universität wien

Diplomarbeit

Titel der Diplomarbeit

“David Lodge as a Catholic Novelist”

Verfasserin

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angestrebter akademischer Grad

Magistra der Philosophie (Mag.phil)

Wien, im Oktober 2008

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt:	A 344 020
Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt:	LA Anglistik und Amerikanistik
Betreuer:	Univ.-Prof. Dr. Rudolf Weiss

Thanks Be To God[1]…

…and Professor Weiss…

…and My Family…

…for their patience, forbearance and support.

for Sarah and Sophie

[1] 1 Kor 15:57.

List of abbreviations

AAS ……. Acta Apostolicae Sedis

Vat II / Vatican II ……. Second Vatican Council

HV …… Humanae Vitae

GS …… Gaudium et Spes

SC …… Sacrosanctum Concilium

CIC …….. Codex Iuris Canonici, i.e. Code of Canon Law

CCC ……. Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church

DH …… Dignitatis Humanae

Introduction

It is the objective of this paper to identify Catholic allusions in the works of David Lodge and to investigate into the features of Catholicism they present.

In a first step the paper discusses the categorisation of Lodge as a Catholic novelist.

Then a historical frame of reference is established, together with an overview of the most important changes in the Catholic Church from the mid twentieth century to the years after the Second Vatican Council. This part of the paper also comments on the way these changes are reflected in the novels of Mr Lodge.

As the works of Mr Lodge are readily identified as satirical novels, we next take a look at the relationship between satire and realism. The theory of dialogism, first established by Michail Bakhtin, is the starting point for this part of the paper. It shows how important the awareness of intertextual allusions is to the right understanding of a work of literature.

The last part takes a look at the ways in which various theological fields are represented in the works of David Lodge. By following direct quotations and allusions it aims at explaining the various situations Catholics find themselves in and the ways in which they learn to live with the "Catholic difference."

This thesis is concerned with the following works of literature: *The Picturegoers* (1960), *Ginger, You're Barmy* (1962), *The British Museum is Falling Down* (1965), *Out of the Shelter* (1970), *How Far Can You Go?* (1980), and *Paradise News* (1991); with an occasional glance at *Therapy* (1995) and *Thinks...*(2001) where it seemed appropriate.

1 Catholic novelist?

> "Oh, Michael! Just like a Graham Greene character." (How *Far*, 41)
>
> The artist has his hands full and does his duty if he attends to his art. He can safely leave evangelizing to the evangelists. (O'Connor, 170)
>
> Test everything. Hold on to the good. (1 Thess 5:21)

At the outset of this paper let me point out that the term "Catholic novelist" is not to be confused with the concept of the "religious novelist". In the following I am solely concerned with the Catholicity of novels and do not ask whether a novelist can be considered religious, a question others have attempted to answer and have failed[2]. It is difficult enough to come up with a satisfying definition of the "Catholic novel", as a brief glance at the respective literary theory shows.

Bernd Engler poses the question which criteria qualify literature as Catholic, whether the affiliation of the author with the Church is sufficient or whether the Catholicism springs entirely from the text itself:

> Setzt ein katholischer Roman etwa die Vermittlung fiktionaler Wirklichkeiten durch eine als katholisch charakterisierte Erzählerfigur oder die Portraitierung katholischer Figuren voraus oder genügt als differenzierendes Merkmals bereits die Behandlung spezifischer Handlungsmuster und Themen, anhand derer eng mit dem Selbstverständnis der katholischen Kirche verknüpfte Problemstellungen aufgegriffen werden können? (Engler, 9)

During the last centuries various, often unsatisfying answers have been given to this question. Daniel J. Tynan says that through baptism the perception of reality is permeated with the Catholic belief. He calls this fundamental if involuntary affection 'cultural Catholicism' and argues that a person baptised in the Catholic faith cannot write anything other than Catholic literature. Albert Sonnenfeld also names the membership in the Catholic Church as the first and most important criterion, in addition to the fact that the author is 'using Catholicism as his informing mythopoeic (sic!) structure or generative symbolic system' (Sonnenfeld, quoted in Engler, 10). The question remains whether a reduction of the Catholic element to the mythopoetic structure does not make the usage of the term 'Catholic' redundant, as the novel is reduced to a novel using Catholic allusions. Even novelists who describe themselves as Catholic novelists are aware of the difficulties of definition. Some authors argue that the salvation of the sinner through the redeeming act of Christ is the basic topic of Catholic novels; others find that it is the struggle of the

[2] cf. Prehsfreund-Kriegshammer 78 ff.

individual with his belief. Sometimes even the general quest for a transcendent telos is seen as the constitutive element of Catholic Literature. Eventually, Engler asks whether it makes any sense at all to discuss a phenomenon that constantly eludes definition.[3]

Despite its elusiveness the term is readily used in literary criticism and fiction[4] and even if it is difficult or even impossible to arrive at an axiomatic definition of the term, its use in the critical discussion is appropriate 'insofern er in seiner historischen Entwicklung sehr wohl eine von Autoren bewusst gewählte und mit spezifischen Aussageintentionen ausgestattete Erzählkategorie darstellt' (Engler, 13).

Strictly speaking, the English Catholic novel came into existence with Cardinal John Henry Newman's novel *Loss and Gain*, published in 1848[5]. The minority statutes and low social acceptance of Catholics in English society were encouragement enough for the rather extensive literary output of Hillaire Belloc (1870-1953) and G.K.Chesterton (1874-1936). With the increasing secularisation and the resulting spiritual crises, writers like Waugh (1903-1966) and Greene (1904-1991) were induced to take up Catholic themes[6].

The problem of acceptance that the Catholic novel encountered at its outset derived from the general view of the critics that 'the novelist whose Catholic beliefs were explicit in his work was working against the grain of the novel form' (Bergonzi, "Decline", 172). It was not *de rigueur* to write about miraculous or supernatural happenings, religion did not have a right of its own but was only used to enlighten the reader on the social behaviour or ethical convictions of characters. The novel of the 1940ies and 1950ies was '*bürgerlich*, this-worldly, realistic, empirical, [and] phenomenological' (Bergonzi, "Decline",173). The novels of Greene and Waugh did not fit this description because their major characters were preoccupied with thoughts of heaven and hell in a very Catholic way. They were presented as 'immortal souls with an eternal destiny', as Bergonzi puts it (Bergonzi, "Decline" 173). The interesting side to the unbelieving readers, who 'may have rejected the world view', was the 'particular intensity and high drama' (Bergonzi, "Decline", 173) Catholic novels offered and the "ordinary" novels were lacking. 'What is undoubtedly true is that, in coming to be recognized as among the country's leading novelists, Waugh and Greene altered the whole status of Catholic literature in England' (Woodman, 30). From

[3] cf. Engler, 13.
[4] cf. *British Museum* with its metafictional reflexion of the tradition of the Catholic novel of the early 20th century.
[5] *Loss and Gain* can be described as a sort of *Bildungsroman*. Its main character's intellectual development towards Roman Catholicism parallels that of Newman himself, described in his autobiography *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (1865). His intellectual progression takes place in the course of everyday living and conversation, expressing Newman's belief that all aspects of experience are interconnected. The majority of the novel consists of conversations on religious subjects.
[6] cf. Engler, 15.

this time on, the "Catholic novel" became a recognizable entity with the informed public, starting with Graham Greene's *Brighton Rock*, published in 1938, followed by *The Power and the Glory* in 1940. By the time Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* (1945) and Greene's *The Heart of the Matter* (1948) were published, the Catholic novel was fully accepted as a literary sub-genre and *The End of the Affair* (1951) in a way marks a climax.

Yet Catholicism remained to a remarkable degree exotic and almost alien in atmosphere in Greene's and Waugh's works, their novels did not 'dramatise Catholic theology *tout court*', there was 'a particular and extreme theological emphasis' (Bergonzi, "Decline", 175) that showed little relationship with or interest in portraying the daily routine of ordinary British Catholicism, 'Rosemary and Benediction on a Sunday evening at the parish church of an industrial suburb, followed by a meeting of the Legion of Mary and a whist drive organized by the Union of Catholic Mothers' (Lodge, *Write On*, 33).

After Greene and Waugh there was a rapid decline of interest in the Catholic theme from the novelists' side and of interest on the readers' part. This is partly due to the different status English Catholics achieved in society. Just as the exclusion from society had led to a growing self-confidence of Catholics, the pluralism arising after the Second World War and the gradual opening of the Church towards the world led to assimilation and a weakening of the specifically Catholic self-perception[7].

> So much assimilation had taken place that there was a crisis of identity. Catholics, no longer so critical of secularism, became by an unfortunate corollary often also no longer critical of the inroads of secularism into Catholicism's own essence. It became difficult for many Catholics to discern what Catholics advocated that was not also advocated by most men of good will. […] The primary and defiant Catholic emphasis upon the spirit, which for so many generations had generated the creative spark between the Catholic communities and the secular environment, had virtually ceased (Kellogg, quoted in Engler, 19).

On the other hand, the seeming decline of the Catholic novel is also due to a problem of definition. The "Catholic novel" as it was known from Greene and Waugh in England, but also from Mauriac, Bernanos and Bloy, was largely preoccupied with showing the workings of divine grace and it worked with a particular and extreme theological emphasis. It was more a matter of presenting a specific approach to faith or spirituality and making this the overall theme of the story. There was an emphasis on 'the separation between Nature and Grace, the exclusiveness of Catholicism, and the insufficiency of ordinary human virtue' (Bergonzi, "Decline and Fall", 176) and no discussion or dramatisation of

[7] cf. Engler, 15f.

Catholic theology in all its aspects. If this specific form of literary output alone is to be seen as "Catholic novel", *The End of the Affair* must mark the end of a literary sub-genre.

We must not forget, however, that "Catholic" does not only imply a specific stamp of spirituality. 'There is more than one way of being Catholic, […] and no narrow conception of 'Catholic fiction' can therefore be valid' (Woodman, 163). A more adequate definition of "Catholic" must therefore take into consideration all the different internal approaches to a Church, its hierarchy, its doctrine and its human body, along with all its various theological disciplines and pastoral concepts. It seems opportunistic to call a novel "Catholic" the moment it is concerned with the spiritual side of theology and not to allow the application of the same epithet for novels that are concerned with such worldly themes as Lodge's are, especially as he does describe the lives of Catholics, oscillating between problems of every-day life and questions of doctrine of the Catholic Church and its developments in liturgy, dogmatic, moral and pastoral theology. Lodge's characters do not so much suffer spiritually but all the more physically in that the kind of indoctrination they are confronted with inhibits their everyday lives and interpersonal relationships (only think of the Applebys in *British Museum* and their procreation-dilemma).

At the outset of his career, Lodge was highly influenced by Greene and Waugh (and all the other Catholic novelists he dealt with while writing his thesis on the Catholic novel). Their novels were remote not only from the mainstream of British values but also from the life of the main body of the Catholic community. He says that 'by presenting authentic religious belief as something equally opposed to the materialism of the secular world and to the superficial pieties of parochial Catholicism' (*Write On*, 31) Greene and others had helped him to deal with his own situation as a Catholic schoolboy. 'The idea of the sinner as a representative Christian was appealing to the adolescent mind, suggesting […] that being a Catholic need not entail a life of dull, petty-bourgeois respectability' (*Write On*, 31). The extreme situations and exotic settings on which these writers thrived were, however, very remote from his own experience as a Catholic, and so he settled in a better known field, the field of everyday Catholic routine. 'When I came to try and write fiction for myself I domesticated their themes to the humdrum suburban-parochial milieu I knew best' (*Write On* 31). In *The Novelist at the Crossroads* Lodge says that '[n]o writer subscribing to the Catholic faith could prevent it from invading his most deeply felt creative work' (Lodge, *Crossroads*, 89). Instead of entering upon soul-searching sagas, Lodge deals with the everyday problems of practicing Catholics in our modern agnostic

world.[8] In his novels we neither encounter high drama nor radical attacks or polemic, there is rather a *'*sense of lucky cautiousness, together with a refusal to make judgements about other people*'* as Haffenden remarks. Lodge's comments on this observation in the following way:

> I certainly don't think of myself as a dogmatic writer, someone who has a message; I would regard myself as a liberal, and in some ways a rather secular kind of liberal in spite of the fact that I'm a Catholic – I'm not the kind who wishes to persuade other people to accept his Catholic beliefs. Catholicism happens to be the ideological milieu I grew up in, that I know and write out of. (Interview with Haffenden, 152)

No matter how far Lodge's themes are distanced from the themes of his predecessors in Catholic fiction, it will not be difficult for his readers to acknowledge that his novels are a continuation of the tradition of Catholic literature that is to be taken seriously, especially if the reader is ready to accept new forms of narrative communication. The Catholic author of the second half of the twentieth century faces fundamentally different problems from those the writer in war- and post-war years had to deal with who saw it as his task to give moral and religious orientation[9].

> Lodge neither abandons the Catholic novel nor nostalgically attempts to perpetuate a dead form. Rather, he seeks to revitalize, or resurrect, the Catholic novel by renegotiating the terms upon which it, and the faith on which it depends, can be made viable in a postmodern, postChristian age. (Morace, 188)

It would not have been authentic to write novels in a moralistic way, or making them up as hidden tractates of magisterial teaching and dogma. On the contrary, through the changes that occurred in the liturgy, moral theology and dogmatic teaching of the Church it became necessary to sharpen the view on the pragmatic features of the belief, and to describe how people dealt with the occurrences in their community. As many of the changes came without warning and a great part of the clergy were not up to explaining and justifying them (mostly for lack of information and self-confidence), it is small wonder that these uncertain and sometimes even chaotic circumstances are readily depicted in a satirrcal form.

A most interesting interpretation of the reasons why Lodge's novels turn out to be what they are comes from Terry Eagleton, a downright Marxist who opines that the Roman Catholic Church contains only two major currents, namely 'a lineage of rigorous doctrinal thought, and a tradition of ethical and social concern' (Eagleton, *Silences*, 95). According to Eagleton, the one branch leans towards Thomistic intellectualism, the other produces

[8] cf. Pfandl-Buchegger,22.
[9] cf. Engler, 20f.

pastoral and evangelical efforts. His worst case scenario is a combination of both currents that leads to 'callous pedantry in such matters as abortion and contraception' (Eagleton, *Silences*, 96), at the best he thinks it will produce leftists, 'for the typical Roman Catholic […] inherits along with …[the] respect for strenuous thought an essentially collective theology, wary of individualism and the inner light' (Eagleton, *Silences*, 96).

> Lodge's religious faith appears in his writing in peculiarly privatized, notional form. He is, in effect, a thoroughly secularized author, whose Catholicism makes little difference to his conventional liberal vision other than providing him with convenient materials for social commentary and comic satire. […] His writing is almost wholly unmarked by spiritual passion […] which would only disturb the comic equipoise of his fiction. (Eagleton, *Silences*, 96)

And so Eagleton concludes that Lodge is not a *Catholic* writer in the tradition of Greene, 'whose novels continually pose secular and religious experience in complex tension' (Eagleton, *Silences*, 95) or Waugh, 'whose secular world is so remorselessly two-dimensional that God can be sensed as an implied alternative to it' (Eagleton, "Silences", 95). For Eagleton Lodge 'is most typically Roman Catholic […] not in the substance of his fiction, but in the running conflict between doctrine and experience' (Eagleton, "Silences", 96).

Lodge demystifies Catholicism and the Anglo-Catholic liberal novel, 'casting out the monological demon' (Morace, 188) and seeks to discover what is essential. 'This "essence" is not a particular belief but an open-ended *need* to believe' (Morace, 188, my emphasis), a need which is implicitly commented on at the end of *How Far* when the unidentified voice says 'We must not only believe, but know that we believe, live our belief and yet see it from outside, aware that in another time, another place, we would have believed something different' (*How Far*, 239).

The awareness that people would have believed something different under different circumstances comes from the experience of the changes within the Church, radical changes in part, that led to uncertainties and to shifts that made a renegotiation of specific Catholic features necessary. Both Bernard Bergonzi and David Lodge have argued that these new emphases and the decline in the sociological 'apartness' of the British Catholic are, for better or worse, destroying the distinctive perspective that produced the 'Catholic novel'.[10] Before Vat II, a firm sense of traditional Catholic identity had provided

> a cultural base from which certain Catholic writers have made a distinctive contribution to British fiction and a distinctive critique of the British status quo. […] Their rhetoric has exaggerated the general Catholic alienation from British society,

[10] cf. Bernard Bergonzi, "Decline and Fall" 176 and David Lodge, *Write On*, 37.

> but their strategy clearly could not have succeeded if they had not in this reflected what has been at least an *element* in British Catholic experience. (Woodman, 43)

The change in the sense of Catholic identity since the Second Vatican Council has made that contribution more problematic, as Lodge says himself:

> I don't think that one can talk of the Catholic novel in quite such sharply-defined terms any more, partly because Catholicism itself has become a much more confused – and confusing – faith, more difficult to define, mainly in the last ten or fifteen years as a result of Pope John and the Vatican Council. The Church no longer presents that sort of monolithic, unified, uniform view of life which it once did. (Bergonzi, *Myth of Modernism*, 177)

Lodge's novels make a distinct step away from the traditional Catholic novel the reader have known from Greene and Waugh. In the course of his work he shows the transition of English Catholicism from a monolithic body of beliefs that were based on doctrine to a religion that has to find its place in a pluralistic society. The main theme is no longer the exemplary individual's struggle for fulfilment of God's plan of salvation but the overcoming of everyday religious problems. In view of the increasing secularisation his "everyman" figures suffer an increasing feeling of insecurity with regard to the binding nature of moral values[11]. The insecurity and struggle for orientation are either directly presented (as in the more 'classical' realistic novels *Picturegoers* and *Shelter*) or transported by an increasing fragmentation of narrative style (as in *Ginger*, *British Museum*, *Paradise*, and the last chapter of *How Far*) and the introduction of a narrator who is oscillating between intrusion and detachment (*How Far*).

