

'Is Intercessory Prayer Defensible on Theological Grounds?'

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Introduction

As Christian believers are we entitled to pray for others? Can we request rain, healing or peace in Northern Ireland? Can we legitimately claim that God has answered our prayers and point to the evidence of this? If we can what are we claiming that our prayer has effected? Is the notion of intercessory prayer simply a superstition that is incompatible with a scientific understanding of our universe? These are just a few of the questions raised by the concept of intercessory prayer. T. J. Gorringer writes:

Belief in providence . . . is not just the belief that God guides events and achieves his purposes through them, but that we can bring all things to him in prayer. But what are we doing when we do this? Does the doctrine of 'man come of age' mean that we must reject as childish and immature belief in a God to whom we can appeal in every situation?

Should we pray only for inner strength, power to love and to forgive? Or do rationalist assumptions lie behind this practice? In failing to pray for rain do we simply parade our unbelief? Are we children of the Enlightenment too clever by half? Or is it that we have been made cynical by the terror of history amongst which we live? If I pray for trivial things . . . and if I believe that success in such cases is an answer to prayer, why is it that God could not have stopped the murder of 6 million Jews, or the appalling accidents and tragedies which meet us day to day in the newspapers?¹

The question of the defensibility of intercessory prayer raises questions of cosmology and theodicy, human freedom and divine sovereignty. But the heart of the issue is one of doctrine: what kind of God has revealed himself through the life and teaching of Christ as interpreted through the Scriptures? We shall begin the discussion with the case for the indefensibility of intercessory prayer.

First Witness: M. R. Austin

'My problem is not so much that prayer is difficult', wrote M. R. Austin, 'but that much prayer is impossible. Further, it is impossible on sound theological grounds.'² Austin rejects the possibility of intercessory prayer influencing God or events on two principal grounds:

The first is the omniscience of God. To pray for 'Mrs Smith with cancer in Ward 8 of the Royal Infirmary' is meaningless, for how could a God who sees all things not know her situation? Moreover, Austin implies, the nature of God's omniscience is that he knew 'from all eternity'. To imagine that he needs to be reminded is therefore inconceivable.

The second principal theological fault is that intercessory prayer impugns the goodness of God. To pray as if to persuade God to do something other than he intended is to suggest that what he intended is not the best. We pray as if we believe that we can be instrumental in the working of miracles, states Austin, a practice which is 'quite unworthy of faith in a merciful and loving and omnipotent God'.³ The God who is the object of intercessory prayer is surely less merciful and loving than the God who does not require such prayer. Intercession as a means of 'bearing one another's burdens' may be a better justification for prayer but seems no more than 'a trouble shared being a trouble halved'; for those belonging to Christ, his grace should be sufficient for their need.

To imagine intercessory prayer as a vehicle for extra-sensory communication, a means of releasing powers of healing that are as yet not understood, is to fall into a form of 'God-of-the-gaps' argument. In Austin's view intercessory prayer is therefore meaningless 'not only on the ground of rationality, but also on the ground of faith in God as merciful and omnipotent'.⁴ Austin argues that the practice of prayer is founded on an inadequate notion of God and his activity which arises from anthropomorphic language; addressing God in such a way is to make him 'too small'. In intercession, the use of anthropomorphic language can be only symbolic or analogic and it is a mistake to expect literal answers to prayer.

Second Witness: J. N. Ward

For Ward, 'Petition and intercession, the asking for blessing for oneself and others, create more problems than any other forms of prayer.'⁵

It is no help at all to think of God as a 'source of causative action in the world of phenomenon to be reckoned as additional and external to those agencies which he has brought into being in the wills of men' so that our prayer is 'an attempt to

make up for our own deficiency in power or wisdom by calling that other more reliable Agent into operation for the accomplishment of what seems to us good'.⁶

Ward believes it incredible that twentieth century Western Christians should be encouraged to pray about the weather. Prayer for him 'begins and ends in thanking and offering' and is most clearly perceived in the Eucharist. The only valid request is to pray as in the Lord's prayer, namely, that God's kingdom may come and his will be done. 'To ask for the good things of God's kingdom is to offer oneself to his rule.'⁷ He agrees with D. Z. Phillips that:

