

Love and Justice

Individual man and society and the respective parties' moral obligations: A comparison of two different approaches in times of turbulence

Egil Morland

Associate Professor in Practical Theology and Leadership,
NLA University College Bergen, Norway
egil.morland@nla.no

The title “Love and justice” is inspired by Reinhold Niebuhr’s thoughts in his book *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932/1960). These words are fundamental in his conception of the relation between man and society, as later developed in a series of lectures in the beginning of World War II. By an analysis of the Norwegian confessional document *The Foundation of the Church* (1942), this article demonstrates how the theological claim of a *just* state in this confession, when compared to Niebuhr’s distinction between the moral obligation of individual man and society, reveals common ideological thought structures.

Keywords: Man, society, state, justice, sin, anthropology.

I. Introduction: The challenge

How may we understand the relation between individual man and society? The question also contains a normative element: How should this relation be? In this article, I will look at two answers or solutions, from a relatively simultaneous time, but very different contexts: The shift in Reinhold Niebuhr’s view on this issue in the years leading up to World War II, and the Norwegian Church resistance’s deliberations on the state’s mandate and the individual’s responsibility. I want to approach the problem of the relation from two perspectives: An outer perspective, which describes the ethical expectations directed to individual man and to society respectively, and an inner perspective, which looks at

these claims from an anthropological perspective. If we are able to understand the nature of the different parties – ‘individual man’ and ‘collective society’ –, we might also shed some light on the nature of their relation to one another. There are good reasons for holding these two perspectives together. A line, often quoted, from the political thinker J. Roland Pennock, reads; “As long as men have speculated about the nature of politics, it has been common to relate it to the nature of man”.¹ I believe that this is a fair assessment.

There are more than indications, I believe, that the importance of questions like these, will become even more urgent in times to come. The private sphere in a modern society is easily trespassed and

the domain of the families' responsibility is decreasing, leaving room for a 'hungry' state to intervene into all areas of life.² I think that there is no less confusion now than before when it comes to the question of the relation between individual man and society, for instance when personal autonomy on one side and the need to forward common moral expectations, and therefore cohesive values in society on the other, is on the agenda.

The article has five parts.

Following the introduction (I), I will give a short presentation of Reinhold Niebuhr's thoughts in his book *Moral Man and Immoral Society*.³ The headline "Love and justice" is inspired by Niebuhr. These keywords are fundamental in his conception of both the relation and the decisive difference between man and society. The title seems at first to signal that Niebuhr's outcome is in 'favor' of the individual, the *moral* man, as compared to the society's inferior moral capabilities. If this is a correct observation, it seems to be a tension between Niebuhr's view on the relationship between man and society and the traditional Lutheran position, where man's corruptibility is a given anthropological trait and the society's moral accountability is expected. Does 'sin' play a role in Niebuhr's conception (cf. the discussion in part IV)? Are the positions comparable, or are they rather referring to different dimensions in the understanding of the relation between man and society (II)?

In testing this, I will present a plausible Lutheran approach to the question, through an analysis of a few examples from the Church of Norway's document from World War II, *The Foundation of the Church – A Confession and a Declaration* (*Kirkens Grunn*, hereafter: *The*

Foundation), which may illustrate what I am looking for.⁴ *The Foundation* expressed the ideological reasons for the church's critique of the Nazi authorities, for instance their plans to raise the young generation in a national socialistic worldview, and their efforts to limit the proclamation of the gospel to spiritual issues alone.

In a recent bibliography, Arne Hassing claims, that the "Norwegian church resistance changed Lutheran political ethics and became a case study in civil resistance" after the war.⁵ Still, it is not widely known that more than 90 % of the pastors in The Church of Norway resigned from their state offices on Easter Day 1942, not to mention why they did so. It was a decision well prepared. The clergy committed themselves to *the Foundation*, proclaimed from the pulpits the same day, although continuing their ministerial work as parish pastors in a free folk church for the following three years. By doing this, they followed their bishops, who six weeks earlier had resigned from their offices (III).

