such a contagion forms "the strangest community—the community of loneliness" (*Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 3 [CP, p. 360]).

with the products of their own work and with those of other creatures, but "on the inside they are naked."⁸¹

Because of Adam's self-willed closure—his resistance to God's communication to him and within him—Adam finds the invitation to participate in God's own fatherhood to be not a gift but a burden, an intrusion upon his loneliness.⁸² Adam finds it unreasonable of God to want to let his divine Fatherhood enter into Adam's selfhood, for then Adam would reflect the radiation of divine Fatherhood as a prism refracts light. In a word: Adam rejects the burden of carrying the image of God within him and of communicating it to others.⁸³ He complains that it is too great a risk to be a true father to a child. It is the risk inherent in the call to love, that "constant challenge" of which Christopher has spoken in *The Jeweler's Shop*.⁸⁴

Still, Adam struggles with the challenge. He comes to recognize that loneliness is not ultimate in him: "not at the bottom of my being at all." This is because there is a deeper fissure in his being than any subsequent closure, an open sesame into which God makes his way. This fissure is not the rift explored in *The Jeweler's Shop*; for that rift is not original but comes later and not without human choice. Surely, the fissure is the "place" for the influx of the creative existence that sustains Adam at the cutting edge of his being.⁸⁵ It is an absolute opening, an opening for the Father's love,

81. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 3, scene 1 (CP, p. 361).

82. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 2 (CP, p. 336): "I could not bear fatherhood; I could not be equal to it. I felt totally helpless—and what had been a gift became a burden to me."

83. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 2 (CP, p. 337). In this context the image relation is one of "mine" and "Yours."

84. *The Jeweler's Shop*, act 3, scene 2 (CP, p. 312), "thrown to us by God, thrown, I think, so that we should challenge fate." Fate here is the destiny inherent in our fallen nature, the rule of sin.

85. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 3 (CP, p. 338); Adam speaks: "... You are never against me. You enter into what I call loneliness, and You overcome my resistance. Can one say that You force Your way in or only that You enter through a door that is open anyway? You did not make me closed; You did not quite close me. Loneliness is not at the bottom of my being at all; it grows at a certain point. The fissure through which You enter is far deeper. You enter—and slowly begin to shape me. You shape and develop me in spite of what I imagine about my ego and other people, yet You do it in harmony with what I am."

that Absolute Love already present in the earlier dramas. Thus, for example, it is the face of her separated husband as it is reflected in the face of the Bridegroom that works upon Anna and gradually makes Stefan's presence "less burdensome" to her.

Adam understands that the opposition founded in conflict is meant to give way to a harmony that endorses his own integrity. But the challenge of love continues, and the risk continues with it. Perhaps we should interpret Adam's struggle as a struggle with that original solitude mentioned in Genesis, prior to the creation of woman, and which we will explore in the fourth chapter. Or rather, the struggle is with what Adam might have suffered had God left him in that solitude. At any rate, Adam seems here to recount his own fall. The very success of creation tempts Adam toward a drift: "Gradually I cease to feel that You express Yourself in me, and I begin to think that I express myself in myself."⁸⁶ But then a sense of nonfulfillment arises within Adam, caused—not simply by desire—but by a certain withdrawal from that original Love. A void wells up within him on the borderline of that original-solitude-now-become-loneliness.⁸⁷ The void mingles Adam's as-yet-untransformed loneliness with the suffering inseparable from the call to love, a call that is daunting to Adam in his loneliness. For the suffering arises only through the muted presence of a Love whose absence is nevertheless felt and somehow understood.⁸⁸

It is here that a pivotal scene takes up the theme of "The Threshold Crossed by Woman." The Woman is undoubtedly Eve, but also Everywoman and each woman; is she also Mary? and the Church? At any rate, she enters Adam's loneliness perhaps at several levels, so that Adam is able to move from the pole of loneliness toward the pole of love.⁸⁹ The Woman conceives a child and gives to Adam

86. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 3 (CP, p. 338).

87. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 2 (CP, p. 338); Adam is poised "between the upper borderline of man filled with humanity and the lower one of humanity destroyed in man."

88. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 2, scene 4 (CP, p. 353). Adam to Monica: "Every feeling, my child, must be permeated by light. . . . One must transfix feelings with thought."

89. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 3, scene 1 (CP, p. 360). It seems to me that,

a new sense of "mine," that very sense which he had resisted. He had resisted because, while his own fatherhood would break down his loneliness, it would also lead him to the Father whose very being is Fatherhood. It is through the child, then, that Adam becomes a father. He says, half complaining: "You want me to love. You aim at me through a child, through a tiny daughter or son—and my resistance weakens."⁹⁰

But Adam arrives at a deeper truth, a truth that arises out of his not-entirely-willing recognition of the image of God that is present in him through the fissure. He realizes that the radiation of the Father's love consists in giving birth, even as from all eternity the Father is Father through begetting His Son: "We return to the father through the child."⁹¹ What is more, Adam comes to realize that—according to the logic of existence embedded in everything—he can accept the radiation of Love from the Father in and through the Son, only by therewith becoming himself a son, and once again a child: "To absorb the radiation of fatherhood means not only to become a father but, much more, to become a child."⁹² Adam says: "After a long time I came to understand that

at the first entrance (*Radiation*, part 1, scene 3, CP, p. 339), the Woman is Eve and Everywoman, but that here she is the Woman of Faith, hence Mary and the Church, and whoever—woman and men—live out of that faith.

90. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 3 (CP, p. 338). The same holds for the Mother (CP, p. 339). And at part 3, scene 1 (CP, p. 362), speaking to the newborn child, the Woman says: "This is also the moment of my birth, the moment in which I become a Mother." Although Adam's resistance is weakened, he still warns Monica: "Is it not true that in the word 'father' there is also fear? I will never be only stillness but also storm. Nor will I be sweetness only; I will add bitterness. And though I try to be transparent, I will also be a puzzle" (part 2, scene 5 [CP, p. 356]). Earlier the Chorus asks: "Where has the exiled father gone to? Where has the punishing father come from?" (part 1, scene 4 [CP, p. 340]). It is possible that these words, once transformed by that Absolute Love Who is Mercy, might also adumbrate the divine Father.

91. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 5 (CP, p. 341).

92. *Reflections on Fatherhood* (CP, p. 368). Cf. Stefan to Anna, *The Jeweler's Shop*, act 3, scene 5 (CP, pp. 319–22). The insistence upon becoming once again a child undoubtedly follows from Jesus' injunction: "Unless you become as little children. . . ." In sharp contrast to Wojtyła's emphasis, Descartes all but complains that we would have been better off if from the start we had been born with fully adult human reasons (*Discourse I-II*), and Kant in his essay *What is Enlightenment?* holds forth the escape from dependency (tutelage) as the beginning of mature humanity.

you do not want me to become a father unless I become a child."⁹³ The image within Adam is the image of "my" Father and "yours," Who has begotten the Word, and of his Spirit who proceeds from their Love. Father, child and love: that is what is essential, what remains.⁹⁴

Throughout the drama the Mother—especially in the third and last part—remains a mysterious figure; perhaps the author intended it so. If on her first entrance she may be mostly Eve, or Everywoman and each woman, in the last part she seems also to stand for the Church, and within the Church for Mary. She speaks of herself as the least obtrusive of the servants of history, bringing to mind the *Magnificat*.

Already in part two, in the child's sanctuary, we find that the stream, which is at once the edge of earth and of human thought, is not an ordinary stream. Just after being rescued from a viper on the trail, Monica puts her feet in the cool, refreshing water of the forest stream: it is "the water that has given birth to man anew"—surely a reference to baptism.⁹⁵

Moreover, the Mother is not herself the light, since that Light radiates from the Father; but she is the shade that protects, and she herself glows with an inner radiance which she communicates to the children of Adam.⁹⁶ Each time, she counsels: "Adam, accept the radiation of fatherhood; Adam, become a child." But each

93. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 1, scene 4 (CP, p. 339). What is more, in the constant giving of birth, "the father revives [as father] in the soil of the child's soul" (CP, p. 340).

94. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 3, scene 2 (CP, p. 364). Also *Reflections on Fatherhood* (CP, p. 368): "And everything else will then turn out to be unimportant and inessential, except for this: father, child, and love."—It seems that the secret formula of which Adam speaks at *Radiation* part 2, scene 5 (CP, p. 358) is the Trinity; cf. n. 75.

95. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 2, scene 3 (CP, p. 350).

96. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 3, scene 1, "Concern for Inner Radiance" (CP, pp. 360–61). The Mother: "I gather the people whom Adam has dispersed. There is in me a love stronger than loneliness. That love is not of me. . . . I love Adam and constantly restore to him the fatherhood he renounces. I discreetly turn his loneliness into my motherhood. . . . And I am not the light of those I enlighten but rather a shade in which they rest. . . . I do not know how it happens that I fill these people with radiance from within. Or rather I do know, but my knowledge is faith."

time Adam is silent; he does not hear or want to hear. She expresses her fatigue more than once toward the close of the drama, and at one point she whispers: "Oh, Adam, how tired I am of you. Truly, fatigue is the measure of our love." But she answers the call of the Bridegroom, and calls in turn to Adam's children to "take into yourself the light that will guide you through Adam's loneliness and lead you to the Father."⁹⁷

Now, Adam knows that the love she communicates to all humankind liberates men and women from loneliness. Indeed, it liberates from an unattached freedom, and gives rise to a new, more certain freedom.⁹⁸ For the fullness of God is the denial of the emptiness of loneliness.⁹⁹ But Adam also realizes that the same light leads straight through the Invisible Child who rests in the Mother's arms, and that it must pass through the suffering and death of that Child, as well as through the death of all human fatherhood and human childhood. And with that Adam is brought back to the thought he has tried to evade throughout the drama: the realization of his mortality.

A troubled Adam remains poised in a quandary between two choices: the loneliness of his own self-isolation, or the adopted fatherhood-childhood that must pass through suffering and death. Adam has known all these things: he has known that the Father is the Source who shows the way, and that the Father could retreat without loss within the Godhead to the absolute Love between Father and Child, leaving the whole world to its self-destruction. The chorus echoes Adam's desperate sigh: "Could we not have learned this long ago? Has this not always been embedded in every-

97. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 3, scene 1 (CP, p. 362). It is here that she adds, "This is also the moment of my birth, the moment in which I become a Mother."

98. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 2, scenes 4-5 (CP, pp. 355-56): "Love denies freedom of will to him who loves—love liberates him from the freedom that would be terrible to have for its own sake. . . . What remains is to await a new maturity, a new unity of will, a common rhythm . . . when we love, a common current runs through our wills. From it a certainty grows, and freedom is born again from certainty. And this is what love means. And then without fear I think 'mine'."

99. *Reflections on Fatherhood* (CP, p. 368).

thing that is?"¹⁰⁰ But the drama closes with the Mother's clarion voice: "You are wrong, Adam! You are all wrong! In me will survive the heritage of all men, implanted in the Bridegroom's death."

In *Reflections on Fatherhood*, Adam says: "All this I know. But is it enough? Knowing, I can continue to substitute for everything the same old common denominator of my loneliness—my inner loneliness, chosen so that I can remain myself alone and nobody else."¹⁰¹ And again, in his conversation with Monica, Adam asks, "When we descend from word to will, what will the word mean?"¹⁰²

We are left at the close of the drama, then, with an indecisive Adam, a sort of universal Hamlet; he needs something more than the knowledge he has: he needs to *act*.¹⁰³ It is, then, to Karol Wojtyła's exploration of the requisites for human action that we next turn.

100. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 3, scene 2, "Radiation and Dying" (CP, p. 368). *Reflections on Fatherhood* (CP, p. 368) closes on this note.

101. *Reflections on Fatherhood* (CP, p. 368). Is this not the same "knowledge without love" against which (in *Our God's Brother*) the future Brother Albert protests to the Other, i.e., to the voice of the Enlightenment? Or again, in *Jeremiah*, when Father Peter cries out that "words are not enough!"

102. *Radiation of Fatherhood*, part 2, scene 5 (CP, p. 357). It is not too much to see here a dramatic form of Wojtyła's philosophical concern with ethical action and its foundations, a concern to which we turn in the following chapters.

103. In *Rhapsodies of the Millenium* (CP, pp. 385–86) Wojtyła illustrates the drama of moral values by reference to the legend of Mieczysław in which a newly Christian people's collective action topples the statue of the "god" Światowid. At once horrified yet determined, proud yet humble, they tremble before the unseen consequences of the act. This, he observes, is "a drama of the highest order, a drama in the sphere of values." And in *Forefathers' Eve* (CP, p. 389) he speaks of a "theater of specific action," of "multidimensional action," and of the moral task of such drama.