The prayer of petition is best understood, not as an attempt at influencing the way things go, but as an expression of, and a request for, devotion to God through the way things go.⁸

Ward's discomfort with intercessory prayer centres around his understanding of God's providence. He advocates 'abandonment' to that providence and criticizes those who pray, for instance, that the sick may be made well as 'conventional', 'wistful' and essentially primitive. In 'real suffering' the only option for the praying Christian is to accept the situation and turn the experience into a form of God's presence. Ward does not regard this as resignation because he interprets such acceptance as service and not endurance. God, states Ward, does nothing apart from offered human beings and cannot be enlisted as an independent helper. Prayer must not be conceived of as persuading God to act in the world—such a view is extremely difficult for thinking people to accept and 'ultimately insupportable'.

Ward recognizes that Christian prayer is addressed to God as Trinity—to the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit—but to use 'Thou' language of God does not imply that God is a person. Thou language, according to Ward, simply conveys God's 'accessibility' and his 'unpredictable aliveness'; it is not as though he can be equated with a human father:

The 'fatherhood of God' is indicated by his dealings with humanity in the light of the Christ-event, not by a human father's relationship with his children, though this in fact indicates the line along which we can fruitfully think about God, as long as we are prepared for modifications of a quite drastic nature when we apply this human situation to the being and action of God.⁹

In his consideration of prayer from a philosophical viewpoint, D. Z. Phillips also picks up the apparent ambiguity of referring to God as a person. 'There is so much of what can be said about God which makes this suggestion absurd, that one wonders why it is made at all', says Phillips. 'One need only mention the ideas of

God's omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence, to show how differently His reality is conceived of from that of a finite individual.¹⁰

The Case Against the Theological Defensibility of Intercessory Prayer

The divine qualities alluded to by Phillips have long created difficulties for understanding intercessory prayer as impetratory (i.e. aimed at causing God to act).¹¹ The theological objections raised against intercessory prayer have been summarized by V. Brummer:

i) God is immutable. Aquinas wrote that God's will is unchangeable and inflexible; it has been fixed from all eternity. For God to change his mind implies imperfection for only one state could have been perfect. Aquinas concluded from God's immutability, 'Therefore, it is fitting that we should not pray to God.'¹²

ii) God is omniscient. We need not pray to God who knows everything (see Austin's case above). Furthermore, if God knows the future all things are already determined and there is no need to pray (as Ambrose reasoned).

iii) God is perfectly good. Eleonor Stump has expressed the logical problem in this way: Whatever requested of God must be either better or worse than would otherwise be. If worse, God would not grant it; if better he would have brought it about anyway. Therefore, petitionary prayer to a perfectly good God cannot effect anything.¹³

iv) God is a transcendent agent who does not 'interfere' in his creation in the way that intercessory prayer obliges him to.

Each of these objections will be considered in turn to establish their adequacy. But before attempting this it is necessary to examine the Christian understanding that God is personal.

God as Person

Each of the four major criticisms of the efficacy of intercessory prayer outlined above betrays the influence of neo-platonic thought on the conception of the divine. Clearly, the Trinitarian God cannot be conceived of as a person in the same way as finite individuals, and it is right to be aware of the limitations of anthropomorphic language. Nevertheless, the Christian interprets and relates to the Trinitarian God as he has revealed himself through Scripture and supremely in the person and work of Jesus Christ. So what does it mean to pray to the Father, through the Son and in the Holy Spirit?

It was Jesus himself who taught his disciples to approach God as *Abba*, Father, in the Lord's prayer (Lk. 11:1-4), and it is the gift of the Spirit given to believers through the atonement (Rom. 5:1-8) which makes that relationship possible (Rom. 8:15-17, Gal. 4:4-7). By addressing God as Father, says P. Baelz, we acknowledge both the holiness and loving-kindness of God:

'Father' reminds us that the God whom we approach is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the origin and goal of all that exists, the hidden God whose felt absence is as real and compelling experience as his felt presence.¹⁴

But knowing God as Father gives us confidence in him and expresses our trust, love and hope (e.g. 1 Jn. 3:21, Heb. 10:35). That confidence has come through the life and work of Jesus, the Son (Eph. 3:12, Heb. 4:16); God is *our* Father, emphasizes Baelz, because he is the Father of Jesus Christ. God is not simply the Almighty Creator—he is like Jesus (Jn. 14:9; Heb. 1:3; Col. 1:19). Our access to God and our confidence before him comes by means of the Spirit (Eph. 2:18) which is God's gift of himself to us.