Contrary to the traditional Catholic novel Lodge's characters' actions lack religious motivation, and still they are easily classified as Catholics, and not just formally. Starting with his first published novel, *The Picturegoers*, it becomes clear that the sociological part of Catholicism dominates over the big themes of Salvation and Damnation[12]: '*The Picturegoers* (1960) provides a rare fictional portrait of Catholic parish life, satiric in places indeed but basically affirmative'(Woodman 35). It is a Catholic novel,

> but written without the nose-to-grindstone glumness, all sin and significance, that the phrase often implies. […] Mr David Lodge […] shows originality in his perception that a young lapsed Catholic, digging with a conventionally religious family […], may be drawn back to the faith because of its associations, not with any heavily orchestrated splendours and miseries, but with ordinary, decent, cheerful domesticity. (Amis' review of *Picturegoers*, quoted in Bergonzi, "Decline and Fall", 179)

[11] cf. Engler, 23f.
[12] cf. Kühn, 57.

The frame of reference is sociological rather than theological, with much close observation of the minutiae of lower-middle-class Catholic life. 'This milieu has rarely been caught in English fiction, for the convert Catholic writers[13] had little knowledge of it' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 31). Lodge's advantage here is that he is a cradle-Catholic, but not a 'typical' one – he was an only child and his father was not Catholic, thus he has a different view of things. This is made felt in his novels, which 'combine detailed knowledge of the institution with cool observation' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 30).

British Museum, which is mainly concerned with the problem of birth control, moves a little away from the affirmative, and the associations of Catholicism are not always positive. According to Bergonzi, *British Museum* 'broke entirely new ground for a Catholic novel' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 32). In a very comic way honeycombed with parody and pastiche it shows the struggles of a young man to reconcile his studies with family life and family life with his sexual life and his sexual life with the teachings of Mother Church. Beneath the comic surface the earnestness of his problems is always present, but the novel never actually questions the position of the Church. In the end the main character manages to arrange his life satisfactorily, not without the help of providence, and any deeper discussion of the birth-control issue is postponed[14] by his wife's starting her period.

How Far Can You Go? is an, 'amusing and compassionate account' (Woodman, 41) of the changes in Catholicism through the nineteen-fifties to the nineteen-seventies, 'the first novel […] in which he has actually made being a Catholic a serious, world-historical kind of situation' (Moseley, 77). Here Lodge explicitly deals with the changes the Catholic world is confronted with in the wake of Vatican II. The young cast of the novel have to learn to cope with the 'dissolution of the once so determinedly separate Catholic sub-culture' (Parsons, 172) and they are challenged to scrutinise their metaphysical world-view and develop a more autonomous conscience. Most of them do not succeed, and Lodge refrains from presenting any deeply religious quest (apart from Ruth, who is the novel's quota-Pentacostalist). He presents ordinary people in an ordinary context with ordinary problems.

By the introduction of a very large cast Lodge manages to show many faces of Catholicism. Prehsfreund-Kriegshammer contends that the subject of *How Far*, the situation of Catholics who through changes in the Church have to come to terms with the new emphasis on their own conscience and the responsibility they have for their own religious life, is presented 'not so much in terms of the characters' inner developments and

[13] Newman, Chesterton, Belloc, Greene, Waugh were all converts.
[14] an interesting parallel to Vatican II which also refused to come up with a binding statement.

struggles' and that in this superficial treatment the basis of Catholicism 'personal religious commitment' is neglected (Prehsfreund-Kriegshammer, 81). Bergonzi's judgement of the characters points in a similar direction: 'Lodge's people are decent and likeable and one intimately understands and sympathizes with their struggles. But they are […], when all is said, *a rather mediocre lot*' (Bergonzi, "Decline", 186, my emphasis).

It is true that in *How Far* the big questions of life it starts out with (see the epigraph – 'What can we know? Why is there anything at all? Why…') are never very deeply touched upon. Maybe that is the price Lodge has to pay for bringing so many different concepts together at the same time and in a rather limited space. Maybe it is even a deliberate feature which enhances the feeling of uncertainty that comes about with the 'gradual collapse of the whole elaborate, slowly built-up metaphysical system which Catholics were brought up in and converts expected to conform to' (Woodman, 41).

The question of "How far can you go?" permeates the whole novel on more than one level. It first comes up in a reminiscence of Michael's schooldays, where it is presented as the 'favourite device of the bolder spirits in the sixth form to enliven Religious Instruction', namely by asking the old priest who was in charge of the RI lessons 'Please, Father, how far can you go with a girl, father?' (*How Far*, 4) The theme of 'how far can you go' in sexual matters has many variations, beginning from pre-marital sex through sexual relationships in marriages up to the question of how far you can go in planning your procreative output and how far you can go in the field of marital infidelity. At the end of the novel the question is put in the context of changes in the Church, it asks how far Catholics or the Church can change without losing their Catholic identity. In the end the reader realises that it is not the novel's objective to answer these questions – it lies in the individual's conscience to decide for himself, both as far as the characters of the novel and as far as its readers are concerned. The device of the authorial narrator enables Lodge to openly discuss the transformations in Catholicism[15] and show them in the attitudes and behaviour of the characters.

Ginger only marginally touches upon Catholic themes. At one point salvation and damnation are briefly touched upon, when a young Catholic recruit accidentally shoots himself and his co-religionist colleague urges him to say an Act of Contrition, but this is only by the by. On the whole one can say that Catholicism is used here as a way of presenting the social apartness of the two main characters, the protagonist being an agnostic and his 'friend' an Irish Catholic.

[15] cf. Bergonzi, *Writers*, 37.

Shelter represents a 'rigid, rather superstitious form of Catholicism' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 10) on the one hand, on the other it tells a young boy's story of breaking out of various shelters – the shelter he had to spend the time in during the WWII air-raids, the shelter of his family, the shelter of his home country where he knew his way about perfectly well, the shelter of a fixed religious system that had an answer to every spiritual or moral question, and the shelter of sexual innocence. All these topics are touched upon very gently and with an ironic undertone (partly due to the fact that the story is to a large extent auto-biographic) and in the end the hero is depicted as a content man who has found a way of incorporating his belief in his everyday life without any greater inconvenience.

Lodge's 1991 novel *Paradise News* deals with the situation of a man who lost his faith but has to come to terms with his past, his Irish Catholic upbringing, the years at the seminary, his priesthood, which he never aspired to from his own will but which was more or less a by-product of his status in the family, sexual repression and frustration, and a dirty secret in the past of his father and his respective siblings. The novel is based on the pilgrim-motif and also touches upon changes in the Catholic Church, focussing on the time after Vatican II. Some critics tend not to count it among Lodge's Catholic novels. Martin says that as the novel focuses on Bernard who is a post-Catholic, the novel also 'merits that label' (Martin, 149). Bernard has lost his faith long before he was forced to leave the priesthood, partly also due to a piety in his family that was 'permeated by self-deception and bad faith' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 40). Still, given its preoccupation with the Catholic religion, a case might be made for including *Paradise News* among Lodge's Catholic novels.

Even Lodge's later novels, *Therapy* and *Thinks…* do not come without one or the other Catholic innuendo. In *Therapy*, the Catholic theme is touched on in the narrative "Maureen. A memoir" (*Therapy*, 222-258). Here Lodge recurs to the topic of the Catholic ghetto, but this time seen through the eyes of an outsider, as Laurence "Tubby" Passmore, who is the author of the piece, is a non-Catholic. Tubby tells the story of his first love, an infatuation with a Catholic girl of Irish descent whose parents are very strict in her religious education. The main reason for the pair's breaking up is that Maureen strictly adheres to the Church's restrictive teaching on sexual morality, something Laurence can neither understand nor accept at the time. As the whole "Maureen. A memoir"-section is more or less a conglomeration of elements taken from *Picturegoers* and the Denis/Angela courting year in *How Far*, this paper will not elaborate on it. May it suffice to say that in the end Tubby goes in search of Maureen in order to 'get absolution' (*Therapy*, 297). He

finds her on her pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela and accompanies her through the last part of the way, and the experience in a way proves healing, more than any of the many therapies he had undergone up till then have.

2 History

As the history of Catholicism in England affects the situation of the Catholic characters of Lodge's novels, we will first take a look at the fate of the English Catholics through the last centuries. Furthermore, we will investigate the developments in the two most relevant theological fields (relevant to the novels of Lodge, that is), namely moral theology and liturgy. This will provide us with the basic information we will need to understand points that will be made in the analysis of the catholic features of the novels.

2.1 History of Catholicism in England[16]

> Dearly beloved, I beseech you as aliens and strangers in this world, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.
> (1 Peter 2:11)
>
> '…I wish I liked Catholics more.'
> 'They seem just like other people.'
> 'My dear Charles, that's exactly what they're not – particularly in this country, where they are so few. It's not just that they're a clique – as a matter of fact they're at least four cliques, all blackguarding each other half the time – but they've got an entirely different outlook on life: everything they think important is different from other people.' *(*Waugh*, Brideshead Revisited)*

The minority status and 'alien' quality of Catholics in England can itself be presented as a special, concentrated instance of the essential Christian 'difference'. To get at least an idea of what makes Catholics so different from the rest of the English population as to justify an author to write a novel about their everyday troubles, it will prove useful to take a look at the history of Catholicism in England from the time of King Henry VIII.[17]

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[16] It may seem restrictive to regard only the history of England relevant for this paper, but indeed, Wales and Scotland are not represented by any character in Lodge's novels, and as far as Ireland is concerned, the Irishmen in Lodge's novels are all immigrants of the second generation at least. I considered it best to integrate the fate of the Irish Catholic immigrants in the body of the English Catholic minority, be they cradle Catholics or converts, for the time being. Differentiation will be made when it appears reasonable and necessary.

[17] For historical data this paper relies on Hastings, Hornsby-Smith, Hughes, Mathew, Norman, Rafferty, and Ward.

Relations to Rome had been bad enough since Pope Clement VII had declared the second marriage of Henry VIII (to Anne Boleyn) void and had laid the sentence of excommunication over the King in July 1533. Most Bishops and prelates submitted to the Act of Supremacy of 1534, overawed as they were by the sovereign power of the King who had raised and made them. It was a matter of course that the mass of temporal peers and lay officials should follow suit. Against the drift stood the Bishop of Rochester St. John Fisher and Sir Thomas More, a lawyer with deep respect for the Canon Law. They were to become the great examples for the families of the ancient faith who persevered in their adherence to the Catholic Church, especially in the Northern counties.[18]

The strict regulations concerning Church adherence, the suppression of the lesser monasteries and the fact that land and buildings, formerly the property of the Catholic Church, were freely distributed among the gentry together with the government's determination to supersede the Latin Mass by the English Prayer Book soon led to insurgencies. The struggles that followed seemed to be less about religion, though. It all seems more a question of property.

By the time of Queen Mary (1553-1558)

> the national tradition was disentangled from the Catholic religious inheritance to which it had been apparently inseparably bound. The quality of reticence, the care for privacy and the frequently casual acceptance of the ancient faith all contributed their influence to render the separation as quiet and unnoticeable as it was effectual. (Mathew, 27)

The positive Protestantism that developed in those days was more likely to have political than religious effects.

> Yet this very fact enables us for the first time to see the English Catholic as a type among the different varieties of Englishman. ... there had now emerged a Catholicism no longer co-extensive with the nation, independent-minded, ready to suffer, perhaps intolerant, vigorous and rooted in the life of the country. (Mathew, 28)

The "readiness to suffer" is no exaggeration when you keep in mind all the disadvantages the Catholics had from their persistence in faith. The wealthy Englishmen who 'had fortified their private fortunes from monastic land' (Mathew, 34) were radically anti-Catholic, so were the chief advisers of Queen Elizabeth. To fortify her standpoint

[18] Lodge introduces one of them, Percy, in *Ginger*. He comes from 'down-at-heel gentlefolk in Linconshire…His family were "Old Catholics" … who had kept their faith through the Penal days.' (*Ginger*, 55)

against the Catholic Church in Rome[19] and to discourage the adherents to that ancient faith a new Act of Supremacy was passed on April 29th 1559,

> declaring the Queen supreme governor of the realm as well in spiritual or ecclesiastical things or causes as in temporal and asserting that no foreign prince or prelate had any ecclesiastical or spiritual authority within her dominions. (Mathew 34)

The Act of Uniformity of religion was enacted in the same year and the Book of Common Prayer was introduced, the Latin Mass was abolished, the Catholic altars taken down. To enforce these enactments the government concentrated rather on deprivation of rights than other penalties. The acceptance of the oath of supremacy was required 'of all temporal judges, justiciaries, or other lay officer or minister' and of 'all and every person or persons who shall be promoted or preferred to any degree of learning in any university within this realm' (Mathew, 38).

In 1563 the obligation to take the oath of supremacy was extended to 'all schoolmasters and public and private teachers of children' (Mathew, 39).

Thus the faithful adherents to the Old Faith were in time excluded from public life, and as even the private celebration of Mass was declared a penal offence with the Act of Uniformity, the number of those who persisted in their Catholicism diminished rapidly, and so did the number of Catholic priests, as they could no longer be trained in England.

> The possibility of the gradual extinction of the Catholic priesthood in England, under the legislation of 1559, had moved William Allen to found in 1568 at Douay in Flanders, a college to train priests for the English mission. (Hughes, 55)

Prejudice against Catholics was strong already, as the anti-Spanish trend during Elizabeth's reign was inevitably anti-Catholic, and the massacre of St. Bartholomew in August 1572[20] fanned it even more. 'It was about this time that the term recusant came into general use to denote those Catholics who steadfastly refused to attend the Anglican worship' (Mathew, 48). It was suggested that they be punished by fines for contemptuous refusing the Communion of the Anglican Church. The bishops were asked to set up a schedule of all the recusants within their jurisdiction, and they were assessed for a special tax.

Another measure taken against the increase in numbers of Catholics was the arresting of the missionary priests coming back from training in Douay. The Act against Jesuits

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[19] we must keep in mind that in the eyes of the Papal Curia Elizabeth was a bastard.

[20] on August 18th 1572 Margaret de Valois, daughter of Catherine of Medici, was married to the leader of the Huguenots, Henry of Navarra. Agitations during the wedding ceremonies led to the killing of thousands of Huguenots in the night of the 23rd of August.

(1585) declared every Catholic priest guilty of High Treason just by his presence within the Queen's dominions, and it was made a felony for anyone to receive or relieve a priest.

Executions of priests were nothing out of the common in Elizabeth's time, and when James I came to the throne in 1603 hopes of an improvement of the situation for the Catholics were fanned by some vague promises of toleration he made before his ascension. The banning of Puritanism and Catholicism at the Anglican Episcopal Conference of Hampton Court in 1604 shattered all hopes of acceptance the Catholics might have had. Then such injudicious actions as the Gunpowder Plot made things turn for the worse.[21] In its wake, the Earl of Northumberland, who was the only influential person all the conspirators had contacts to, was arrested, tried for misprision of treason and condemned to prison for life. 'Opposition from Northumberland (the county, my addition) was henceforth impossible, anti-Catholic animus developed and hatred of the Jesuits struck root' (Mathew, 71).

A new oath of allegiance was enforced by the 1606 "Act for the better discovering and repressing of Popish Recusants". Apart from the oath a fine was to be exacted from people keeping servants who did not go to Anglican service, a measure aimed at the great number of Catholics in service all over the country. Furthermore, recusants were not allowed to go more than five miles from their homes, which made it impossible for many of them to attend Catholic Mass, should any priest dare say one in their districts. Catholics were prohibited from practising at the Bar, acting as attorneys or physicians, from executing trusts or acting as guardians to minors.

In addition to this external pressure, 'the Catholic life of the period suffered from all the difficulties inherent in a breakdown of effective leadership' (Mathew, 79), and to top it off, Jesuits and seculars tended to divide the sympathies of the laity.

> The way in which the Catholic tradition survived without leadership is indeed one of the more remarkable facts of seventeenth-century life. For two generations there was no recognized ecclesiastical leader. (Mathew, 84)

After the Catholic insurrections in Ireland in 1641 and the Civil War under King Charles I, in which numerous Catholics supported the King's cause, the minority situation became even more stringent. The biggest disadvantage they had to face was

[21] During the autumn of 1605 a group of people, all of them Catholic and none of them politically influential, plotted to blow up the King and the Houses of Parliament. An anonymous letter warned one of the Lords against attending the opening of Parliament on November 5th . Just before midnight on November 4th Guy Fawkes was arrested in the cellars below the Houses of Parliament. According to Mathew, it seems improbable that government agents were not aware of the plans in their early stages. Mathew assumes that the plot was allowed to go on so they would have something in hand against the Catholics. (cf. Mathew, 71)

unemployment, as the only recognition the recusants could receive was that of a military rank.

Charles II, whose life had been saved by Catholic royalists, made a Declaration of Indulgence in favour of religious dissidents, but with small result, and Parliament forced him to enact the Five Mile and Conventicle Acts, which hindered the movement of recusants and forbade private assemblies for worship.

The Test Act of 1673 stipulated an oath of supremacy binding each bearer of a civil or military office to loyalty to not only the Anglican Rite but also the Anglican Church as the only Established Church. The brother of King Charles II[22], who had converted to Catholicism in 1668, resigned rather than take the Test Act oath; which led to an increasing hysteria against Catholics. When in 1678 the totally fictitious but widely believed Popish Plot (in which Titus Oates accused the Jesuits of having planned the assassination of King Charles II in order to bring his Roman Catholic brother, the Duke of York and later King James II, to the throne) was 'discovered', parliament passed a number of Exclusion Bills, banning Catholics from the succession to the throne. In October 1678 the penal laws were enforced strictly and priests were arrested all over the country. Perhaps the most popular victim of this plot was the Archbishop of Armagh, Oliver Plunkett, who had been arrested at the outbreak of the 'Plot fever' and was executed in 1681.