I then ask if these two ways of unfolding the relation between man and society – the contribution from Niebuhr and the spirit in the Norwegian confession during wartime –, can be combined in a rewarding encounter (IV). Finally, in the conclusion, I will argue that together these two approaches can form a common realistic rather than pessimistic notion of the issues at stake (V).

So far, I have not distinguished between the concepts of 'community' and 'society', or of 'authority' and 'civil government', where the latter word implicates the existence of a formal body authorized to act on behalf of a larger community. The meaning of 'society', when used here, will tend to have this comprehensive mea-

ning: as authority and as this authority's ability to exercise power.⁶ This is due to two reasons.

First: In a modern society, where for instance the church does not in herself exercise a direct worldly power, the expectations to those authorities which possess such power will be addressed to as 'the state'. There are only a few and not very attractive nations on earth where society has not managed to establish a state.

Second: What is 'society'? Any first year student of sociology has learned how an even limited number of persons, in their many roles, meet with a multitude of norms directed to these roles, and very soon a spider web of relations emerge. Some threads shape a heavier traffic pattern than others. In bigger and more complex webs, some persons will – in times of peace – be asked or chosen and thereby authorized to take care of the expectations and commitments, which need being exercised on behalf of all its members. We may call it regime, authority or simply 'state'.

Niebuhr clearly uses the word 'society' in this way; but it also covers a wide range of phenomena, depending on its references to a variety of societal forms, be it family, tribe and clan, or race, people and nation. In all aspects, it includes the meaning of exercising the common interests of a smaller or larger group, and the individual man's willingness to submit to this.

II. Reinhold Niebuhr's concept of Moral Man and Immoral Society

The cultural and ideological shift from an optimistic belief in a permanent progression, whether in the scientific fields or in man's rationality and therefore in man's ability to overcome obstacles for a new and modern humanity, to a pessimistic or

defeatist attitude, came later in the United States than in Europe. Neither World War I nor the class struggles, neither the revolution in Russia nor the unrest elsewhere in Europe, had made a severe impact on the social optimism amongst intellectuals in the US. The country was still a young nation, it had yet land to conquer, and science opened up new and unknown promises of a prospective future: "Most of liberal culture in America in the 1930s [...] was still deeply optimistic about society and so about history. As in Europe before World War I, they believed thoroughly in historical progress [...] from autocratic and despotic governments to democracy, from religious and racial intolerance to tolerance, from authoritarian and dogmatic religion to liberal [...]. Accordingly, people were becoming more moral, society was becoming almost Christian, and the task of the churches was building the Kingdom of God on earth."⁷ These were widespread ideas.

Reinhold Niebuhr's book *Moral Man and Immoral Society* came as a bombshell into this cultural harmony. Niebuhr was a leading political thinker and a leading Christian intellectual mind of his time, deeply rooted in the social gospel movement. His fellow liberal theologians therefore experienced a kind of betrayal when he presented his book in 1932, in which he set a new ideological paradigm.

The challenges he gave in *Moral Man* were the following:

1. Even if social institutions, moral customs and laws may have progressed, the self-interest – in all the aspects of the word – is predominant in modern societies and nations. The "natural impulse" of groups, classes or nations is to secure their own interests, to protect themselves and defend their privileges.

2. There is a fundamental difference between the moral behavior of individuals and the behavior of groups. Individuals may have a real possibility and willingness of self-sacrifice for others, and in that way being able to transcend their self-interests. That is not the case for communities. Consequently, many things an individual will not do, because he is obeying the moral law and/or his personal conviction, he might nevertheless do as part of a group or of a nation. Patriotism is another word for this. In ethics this is sometimes mistaken for altruism, says Niebuhr.⁸ True altruism, however, is more likely to happen when individuals act *against* the interests of the groups, to which they belong. Altruism is more likely present when someone is opposing the morality of the group. According to Niebuhr, examples of this are the fates of Socrates and Jesus.⁹