For Paul the spirit of God is one with the Spirit of Jesus Christ. The same Spirit who was present to Jesus from his birth to his death is now present through the risen Christ to his people the Church. Hence the believer's relationship to God is no formal or external one. It is a relationship of heart and mind.¹⁵

To speak of God as Spirit is to speak of One who is totally free, totally responsive and totally responsible, says Baelz. To conceive of God as Trinity is to bring relationship into the very being of God and to reject the premise that God can be regarded in an impersonal way. To believe and trust in God as revealed incarnation-ally is to reject the impersonal Absolute being, the 'solipsistic monad' as Lucas describes this deity¹⁶, of much philosophical and theological debate. Moreover, to pray to the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit embodies certain convictions about the nature and significance of intercessory prayer which we shall have to return to. But first, in the light of the personhood of the Triune God, the reasons for regarding intercessory prayer as indefensible will be evaluated.

God is Immutable

In his discussion of this issue, V. Brummer dismisses the classic appeal to neo-platonic immutability as misplaced but asks whether a less absolute form of immutability might be consistent with a fully personal God. Brummer considers the contention of P. T.

Geach that God's knowledge, power and will cannot really change. According to Geach's argument 'an entity has changed if a predicate which at one time can be truly ascribed to it, cannot at a subsequent time be truly ascribed.'¹⁷ For instance, can the sky be said to be blue if the next day it is overcast? He distinguishes between relational predicates and non-relational predicates and contends that God can change with respect to the former (relational) but not the latter (non relational). In 2 Kings 20, the prophet Isaiah tells King Hezekiah that God has told him that he will not recover from his illness (v. 1) but, in response to Hezekiah's prayer, God says through Isaiah that he has decided to heal him (v. 5). Geach interprets this as meaning that God's will was that the king should die if he did not pray and recover if he did; the change was therefore in Hezekiah and not in God.

Brummer criticizes this approach first by pointing out that because Hezekiah's prayer determined which of God's intentions was realized it must have had a real effect on God's intentions. But second, and more significantly, he cites the argument of J. R. Lucas viz:

'The argument from changelessness is totally misconceived. For change, like sameness or difference, is an incomplete concept: we always need to specify with respect to what something has changed, or is the same as or is different from some other thing. God is changeless in some respects—in his goodness and his love and his faithfulness: but he changes in other respects . . . Indeed, if God could not change in any respect he would not be a person at all.'¹⁸

God can be trusted to remain faithful to his character and in that personal sense he can be considered as immutable. This does not mean that God should be considered as having no choice, argues Brummer, for that itself would imply an impersonal nature.

God is Omniscient

There are two aspects to the challenge of God's omniscience. The first is that God knows the future, the second is that God knows what the believer wants.

God's omniscience carries the implication of determinism, i.e. that the future of the universe, and all events within it, is totally fixed. It also raises the key question of God's relationship to time. Boethius viewed God as standing outside time in a way that meant he experienced all moments in time as if they were present. This is essentially a form of passive foreknowledge; God sees things when they occur and not beforehand. Brummer rejects this position on the grounds that it means all time is simultaneous and our

experience of time is, therefore only an illusion. From this he concludes that if there is no real temporal succession there is no *real* change either.

Brummer asks to what extent it is coherent to speak of God 'knowing the future'. Citing B. L. Hebblethwaite, Brummer states that God's omniscience is self-limited by the nature of his creation. God knows everything it is logically possible to know and knows the future as *future*, with all its possibilities. Lucas argues in a similar way:

Fallible foreknowledge is enough to enable God not to live only from day to day, but to foresee the likely course of events and to take such actions, consistent with human freedom, as will work out for the best in the context of those decisions men are likely to take.¹⁹

God's omniscience is thus self-limited for the sake of human freedom; his creation is one given autonomy and a genuinely 'open future'.