Despite these events James II succeeded his brother Charles to the throne in 1685. He abided by his right to 'dispense from the effects of penal statutes in particular cases for an adequate cause' and thus several Catholics were appointed to state posts and chapels were restored all over the country. This caused unease among the Protestant population, and Mathew holds that

> had the King really been contented with his private chapels, his own Court circle, his occasional use of the dispensing power, and had the Queen remained childless he would have been able to live out his days in peace. (Mathew, 116)

The birth of his son James, Prince of Wales, in 1688 shattered all hopes of a Protestant successor, and an attempt to 'overthrow the existing regime was henceforth inevitable' (Mathew, 119). In October 1688 William, Prince of Orange, who was the only child of the eldest daughter of Charles I, set sails to invade the British Islands. Early in 1689 the Crown was settled on the Prince and Princess of Orange for their joint lives.

> The departure of King James had a doubly serious effect upon English Catholics: on the one hand it destroyed their hopes for the future by permanently seating their

[22] The Duke of York, later to become King James II.

> enemies in power and on the other it removed a proportion of their leaders. (Mathew, 120)

Anti-Catholic legislation was reinforced, with the aim to debar Catholics from profitable employment and to curtail their civil rights. Catholic priests were made subject to imprisonment for life and rewards were offered to anyone who informed on them in case they said Mass.

During the reigns of George I and George II, the 'old religion' was so weak that in spite of the strong antipathy against it, it was safe from persecution, except for 'that passive kind which exclusion from all employments must imply' (Mathew 133). The richer recusants, who could afford to travel to Europe, brought a faintly cosmopolitan character to the Catholic community. Their sons were sent for education to the Low Countries or to France[23]. The colleges there were substantially supported not only by Old Catholic gentry, but also by the few members of the southern Catholic urban middle class, whose prosperity had increased over the last decades.

During the eighteenth century, under the charismatic leadership of Bishop Challoner, for the first time since 1563 (when the obligation to take the oath of supremacy was extended to school teachers) schools for Catholics were established on English soil. 'The rich Catholics enjoyed a measure of social freedom and consideration, while political action was still wholly denied them' (Mathew, 140). As political or military activity was no option, many of the well off Catholics became connoisseurs and patrons of the arts, thus gaining a better social standing as they were regarded as highly cultured. This was enough encouragement for parliament to prepare the first Catholic Relief Act, which received royal assent in June 1778.

Parliament could not foresee, however, that prejudice against Catholics was still rooted deep enough to catalyse a mass demonstration organised by the Protestant Association[24]. The demonstration turned into what was later to be called the Gordon Riots, which lasted for five days, leading to the destruction of Catholic properties, the burning down of Newgate prison and causing considerable damage to the business premises within reach of the City. 'One of the facts revealed by the accounts of the riots is the large number of Irish already engaged in trade in London' (Mathew, 147). Among the less prosperous Catholics

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[23] Here they came in contact with Jansenist tendencies. Jansenism was anathemasised in the Bull "Unigenitus" in 1713, and this official disapprobation and the suspicion that Jansenite teachings were propagated in the colleges led to a falling away of vocations.

[24] this Association had pledged to obtain the repeal of the Relief Act, their leader was Lord George Gordon, a Member of Parliament.

numbers had been falling as steadily as among the rich ones, but during the reign of George II this decline was checked by the influx of Irish labour.

> The poor of all creeds were then politically insignificant and the rooted prejudice and polished scepticism of fashionable circles united in a refusal to welcome the middle classes and the clergy. The Catholic gentry were thus divided *politically* from their Protestant equals and separated *socially* from their less fortunate co-religionists. (Mathew, 140)

After the Gordon Riots it was not so much hostility but profound indifference the Catholic body was regarded with in public life. The Old Catholic families were dying out, the younger generation were receding in numbers, and support for the poor Catholics diminished with each apostasy. Left to themselves, the Catholics contributed to their own weakening by internal disagreements: the Cisalpine spirit touched quite a considerable number of adherents to the Old Faith.

> Accepting the general tenets of Catholic dogma, the Cisalpines were accustomed to concentrate attention on their moral obligations towards the State. They were ready to receive the dogmatic teaching of the Holy See; but they regarded all other forms of papal action with chill reserve. … There was always a strong sense that the clergy were exceeding their rights. (Mathew, 150)

The Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 was the final step in allowing Catholics fully back into society, so to speak, granting them access to all state offices, excepting the office of viceroy and chancellor – there had to be a difference. Prejudice seems to have been too deeply rooted. 'The increased access of at least some Catholics to the public world had an obvious effect both on British Catholics themselves and on the popular conception of them' (Woodman, 4).

For the secular world, however, the Catholic Church remained a sinister institution; its values were seen in opposition to the British ethos and lifestyle. 'Many pious Catholics continued their isolation from the mainstream of British life for a long time to come' (Woodman, 4). Thus anti-Catholicism remained one of the basic patterns of social and political culture far into the 20th century; as a result of the heavy load of prejudices, Catholics in England grew into some kind of an alternative society with its own social, ethical and religious code.

The impact of the Second World War broke up some of the strict boundaries:

> The institutional Church flourished in the post-war world. Catholic schools thrived after the Butler Education Act gave them greater state funding. Far more Catholics began to go to university, and there was [...] an accelerating increase in the middle-class proportion of the Catholic population. Despite the continued sense of apartness and the critique of the new order [...], Catholics in general were coming to fit in more

> comfortably from a sociological perspective with the centralist consensus of English society. (Woodman, 35)

Still, Catholicism retained the aura of strangeness[25], not only due to the influence of Irish Catholicism[26] and Catholic immigrants from Poland and Italy[27] but mainly due to the general difference in religious rites and social behaviour[28]. These differences are best made felt in *Picturegoers*, but the novel does not convey

> any sense that British Catholicism was about to enter into its greatest crisis since the Reformation. Despite important shifts in the sociological attitudes of British Catholics in the post-war period there was little sense of change in the externals of Catholic life. (Woodman, 35)

In fact, the Catholic Church was on the brink of the Second Vatican Council, but it still 'functioned and flourished as it had done, apparently almost unchanged, for many centuries' (Hastings, 490). The Latin Mass had been altered only marginally since the Middle Ages. Nuns still wore their antique habits, their strange distinctive head-veils (this is alluded to in *How Far*, when the sisters of Ruth's convent in the wake of Vatican II opt for a new, more modern and above all more comfortable habit). Minor seminaries were still filled with hundreds of small boys from working-class homes trained in their teens in Latin and celibacy (Patrick in *Picturegoers*, Percy in *Ginger*). Benediction and rosary (the Mallorys in *Picturegoers*), the nine First Fridays, plenary indulgences (the Game of Salvation in *How Far*),etc. – 'the pattern of popular and even clerical piety remained utterly remote from that of most other Christians in Britain. The Catholic Church remained indeed a law unto itself' (Hastings, 490).

All this was to change soon; too swiftly, indeed, and traumatically for many. What amounted to a cultural revolution in the sixties in British society at large went along with massive changes in the general pattern of national religious practice. At the same time a great renewal and destruction of benchmarks occurred in national and international Roman Catholicism as such through the work of the Second Vatican Council.

The huge leap in the secularization process had its effects on the average Englishman and woman who had until this period been at least an occasional churchgoer. Now churchgoing was no longer any kind of norm. England was ceasing to be even nominally a Christian country. Because of the Sunday Mass obligation congregations in Roman Catholic churches dropped off less than in other denominations, and so the relative position

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[25] cf. Rafferty p. 14.
[26] 'At the time of the 1971 Census, nearly half the Catholics in England and Wales were either first- or second-generation immigrants and half of these were from Ireland.' (Hornsby-Smith xv)
[27] see Hornsby-Smith 4.
[28] i.e.: "general", meaning common to all Catholics around the world, as opposed to non-Catholic societies.

of English Catholicism was in many respects strengthened. But, 'far from preparing for an important new centrality of Christian witness in Britain, the process of renewal in the Church produced a devastating internal crisis instead' (Woodman, 37).

The Second Vatican Council, the greatest ecclesiastical event of the century for Protestants as well as Catholics began to meet in 1962. For many years a theological renewal had been taking place on the continent, though its impact among British Catholics had so far been marginal. A greater sense of the way God worked in the ordinary secular world and in basic human experience had developed at the same time as a growing recognition that some aspects of the Church since the Council of Trent[29] were more provisional and time-bound than had once seemed the case. The whole image of the Church began to alter, the Roman Catholic Church was presented no longer as the one and exclusive true Church but rather as the central body in which that true Church subsists[30]. A degree of participation in that one true Church is no longer denied to other churches, so that an enormous boost was given to ecumenism. With remarkable speed the situation changed from one in which it was a mortal sin for a Catholic to attend a service in a non-Catholic church to one in which Pope John Paul himself worshiped with the Archbishop of Canterbury in Canterbury Cathedral (1982)[31].

'The liturgical and disciplinary reforms which emanated from the Second Vatican Council also raised howls of heartfelt protest from fearful traditionalists' (Hornsby-Smith 8). For example, the abolition of the rule about Friday abstinence was felt to be bereaving the English Catholics of a feature by which they distinguished themselves from the rest of society. This may sound exaggerated, but Mihály has a point when she says that 'the myriads of practices, beliefs, devotions and views that strung Catholics together as a group distinct from the English mainstream' were 'probably nowhere as important for the identity of Catholics as where they were in a minority position like in England' (Mihály, 118). The whole elaborate, slowly built-up metaphysical system which Catholics were brought up in and converts expected to conform to was slowly breaking up. According to Woodman the collapse of the system is 'indistinguishable from […] the decline in Catholic 'apartness' through increased social mobility' (Woodman, 42). Bergonzi and Lodge have even argued

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[29] Council of Trent:1545-1563 in reaction to Martin Luther's reformation. The Council met in three periods of sessions. In the first period it emphasised the authoritarian character of the tradition of the Church, against Luther's sola fide-principle that held the Holy Scriptures more important than tradition. The second period was concerned with the sacraments. After the third session the Tridentine Confession was promulgated. The Council of Trent had so strong an impact on Catholic theology that the whole period between Trent and Vatican II came to be known as "post-Tridentine."

[30] cf. the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, 8.

[31] cf. Woodman, 37.

that ultimately the decline in the sociological 'apartness' of the British Catholic even destroyed 'the distinctive perspective that produced the 'Catholic novel'' (Woodman, 42). Still, Martin holds that 'if being Catholic no longer meant being wholly distinct from the rest of society, it had not ceased to have considerable meaning for its adherents' (Martin, 94). Herein lies the chance for the Catholic novel to develop new forms and remain a genre worth the author's and reader's interest, as Lodge has shown with his contributions.

2.1.1 Ultramontanism

Ultramontanism (literally, 'beyond the mountains') is the tendency to look to Rome and the Papacy as the absolute, totally centralized source of authority in the Church and to minimize local and national autonomy.

In many passages of his novels Lodge presents his Catholics as very much Rome-oriented. Considering the history of the Roman Catholic community in England (see above), this is not surprising at all: The characters' obsessed with rules from Rome is totally coherent with their minority-status within the realm. In order to define themselves, they have to adhere to the rules more strictly perhaps than in other countries, where Catholicism is the predominant denomination. The consequence is the strong idea that doctrine is imposed from above rather than proceeding from the whole body of the faithful, a 'triumphalist celebration of the visible glories of the Church' (Woodman, 82). The earthly manifestation of the Kingdom of God as it is announced in Mk 1:15 ('The time has come, he said. The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!') is no longer seen in the collective efforts of the individuals in the community, but in the visible hierarchical organization with the Bishop of Rome at its head. The definitions of Trent and the post-Tridentine Church that has always been presented as unchanging have on the one hand given Catholics 'an enormous feeling of doctrinal assurance and belonging' (Woodman, 82).

> To be a Roman Catholic had come to mean espousing a very clearly defined set of doctrines and way of worship, centralized and ultramontane, markedly set apart from contemporary (i.e. nineteen-thirties to -fourties) English ways in certain respects and powerful in its sense of certainty. (Woodman, 27)

On the other hand,

> the authoritarian element in the whole approach has played its part in the so-called 'Catholic neurosis', and in emphasizing loyalty to the institution to such a degree

> there has even been the risk of underplaying the need for individual conversion to Christ. […] Pope Paul VI himself commented on the need for the evangelization *of Catholics*. (Woodman 82)

Many Catholic commentators are convinced that the 'Catholic neurosis' is 'compounded out of authoritarianism, superstition and the peculiarities of Catholic moral teaching' (Woodman, 27). The reason is that giving children prefabricated and final answers to all mysteries of the universe runs the risk of 'stunting intellectual exploration and growth' (Woodman, 27). Paradoxically, most Catholics, even the conservative ones, preserve a certain freedom or at least a tension with the institution and an awareness of its imperfections, which results in a self-conscious reactionary Catholicism.

Among Lodge's characters we find ultramontanists, progressive Catholics, people who are rather indifferent to the goings on in the Church as long as these do not touch upon their lives, and people who undergo a development that leads them completely away from the Catholic Church. The boundaries are not always sharply defined, but on the rough we could say that the following persons can be counted as ultramontane: Mrs Mallory, Damien O'Brien, Father Kipling, and Bridget in *Picturegoers*, Percy Higgins and to some extent Mike Brady in *Ginger*, Adam Appleby and Father Flannegan in *British Museum*, Timothy and his parents in *Shelter*, Father McGahern, Angela, Edward in *How Far*, and Mr Walsh in *Paradise*. Their critique of the modern world tends to be 'ultramontane and reactionary in form' (Woodman 16).

The progressive Catholics in Lodge's books almost always have the rougher time, partly due to the fact that 'progressive Catholicism creates its own form of double consciousness and the temptations to intellectual snobbery and an inner circle' (Woodman, 73). The Dollinger society in *British Museum* with its unofficial chaplain Father Bill Wildfire OP is one example of such a separatist group:

> The Dollinger Society took its name from the celebrated German theologian[32] of the nineteenth century who had been excommunicated in 1872 for his refusal to accept the doctrine of Papal Infallibility[33]. […] It [was] an informal discussion group of lay Catholics concerned to liberalize the Church's attitude on more urgent and topical issues, *such as religious liberty in Spain, nuclear war, and the Index Librorum Prohibitorum*. Its only public activity took the form of writing outspoken letters on such subjects to the Catholic Press. The letters were never published, except in *Crypt*, a subscription newsletter edited by the Society's unofficial chaplain, Father Bill Wildfire OP, who, after a few beers, could be coaxed into questioning the doctrine of the Virgin Mary's Assumption into heaven. Heretical statements like this […] were a source of unholy joy to the Society. (*British Museum*, 59f.)

[32] Johann Joseph Ignaz von Döllinger (February 28, 1799 - January 14, 1890) was a German theologian, Catholic priest and church historian who rejected the dogma of papal infallibility.
[33] Papal infallibility was defined dogmatically during the First Vatican Council, 1870.

The narrator comments that it seemed that 'the liberal conscience had a more thrilling existence within the Church than outside it'(*British Museum*, 60), and this seems also to hold true for Michael and Miriam in *How Far Can You Go?* They attend an avant-garde liturgy at a college 'that would have lifted the back hairs on the red necks of the local parish priests had they known what was going on in their midst' (*How Far*, 133), and as a consequence of the liturgical reform, they start to hold 'occasional gatherings […] which they called "agapes", after the common meal or love-feast which accompanied the celebration of the Lord's Supper in the primitive Church' (*How Far*, 141). The main objective of these agapes does not seem to be the remembrance of the mysteries of the Faith, however, but getting together and enjoying elitist discussions. Michael even risks promotion at his college for the sake of adhering to the progressive group "Catholics for an Open Church."

On the whole, both the radical ultramontanists and the radical modernists retain a minority status in Lodge's books, as they do in real life.

2.2 From Dusk till Dawn – Developments in the Church

> …and moved by the Holy Spirit may never cease to renew herself. (*Lumen Gentium*, 9)

> "We are going," …[Pope John XXIII] declared, "to shake off the dust that has collected on the throne of St Peter since the time of Constantine and let in some fresh air." The Second Vatican Council which he convened brought out into the light a thousand unsuspected shoots of innovation and experiment, in theology, liturgy and pastoral practice, that had been buried for decades out of timidity or misplaced loyalty. (*How Far*, 80)

The discrepancy between living in this world and at the same time rejecting it stems from an over-simplification of the Church's relationship with the world. You cannot split the two concepts, as the Church does not consist of an unworldly hierarchy, but of people, and people are meant to live 'in this world' – as any true Christian ought to know, be he trained in the method of historical-critical exegesis of the Bible or not: No matter which way you understand Genesis 1-2, be it literally or metaphorically, it always comes down to God as creator of a good world in which man is supposed to live (in both accounts of the creation, Gen 1 and Gen 2).

In the Middle Ages, however, the Church maintained an absolutistic and sacralistic course. Its strength was weakened by the Reformation and eventually by the French Revolution, and suddenly it was faced with 'a new secular order that seemed to have escaped its control completely' (Woodman, 85).