3. One of the most provoking ideas in Niebuhr's book is his assertion that *reason* and liberal theology do not represent a trustworthy alternative to traditional thinking, that is: not more than an authoritarian or conservative theology. "Both the highest reason and the most advanced religion can provide [...] justification for a group selfishness even more than they have provided challenges to it."¹⁰ Niebuhr claims that in "every human group there is [...] less capacity for self-transcendence, less ability to comprehend the needs of others and therefore more unrestrained egoism, than the individuals, who compose the group, reveal in their personal relationships."¹¹

Niebuhr tried to analyze the moral resources and the moral limitations of human nature. His purpose was to find adequate political strategies to achieve an ethical goal for society by taking these insights to full account. In doing so – as

an advocate of a "disillusioned generation" – Niebuhr was quite prepared to face attacks by those who still lived in the "sentimentalities of the Age of Reason".¹²

Moral Man and Immoral Society is both a political and philosophical pamphlet. Niebuhr's opinions are to a certain degree based on sociological and historical findings. He emphasizes for instance the fact that the churches, when preaching the gospel to the slaves and men's equality to God, did not expect social changes as an outcome of this preaching.¹³

Though there is not a single reference to Scripture in Niebuhr's book, it nonetheless reflects a biblical anthropology that I think most Christians may agree with. Niebuhr prompts a critique of a certain heritage from the Augustinian tradition – and Lutheran, I would add – especially relevant to the situation in German Lutheranism at the time this book was written (1932), when leading theologians developed the idea of the state's autonomy (*Eigengesetzlichkeit*) and thereby indifferentism to the church' preaching of God's law. This tradition has a "tendency [...] to obscure the shades and shadows of moral life, by painting only the contrast between the white radiance of divine holiness and the darkness of the world". This may tempt "the religiously sensitized soul [...] to despair of society" with the fatal consequence, that religion "thus degenerates into an asocial quest for the absolute".¹⁴ Niebuhr sees a direct link from evolutionary optimism of the last centuries and the sentimentalizing of moral and social problems leading to a kind of religious idealism: "In spite of the disillusionment of the World War [I], the average liberal Protestant is still convinced that the kingdom of God is gradually approaching..."¹⁵

Against this attitude, and in spite of his

critique of a certain strand in the Christian tradition, Niebuhr claims that the triumph of love has to come through the intervention of God; love is triumphant in its own integrity, as shown on the cross. The world, however, will always conspire against it. Consequently the highest goal that one is called to realize in society is not love, but justice. Only individuals can and should try to aim higher, rare as it though is, also amongst individuals, to practice unconditional love: “From the perspective of society the highest moral ideal is justice. From the perspective of the individual, the highest ideal is unselfishness. [...] The individual must strive to realize his life by losing and finding himself in something greater than himself”.¹⁶

Niebuhr described this new gained position as a “Christian Realism”.¹⁷ One may also describe it as a dialectic anthropological concept, based on the insight that man, through intellectual freedom, possesses the ability to promote good as well as evil. Niebuhr therefore criticized not only the false utopianism – which inevitably will lead to despotism – of communist societies, but he also criticized the self-righteous western belief of itself as called to save the world. In the real world, in practice, the exercise of power always leads to a moral deficiency, he claims. Alas, at the same time society should always aim at realizing justice for its citizens and amongst nations.

III. The Foundation of the Church and the Role of the State

What does the Church implicate when it claims to preach God’s commandments to the worldly authorities? Article V in *The Foundation of the Church* reads: “As to the State’s calling, our Confession states that the State has nothing to do with

the soul but shall ”defend the body and material things against manifest wrongs¹⁸ and hold the people in check in order to maintain civil justice and peace”.” The last quotation is from *Confessio Augustana* (CA) art. 28.

By the word ”implicate” I ask about the principle behind the idea that moral instances outside the state’s authorities have a say in the question of how actual policies should be, and thus what this notion thereby reveals about the assumed relation between individuals and society. The answers to both questions must rest on political and ethical reasoning; the former may be primarily on principal ethical thought, while the latter also implies a religious philosophical and anthropological approach.