With respect to human desires, Brummer argues that 'in asking God, the person who prays acknowledges that God is a personal agent, and accepts that he is at the mercy of God's free agency for whatever it is that he asks of God.' Brummer points out, 'the way in which I try to get someone to do what I want, depends on the sort of relation I wish to have with the other. In this way petition can only be meaningful within the context of a personal relation.'²⁰

God is Perfectly Good

In many ways this is the central theological problem for the Christian in relation to intercessory prayer because it is a focal point for questions of theodicy, providence and the sovereignty of God. As such there is a great deal of mystery that cannot be fully resolved here, but that does not mean there is complete darkness.

The argument of Stump above makes the assumption that there can be only one best plan. According to Lucas this is not itself logical in the light of the universe God has created. Human freedom is an essential aspect of God's creation and as such Lucas argues that there must be an infinity of possible plans. He likens God's providence to the Persian rugmakers who start at one end of a carpet while their children start at the other: the skill of the father is able to accommodate the children's work to create a rug of great beauty. According to this analogy, God's plans for the future take into account what the present has turned out to be. What is more, argues Lucas, the desires of God's children have a value in the degree to which one plan is better than another. This means that God's children may be seen not only as originators of actions but also of values. 'The mere fact that we want something is a

reason, though not a conclusive reason, for God giving it to us.²¹ Lucas' reasoning depends on a certain view of how God acts in the world, namely his providence, and it is to this subject we must turn.

Providence and the Agency of God

According to M. J. Langford, providence is strictly understood as God's prior knowledge of and his provision for the world. However, in practice it is regarded as God's foreknowledge and his government of nature, humankind and history.²² Before considering further how God might be acting, some discussion of the nature of God's creation is appropriate.

John Polkinghorne, the theoretical physicist and theologian, states that the practice of petitionary prayer 'implies belief in a God who acts in the particular as well as the general'.²³ But why should God need us to pray, asks Polkinghorne? It is not as if he is ignorant of the need, or that he may have forgotten or that he needs suggestions! Neither is it because his will needs to be coerced as if by magic. This kind of prayer is not reminding ourselves that we need his assistance or a kind of 'providential pattern recognition'. Rather, Polkinghorne states, it is the alignment of human and divine wills—the correlation of human desire and God's purpose. As such intercessory prayer is a collaborative personal encounter in which both parties contribute.

Such a cooperative venture in the achievement of divine purpose is possible because of the balance between structure and flexibility in the nature of the universe; there is regularity in physical processes but not rigidity. The idea that an action of God constitutes an 'intervention' stems largely from a mechanistic ('Laplacian') view of the created order which is no longer tenable. By contrast, the 'quantum universe' is fundamentally indeterminate and is founded on statistical probabilities rather than fixed entities; there is a law-like structure but it has uncertainty (contingency) at its very heart. Within this universe, argues Brummer, there is the clear possibility that acts done freely by humans may bring about contingent changes in what happens. It is a universe of real chance but not purposeless 'pure' chance, says Gorrings. The rise of Deism ('the clockmaker God') was assisted by a mechanistic understanding of physical processes; the quantum universe, on the other hand, gives support to Christian Theism.²⁴ Intercessory prayer can be considered as going 'with the grain' of God's creation.

Polkinghorne turns on its head the perjorative accusation that intercession is to an interfering God who acts like a laser beam. Laser light is formed by coherent alignment of light 'waves' which reinforces

the power of the light rather than interferes with it. 'Understood in this way', he comments, 'it is not inconceivable "that our asking in faith may make it possible for God to do something he could not have done without our asking"'.²⁵ As divine-human co-operation the merits of corporate prayer are quickly appreciated as more individuals are enlisted in the realization of God's purposes. Prayer makes sense only within a certain type of universe, maintains Polkinghorne, and only makes sense with a certain kind of God.

The essence of prayer is that it is not a mechanical operation, predictable in advance, but that it is a personal encounter with God, whose character and outcome are only revealed in the events themselves.²⁶

God's Providence and Theodicy

Belief in God's providence, writes T. J. Gorrings, is the very structure of the religious life:

belief that God acts, that he has a purpose not simply for the whole of creation but for me, that this purpose can be discerned and that, through prayer I can put myself in the way of it. It is also the conviction that I can bring every concern to God . . . in the conviction that this will make a difference.²⁷

Gorrings and Vernon White insist that understanding of God's providence must be based on the premise that God cares even for the fall of a sparrow (Matt. 6:25–26). As such all providence must be 'special providence', concerned for the ultimate good of the individual. This implies, says Gorrings, that 'the problem of evil' (theodicy) is really the problem of providence.