> Different ways of reacting to this threatening situation are possible, but one very central response […] was the condemnation of the modern order as a whole and a more deeply defensive absolutizing of the Church. […] There is a tragic failure of insight here, the tendency to reject the modern political world not because, like all political systems, it incorporates elements incompatible with the Kingdom of God but rather because it is modern and secular as such and thus a threat to the old, idealized order of Church hegemony. (Woodman 85)

Scepticism towards the modern world and politics was deeply rooted, and it took more than a handful of progressive theologians to prepare for the changes the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) brought about, but finally members of the hierarchy as well as 'ordinary' church folk realised that the Church is inevitably involved in change through time. The 'constant factor in the history of the Church and of its understanding of itself', as Hans Küng puts it,

> is only revealed in change; its identity exists only in variability, its continuity only in changing circumstances, its permanence only in varying outward appearances. In short, the 'essence' of the Church is not a matter of metaphysical stasis, but exists only in constantly changing historical 'forms'. (Küng, *The Church*, 4)

New images popular at the Council include the idea of the pilgrim Church and the Church as the people of God.[34] Both incorporate a sense of imperfection as part of the very self-definition of the Church. The pilgrim Church is still on the way: 'at the same time holy and always in need of being purified' (*Lumen Gentium*, 8). But the most significant change of emphasis is the formula that the true ideal Church *subsists* in the Roman Catholic Church rather than being completely identifiable with it:

> This Church constituted and organized in the world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the Bishops in communion with him, although many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside of its visible structure. (*Lumen Gentium*, 8)

With this formula the Church has given up the old "*extra ecclesia nulla salus*[35]". The traditional ideal norms of the Church, Catholicity, Holiness, Unity and Truth are no longer seen as absolute attributes of the Church, but as eschatological aims:

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[34] cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 48

[35] "There is no salvation outside the Church." (my translation)

> If the Kingdom preached by Christ had been realized, there would be no need for the Church. Essentially the Church substitutes for the Kingdom and must, theologically, define itself as an instrument for the full realization of the Kingdom and as the sign of a true yet still imperfect realization of this Kingdom in the world.[36] (Woodman, 91)

2.2.1 Development in moral theology

> In this faith, married people can do all tings, hope all things, endure all things. (*Humanae Vitae and the Bishops*, 162)

Catholic moral theology generally defends the existence of absolute and universally valid norms for Christian ethical behaviour. The pre-Vatican II manuals of moral theology reflect a concept of life within a very authoritarian society that was structured entirely from the top down. Moral theology assumed a much closer relationship with the science of canon law, so that many considerations in the manuals of moral theology of Vatican II days belong rather to canon law; all morality was based on law for law was seen as the guiding and directing force of all life. The reason for this is simple: moral manuals were primarily used for training confessors to distinguish between mortal sin and no sin, their main purpose was to draw a clear and certain boundary line between sin and no sin[37]. Moral theology as separated from spiritual theology paid practically no attention to the growth and development of the Christian life – an area in which there is no room for absolute norms which are always binding. Moral theology considered the Christian life primarily in terms of obedience to an elaborate system of laws.[38]

In the years before the Second Vatican Council a renewal of moral theology had taken place, accepting only the existence of certain absolute norms. The *aggiornamento* in moral theology stressed that, within the boundary lines marked off by absolute norms binding for all, there exists a large area of moral conduct which is not governed by the application of general norms to particular cases. Bernhard Häring[39], Karl Rahner and other leading moral theologians of the time realised that all men are called to perfection in spiritual terms and that theology can no longer be content to discover the dividing line between sin and no sin.

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[36] Leonardo Boff: *Church, charism and power*. London: SCM Press, 1985) p. 146.
[37] A fact that is reflected in *How Far Can You Go?* where Father Austin Brierley has to know about 'the different postures in which copulation may be contrived' in a theoretical way 'for it is necessary that a priest should know of every sin that he might have to absolve.' (*How Far*, 12)
[38] cf. Curran, 99-101.
[39] Theological counsellor during the Second Vatican Council, professor of moral theology in Rome, co-author of the Majority Report.

The biblical, liturgical and catechetical renewals in the Catholic Church also influenced the outlook and scope of moral theology.[40]

When we look at the moral theological literature of the relevant time-span[41], it becomes evident that moral theologians have a more liberal – one might venture to say enlightened – attitude and a more scientific approach to moral issues than the magisterium of the church. One instance is the precision with which they try to define a frame of reference for their theories. For the following discussion may it suffice to point out one important feature of moral theory: Moral statements are not axioms (self-evident truths like those of mathematics and logic), there is room for dispute about them. Still, they do resemble axioms in expecting an immediate acceptance, and 'the definition to which they come nearest is perhaps that of "intuitions"' – it is like an axiom in that it is perceived directly, but it does not necessarily need to be accepted by all reasoning men in order to have validity for the person who perceives it.[42] What follows is that 'The only valid form for a moral statement which we ourselves make is "I think" … "that this is right" and the only way of testing it, in the end, is to do it' (Keeling, 18).

According to Keeling, our use of moral language suggests that we are not just expressing a personal preference:

First, when we express a moral view to a fellow human being we generally expect him to share it. There is the expectation that there is a common standard of judgement on given questions such as the rights of property or the taking of human life. When differences of opinions arise, we feel that they matter and ought to be overcome.

Second, most moral systems equate the following of their prescriptions with a person's long-term happiness. This means our moral judgements can to a certain degree be verified in action (still – they cannot be proved).

Third, our moral judgements assume that a person is free to act. It follows that moral statements are limited to actions which are done from deliberate choice.

In other words, the three elements of moral activity are 'our beliefs about the nature of man and of the world, our estimates of the practical effects of our possible action, and our freedom to choose to act' (Keeling, 15).

Anyhow, no moral system can claim the right to be enforced on all men. In the end, even if all men but one conform to a certain moral idea, this idea cannot be morally binding for that one man. We have no way of proving that moral ideas concern the

[40] cf. Curran, 73.
[41] Böckle, Curran, Hertz, Müller, Günthör, Ertl, Hirschmann, Gründel, Häring, Guardini, Rahner, a.o.
[42] cf. Keeling, 16.

structure of the universe; there is no way of showing that a defined set of moral standards is exclusively right. For the sake of living together we have to have laws and agreements, but we should be cautious about legislating in matters of morals, or 'wanting to make other men be good' (Keeling, 20).

After these preliminary reflections on moral language we need to answer the question where moral ideas come from at all. Moral theologians are in accord about the fact that it is not possible to trace the existence of moral ideas back to a single and unambiguous basic source. It is more from a co-existence of the following main sources that moral ideas spring from: the scriptures (which is "revelation" or "things shown"); tradition; *the Church*, which is the whole body of Christians, not only the present generation; rational faculties; *conscience*, which is the term used in traditional moral theology for what we have called "intuition", and which draws on what our minds can make out of the world around us, as well as on the other sources of moral information like philosophical systems, parents, teachers, friends, social influences in general.[43]

As to the Scriptures – the Second Vatican Council reminded theologians that the scriptures are the soul of all theology:

> Sacred theology rests on the written word of God, together with sacred tradition, as its primary and perpetual foundation. By scrutinizing in the light of faith all truth stored up in the mystery of Christ, theology is most powerfully strengthened and constantly rejuvenated by that word. For the Sacred Scriptures contain the word of God and since they are inspired really are the word of God; and so the study of the sacred page is, as it were, the soul of sacred theology. (*Dei Verbum*, 24).

The scriptures show the overall context of Christian morality – the covenant of love between God and his people, but the scriptures themselves do not furnish concrete answers to all the moral problems that are facing modern man.

Tradition plays a prominent role in the forming of the moral teaching of the Church. The Catholic Church always lives in continuity with its past. The Church has learned much in its development, and tradition may well be called the memory of the Church. However, the very fact that something was taught at an earlier time in the Church is not a guarantee that the same teaching holds true today. Tradition and scripture are both most important in the formation of the decision of the teaching Church, but they are not adequate criteria in themselves. What about the use of reason and man's rational faculties in arguing to a particular moral decision?

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[43] cf. Keeling, 21

The teaching Church must use all human means to investigate the world and its problems and to apply the gospel message to present day problems. However, history shows that reason alone can come to very different conclusions about particular issues. Basically one can conclude that scripture, tradition and reason play a prominent part in the process of the formation of moral teaching of the Church. But neither singly nor together do they constitute an adequate explanation of the way in which the Church formulates its moral teaching. A very important factor in the teaching of the Church is the experience of Christian people. 'The teaching Church definitely learns from the experience of the living Church' as Curran puts it (Curran, 95).

> Some Catholic theologians might object that the emphasis on the experience of Christian people would destroy the very concept of the Roman Catholic Church and its teaching authority. … [But] the renewed Catholic theology of the Church is stressing the fact that the Church is not just the hierarchy and the magisterium but the whole People of God. If the Church is the people of God, then the experience of Christian people has a part to play in the teaching of the Church. (Curran, 97)

This position is asserted by the Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, which states

> The entire body of the faithful, anointed as they are by the Holy One, cannot err in matters of belief. They manifest this special property by means of the whole peoples' supernatural discernment in matters of faith when … they show universal agreement in matters of faith and morals. (*Lumen Gentium* 12)

This is all the more important to remember as in the second half of the nineteenth century people were speaking of a crisis in obedience and authority in the Catholic Church. The tensions existing about authority in the Church mirrored the changing circumstances in which individual responsibility assumed a greater role and authority assumed a lesser role in the life patterns of individual Catholics. Moral theology was called to reflect the changing circumstances by placing more emphasis on individual conscience and responsibility with a corresponding deemphasis on the role of laws in the life of the Christian. It was forced to reconsider the existence of absolute, universal laws of behaviour obliging in all circumstances. An older moral theology had pictured the Church as a perfect society which had all the answers, which were handed down from the authorities of the Church. 'The Church had become smug and triumphal precisely because it thought it had all the answers and did not have to go through doubts and anxieties of human existence' (Curran, 105). This is, by the way, reflected wonderfully in the smug and self-righteous character of Damien O'Brien in *The Picturegoers*.

Beginning with the second half of the twentieth century, however, a transition has occurred from a classicist methodology to a more historically conscious methodology. 'A Classicist methodology tends to be abstract, *a priori*, deductive, and ahistorical' (Curran, 107). It attempts to cut through the accidents of time and history to arrive at eternal, universal, and unchanging abstract norms that are then applied to particular situations; this methodology is connected with the Platonic notion of a pre-existing world of ideas. Primary attention is given to substances and essences 'while the contingent, the particular and the historical are regarded merely as accidents which modify the already constituted reality' (Curran, 107). In modern thought, though, it is the personal, historical, and existential that receives more emphasis. Here meaning is not something fixed, static, and immutable, but shifting, developing, going astray, and capable of redemption.

However, there still remains the question about universal, absolute, negative norms of Christian conduct in matters of e.g. contraception, abortion, divorce, etc.

With the Second Vatican Council Roman Catholic theology ceased to insist on absolute norms in ethical conduct. Still, it has its sources of absolutism, which are the Natural Law and the teaching authority of the Church, the argumentation of both of which we will encounter when we get to the topic of birth control.

2.2.1.1 Birth control

Birth control was the one big issue connected with the question about the relationship between the authority and tradition of the Church and the individual conscience. Beginning with the nineteen-fifties the pressures of a hedonistic and permissive society grew ever harder on the conservative asceticism of the Church. Progressive priests had for some time refused to condemn artificial birth control, and the hope grew that Rome would officially permit it. To some degree, those hopes were even justified – while in 1930 any change in the magisterial thinking seemed inconceivable, concessions were made starting with the Papacy of Pius XII:

In 1930 Pope Pius XI issued the encyclical *Casti Connubii* ('Of Chaste Marriage'), a document that said that

> since, therefore, the conjugal act is destined *primarily by nature for the begetting of children*, those *who* in exercising it *deliberately frustrate* its natural power and purpose *sin against nature* and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious. (*Casti Connubii*, 54, my emphasis)

and furthermore, in a very authoritarian tone that does not allow any contradiction:

> Since, therefore, openly departing from the uninterrupted Christian tradition some recently have judged it possible solemnly to declare another doctrine regarding this question, the Catholic Church, to whom God has entrusted the defense of the integrity and purity of morals, standing erect in the midst of the moral ruin which surrounds her, in order that she may preserve the chastity of the nuptial union from being defiled by this foul stain, raises her voice in token of her divine ambassadorship and through Our mouth proclaims anew: *any use whatsoever of matrimony exercised in such a way that the act is deliberately frustrated in its natural power to generate life is an offense against the law of God and of nature*, and those who indulge in such are branded with the guilt of a grave sin. (*Casti Connubii*, 56, my emphasis)

Pius XII brought about a slight change by accepting the rhythm method as a legitimate way of limiting the size of one's family granted the couple had 'a good reason'. He even stated that it was legitimate for women to take the birth control pill for medical reasons, as long as the main goal was not contraception, the contraceptive side-effect was tolerated for the sake of the doctrine of double-effect.

The Second Vatican Council in its Dogmatic Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* for the first time gave up the Church's position that the begetting of children was the prime purpose of the marriage bond:

> Marriage to be sure is *not instituted solely for procreation*; rather, its very nature as an unbreakable compact between persons, and the welfare of the children, both demand that the mutual love of the spouses be embodied in a rightly ordered manner that it grow and ripen. Therefore, marriage persists as a whole manner and communion of life, and maintains its value and indissolubility, even when despite the often intense desire of the couple, offspring are lacking. (*Gaudium et Spes*, 51, my emphasis)

The way towards a more progressive view upon the relationship between man and woman and the role sex plays in it seemed smoothed out. But then the topic became too hot, the factions could not agree upon a position acceptable to both conservative and progressive theologians, and in March 1963 Pope John XXIII, not willing to rush so important a matter, appointed a commission[44] to investigate into the latest findings in the fields of medicine, physiology and biology, sociology, psychology and moral and pastoral theology.

The members worked in groups: theologians, a third of the total; demographers, sociologists, and economists; doctors and psychologists. A group of cardinals and archbishops was asked to present the proposals to the pope. The president of this group

[44] the Pontifical Commission for the Study of Population, the Family, and Birth.

was Cardinal Ottaviani, and the vice-presidents were the Cardinals Heenan[45] and Döpfner. In 1967 the majority of this commission compiled a report opting for a change in doctrinal instruction concerning contraception. This report became publicly known[46]. Renowned moral theologians spoke in a way that encouraged Catholic couples to search for viable ways of contraception trusting their own educated conscience. The methods of putting into practice "responsible parentship" were generally left to the judgement of the conscience of spouses, without ever speaking of disrespect for the Church, subjectivism or arbitrariness. Thus it is natural that many priests and lay people hoped for a different Papal decision. They did not reckon with the impact the minority-report had on the Pope. The conservative members of the pontifical commission, a tiny minority, presented a paper that placed special emphasis on the authority of the Pope, the 'constant teaching of the Church' and the concept of Natural Law.

When on July 25th 1968 Pope Paul VI issued his encyclical *Humanae Vitae* the influence of the minority-report was keenly felt. *HV* banned all artificial methods of birth control, its uncompromising position led to protests around the Catholic world and Roman Catholic hierarchies in some countries openly modified its policy. The document surprised many Catholics who had hoped for a relaxation of the traditional attitude after Vatican II, and it rejected the views of the commission appointed to consider birth control, which had recommended that the ban on contraception be ended.

The first bone of contention for most national hierarchies was the way Humanae Vitae recurred to the concept of Natural Law.

It is disconcerting that although in what is by far the larger part of its moral teaching the Catholic Church has never used Natural Law as a vehicle in determining the morality of a particular action, it most certainly does so in matters of birth-control and contraception; with a very monolithic access towards the matter at that. The historical investigation Curran undertakes clearly shows that Natural Law does not designate a monolithic philosophical system with an agreed upon code of ethical conduct existent throughout the history of the Catholic Church. It is always stressed that although every living being has its own nature which is teleological, dynamic and specific, there is no intrinsic dynamism which 'propels man toward his goal of rational perfection' (Curran,

[45] John Carmel Heenan, 1905-1975; Archbishop of Westminster 1963-1975, from 1968 President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. Heenan charged that *Gaudium et* Spes had been written by clerics with 'no knowledge of the world, delivered a savage attack on theological experts at the council who would like to modify the church's position on birth control.' (n.n."The bravest Schema")

[46] It was published in *The Tablet* and in the *Herder Korrespondenz*, Ottaviani and Heenan refused to present it to the Pope, they together with two other theologians wrote another report; Döpfner was the one to present the majority-report.

75). Natural Law is never monolithic. The theories of Natural Law of the Scholastic period, and in particular Thomas Aquinas, greatly influenced Catholic moral teaching. Among the four different definitions Thomas cites, there is one proposed by Cicero: 'Ius naturae est quod non opinio genuit sed quaedam innata vis inseruit'[47]. What follows is that man must respect the laws of nature and cannot interfere with them. Particularly in the area of marital ethics Ulpian's conception of Natural Law as 'that which is common to man and all the animals apart from any intervention of reason' (Ulpian, quoted in Thomas, *Sentences* IV Sent., d.33, q.1, a.1, ad 4um.) has created problems: Nature teaches man that sexual union exists for the procreation and education of offspring. Consequently, Catholic thought used to stress procreation as the primary end of marriage with the love union aspect of sexuality as the secondary end added on to what was primary and fundamental.[48] 'But does not man's rationality demand that at times he interfere with the laws of nature so that he might live a more human existence?' (Curran, 78). After all, in nature some things always occur, others which usually happen can be impeded by external circumstances and accidents. In accord with that, some human moral laws are absolutely universal, others, however, admit of exceptions because of accidental circumstances.[49] We must keep in mind that the metaphor of the Natural Law written on the heart of man[50] is not a unified and minute code of ethical actions.

In espousing the Natural Law as a method of forming moral judgments, Paul VI seems to have forgotten that the Natural Law does not imply the existence of always valid, universal norms of conduct once one descends from the first principles. It is much more a matter of dynamic development than a divine *positivum*, as is shown in Häring's theology, for example. In general, Häring accepts the traditional Catholic understanding of the Natural Law, but he incorporates the Natural Law into his more biblically inspired, dialogical understanding of the Christian life. Man acts in accord with the nature that he has received from God. The existence of some negative, absolute norms of conduct does not necessarily imply a legalism or code morality. Such negative norms merely point out the few actions which are never compatible with our human existence. Within the large field of human actions which are compatible with our human nature, there are no general

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[47] "Natural law is something that is not generated by conjecture but given by some innate power." (my translation)

[48] This hierarchy of concepts, although rejected in *Gaudium et Spes*, stands behind the Natural Law argumentation of Humanae Vitae and is basically still feasible under the surface of all the magisterium's teaching on sexual matters, no matter how they try to "stress" the importance of the love union.