To prevent a possible misunderstanding, let me add that none of these questions are dependent on or even linked to the fact that the Church of Norway during the second world war time was a state church, and that the state therefore, in its capacity of performing church polity, was bound to respect certain customary or statutory regulations. This aspect of the state church relation is in detail dealt with in art. VI in *The Foundation of the Church*, and the church’s view, as comprised in this specific paragraph, claims that “[o]nly when the organs of state work for the good of the Gospel’s right proclamation and the upbuilding of the congregations can they with legal legitimacy exercise their regulative authority in the church administration.”

The disagreements about how and when these prerequisites were violated during war time, were of course fundamental to the conflict between the parties, but they are of no specific interest here.

Although the headline of article V speaks about the proper relation of the

Christians and the *church* to the authorities, we may conclude that the concern of the church in this article is not of a specific, particular nature. By saying that, we are not neglecting the fact that the article has three direct references to Scripture,¹⁹ one reference to Luther and one to the Lutheran confession.²⁰ On the contrary: The reasoning principally rests on a general approach that may appeal to people of any faith, or to people of no faith at all; the confession articulates that it is possible to communicate this universally.

The agenda is to profess that there are limits to the realm of the worldly powers. In advocating this, the church naturally uses the sources that can substantiate her position, therefore the references to Scripture and to the Confession. This is however an ideological rather than a specific denominational position. This becomes clear when we compare this document to the later declarations on human rights: The points of view coincide, but where the church can give scriptural grounds to support her view, the secular argument has to refrain from giving such references.²¹ Philosophically speaking these grounds are *a priori*, at the same time given and chosen, and evident in themselves.

What does the church declare? On the grounds of the church's confession, one "distinguishes between two orders or realms: the worldly state and the spiritual church" (So does all western world see it nowadays, although clearly in a different meaning: as a total separation and not as a distinguishing). The basic assumption behind the distinction in *the Foundation*, is that both regiments are willed by God. Consequently, the regiments have to conduct their vocation in a proper way to fulfill their respective purposes. As examples to what happens when the worldly

regime does not respect this, the declaration identifies what has later become the very core of human rights: "[I]t is a sin against God if the state begins to tyrannize souls and tries to dictate what they should believe, think, and see as their spiritual duties. Because if the state tries to coerce and bind souls in matters of conviction, nothing will come of it but conflict of conscience, injustice, and persecution."

To conclude, so far: What the church expects of the state is exactly: *A just society*. This corresponds with what lay behind the first serious confrontation with the Nazi-regime: The church intervened "*In Defense of a Just State*".²² The opening paragraph in the pastoral letter which the bishops addressed to Commissioner Minister Skancke in January 15th 1941,²³ read: "According to the church's confession, the church stands in relation to a just state, insofar as the state through its agencies is presumed to uphold the God-given order of law and justice."²⁴

This sentence is not in itself an approval of democracy or control over the state by majority rule. *All* kinds of authorities have to submit themselves to an ethical standard as expressed above. Some may think that the Lutheran view on man's original sin (CA 2) causes a tension with the very idea of democracy, because this idea rests on a belief in certain qualities and capabilities in man, and according to a Lutheran anthropology man – allegedly – does not hold such qualities. I do not find this view convincing. It may be true that a modern, democratic state has an inbuilt optimistic anthropology,²⁵ although that must even more be the case for totalitarian regimes during the last generations – one could start by going back a century, to the years of 1914 and 1917 – may these regimes represent nationalism,

communism, Nazism, or utopian socialism. But, the question still remains: What contribution to a good and rightful relation between individual man and society (state) can a Lutheran anthropology offer?

The key word when we are looking for an answer to this problem is – I think – “coerce”, used in CA and quoted in *the Foundation* (“Hold in check”); it is the same word in both Latin and English.²⁶ In general, *coercion* conveys a negative connotation; coercion means that someone against his willing cooperation is compelled to give in. The Latin version, however, clearly holds a double meaning; it also includes the function of upholding order and controlling an area within its borders, so that peace and justice may prevail. There is no doubt that this way of thinking supports an appreciation of the state’s – the civic authorities’ – duties on behalf of the individuals.