To take the Bible in one hand is to believe in the glory God intends for human beings; to take the newspaper in the other to see this is contradicted.²⁸

But the omnipotence of God, his power, is displayed in weakness, as the cross demonstrates supremely. Gorrings believes that the Scriptural understanding of God's knowledge, power and providence have been misconstrued through the use of 'proof texts'. God's knowledge is not to be interpreted along the lines of omniscience but wisdom. For example, the expression 'it is necessary' in the gospels is not indicative of predestination but the logic of love and grace. 'Providence is God's wisdom in action, and what that means is seen in Christ.'²⁹ The sovereignty of God is redefined in the course of Scripture such that the Lord is seen as the one who takes the form of a servant. Gorrings has attempted to interpret providence in terms of Christ and the cross (e.g. 1 Cor. 1:11–25) in a way which

does justice to God's sovereignty, human freedom and divine grace. The resurrection is the promise that God's power shown in the logic of love will not be defeated.

White believes that attempts to expound God's providence must not compromise God's sovereignty, his initiative or his specificity of action. Taking a more traditional view of the sovereignty of God as revealed through Scripture, White differs from Gorringer in maintaining that God must be aware of the future to ensure that good is worked for all individuals in all circumstances; that he cannot be defeated in his eventual purpose. While Gorringer reinterprets sovereignty, White argues that it is human freedom which is more ambiguously portrayed in the Bible (though it should be stressed that he tries to avoid the charge of determinism). As with Gorringer, the person and work of Jesus Christ is central to God's purpose for the whole created order—God foreordained his own experience in Christ to be the 'ground and possibility' of bringing the whole created order to fulfilment (Col. 1:15ff.). White states that (his own exposition of God's universal and special activity):

in fact takes nothing whatsoever away from the proper significance of faith, for in so far as faith perceives something of God's purposes, and responds obediently, then there is plenty of room within this scheme for the worldly contingencies to be significantly affected, and so for God to be working a different *kind* of good. It should already be clear that in and through a contingency such as faith and response (including, no doubt, our prayers) God's ends are wrought in a different way than through the contingencies of unbelief.³⁰

How faith and the specific purposes of God come together in intercessory prayer is the final topic to consider.

Intercession to the Father, Through the Son, in the Holy Spirit

How we approach intercession is fundamentally conditioned by our doctrine—what sort of a God do we believe in? For Austin, the only prayer is one of silent contemplation before God, trusting in his good purposes. But, as Baelz has pointed out in strong terms, 'A submissive and seemingly pious resignation contains the seeds of a callous and impious blasphemy.'³¹ Are we to acknowledge that all things which happen are the will of God? The divine power of love is not only gentle and full of compassion but is also severe and righteous. To pray as Jesus taught—'Thy will be done'—is not fatalism nor passive acceptance

but an active engagement with God's purposes for the world.

But how does God enable us to be drawn into his purposes? Is it up to us to look and discern what God might be wanting to accomplish and then pray accordingly? This seems to be the essence of what Ward advocates. Tom Smail argues that to view intercession in this way is to turn it into a burdensome task and to miss the truth that prayer is God's gift to us before it is a task or discipline. 'We give ourselves for the sake of others in intercession. In answering God responds to our response to him by giving himself afresh to us.'³² This seems very similar to the contention of Ward that God has nothing to give us but himself. However, Ward's comprehension is rather different as can be seen from his approach to prayer for the sick (see above). Using the same example of someone suffering from illness, Smail says it is right in our prayer to ask God for what we naturally want for our friend. However, we should pray tentatively and conditionally, asking God's Spirit to 'initiate us into God's immediate and particular will' for the person and the situation: the Spirit will show us how to pray.