[49] cf. Curran, 81

[50] 'This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.' (Jer 31:33)

principles from which man can always deduce what is the fitting thing to do. Under the inspiration of the Spirit man is led to embrace those actions which are most fitting in the particular situation. The Natural Law does not necessarily preclude any growth or development.[51]

When we take a deeper look at the statements of renowned moral theologians of the time, it makes one wonder anyone remained faithful to the Church at all. Just one example: Professor Lambruschini, Italian moral theologian, member of the Papal Commission, on Humanae Vitae during the press conference on July 29th 1968:

> Firstly, there is no question of the existence of natural moral law.
> Secondly, the interpretation of said law lies in the prior and – in certain aspects – sole competence of the Church.
> Thirdly, it is the constant teaching of the Church that any marital act which is robbed of the possibility of procreation contravenes Natural Law and is therefore forbidden.

This last statement clashes radically with the more liberal testimony of *Gaudium et Spes*, it is a regress into the teachings of *Casti Connubii* and evokes remembrance of the Middle Ages when the frequency of marital intercourse was limited by strict regulations. It was forbidden to have sex during advent and lent, on ember days[52], on vigil days[53], on Sundays, and on major feasts during the liturgical year. Simple calculations show that this meant no sex for the better part of the year: two thirds of all nights went unexploited. The papal encyclical Humanae Vitae calls for a similar amount of abstinence. Due to the fact that it only allows natural contraception as a rightful means of reducing the number of offspring, the faithful adherent of papal doctrine was limited to the same amount of sex as faithful Catholics of the Middle Ages. And that in the year of the sexual revolution, mind you. Small wonder the whole world was in an uproar after its publication, especially as any informed Catholic knew that there had been discussion of the issue even during the second Vatican Council and that a majority of theologians had opted for a draft[54] that was far more liberal than the outcome of Pope Paul's reflections three years later.

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[51] cf. Curran, 154

[52] Ember days (from Latin "quatember"): the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday of the week between the third and fourth Sundays of Advent, between the first and second Sundays of Lent, the week between Pentecost and Trinity Sunday, and the calendar week after Holy Cross Day (September 14) (the liturgical Third Week of September).

[53] Vigil days are the days before major liturgical feasts, the name derives from the all-night vigils that used to be held on the eves of such feasts.

[54] The 1965 draft never made it to the official status of a Vat. II document. Although more than two thirds of the college of cardinals voted for it, a minority toppled the decision and the Pope promised to investigate the topic further and to come up with a document in due time – the result was his encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, promulgated on July 25th 1968. In his encyclical Paul VI overrode 71 members of the commission, taking sides with the remaining *four*. He decided over the heads of renowned Bishops and Cardinals, over the heads of the Congress of World Lay People, over the heads of leading European moral theologians, he ignored

The Council's pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes* opens with the words

> The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts. (*Gaudium et Spes* 1)

These words point in a direction the Pope might with good conscience have followed in his encyclical. That he did not do so brought many theologians against him. They were concerned about the lack of insight the Pope had for individual problems and complications. Conjugal life for him seemed to be of a sameness and simplicity that he did not see any necessity to investigate into the various fates and histories of couples coming from differing historical, cultural or social backgrounds. Humanae Vitae leaves no space for individual differences between relationships. Its concept of love is very abstract, there is no impulse, desire, lust, anger, frustration, romance; it is all sense and will. The loving commitment he speaks of seems to be a synonym for the religious concept of consecration. For the enlightened reader it is consternating that Paul VI, an otherwise very open, assiduous, earnest, wholehearted, and wise Pope after three years of information and contemplation could not come up with something less moralistic. There is absolutely no mention of concrete experience, neither of married people nor their indirectly concerned friends, physicians, mentors, priests; no incorporation of medical or psychological expertise, be it from the fields of depth psychology of sexual psychology. Walter Dirks, Secretary to Romano Guardini and one of the commentators during the Vatican Council, comments:

> Ein Wort der Kirche zu Geschlechtlichkeit und Ehe könnte den gläubigen Eheleuten zeigen, was das Evangelium zwei so doppelt verbundenen Menschen zu sagen hat, was an Glaube, was an Hoffnung und was an Liebe in der Ehe lebendig und konkret werden kann, wie viel Rücksicht und Zartsinn erwartet, welche Askese, ja welches Opfer den beiden aber abverlangt wird; wenn ich das kirchliche Amt entschließt, die Intimsphäre zu respektieren, so könnte es sich auf ein Wort solcher Art beschränken, und solche Zurückhaltung vor dem intimsten Bereich stünde vor allem Zölibatären gut an. Wenn die Kirche sich dagegen weiterhin entschließt, „zur Sache" zu sprechen, dann dürfte sie es aber auch nicht unterlassen, den jungen Menschen Mut zur Zärtlichkeit, zum Liebesspiel, zu den Abenteuern auch der körperlichen ehelichen Liebe zu machen. Die Kirche hat den Eheleuten in Verkennung der Schöpfung jahrhundertelang suggeriert, die mit dem Akt der Liebe verbundene Lust dürfe man als „Begierlichkeit" allenfalls in Kauf nehmen, nicht aber als Schöpfungsgeschenk dankbar annehmen und human entwickeln. Eine Kirchenführung, die sich so verhalten hat, hätte allen Anlaß, jenes Wort „Gaudium" aus dem ersten Satz von „Gaudium et spes" auch auf die elementare Freude ehelicher Menschen zu beziehen,

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years of confessional pastoral praxis. The Pope decided against the *sensus fidelium* and against the *sensus fidei*.

> - bevor sie dann so weise und diskret wäre, diesen Bereich erotisch-sexueller Erfahrung, Humanität und Spiritualität christlichen Eheleuten selbst zu überlassen. (Oertel, 42)

However, taking into consideration the two main discussions *Humanae Vitae* triggered, it may still be seen as a blessing of some sort. On the one hand, it reopened the discussion of Papal infallibility; on the other hand, it forced many theologians to face up to their own position. This again came in handy for the church folk, for seeing that even highly renowned experts did not come to the same conclusions concerning the moral laws of conjugal life the discussion fortified their persuasion of the autonomy of their own conscience. For the first time in history, the faithful were prompted by their priests and bishops to seriously consider, examine and in points in which it contradicted their convictions and conscience to reject a Papal document.

The process of criticism began when on September 4th 1968 *The Times* published the secret document the Bishops found enclosed to their individual copies of *Humanae Vitae*, accompanied by the following commentary:

> The covering letter to the Encyclical Humanae Vitae from the Vatican Secretary of State, […] suggests that the Curia was aware of the dismay with which the Encyclical would be received in some sections of the Roman Catholic Church. It was also evidently foreseen that the document would precipitate a crisis concerning papal authority within the church. It is this aspect of the affair that is likely to have the most lasting consequences, although they are as yet unforeseeable. ("The Pope and Conscience", 9)

The letter by Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Cicognani, required church leaders to make every effort to ensure that the teaching of *Humanae Vitae* was understood and obeyed. First he ensured the addressees that the pope 'has never failed to keep in mind the silent entreaty which he felt rising towards him from so many of his sons entrusted with the care of families' and that 'He was acutely and painfully aware of the conditions of life, housing and work which are those of so many married couples in our time.' He appreciates the problems people are faced with, but:

> it became daily clearer to him that the greatest service he could render in this field to Christianity and to the whole of mankind, was to propound again in all its purity, while taking into account recent scientific discoveries, the social evolution of our time and the increased appeal to "responsible parenthood", the *constant teaching of the church*, which while seeking only the real good of man and of the family, brings to the problem under discussion its *only true and profound solution*. ("Secret orders", 8, my emphasis)

What sounds like mockery of the circumstances of young married couples who are struggling to keep ends meet goes on in a tone that does not become any more

understanding or indulgent: ‘The Holy Father is aware of the bitterness which this answer may cause to many couples, who awaited another solution to their difficulties.’, but the anxieties the letter focuses on are not those of the couples but the Pope’s:

> the Pope wished to study the whole matter in detail *himself*. *He* considered at length, with respectful attention. […] *He* spent a long time in prayer. *He* consulted many wise and learned members of the episcopacy, the clergy, and the laity, […]. And now, *he* turns to all priests[…] to exhort them to put forward to Christians this delicate point of church doctrine, to explain it, and to vindicate the profound reasons behind it. (“Secret orders”, 8)

And the Pope does not count on the people to understand him, he counts on

> [the priests] and on their devotion to the chair of Peter, their love for the church, and their care for the true good of souls. Like them, he is informed of the ideas and practices prevalent in contemporary society, and he is well aware of the efforts that will be needed to educate men's minds on this point. (“Secret orders”, 8)

The rest of the letter amounts to an exhortation of the priests how to explain to married couples that they are expected to conform to the teaching of the Church in spite of all efforts that might cost them, in order to ‘purify their love’ and to ‘appreciate the happiness of a married life lived in the sight of God and in full obedience of his laws.’ (“Secret orders”, 8)

> Finally, it is essential, in the confessional as well as by preaching, through the press and the other means of social communication that every pastoral effort be made so that no doubt whatever remains among the faithful nor among outside opinion on the position of the Church on this grave question. […] She does not doubt that future generations will appreciate in all its fullness the importance and the blessing of the service which she renders to married couples, to the institution of the family and to the whole of society, in defending without weakness this point of her teaching. (“Secret orders”, 8)

It was, paradoxically, among the celibate clergy and not among the married laity that the most acute distress was caused by the Pope’s ruling. The national hierarchies were not long in making statements both in answer to the encyclical and to the secret letter. A commentator of *The Times* summed up first reactions as follows:

> *Most of the English bishops* have indicated that married people who conscientiously are unable to conform may expect a certain *pastoral indulgence*. The *Belgian* hierarchy has been more explicit, and has not left the same ambiguity as to whether a person who does not conform is expected to harbour a sense of guilt on that account. “If someone who is competent in the matter and is capable of forming a well thought out personal opinion … after serious examination before God, reaches other conclusions on certain points, he has the *right to follow his convictions* in this domain, provided he remains prepared to continue his examination honestly.” He is required not to become conscious of sinfulness, but to believe that it is possible that he is mistaken – not an unreasonable demand. A more exacting submission is being required of the clergy, as may be gathered […] from the actions of some diocesan

> authorities in England. *Priests* hold a teaching office: a controverted question has been ruled upon by one of the church's recognized procedures for achieving finality: they are therefore *called upon to teach what has been decided*. This simple appeal to the principle of authority is inadequate to the situation. *Some priests*, after prolonged examination of the issues, *conclude that the Pope is wrong*. The *papal teaching in this matter is founded*, not on revelation, or inspiration, or an appeal to tradition, but *on a doctrine of natural law*, that is to say, the truth of the matter is to be found by right *reason*. And reason is a faculty of which the papacy makes no claims to preponderance. On that ground it can win assent only by argument, not by assertion. *Loyalty* may counsel silence, or it may counsel action to move the church to rectify a mistake; it *cannot command the annulment of a person's reasoned and conscientious conviction*. ("The Pope and Conscience", 9, my emphasis)

The media were very keen on publishing on the matter, and there are many comments of parish priests to be found in various newspaper archives. Those comments are always full of pastoral care and it becomes clear that the real losers in the game were the parish priests who had to deal with the problems of the married couples directly. In one case, a priest from Southwark hoped that the teaching of the Church would change soon, and with good reason:

> Mgr. Reynolds says he knows only too well the miseries of Catholics; their difficulty in observing the church's teaching, the insincerity of their confessions and their reluctance in receiving Holy Communion, when they had every intention of continuing what were considered evil practices; there were the unwanted children, the tensions and even suicides. "One lady – not in my parish – told me that she personally knew three men who had taken their lives because the wife had insisted on observing the church's teaching", he says. ("Birth control change", 4)

In another case a priest from Nottingham was dismissed 'after he had said in a letter to the bishop that there should be more open discussion of the birth control issue' ("Protest over dismissed priest").

Within a few weeks, whole books were compiled comprising comments, lectures, letters, speeches of renowned theologians of various disciplines (fundamental theologians, moral theologians, dogmatic theologians), philosophers and journalists on the encyclical. The statement of the Hierarchy of England and Wales was issued on September 24th 1968. It is rather ultramontane in tone and content. After acknowledging the effort of the encyclical to point to the 'dignity of marriage' (Horgan, 112) it goes on to stress the fact that the Pope as the Vicar or Christ is entitled to issue encyclical letters and that according to *Gaudium et Spes* 25 those must be adhered to 'even when he is not speaking *ex cathedra*.' (Horgan, 113) This was the most contended issue in the whole discussion:

> Wer die Unfehlbarkeit "definiert", das heißt sie umgrenzt, erklärt den riesigen Bereich, der außerhalb ihres engen formal definierten Bereichs liegt, logischerweise als den Bereich der Fehlbarkeit. Dieser simple Tatbestand ist in

> verständlicher Rombegeisterung zuweilen vergessen worden. Enzykliken erfüllen nun einmal die 1871 aufgestellten Bedingungen der Unfehlbarkeit nicht. (Dirks, Walter, zit. in Oertel, Erstes Echo auf HV, S. 39)

Irrespective of this canonical truth, the bishops of England and Wales go on in their appraisal of the encyclical, and although they are obviously aware of the fact that the encyclical has provoked a fierce discussion on the whole exercise of the magisterium, they nevertheless hold with its prime message that 'it is against the plan of God to take positive steps to destroy the possibility of the transmission of life' (Horgan, 114). They concede that in the general anticipation of a possible change some couples may have decided according to their consciences to use artificial contraception, but they are reminded that they are in the wrong and they should 'bear in mind the great weight which attaches to a pronouncement by the Holy Father' (Horgan, 115).

The pastoral care the bishops of England and Wales attach to their statement is beyond comment:

> The personal problems have to be faced by faithful couples genuinely wanting to do God's will but facing formidable obstacles. They know that their own living conditions may not quickly be adjusted to accommodate another child. The prospect of pregnancy for some women is a risk to health and perhaps to life. Such Catholics are concerned not with academic disputes but with stark human decisions. Let them remember that the Church has the charity and understanding of Christ our Lord. […] However difficult their circumstances may appear they should never think that they are separated from the love and grace of God. (Horgan, 117)

At which point they cite from the encyclical directly:

> 'For this reason, husbands and wives should take up the burden appointed to them, willingly, in the strength of faith and of that hope which does not disappoint. Then let them beg the help of God with unremitting prayer and most of all let them drink deep of the grace and charity from that unfailing fount which is the Eucharist. If, however, sin still exercises its hold over them, they are not to lose heart. Rather must they, humble and persevering, have recourse to the mercy of God, abundantly bestowed in the sacrament of penance.' (*Humanae Vitae*, 25)

In their concluding paragraph they state that '[d]uring this time of controversy we should all bear in mind that self-discipline and the way of the Cross are part of our Christian calling' (Horgan, 117).

When Lodge at the end of *How Far* writes that 'all bets are void' (*How Far*, 244) concerning the future of the Church he could have known better – Pope John Paul II while still Cardinal Wojtyla said that the issue of contraception was a 'struggle for the value and meaning of humanity itself' (1978). He was one of the co-authors of the minority-report.

When he became Pope he confirmed *Humanae Vitae* – 'the natural regulation of fertility is morally correct, contraception is not.'

2.2.2 Developments in liturgy[55]

Liturgy in its original sense means 'what is done for the people' (from the Greek compound *leiturgía*: *'érgon – deed* and *leós – people*); early Christians used it to refer to the celebration of the Eucharist; in a wider sense it is used to denote any kind of church service. The concept of liturgy builds on the promise that Christ is always present in His Church ('Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them' – Matt. 18:20), especially in her liturgical celebrations. The liturgy is considered as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy the sanctification of the man is signified by signs perceptible to the senses, and is effected in a way which corresponds with each of these signs; in the liturgy the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and His members (a reference to 1 Kor 12,27: 'Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.'). Liturgy does not spring from human endeavour but is basically seen as a continuation of the mystery of redemption.

When we look at the development of liturgy from the early modern times through the Baroque, Restoration and up to and past the Second Vatican Council, we see that changes had been called for since the sixteenth century but were slow to take hold and were not always readily accepted. As a first step, standardised liturgical books were introduced by the Council of Trent (1545-1563): The *Catechismus Romanus* (1566), the *RomanBreviary* (1568), the *Missale Romanum* (1570), the *Pontificale Romanum* (1596) and the *Rituale Romanum* (1614). Those were, as a matter of course, all in Latin. In 1588 the Congregation of Rites was installed, an institution in charge of supervising the observance of the new liturgical instructions. The new liturgical books led to a rigid normative and casuistic exertion of liturgy and teaching. Throughout the Baroque, this rigid formality was overlaid by the pompous vestments, gestures and music of the time. The subjectivism that had been one point of criticism at the Council of Trent had not subsided, on the contrary. Due to the Latin texts, people fell back into private devotion and silent prayer during Mass; attempts at introducing translations into the vernacular were severely condemned by Pope Alexander VII (the successor, by the way, of Pope Alexander VI, the one Adam Appleby

[55] for confirmation and further reference see Adam, 11-16 and 37-52.

cites as his role model for Papacy[56] in *British Museum*, 73), the reason being that such translations were 'sacrilegious profanations of the sanctuary'. The core of the liturgy, the Holy Eucharist, became a completely mysterious and high-minded matter scarcely anybody felt comfortable with. This brought about a boom in worship of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, of the ever-present Son of God in the tabernacle, of his Passion, and to intensified Marian devotion (again the Sacred Heart, but especially the Rosary and various forms of prayers and devotional objects connected with her as e.g. Holy Medals).

The Enlightenment brought a new dynamic and liturgical theorists bethought themselves of the origin of liturgy in the service for the people and the importance of pastoral care. The liturgy's congregational character was emphasised and people opted for clearer and simpler forms and more reasonability. But at the same time liturgy ran into danger of being degraded to a means of moral education.

During the Catholic Restoration the liturgical theorists took a step back to the times of the High Middle Ages, the result of which was the rediscovery of Thomas Aquinas in the neo-scholastic movement. The Roman liturgy was accepted as the alleged primordial form. The discussion of vernacular versus Latin was subdued by the simple statement that the mysterious character of the Holy Liturgy was to be safeguarded and that it was only logical that the liturgical words, even more than Holy Scripture, were reserved to the clergy. Any change in formula or rite was seen as an offence against the Church.