This becomes even more clear when in CA 28 ‘coerce’ is combined with the word *swords*, which in this context serves a positive purpose – or more correctly, it serves two attractive goals: salvation for the soul and justice for the body. In that way the two powers, the spiritual and the physical, can respectively serve as God’s instruments for salvation and creation. The civil government “is the power of the sword providing for external righteousness and peace”.²⁷ The threatening dangers of all times occur when the respective authorities trespass their given limits. This way of thinking also expresses that the powers are not sovereign in themselves, as formulated in *the Foundation*, “God [...] is the Lord and the supreme authority over all orders” (art. V).

It is true that both *Confessio Augustana* and *the Foundation* presuppose an anthropology that reveals a profound

insight into the realities of man as a fallen creature, and the consequences thereof. The reasons for giving the worldly powers their authority is that they shall limit (confer again the word *coerce*) man’s tendency to promote his self-interest and self-love on the cost of others, as this is what deprives God of his honor. In effect, God has to put up another regime besides the one that proclaims his Kingdom by Word and Sacrament. This regiment’s coercion is intentionally if not always primarily good-natured, whether practiced by the *pater familias*, by the law, by the police or by military forces.²⁸ Only in this way can evil be ‘held in chains’. Only in this way can the consequences of sin be adequately limited. In fact, this is the decisive reasons for God to uphold that order in the world.

So much said, the Lutheran anthropology “does not take a narrow view of man’s moral capabilities”.²⁹ The so called ‘civic righteousness’ among men is a virtue that is highly praised by Luther; God doesn’t only want it, he demands it. This does not give man reason to brag, nor does it put him – spiritually – in a new or favorable position to God.

Martin Luther vividly demonstrates this by the metaphor of two courtrooms, on the one hand a spiritual or theological, and on the other a civic. The righteousness, which may justify a man before the civil judge, does not count as righteousness before God. The trials – to stay in the metaphor –, are not even based on the same criteria. The first is an outward thing, necessary and praiseworthy in itself though, while the second looks at the heart. For instance, the desire for fame, which is often rewarded of its’ seemingly unselfish behavior, is by Luther regarded as the most shameful thing, as far as *God* is concerned.

The concept ‘nature’ is, in both political and theological contexts, seldom used in a very precise way. One gets the impression that the word fluctuates, i.e.: that the meaning varies not only from one author to another, but that it in itself gives more of an *indication* of a phenomenon than of exact meaning. Sometimes ‘nature’ serves as a reference to a constant factor in what it means to be a human. In that case, it is not subject to change, it cannot alter. It is as such an intrinsic characteristic. In this meaning ‘nature’ tends to support a conservative or static position. ‘Nature’ may also, however, mean the quite opposite, or better, it may contain another meaning *as well*: ‘Nature’ draws attention to man’s potential; it can inspire man to fulfill its’ purpose or calling, not neglecting or denying it. In this meaning ‘nature’ is used to motivate and thereby activate the inbuilt qualities in man in a more dynamic or progressive way.

In short, the concept of man’s nature may reflect the tension between what is ‘humanly’ as a matter of fact-description of the grim realities, and what one ideally should strive to realize of human values in life.

The implication of this is that a Lutheran anthropology sometimes is regarded as either legitimizing a given context, and as such represents a hindrance to positive change, or it may function as a reminder of what the situation could and would have been like, if man’s integrity and moral potentials had been taken into full account. In this *The Foundation* marks a break with a tendency in the history of Lutheranism of uncritical loyalty to the state. This new understanding is, however, nonetheless consistent with the theological principles in the *Confessio* (CA).³⁰