Prayer following this pattern recognizes that God himself comes to our side of the relationship in prayer. 'We do not know what we ought to pray for', says St Paul, 'but the Spirit himself intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will' (Rom. 8:26). Lucas argues that our desires and values may influence how God achieves his particular purposes, but Smail emphasizes how our desires must be open to be reshaped in intercession. Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane captures the two strands: 'My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken away from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will' (Matt. 26:39). Intercession does not involve suppression of our desire but transformation, says Baelz. The Spirit draws us into the intercession on behalf of all creation that Christ, our ascended King, makes to the Father as our High Priest (Rom. 8:24; Heb. 7:25):

(Christ) knows from the inside both the gracious divine purpose and the disgraced human situation and by his intercession can expose the one to the other.³³ Through his self-giving to the Father's purposes the world is both created and redeemed.³⁴

When we pray 'in the name of Jesus', we call upon his redeeming and transforming work and remember the example of his own self-offering to the Father.

Concluding Comments

Gorringer reminds us of Karl Barth's assertion that the keynote of Jesus' teaching is 'Ask!' (e.g. Matt. 7:7–11; Lk. 18:1–6; Jn. 15:7) and St Luke explicitly connects

Jesus' teaching on prayer with the gift of the Holy Spirit (Lk. 11:13; see also Jn. 14:13–17). The answer to the question 'Is intercessory prayer theologically defensible?' hinges on what sort of God we have faith in. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ draws us to participate in his purposes rather as a musician gathers people to listen. He also provides direction; Goringe compares God to a theatre director who works without script or plan but the most profound understanding of theatre and the play. 'The theme of the play is love, and the realisation of love.'³⁵ God does not simply 'let the play be' but engages in mutual exploration with the players through the 'dialogue' of prayer.

God does indeed hear the prayers of his people. His Spirit moves us to pray in the first place. He is more ready to hear than we to pray and he wishes to give more than we desire or deserve. But his activity is hidden except to the discernment of faith—working through and within natural causes and in the hearts and minds of those he loves.

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Footnotes

1. Goringe, *God's Theatre*, op. cit., pp. 88–9.
2. Austin, *Can intercessory prayer work?*, art. cit., p. 335.
3. Ibid., p. 336.
4. Ibid., p. 337.
5. Ward, *The Use of Prayer*, op. cit., p. 19.
6. Ibid., p. 52. Ward quotes J. Burnaby.
7. Ibid., p. 51.
8. Phillips, *The Concept of Prayer*, op. cit., p. 120–1.
9. Ward, op. cit., p. 27.
10. Phillips, op. cit., p. 43.
11. In AD 233, Ambrose posed the following question to Origen: 'First: if God knows the future beforehand, and it must come to pass, prayer is vain. Secondly: if all things happen according to the will of God, and if what is willed by him is fixed, and nothing of what he wills can be changed, prayer is vain.' Cited in Lucas, *Freedom and Grace*, op. cit., p. 35.
12. Cited in Brummer, *What are we doing when we pray?*, op. cit., p. 34.
13. Cited by Brummer, op. cit., p. 49.
14. Baelz, *Does God answer prayer?*, op. cit., p. 11.
15. Ibid., p. 13.
16. Lucas, op. cit., p. 39.
17. Geach cited in Brummer, op. cit., p. 36.
18. Lucas cited by Brummer, *ibid.*, p. 40.
19. Lucas, op. cit., p. 37.
20. Brummer, op. cit., p. 47.
21. Lucas, op. cit., p. 40.
22. Article on Providence in *New Dictionary of Christian Theology*, eds. Richardson & Bowden, op. cit., p. 478–9.
23. J. Polkinghorne, *Science and Providence*, op. cit., p. 69.
24. A note of caution ought to be sounded here. The so-called 'God-of-the-gaps' could be accommodated only in the 'space' provided by a failure to give adequate scientific explanation. The fundamental indeterminacy of the Universe discovered through quantum mechanics should not be seen as providing a new gap for God to reside in. Rather it reveals that the Universe is contingent in nature, a property consistent with purpose and autonomy. See White, *The Fall of a Sparrow*, op. cit., p. 104.
25. Ibid., p. 71. Polkinghorne partially quotes P. Baelz.
26. Polkinghorne, op. cit., p. 73.
27. Goringe, op. cit., p. 1.
28. Ibid., p. 4.
29. Ibid., p. 55.
30. White, op. cit., p. 179.

31. Baelz, op. cit., p. 25.
32. Smail, *The Giving Gift*, op. cit., p. 199.
33. Ibid., p. 207.
34. Ibid., p. 209.
35. Gorringer, op. cit., p. 78.

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