With Pius X (1903-1914) a new pastoral phase set in, which is known as 'the' Liturgical Movement. In his Motuproprio "Tra le sollecitudini" he postulated that 'it is important for the congregation to actively partake ("participation actuosa") in the mysteries and in the public and solemn prayers of the Church.' (AAS 36, 330) Liturgical theologians and members of the clergy realised the importance of democratisation in the field of liturgy. Romano Guardini's *The Spirit of Liturgy* (1919) largely influenced the development. He was one of the propagators of celebrating Mass *versus populum* (facing the congregation) and allowing the congregation to give the (still Latin) answers. The text was basically still the 1570 *Missale Romanum*, Latin, of course, and up to the early 20th century the Missals people used to follow the service omitted the words of the Consecration (they were too holy for ordinary people to read or even speak). In 1912 W. Knott & Sons Ltd. published the first English Missal, for the use of the liturgically

[56] Alexander VI, around 1500, born Rodrigo Borgia, a Spaniard, vice-chancellor to the Pope; his mistresses were Vannozza de Catanea and Julia Farnese (whose brother was Pope Paul III); with Vannozza he had children (Lucrezia Borgia, Cesare Borgia) and led a family life starting from the time he was Cardinal.

interested. The liturgical awakening did not come off undisputed, of course. Suspicion and distrust were carried to the height during the Second World War, the Liturgical Movement fell into a crisis; Guardini warned against liturgism, practicism, dilettantism, conservatism and irrational bureaucratic fixation. In 1947 the Liturgical Movement was finally officially acknowledged by Pope Pius XII in his Encyclical *Mediator Dei*. In the beginning, people were very much in favour of supporting the participation of the congregation in the celebration of the current Tridentine liturgy. Only toward the middle of the twentieth century did the liturgical scientists, theorists, theologians, the clergy and the hierarchy realise that the liturgy itself stood in need of reform. Gradually, vernacular texts were allowed into the liturgy of the rites.

The Second Vatican Council brought the changes people had been hoping for since the Middle Ages. On December 4th 1963, exactly 400 years after the last session of the Council of Trent, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* was promulgated. It had been approved by 2147 votes to four.

> …[I]t desires to impart an ever increasing vigour to the Christian life of the faithful; to adapt more suitably to the needs of our own times those institutions which are subject to change […]. The Council therefore sees particularly cogent reasons for undertaking the reform and promotion of the liturgy. (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 1)

The Constitution's overall aims are: Higher esteem for the liturgy as 'no other action of the Church can equal its efficacy by the same title and to the same degree' (*SC* 7), promotion of the active participation of the congregation[57], more appreciation for the liturgical science and promotion of liturgical instruction,[58] and overall reform of the liturgy in its alterable parts.[59]

Now, finally, the vernacular was officially allowed in the Mass:

> In Masses which are celebrated with the people, a suitable place may be allotted to their mother tongue. This is to apply in the first place to the readings and "the common prayer," but also, as local conditions may warrant, to those parts which pertain to the people. (*SC*, 54)

In order to achieve these aims, instructions for the proper execution of the constitution were issued. One of the most important was *Inter Oecumenici* (1964), which among others contains the instructions on the allowed use of the vernacular in liturgy:

> 57. For Masses, whether sung or recited, celebrated with a congregation, the competent, territorial ecclesiastical authority on approval, that is, confirmation, of its decisions by the Holy See, may introduce the vernacular into:

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[57] cf. *Sacrosamctum Concilium,* 14 a.o.
[58] cf. *SC*, 15-19.
[59] cf. *SC*, 21-40.

> a. the proclaiming of the lessons, epistle, and gospel; the universal prayer or prayer of the faithful;
> b. as befits the circumstances of the place, the chants of the Ordinary of the Mass, namely, the *Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus-Benedictus, Agnus Dei*, as well as the introit, offertory, and communion antiphons and the chants between the readings;
> c. acclamations, greeting, and dialogue formularies, the *Ecce Agnus Dei, Domine, non sum dignus, Corpus Christi* at the communion of the faithful, and the Lord's Prayer with its introduction and embolism. (*Inter Oecumenici*, 57)

The Latin form was still maintained in Masses the priest celebrated alone, and 'Missals to be used in the liturgy […] … [had to] contain besides the vernacular version the Latin text as well.' (*Inter Oecumenici*, 57)

The development in liturgy was extremely dynamic. Liturgical books were published in quick succession, starting with the new *Lectionarum Missae* in 1969, a very short period of completion minding the fact that a completely new schedule of Readings had to be arranged for all Sundays, Weekdays and Feast Days of three succeeding years (the scheme rotates in a three-year-rhythm). The new *Missale Romanum* with the altered *Ordo Missae* was published in 1970, its translation into English a few months later in the same year. The many changes and the greater variation in services were greeted with joy by most of the Catholics.

Critique came from two sides: those who felt that reform had not reached far enough, and those who feared that the changes would corrupt the 'good Catholic community' and that any reform equalled an act of treason. The reason for this fear of corruption was the shift in the image of the Church. The change from the use of Latin in the Mass to the vernacular language may seem superficial. Yet in a sense the symbolic significance of this was immense. 'In this one shift the image of the Church as changeless, of which the continued use of Latin was a visible sign, was dented' (Woodman, 38). The universality of the international Church was to some degree downgraded in comparison to the needs of the local community.

The most prominent critic of this change in liturgical language was Bishop Marcel Lefèbvre, a downright conservative who almost led part of the Church into schism. It is due to him and his like that in 1984 Pope John Paul II issued an indult allowing the celebration of the Tridentine Mass under special circumstances (the priest and congregation were not to be associated with people who doubted the validity of the 1970 *Missale Romanum*; they needed a special license to celebrate a Tridentine Mass and it was to be held in Latin; care had to be taken that such custom did not jeopardise the renewal of the liturgical life of the parish).

3 Realism and Satire

3.1 Relationship between fiction and reality

> Kan ma kan … It was so, it was not. (Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses*)
>
> I think it's about time we moved on from the land of make-believe to the territory of hard fact! (Lodge, *About Catholic Authors*)

Theorists like Barthes argue that the author is not existent as an individual entity independent of the process of generating the text, 'there is no other time than that of the enunciation and every text is eternally written *here and now*'. (Barthes, *The Death of the Author*, quoted in Lodge, *After Bakhtin*, 15). In one of his essays, Paul de Man says that 'it is always against the explicit assertion of the writer that readers degrade the fiction by confusing it with a reality from which it has forever taken leave'(de Man, "Criticism and Crisis", quoted in Lodge, *After Bakhtin*, 15).

When we look at the way Lodge sees his own work, the traditional, humanist model of expressive realism with its stance that novels are 'more or less powerful expressions of a unique sensibility or world-view – the author's – and […] more or less truthful representations of reality.' (Lodge, *After Bakhtin*, 12) seems to be quite an appropriate approach:

> Now my first reaction as a novelist is to contest these remarks – to say to Barthes that I *do* feel a kind of parental responsibility for the novels I write, that the composition of them *is*, in an important sense, my past, that I do think, suffer, live for a book while it is in progress; and to say to de Man that my fiction has not 'for ever taken leave of reality' but is in some significant sense a representation of the real world, and that if my readers did not recognize in my novels some truths about the real behaviour of, say, academics or Roman Catholics, I should feel I had failed, and so would my readers. (Lodge, *After Bakhtin*, 15)

By imitating the form of documentary or historical writing a novelist exerts power over readers, obtaining total faith in the reality of fictitious characters and events[60]. He 'makes every endeavour to achieve verisimilitude. He tries to be neutral so as not to draw attention to the artificiality of the text' (Amann, 28).

Lodge the theorist is aware that writing cannot imitate reality directly. But it can

> imitate ways of thinking and speaking about reality, and other ways of writing about it. A working definition of realism in literature might be: *the representation of experience in a manner which approximates closely to descriptions of similar experiences in non-literary texts of the same culture*. (Lodge, *Modes*, 25)

[60] See Lodge, David. *After Bakhtin*, 17.

The realism of Lodge's novels does not so much concern the character's actions and feelings (as is the case with Greene's and Waugh's characters), but it is a realism created by the accurate and even meticulous description of events, situations, actual historical events, and discussions of theological topics of the time.

Different from the classical historical model, the modern novel makes concessions. A certain amount of ambivalence remains, due to the insight that there can be no ultimate claim to truth, that history's reception depends on the subjective view of the individual observer. The new form of the experimental historical novel introduces a narrator who comments on and interprets events in his story[61].

Lodge does so in *How Far Can You Go?*: On several occasions[62] he offers information on what happens in the "real world" parallel to what his characters experience. The purpose of this strategy is 'to authenticate his fiction in order to create [...] a fictional world that would correspond as closely as possible to the author's and reader's "real world"' (Morace, 173). Then when Violet is introduced he muses about what name to give her[63]; after describing how Edward and Dennis leave the baptismal party so Edward can tell Dennis about his diagnosis trisomy 21 for Nicole (Dennis's newly baptized daughter), he apologetically states that 'I did say this wasn't a comic novel, exactly' (*How Far*, 112), thus establishing an emphatic link with the reader. Another such link is established when he says that 'Dennis and Angela […] stand here for all the real people to whom such disaster happen' (*How Far*, 125). On introducing the discussion around Pope Paul VI's first encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*, he lets the narrator say

> [t]he omniscience of novelists has its limits, and we shall not attempt to trace here the process of cogitation, debate, intrigue, frae, anxious prayer and unconscious motivation which finally produced that document. (*How Far*, 114)

With that he seemingly refuses to take sides, but the ensuing discussion of Paul VI's line of action very much reflects historically documented discussions of the matter[64] with a clear tendency towards non-conformity with the Pope's opinion, something that is certainly expected by the reader after the preparatory explanations the narrator had given on the

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[61] Cf. Maack, 159f.

[62] i.e. every time he enters a new year that will be relevant for the plot: 1953 – Coronation year; ascent of Mount Everest by Hilary and Norgay (31); 1956 – Suez Crisis; Hungarian uprising (48ff.); 1958 – death of Pope Pius XII; 1963 – Profumo affair (76); 1966 – publication of Masters and Johnson study on human sexual response; England wins soccer World Cup; death of Evelyn Waugh; abolishment of Friday *fast* (he speaks of Friday *abstinence* – here for once he is wrong – cf. CIC can. 1251); Catholic Church still focused on contraception (102); 1968 – student revolutions; invasion of Czech Republic by Russia; assassination of Robert Kennedy; publication of *Humanae Vitae* (114); air crash on March 3rd 1974 (139); deaths of Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul I and election of John Paul II (243).

[63] cf. *How Far*, 15.

[64] for a more detailed discussion see below, 4.4.1.3.

changes that had occurred in the wake of the Second Vatican Council. Basically, those passages are very much true-to-life, interweaving real events with the lives of the characters in so tightly knit a texture that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between fact and fiction, especially reading the novel years later when some of the "real" names or events do no longer ring a bell. One example may suffice:

> In October of that year (1966) […] Pope Paul declared that there would be no pronouncement on the issue in the immediate future, and that meanwhile the traditional teaching must be rigidly adhered to. Monsignor Vallainc, head of the Vatican Press Office, when asked by journalists how the Pope could say that there was no doubt about the traditional teaching when his own commission had been appointed to investigate it, replied that the Church was in a state of certainty, but when the Pope had made his decision, whatever it was, the Church would pass from one state of certainty to another. This pronouncement was, according to Father Charles Davis, a leading theologian much admired by Austin Brierley, the last straw that broke the back of his faith in Catholicism, and shortly after it was made he left the priesthood, and the Church, and married, amid great publicity. (*How Far*, 105)

Compare this with the publication of an article in *Time Magazine* of Nov. 18th 1966:

> Is the church's old teaching against birth control a doubtful law? Although many theologians cannot see how the matter could be interpreted otherwise, Rome insists that the answer is no. Monsignor Fausto Vallainc, the Vatican's official press officer, said that the present teaching is still to be considered "certain," and that if the church changes, it will be "from one state of certainty to another state of certainty." (n.n. "Contraception? Not Yet.")

There is another article from Dec. 30th 1966 which is interesting in this context:

> The Rev. Charles Davis is England's leading Roman Catholic theologian. […]England's Catholics were shocked last week when Father Davis announced that after 20 years as a priest he was leaving the church. Compounding the shock, Davis, 43, also said that he intended to marry an American Catholic, Florence Henderson. (N.N., "A Theologian Defects")

Still, it is important not to 'treat the text as a sign of something more concrete, more authentic, more real, which the writer could, if he … cared to, hand over in its raw and naked truth' (Lodge, *After Bakhtin*, 16) and to keep in mind that the answer to the question whether a novel can be 'true to life' still remains 'yes and no' (Lodge, "The Novel Now" 17). For as Lodge says himself in his 1980 after-word to *British Museum*, his first two books, *The Picturegoers* and *Ginger*[65], were both 'essentially serious works of scrupulous realism' (*British Museum*, Afterword, 169), and yet he speaks of liberation when he talks about the discovery of his zest for satire and parody, which he makes extensive use of from

[65] all his exploits, including his success in taking his girl friend's virginity ("after much effort and little pleasure") are told in the flat, honest way that makes one recognize *Mr. Lodge as a truthful writer and his character as a distinct human being*. (N.N., "On Parade", 853, my emphasis)

British Museum onwards[66], thus eluding the dominance of his literature by expressive realism. 'What remains is an ambivalent and sometimes contradictory relationship between fact and fiction' (Lodge, *After Bakhtin*, 18). In his own search for a theory that could 'transcend th[is] opposition of humanist and post-structuralist viewpoints and provide an ideological justification for the novel that will apply to its entire history' (Lodge, *After Bakhtin*, 21), Lodge came upon the works of Mikhail Bakhtin, a Russian theorist whose 'concept of language is essentially dialogic' (Lodge, *After Bakhtin*, 21).

> The words we use come to us already imprinted with the meanings, intentions and accents o[f] previous users, and any utterance we make is directed towards some real or hypothetical Other. 'The word in living conversation is directly, blatantly, oriented toward a future answer word', says Bakhtin. 'It provokes an answer, anticipates it and structures itself in the answer's direction.' (Lodge, *After Bakhtin*, 21)
> The dialogic includes, but is not restricted to, the quoted verbal speech of characters. It also includes the relationship between the characters' discourses and the author's discourse (if represented in the text) and between all these discourses and other discourses outside the text, which are imitated or evoked or alluded to by means of doubly-oriented speech. It is of course true that everything in a novel is put there by the novelist – in this sense the literary text is nor, like a real conversation, a totally open system. But it is Bakhtin's point that the variety of discourses in the novel prevents the novelist from imposing a single world-view upon his readers even if he wanted to. (Lodge, *After Bakhtin*, 22)

Lodge does not only deal with Bakhtin's theory in his own theoretical work but also adopts the dialogic style Bakhtin describes in his own novels, as he indicates himself:

> As for my own contribution to contemporary British fiction, I must leave the Bakhtinian reading of that to others. I will only say that I have found Bakhtin's theory of the novel very useful when challenged to explain how I can write carnivalesque novels about academics while continuing to be one myself. (Lodge, "The Novel Now" 24)

That is at the same time the answer to his satirical and carnivalesque treatment of Catholicism in view of the fact that he is a Roman Catholic himself (or at least was an 'orthodox practising Catholic' in those days according to his own statement in the introduction to the 1993 reprint of *The Picturegoers*). Each of his novels deals with reality on one level or the other. The claim to realism of *Picturegoers* and *Ginger* has already been mentioned above.

Concerning *Out of the Shelter*, Lodge said in an interview:

> I hoped it would have some cultural-historical representativeness, a sort of international novel, […] and also be a kind of *Bildungsroman*. […] That experience of going to Germany at the age of 16 had been a rite of passage. […] If I were writing it now I would not use that restrained monotone, the conventionally realistic mode.

[66] See Lodge, David. *British Museum*. 169.

> […] [t]he epilogue in *Out of the Shelter* was meant, in a way, to reflect what I felt had been my own experience. […] [Timothy] is happy with his wife and family, and with his academic job, and he feels a bit guilty about the difference between his fate and that of other people. (Interview with Haffenden, 150f.)

British Museum makes things complicated for the critic by its "double structure". As Morace points out it is not easy to do the novel critical justice because it was as easy for early reviewers to overlook its parodic side as it is for later readers to fail to realise that in this novel 'realism and parody, life and literature, feed on and reflect each other, creating a comical but nonetheless disturbing confusion of realms' (Morace, 132). The TLS review states that

> there are flirtations with seriousness. Appleby's central nagging fear is that his wife is pregnant again. Forbidden as a Roman Catholic to take the more obvious measures, he provides us with slapstick fun with ovulation charts and rectal thermometers. But there are also glances at the deformations of feeling caused to the faithful by a dogma they resent but will not deny. (N.N., "Bucking", 1097)

The novel enters upon the dilemma of realism in a conversation the characters have at the postgraduate sherry party, when Adam explains his theory of the novelists' '*using up* experience'. 'Before the novel emerged […], narrative literature dealt only with the extraordinary or the allegorical. […] There was no risk of confusing that sort of thing with life' (*British Museum*, 118). The problem with the novels is that they describe ordinary people doing 'just the sort of things you did yourself' (*British Museum*, 118).

Of *Out of the Shelter* Lodge says that it is

> probably the most autobiographical of my novels, inasmuch as Timothy Young's early life, and the circumstances in which he comes to visit Heidelberg, correspond closely to my own. For Part I, I drew on my memories of the London Blitz of 1940: of being "evacuated" with my mother to the country for much of the war [...]; of growing up in the post-war austerity years in the unlovely environment of South-East London, [...]going to a grant-aided Catholic grammar school, and slightly surprising myself by my own academic success, which would eventually propel me into the professional middle class. (*Shelter*, Introduction, ix)

The profound historicity of events in that novel is beyond debate, and the linear presentation of events and realistic style show that this novel is nearer to his two first, *Picturegoers* and *Ginger*, than to *British Museum*, which is understandable as it was conceived before *British Museum* was written.