IV. Discussion

What strikes a reader of *Moral Man* is that Niebuhr’s concepts in this book seem to be of a sociological or factual, rather than a theological or philosophical, nature. One could, I will argue, say that his concepts “moral/immoral” are markers on a horizontal line of *relative* values. If that is a correct observation, Niebuhr will not be in conflict with the Lutheran concept of sinful (corrupt) man and just society; it is, on the contrary, in accordance with the perception of the differences between man’s position *coram Deo* and *coram hominibus*. Niebuhr does not claim that ‘moral man’ is bound to do the good, far from it, confer his remark about the rareness of the self-transcendence in individual moral behavior. His agenda, as I see it, is to point at the relative differences between the morality of man and the morality of society. Further, Niebuhr’s point is that the capacity for self-transcendence lies in the self’s nature, and “not in its rational capacity for conceptual and analytic procedures”.³¹ Only then can a consistent idealism, as well as a consistent naturalism, be avoided, and prepare room for an anthropological realism.

Niebuhr developed these thoughts in great detail in a series of lectures at the beginning of World War II, published under the headline “The Nature and Destiny of Man” (1941). Here he expressed his belief that alongside the western culture’s emphasis on individuality, this culture also lies on the faith of the Bible and of the culture’s Hebraic roots. This tradition does not split the self in different entities, like body, mind and spirit, but holds them together “in its freedom from natural necessity” – which is another word for determinism.³²

Niebuhr quotes Albrecht Ritschl, whom he recognizes as “the most authoritative

exponent of modern liberal Christianity”.³³ Ritschl once declared that religion seeks to overcome the problem of man’s finiteness and freedom. It may seem as if this is a contradiction between being *a part of nature*, and at the same time claiming to *dominate nature*. Niebuhr agrees, but then adds: “Ritschl does not appreciate that the uniqueness of the Biblical approach to the human problem lies in its subordination of the problem of finiteness to the problem of sin. It is not the contradiction of finiteness and freedom, from which the Biblical religion seeks emancipation. It seeks redemption from sin; ...”³⁴

Niebuhr points out that the Bible defines sin in both religious and moral terms. The religious dimension of sin is rebellion against God, as man’s effort to usurp the place of God. The moral and social dimension of sin is injustice; an ego thereby “inevitably subordinates other life to its will and thus does injustice to other life”.³⁵

By his reply to Ritschl, Niebuhr places himself in a tradition, which is both common Christian, and especially made a point of in Lutheran preaching.³⁶

The evil is not rooted in “the ignorance of the mind” – confer again the background for *Moral Man* –, but is “primarily expressed in [...] a corruption of [man’s] essential freedom and grows with its freedom”³⁷. In religious terms: The evil is rooted in sin. This is why coercion is called for. It shall limit the kind of freedom that threatens other people’s life and freedom.

V. Conclusion: When positions meet

I find on this point – the society’s obligation to limit evil and promote justice – a similarity between Niebuhr’s position and the anthropology underlying Lutheran

theology in general, and specifically as reflected in *the Foundation of the Church*. If I am permitted a little linguistic creativity, I would claim that the two positions coincide, but not by coincidence. Because realities speak for themselves. Realities ask for realism. It asks for a realistic anthropology. Niebuhr had overcome the naiveté of the anthropology of liberal theology. Enlightenment of man and rationality of mind proved themselves as frail instruments and meager comfort against the depression of the thirties and then against an all-consuming war.

The theological deliberations in *the Foundation* reflect a genuine, albeit innovative and constructive Lutheran way of thinking about the relation between man and society. The implicated anthropology of this idea has been ‘accused’ of being (too) pessimistic, due to the perception of man’s total corruptibility. Critics also claim that the Lutheran notion of so-called ‘orders’, whether based in the creation or in original sin, has set negative imprints in history. The reason should allegedly be that the very idea of a fixed, unchangeable and God-willed *order*, for instance the State’s authority, presupposes that even the evils of life are integrated and implicated in God’s will and providence.

The Foundation, however, did not function in this way. On the contrary, it introduced a more dynamic awareness of the worldly authorities’ mandate, and consequently the limitations of the citizen’s obedience to the same authorities.

Who has the mandate to counter the consequences of ‘sin’ in society and level between people, other than the state or society? That is why Niebuhr – like *the Foundation* – demands of society that it shall defend righteousness and strive for justice. The state cannot fight sin in its

religious dimension but it can fight the moral and social consequences of sin. Here we see a parallel to the metaphor of the two swords. One sword fights by preaching the Gospel and by the proclamation of redemption of sin, the other sword fights the fruits of sin – in society –

by means that equal that challenge. Consequently, by coercion, if necessary.

This is where the positions meet. Here Niebuhr's challenge to modern culture concurs with both the realism and with the fighting spirit that we find in *the Foundation of the church*.

Notes

1. Pennock, J. Roland and Chapman, John W.: *Human Nature in Politics*, New York University Press 1977, 1.
2. There are interesting references to this subject, not the least in the title: "Individual Rights and Societal Responsibilities", by Jens Bruun Kofoed, in *Theofilos* 1/2017, albeit from a very different angle (Old Testament). The question of a corporate vs individual accountability on the societal level may really challenge our theology as a whole.
3. Niebuhr, Reinhold: *Moral Man and Immoral Society, a Study in Ethics and Politics*, (1932/1960). Westminster John Knox Press.
4. *The Foundation of the Church – a Confession and a Declaration*, 1942. Translated by Torleiv Austad and Arne Hassing, KZG/CCH, volume 28, Issue 2, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015.
5. Hassing, Arne: *Church Resistance to Nazism in Norway 1940-1945*, University of Washington Press, Seattle 2014, ix.
6. I use the words "tend to", because the same will apply to informal structures, as in the word 'community'; it may appear in different sizes and shapes.
7. Langdon B. Gilkey in: *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, xvi.
8. *Ibid.* xix.
9. The ongoing debate on Edward Snowden's disclosure of modern surveillance could maybe serve as a modern test case, as could the debate on and reluctance to receiving Dalai Lama in Norway, which illustrates the contrarian perspectives of political and economic interests versus moral commitments.
10. Gilkey: "Without denying Niebuhr's point, I might add that, nonetheless, [...] the churches [...] had a better record challenging the evils of the state than did the academic faculties, the scientific laboratories, or the educational administrations in those same communities", xix.
11. Introduction to the 1960-edition by Cornel West, xxix.
12. *Ibid.* xxxvi.
13. Niebuhr 1960, 78.
14. *Ibid.* 69-70
15. *Ibid.* 79
16. *Ibid.* 257.
17. See "The Preface" for the Scribner Library Edition of *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, New York 1941/1964, viii.
18. *Book of Concord*, ELCA, Fortress, Minneapolis, translates as "manifest harm".
19. Luke 4:6; John 14:30; Ezekiel 3:17 ff.
20. WA 12,334.
21. *UN Declaration on Human Rights*, 1948, and *European Convention of Human Rights*, 1950.
22. Hassing 2014, 69.
23. The Pastoral Letter ('*Hyrdebrevet*').
24. Hassing's translation from Norwegian (2014), 73.
25. Wolf, Ernst in T. Strohm & H.-D. Wendland: *Kirche und moderne Demokratie* (Wege der Forschung, Band CCV), 1973, 259.
26. Grane, Leif, *Confessio Augustana*, København 1972, 204.
27. Schlink, Edmund: *Theology of the Lutheran Confession*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1960, 226.
28. Luther's explanation to the fourth Commandment in the large Catechism, see *The Book of Concord*, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 2000, esp. §§ 150 (407) and 172 (410).
29. Althaus, Paul, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1970, 143.
30. Austad, Torleiv: *Kirkens Grunn. Analyse av en kirkelig bekjennelse fra okkupasjonstiden 1940-45*. Luther Forlag, Oslo 1974, 224.

31. From “The Preface” for the Scribner Library Edition of *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, Vol II, 1941.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid. 178.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid. 179.
36. Morland, Egil: *Motstand og forkynnelse*, [Resistance and Preaching], Portal Forlag, Kristiansand 2016, p. 176.
37. From “The Preface” for the Scribner Library Edition, viii.