How Far is a special case as far as realism is concerned; it is what Lodge would call a 'problematic novel' (Morace, 15) because it 'exposes the conventions of fiction without giving up its claims to realistic representation' (Trinder, 6). As mentioned above, Lodge

'"breaks the frame" by introducing the author on the same level as the characters and reflecting on the potentialities of literary writing' (Trinder, 6). The reason for doing so is that this method gives the writer a chance to 'remain loyal both to reality and to fiction (contingency and necessity, scepticism and credulity)' (Morace, 15). The difficulty of that task is made a subject and the writer 'invites the reader to participate in the aesthetic and philosophical problems that the writing of fiction presents' (Lodge, *Crossroads*, 24). This makes the reader aware that fiction and reality are not always easily kept apart, and that fiction is carried along the paths of reality.

In order to achieve his aim, namely to show that the historical dilemmas of Catholicism are communal, without ending up with a huge saga novel, Lodge *had* to deviate from the realistic mode[67].

> I also knew I had to find some way of communicating to a non-Catholic audience a lot of theological and ecclesiastical information. So thinking in terms of a short novel with a rather rapid pace, with a lot of characters and a lot of information to communicate, I was led inexorably to use a dominant, intrusive authorial voice which would communicate that information in a way I hoped was itself amusing. (Interview with Haffenden, 155)

There are still moments of absolute realism; as Haffenden observes, Lodge focuses a good deal of conventional realistic energy on the fates of Dennis and Angela, for example[68]. Lodge speaks very openly about the parallels their story has to his own family life –

> My wife and I do have a Down's Syndrome child. […] I connect it with the whole curious business of Catholic teaching on birth control: there is a certain amount of evidence that if you try to use the so-called 'rhythm method' you are possibly […] more likely to have some congenital problem. That causal connection is only lightly touched on in the book; what interested me is the whole problem of how you cope with what appears to be a tragedy, and whether or not religion is any use in that eventuality. (Interview with Haffenden, 153)

When Haffenden approaches Lodge on the subject of the one unidentified voice in the transcript of a videotape of the Paschal Festival, Lodge affirms that

> the reader is indeed in a position to identify the voice-over as the narrative voice, and those speeches do represent my own view as authorial narrator about the whole issue that I've raised: that would be a proper way to read the book. (Interview with Haffenden, 155)

Still – ambiguity is retained to a certain extent, as he states in the same context that

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[67] cf. Haffenden, 155 Lodge and Haffenden talking about the relationship between fact and fiction in *How Far Can You Go?*

[68] cf. Interview with Haffenden, 153.

> the more prominent the author is, the more he becomes a rhetorical trope, and the more difficult it is to identify that voice with me. (Interview with Haffenden, 153)

In his TLS review of *How Far* Jeremy Treglown points out that the novel's

> factual narrative […] enables […] a mutual substantiation of the real and the imagined worlds, the historical lending the fictional authenticity, the fiction giving emotional weight to reality. "History" is shown not only as profoundly affecting individual lives, but as repeating on a larger scale domestic ironies and tragedies. (Treglown, 487)

The reason Lodge gives for his inclination to the realistic representation of events in his novels (though never in a monological way) is that 'part of the formal integrity of what you write must have its roots in what you are and in the life you live.' As he is 'working within a version of the world that will be recognizable to those who share it' that makes him 'a different kind of writer from somebody drawn to fantasy or the surreal.' His fiction 'aims to have at least a basis of recognizable representation of the real world' (Interview with Haffenden, 158).

3.1.1 Dialogism

The seeming discrepancy between the claim to realism and the comic or seriocomic form of Lodge's novels dissolves when we take into account his theoretical background, Bakhtin's theory of narrative dialogism. Morace gives a concise summary of possible levels of dialogism:

> There is not only the dialogic interaction between characters, of course, and between utterances, but also between words, between styles, between languages, between a character and his words and thoughts, between character(s) and author, between novel and reader, between the author and his other works, between the text and the intertext. Obviously, certain of these dialogues will be explicit in the novels, others implicit. (Morace, 5)

Whether explicit or implicit, 'there are no 'neutral' words and forms … [and] contextual overtones […] are inevitable in the word' (Bakthin, *Dialogic*, 293; quoted in Morace, 7). The branch of Baktin's theory which describes this phenomenon is intertextuality, but intertextuality just like dialogism exists on two planes; 'one plane involves what is actually present in the specific work and the other what is physically absent from the text but, nonetheless, contextually present' (Morace, 7). The function of intertextual reference is to convey meaning in a condensed form.

According to Bakhtin's typology of literary discourse, the various intertextual references can be allotted to the category of '*doubly-oriented speech*, that is speech which not only refers to something in the world but refers to another speech act by another addresser' (Lodge, *After Bakhtin*, 33). In Bakhtin's system there are four categories of doubly-oriented speech, namely stylization[69], parody, skaz[70] and "dialogue", i.e. 'discourse which alludes to an *absent* speech act', which means that it 'shapes the author's speech while remaining outside its boundaries' (Lodge, *After Bakhtin*, 33).

In *Pictuergoers* Mark muses on the problem whether other people are like him and comes to the conclusion that his self-consciousness is the penalty of his trying to be a writer. The description of the creative process instantly rings a bell: 'To create characters you took a rib from your own personality, and shaped a character around it with the dust of experience'(*Picturegoers*, 93) – this is essentially the content of Gen 2:22 'God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man' intertwined with Gen 2:7a 'the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground' – an instance of "dialogue". Another example is Jonathan in *Ginger*, with his denials of Percy and Mike as 'friends' – an allusion to Peter's denial Mt 26:69-74; and the echoes of Catholic doctrine in certain of his phrasings – 'occasion of sin' in his 'occasion for regret' and 'firm purpose of amendment' from the sacrament of penance in his 'possibilities of amendment'.

Stylization is a feature that accompanies most of the characters of *Picturegoers*. One of the most striking is the code of Doreen the usherette, whose world seems to be cut out from in-style magazines: 'erect in her *Second Skin* corselet, her tummy … perspiring through the new *Miracle Fabric*, her breasts […] in […] her *Treasure Chest* bra' (*Picturegoers*, 21, my emphasis). Next, there is Father Kipling: to him the cinema is 'a pit of almost total darkness and stifling heat' (*Picturegoers*, 19) – an allusion to hell, he speaks of 'communion with the screen' (*Picturegoers*, 34), the actress in his eyes is a 'disgracefully undressed Jezebel' (*Picturegoers*, 36) – even if one did not know, these and other utterances clearly mark him as a man of the church. Another man, but certainly not one of the church, still betrays tentative moral gropings, namely Jonathan Browne in *Ginger*: 'confession', 'contrition', 'indoctrinated', 'covet', 'expiation', 'benediction', 'mission', 'conscience', 'eremitical' bespeak a solid religious subtext. Throughout *Shelter*, the ambiguity of Kate's character and her family's response to her evidences itself in lines such as 'it was as if Kate were accumulating invisible credits, like *indulgences*, on which

[69] 'At times, however, the line separating stylization from parody cannot be quite as clearly drawn as Bakhtin would like to assume, and the reader may well wonder if there is not some irony in the echo' (Morace, 186).
[70] i.e. Russian for *speech*, *oral narration*; from *сказат* [skazat] – *to tell*.

the rest of the family could draw' (*Shelter*, 41, my emphasis), an allusion to the religious preoccupation of her family. *How Far* practically begins with a stylized sentence: 'It is just after eight o'clock in the morning of a dark February day, *in this year of grace nineteen hundred and fifty-two*' (*How Far*, 1, my emphasis) – a shot at liturgical usage.

There are many instances of parody, Father Kipling's sermons in *Picturegoers*, for example; and most obviously those in *British Museum*, the most interesting to this discussion being the "Chesterbelloc"-style passages Adam reads from the oeuvre of Egbert Merrymarsh. But the description of the Game of Snakes and Ladders in *How Far* can also be seen as a parody, namely of the rigid and monologically certain style of the penny-catechism.

Skaz is maybe the most prominent form of doubly-oriented speech Lodge makes use of. All the instances of quotation from the Bible, liturgy, theologians, philosophers, penny catechism, the Catechism, even Code of Canon Law, fall into this category because they are always used as direct quotations. *How Far* starts with an epigraph quoting a well-known theologian of his time, Hans Küng: 'What can we know? Why is there anything at all? Why not nothing? What ought we to do? Why do what we do? Why and to whom are we finally responsible?'[71] (*How Far*, epigraph)

The intertextual references do not always establish a direct connection, but are sometimes more intricate, so that whoever cares can follow the hints[72], or give it a miss. Interesting as it may be, it is not necessary to identify each and every intertextual allusion so as to understand Lodge's novels. In order to guarantee the readability of his books, he writes layered fiction, 'so that it will make sense and give satisfaction even on the surface level' (Interview with Haffenden, 160), while readers are invited to discover other levels of implication and reference if they are thus inclined. To the theologically interested reader *Picturegoers, Ginger, British Museum, Shelter, How Far, and Paradise News* will open up in a different way than to the connoisseur of English literature.

The purpose of this paper is to identify part of the dialogically intersecting voices, namely those that speak some form or another of Catholic language (or shall we say dialect?). The motivation is to show that by his decision to employ the dialogic form,

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[71] the passage is a direct quotation from Küng's tractate *On Being a Christian*, from the chapter "Die Wirklichkeit Gottes", p. 67.

[72] a challenging instance, although the novel in question is not part of our discussion: In *Thinks* Lodge provides us with enough facts to figure out that the action of the novel takes place in 1997: In the Roman Catholic Church, the Readings of Sunday masses are fixed in a three-year-scheme, and the story of Abraham and Isaak which he refers to ('The First Reading was the story of Abraham and Isaac'(*Thinks*, 31)) is read on the second Sunday in lent, in the reading-year B. The diary entry is made on February 23rd (*Thinks*, 21), and the only "second Sunday in lent" that fell on a 23rd of February during the whole 20th century was the one in 1997.

Lodge contributes to the liberation of the Catholic mind in that his novels set people to think about the reasonableness of adhering rigidly to legalistic, normative, enslaving concepts. Apart from the employment of doubly-oriented speech, his introduction of juxtaposing couples or concepts opens a space for discussion of both sides of the medal – the agnostic and the blind believer, the enlightened Christian who does not conform to the magisterium of the Church in all matters of faith or morality and the faithful servant of Rome who unquestioningly does as he is bid, without judging the one or the other, but also without resolving the tension in a synthesis that would not be credible either.

One such couple are Mark and Clare in *Picturegoers*. A mildly agnostic young intellectual in search of worldly delectation and a shy young ex-novice not acquainted with the ways of the world, they gradually trade characters. 'She … [becomes] more sceptical and self-consciously dialogical, and he more strident and monologically certain' (Morace, 115). The change is conveyed by means of language; towards the end of the novel their words echo the former character of the other. But neither of them ends up as a winner or loser, and there is no saying which of the two would score more points in The Game[73], because, after all, it is just a game, and life is more complex than that, even for a Catholic.

Or take *Ginger, You're Barmy*. Jon says: 'I have always tried to avoid occasion for regret, the most lingering of all the unpleasant emotions, by prudent foresight' (*Ginger*, 46) – Jon's conscience does not seem to work at all, whereas Mike's works overtime. The dialogic juxtaposition of these two characters demonstrates that there is no monologic synthesis that can solve moral dilemmas. Neither Mike nor Jon is right, but 'they somehow share the truth between them' (Morace, 121). On the one hand, there is Mike with his view of the army as 'evil', which deprives him of his 'free will' and makes it impossible for him to fulfil his purpose on earth, which is 'to exercise my free will, and to save my soul' (*Ginger*, 158) – a rather pedantic and catechetical way of seeing things; on the other hand, there is Jon, for whom the army means the interruption of his academic studies and the limiting of his personal freedom – a rather self-centred point of view. 'Instead of promoting a moral position, the novel creates a morally and textually ambiguous world' (Morace, 122), an ambiguity which comes to a climax in the description of Percy Higgins's death. The crucial question whether it was accidental or deliberate, crucial not only from the coroner's and the military court's view, but especially in view of the fact that he was a practising Catholic, is left unanswered. The novel focuses on the way Jon and Mike deal with this ambiguity.

[73] 'The name of the game was Salvation, the object to get to Heaven and avoid Hell' (*How Far*, 6)

Two juxtaposing concepts collide in *British Museum*: on the one hand, we have the attitude of the Samuel-Johnson epigraph 'I would be a Papist if I could. I have fear enough, but an obstinate rationality prevents me' (*British Museum*, 6), which is represented by Adam's friends Camel and Pond; on the other hand, we have the Applebys, who strictly adhere to the Roman Catholic Church's teaching on birth control, hoping for a change but in the meantime abandoning themselves to their fates.

Life's ambiguities are presented (although rather clumsily) in *Shelter*, where Timothy, 'coming out of his various literal and figurative shelters' enters a world that is 'socially, culturally, religiously, and sexually ambiguous' (Morace, 146). On the religious level the novel presents two worlds: the lower-middle-class Anglo-Catholicism Timothy is indoctrinated with and the secularity that he fears has corrupted his sister in Heidelberg. Back in England, 'Sunday was mainly devoted to Church' (*Shelter*, 42), whereas on the Continent, Kate 'usually ... [lies] in on a Sunday' (*Shelter*, 134). This and many other alternatives stand before Timothy, but 'Lodge suggest[s] that there is no one voice and no one course of action for Timothy [...] to follow' (Morace, 148). Kate again is a living oxymoron, to her family she is 'at once a fairy godmother and a fallen woman.' (Morace, 148) The novel on the whole is a variation of the theme 'dialogue between the flesh and the spirit, but one in which the voices merge and the spirit is hardly allowed an unequivocal triumph' (Morace, 149).

How Far Can You Go? is 'a novel in which ...[Lodge] cultivates an artful simplicity in order to undermine the power of whatever is static and singular, in a word, monological' (Morace, 172) The most striking feature are the digressions Lodge makes, the longest in chapter four: the discussion of the birth-control debate (pages 114 to 121), a passage which comes up with another digression from the digression, namely the explanation of the problems the concession that conjugal sex is an *intrinsece bonum* brings with it (pages 116-117). The dialogism of these passages has more than one layer. First, they point out that 'the entire birth control debate was *itself* a theological *digression* insofar as it involved a drifting away from Christ's own teachings into a realm that is at best speculative' (Morace, 177, my emphasis), at least if share the view of the narrator who states that the whole issue was 'a question on which Jesus Christ himself had left no recorded opinion[74]' (*How Far*, 115). On another level, the passages imply 'sympathy with liberal Catholics who viewed the Church's prohibition on birth control as an imposition of the Church's

[74] If we read the Gospels closely and filtered out everything whereof Jesus Christ *had* left a recorded opinion, the result would not bear any comparison with the doctrine of any Christian confession or with any of their moral, sociological, ethical, pastoral… teachings.

power in an area where it had no real authority' (Morace, 177). The discussion then drifts into an area the reader would not expect in the least, namely the sexual life of priests and nuns:

> The value of celibacy no longer seemed self-evident, and a progressive priest might find himself in the paradoxical position of defending the right of the laity to enjoy pleasures he himself had renounced long ago, on grounds he no longer believed in. (*How Far*, 120)

Later the narrator concedes that the whole debate over birth control was not quite as absurd a diversion from more important theological or moral questions as one might think,

> for it compelled thoughtful Catholics to re-examine and redefine their views on fundamental issues: the relationship between authority and conscience, between the religious and lay vocations, between flesh and spirit. (*How Far*, 120)

The novel on the whole appears to advocate change within the Catholic Church and at the same time uses comedy to undermine the authority of those characters who advocate the liberal course. Take for example Adrian, the chairman of Catholics for an Open Church – COC (what an acronym!). He is quite proud when the Automobile Club puts up a road sign for their Pascha Festival, thus bestowing legitimacy on it. And there is a wonderfully self-conscious dialogical line an old spinster (who has 'pastoral responsibility for the girls on her floor') delivers in a discussion of morals at Michael's college:

> With Bede teaching situation ethics in the Theology Department, it's hardly surprising the young people should decide it's all right to sleep with each other – always providing, of course, that it's a serious interpersonal relationship based on genuine trust and a non-exploitative giving of oneself to another. (*How Far*, 197)

As Morace says, Lodge offers 'endless oppositions, qualifications, and coordinations designed to undermine […] the novel's deceptively simple catechetical style and structure' (Morace, 178). With this method he forces the reader not only to accept the multiplicity of possible interpretations but also 'to remain open to all the conflicting possibilities' (Morace, 179). *How Far* 'does not really take up a clear position on the question the title raises, it explores the question' (Interview with Haffenden, 152).

On the whole one can say that Lodge throughout his novels strives to move toward an 'ever freer and broader and more self-conscious use of the novel's inherently dialogical means, towards a plurality of voices and forms' at the same time holding on to 'whatever is […] essentially human' (Morace, 208).

3.2 Satire[75]

Satire is traditionally defined as 'the employment, in speaking or writing, of sarcasm, irony, ridicule, parody, etc. in exposing, denouncing, deriding, or ridiculing vice, folly, indecorum, abuses, or evils of any kind' (COED, satire). This means that there must be a certain level of moral standards against which vice, folly, indecorum, abuse and evil can be measured. Problems arise when moral standards themselves become the target of satire, as is the case in Lodge's novels when he enters upon the theme of sexual morality. Obviously, although a Catholic author, he does not conform to the moral standards of the Catholic Church. His moral standards are detached from his confession and he applies a more humanist measure.

The question arises now to what end Lodge applies satire in his novels. It seems that it is not in order to achieve change or renewal, his are not such noble motives. He savages his own social set without any expectation that this satire will materially change anything. He ruthlessly observes the Catholic system and shows how characters suffer from it and still survive. Lisa Colletta points out in her study *Dark Humor and Social Satire in the Modern British Novel* that 'comedy no longer serves a corrective satirical function but instead offers the pleasurable […] protection of laughter' (Colletta, 5). According to Freud, such comedic defiance of distressing subject matter is 'humour on a grand scale' (Freud, *Jokes*, 285, quoted in Colletta, 7). 'It acknowledges pain, suffering, and futility but displays a magnificent superiority over the real situation' (Colletta, 7). One of the advocates of comedy as a coping device is Bakhtin. To him, 'the comic experience is important because it suggests the truth about the basic antinomies of existence, offering a way out' (Colletta, 8).

In tracing the history of the novel back to the temporary comic babble of carnival, from which spring 'lawless proliferation and renewal' (Morace, 3), Bakhtin concludes that the

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[75] working definitions:
comic – aiming at a humorous or ridiculous effect: applied to literary compositions,… which have it as their express aim to excite mirth. (COED, *comic*)
humour – a) That quality of action, speech, or writing, which excites amusement; oddity, jocularity, facetiousness, comicality, fun b) The faculty of perceiving what is ludicrous or amusing, or of expressing it in speech, writing, or other composition; jocose imagination or treatment of a subject. (COED, humour)
irony – 1. A figure of speech in which the intended meaning is the opposite of that expressed by the words used; usually taking the form of sarcasm, or ridicule in which laudatory expressions are used to imply condemnation or contempt. 2. A condition of affairs or events of a character opposite to what was, or might naturally be, expected; a contradictory outcome of events as if in mockery of the promise and fitness of things.
sarcasm – A sharp, bitter, or cutting expression or remark; a bitter gibe or taut. Now usually in generalized sense: Sarcastic language; sarcastic meaning or purpose. (COED, sarcasm)
sarcastic – bitterly cutting or caustic (COED, sarcastic)

consequences for literature are 'profusion of styles […] and self-consciousness which evidences itself as parody' (Morace, 3f.). The novel becomes essentially parodic, undermining conventionality on all levels, starting with its own form and language and affecting author, reader, society and authority[76]. But that does not mean that it is reduced to something less earnest, less relevant to life, than straightforward classical historical fiction. In his work of literary critique *The Dialogic Imagination* Bakhtin states that any form of straightforward discourse is one-sided and therefore

> incapable of exhausting the object. The process of parodying forces us to experience those sides of the object that are not otherwise included in a given genre or a given style. Parodic-travestying literature introduces the permanent corrective of laughter, of a critique on the one-sided seriousness of the lofty direct word, the corrective of reality that is always richer, more fundamental and most importantly *too contradictory and heteroglot* to be fitted into a high and straightforward genre. (Bakhtin, *Imagination*, quoted in Lodge, *After Bakhtin*, 39).

'Parody […] is obviously more critical than other forms of writing' (Amann, 83), not least because of its relation to an intertext. 'An intertext or the reference to it is a possible indicator of tone or attitude' (Amann, 79). In order to understand certain passages in Lodge's novels, we need to be aware of the ironic tone they adopt and of the connotations that arise from the detected references; and we must not forget that satire (taking on the form of parody, comedy, humour, irony, pastiche, etc.) only works in correspondence with truth, which means that satire is only successful if it relates to an objectively true subject, which is ridiculed or put into a contradictory context, thus rendering the combination of two objective truths subjectively ironic.

In the case of Lodge's novels, the narrator's irony is not confined to traditional forms, but extends to changes and new developments in the Catholic Church, as Beata Streichsbier points out in her study: 'The New Catholics have not made any real progress. They are […] preoccupied with secular problems and with becoming modern and progressive' (Streichsbier, 101). This may be true to a great extent, but when she presents as an example the impression that 'There is […] a tragically ironic incompatibility between the belief in the goodness of God and the experience of all the suffering in the world' (Streichsbier, 107) we must point out that this has nothing to do with irony deliberately employed by Lodge as a stylistic element, but is a totally earnest and existential question of theodicy[77]. Calling this irony belittles the problem that has occupied generations of

[76] cf. Morace, 4
[77] The first to formulate the problem was Epikur:

theologians and philosophers and ultimately generated great theories of atheism and agnosticism, on the one hand, and answers to those by apologists and leading fundamental and practical theologians like Rahner and Metz, on the other[78].

We will have to look for irony someplace else, for example in the see-saw relationship between Mark and Clare in *Picturegoers*. First he wants her but she is too much of a "Good Catholic Girl" to allow any messing around. In the course of the novel they gradually switch characters and when Clare is finally prepared to go in for Mark, he has lost his interest and wants to become a priest. 'Now I'm like you, you're like I used to be,' she tells him. 'It's like a see-saw: one side goes up, one side goes down. That's me gone down I suppose. I suppose we were once dead level, but I don't especially remember it' (*Picturegoers*, 202).

A similar ironic incompatibility arises in *British Museum* when Adam is first afraid lest Barbara should be pregnant again. In order to secure their future, he begs his Professor to get him a job with the English department. On hearing about his ever growing family, the Professor promises to see what he can do. When Barbara tells Adam that she is not pregnant after all, he ought to be relieved – but ironically cannot be, because her pregnancy is what the job depends on. So much for the Catholic Church's concept of 'responsible parenthood.' *British Museum* on the whole is a satirical book par excellence, and the ironical treatment of the birth-control issue reaches one of its peaks very early in the novel, in an article the frustrated Adam mentally mentally:

> "*Catholicism, Roman,* for a Martian encyclopaedia compiled after life on earth had been destroyed by atomic warfare.
>
> Roman Catholicism was, according to archaeological evidence, distributed fairly widely over the planet Earth in the twentieth century. As far as the Western Hemisphere is concerned, it appears to have been characterized by a complex system of sexual taboos and rituals. Intercourse between married partners was restricted to certain limited periods determined by the calendar and the body-temperature of the female. Martian archaeologists have learned to identify the domiciles of Roman Catholics by the presence of large numbers of complicated graphs, calendars, small booklets full of figures, and quantities of broken thermometers, evidence of the great importance attached to this code. Some scholars have argued that it was merely a method of limiting the number of offspring; but as it has been conclusively proved that the Roman Catholics

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Entweder will Gott die Übel beseitigen und kann es nicht: dann ist Gott schwach, was auf ihn nicht zutrifft;
oder er kann es und will es nicht: dann ist Gott missgünstig, was ihm fremd ist;
oder er will es nicht und kann es nicht: dann ist er schwach und missgünstig zugleich, also nicht Gott;
oder er will es und kann es, was allein für Gott ziemt: Woher kommen dann die Übel und warum nimmt er sie nicht hinweg?

Among the philosophers and theologians who concerned themselves with the problem are Leibnitz, Hegel, Schelling, Kant, Jonas, Augustinus, Thomas Aquinas, Luther, Rahner, Guardini, Sölle, Küng, and Metz, to name just a few.

[78] In fact, many theologians are convinced that the question of theodicy and the resulting theories of atheism and agnosticism contributed greatly to a re-definition, re-positioning and renewal in Catholic theology.

> produced more children on average than any other section of the community, this seems untenable. Other doctrines of the Roman Catholics included a belief in a Divine Redeemer and in a life after death. (*British Museum*, 11f.)

In *How Far* Lodge frequently uses irony to point at the weak points of the Church:

> In April it was leaked to the press that four conservative theologians on the Pontifical Commission[79] had admitted that they could not show the intrinsic evil of contraception from Natural Law arguments alone. In other words, they still thought it was wrong, but only because the Church had always said it was, and could not have been teaching error for centuries. However, as a letter in the *Tablet* pointed out, the Church had once taught that owning slaves was permissible and lending money at interest was a grave sin. (*How Far*, 102 f.)

In *Paradise News* the most pronounced irony lies in the nature of Bernard's life. He, the agnostic, is the only person in the novel who truly and from deepest conviction lives a life worth the epithet "spiritual" in the sense of acting according to the Golden Rule.

Some of the most critical passages in Lodge's novels are the passages '[p]ointing out affectation and hypocrisy, which I think of as the satirical edge of comedy' (Interview with Haffenden, 161). These passages are usually connected with one of the 'minor'[80] characters, Percy in *Ginger*, Damien in *Picturegoers*, Father Finbar in *British Museum*, Miles in *How Far*, Mr Walsh and Ms Knoepflmacher in *Paradise News*.

One of the reasons why the field of Catholicism lends itself to satire so well is that the strange 'difference of Catholicism'[81] as a whole is an ambiguous one, encompassing both high art and bad taste, both piety and superstition. The outcomes, in Lodge's novels, are descriptions of interiors of homes and churches that oscillate between cliché, satire and reality:

> The kitchen into which he was ushered confirmed his suspicions about Mrs Mallory's religious background: the evidence of the plastic holy water stoup askew on the wall, the withered holy Palm, stuck behind a picture of the Sacred Heart which resembled an illustration in a medical text-book, and the statue of St Patrick enthroned upon the dresser, was conclusive. (*Picturegoers*, 44)

> The walls were hung with large pictures of martyrs in various forms of agony: he identified St Sebastian transfixed with arrows like a pin-cushion, and St Lawrence

[79] Prof. J. Ford SJ, Washington; Prof. J. Visser, Academia Alfonsia, Rom; Prof. M. Zalba SJ, Gregoriana/Rom; Prof. St. de Lestapis SJ, Paris/Vanves – The authors of the Minority Report which was published in the *Tablet* and in the *Herder Korrespondenz*.

[80] With the usually long cast lists of Lodge's novels it is difficult to say who is 'minor', because all of the 'minor' characters play a crucial role: Damien provides the foil for Mark; Father Finbar serves as conservative partner in the birth-control-discussion; Miles fulfils a double role, he stands for the disappointed convert and he is the one homosexual you need for a fair statistics; we need Mr Walsh to get Bernard to Hawaii, and Ms Knoepflmacher to have someone look after Mr Walsh while Bernard is taking his courses in sexual education.

[81] cf. 1 Pet 2:11

> broiling patiently on a grid-iron. While those morbid icons were consistent with what he knew of Mrs Rottingdean's religious background, they made him feel uncomfortable. (*British Museum*, 102)

> The winter daybreak is too feeble to penetrate the stained-glass windows, doubly and trebly stained by soot and bird droppings, that depict scenes from the life of Our Lady, with St Jude, patron of lost causes, prominent in the foreground of her Coronation in Heaven. In alcoves along the side walls votive candles fitfully illuminate the plaster figures of saints paralysed in attitudes of prayer or exhortation. (*How Far*, 1)

There are also descriptions of acts of worship that hover at the brink of non-creditability:

> Clare was getting down on her knees, as if to underline her own (Patricia's, who is watching her) lack of real piety. She usually said her prayers in bed. And Clare said such terribly long prayers. The whole rosary at *least*. Perhaps she'd better say some more. Hail Mary full of grace… (*Picturegoers*, 97)

> [Mark] rummaged in the toy-cupboard of his childish memory for old scraps and fragments of prayers. Hail holy Queen, Mother of Mercy Hail our Life our Sweetness and our Hope. O clement O loving O sweet Virgin Mary. O Sacred Heart of Jesus have mercy on us, O Sacred Heart of Jesus have mercy on us. *Help me to do the things I should*
> *To be to others kind and good;*
> *In my work and in my play,*
> *To grow more loving every day.*
> He realized that he had been reciting this infantile jingle over and over again. (*British Museum*, 95)

> And another thing I've forgotten is to say my prayers, she thought, as she reached the bedroom. Perhaps I'll skip them tonight. But I suppose I've got something to be thankful for. Just a Hail Mary then. (*British Museum*, 156)

> Lying on his back, he made the Sign of the Cross, and said his usual night prayers, which he had omitted in the excitement of going to bed – an Our Father, a Hail Mary and a Glory Be, an Act of Contrition. (*How Far*, 53)

Occasionally Lodge's characters fall into the abyss of hypocrisy, as is usually the case with Damien:

> Damien O'Brien watched the charade with tight-lipped disapproval. […] a person so obviously worldly and unprincipled […] …[he] wrinkled his nostrils …[at a man reeking of beer] […] the bus lurched forward and removed from his vision the scandalous advertisement of some half-naked film actress […] it was time some organization of Catholic action organized a protest against such advertisements. … The thought recalled him to the beads he was fingering in his pocket. He passed on to the Third Joyful Mystery of the rosary: the Birth of Our Lord. (*Picturegoers*, 28)

In contrast to that, Lodge at the same time presents Catholicism as a 'poetic and aristocratic religion' (Woodman, 61). When in *How Far* Miriam is introduced to

Catholicism by her fiancé Michael, she finds it 'just what she was looking for: it was subtle, it was urbane, it had history, learning, art (especially music) on its side.' (*How Far*, 58) But the aestheticism is also revealed as a commonplace. Mark Underwood comments on the 'common mistake of outsiders, that Catholicism was a beautiful, solemn, dignified, aesthetic religion' when in reality it was 'ugly, crude, bourgeois' (*Picturegoers*, 173). When we look at Lodge's whole oeuvre, Catholicism is never secure from satire, satire works as a kind of corrective for commonplace notions.

Compared with many modern novelists, however, 'who like to humiliate and torment their characters, Lodge treats his creations with respect and affection, even at the risk of being sentimental' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 47). Satirize as he may, Lodge never drifts into cynism, he has 'an extraordinary generosity towards all … [his] characters, even those who might otherwise be considered shits' (Haffenden, 164).

3.3 The fun-factor - how not to take Catholicism and thus life too seriously

> The fictional use of violence, shock, comedy, insult, the bizarre, are the everyday tools of the Catholic novelist's trade. How could it be otherwise? (Walker Percy, *Message in a Bottle*, 118)
>
> Jokes defend the individual from repression, inhibitions, and other forces that threaten the ego. (Freud)

As we have noticed at the outset of this discussion, Lodge's novels are not concerned with the high spiritual drama of the "classical" Catholic novel, but they deal with everyday Catholic life. In part Lodge resorts to a drab realistic presentation, but 'the problems that arise from following their beliefs are more likely to be treated comically than melodramatically' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 30) and among other devices he makes abundant use of doubly-oriented discourse (parody, *skaz*, stylization and dialogue) in order to mock the over-the-top and "more popish than the pope" attitude of men of the Church towards morality (Father Martin Kipling in *Picturegoers*, Father Finbar Flannegan in *British Museum*, Father McGahern and the bishop who dispended Father Brierley in *How Far*, Bernard's superiors in *Picturegoers*), the Theologians' grandiose and haughty style of discourse (e.g. the Game of Salvation episode or the explanation of the birth-control issue in *How Far*) and the church-folk's views and beliefs (Damien's hypocrisy in *Pictuergoers*, Mike's radicalism in *Ginger*, the Applebys' adherence to the Church's teaching on birth control in *British Museum*, Ruth's conversion to Pentecostalism in *How Far*, etc.).

In his 1985 interview with Haffenden Lodge explains his affinity to the comic genre and why he thinks that it 'performs a very valuable hygienic cultural function: it makes sure that institutions are always subject to a kind of ridiculing criticism' (Haffenden, 166). He derives this idea from Bakhtin, who associates this kind of criticism with bodily processes, 'which religious and governmental institutions try to deny and suppress in the interests of mind and power' (Haffenden, 167). Lodge says that his way of writing aims at reminding the institutions (whether it be academy or Church) that '…[their] interests are not all-absorbing and all-important, and that those interests to some extent depend on the suppression of certain facts about life of a low, physical, earthy kind' (Interview with Haffenden, 167).

This may be perceived as subversive, but subversion in the novel has a liberating effect. Hierarchies are toppled, contrasts are united, sanctuaries become profane, and the relativity of things is revealed.

'Comedy is based on contrast, on incongruity' (*Language*, 250), and there are various ways of achieving the aim of 'ridiculing criticism'. For one, you can place figures and objects of authority 'in a decidedly humorous light by excerpting their words in such a way as to deprive them of their serious context and content' (Morace, 137).

When Father Kipling's cinematic adventure is depicted, the passage is densely packed with theological vocabulary. He sees a 'moral obligation' to go in the cheapest seats (an indirect allusion to Lk 14:7-10[82]), but at the same time he thinks he has a right 'to indulge himself' this once. He finds himself propelled into a 'pit of almost total darkness and stifling heat' (*Picturegoers*, 19), a phrase taken from the eschatological discourse of the Four Last Things, the chapter about Hell, and put into the entirely inappropriate context of Father Kipling's perception of the interior of the cinema. This way, Father Kipling is instantly established as an ultra-conservative, unworldly character who needs not to be taken seriously by the reader. The effect is enhanced when he reaches the row he has been ushered to: 'Horror of horrors! He had genuflected!' (*Picturegoers*, 20) and to top it off he finds himself wondering at the opening credits listing names like Mo (i.e. Moses), Xerses (i.e. Xerxes, the Persian king from the book of Ester), Angel, and announcing that 'Color

[82] When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honour at the table, he told them this parable: When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honour, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, 'Give this man your seat.' Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, 'Friend, move up to a better place.' Then you will be honoured in the presence of all your fellow guests. (Lk 14:7-10)

was by Technicolor' – 'He had always thought colour was by Almighty God' (*Picturegoers*, 63).

You can also take the form of serious Catholic discourse and fill it with an entirely different, very worldly meaning. Lodge does so in the penny-catechism parody in *Picturegoers*. The first authority for the average Catholic of the nineteen-fifties was the penny-catechism. Lodge takes its form (question – answer, rep. ad inf.) and turns it into 'a cinema-manager's catechism:

> Q. What does the margin of profit or loss depend on?
> A. Ice-cream.
> Q. What therefore, does my livelihood depend on?
> A. Ice-cream.
> Q. What therefore, is the source of all happiness?
> A. Ice-cream…. (*Picturegoers*, 11)

Another strategy is to juxtapose familiar situations with inappropriate reactions. When experience of the world leads us to expect one reaction to familiar situations and we perceive another, the surprise generally results in laughter.

In *Pictuergoers* there are two perfect examples, both of them featuring very conservative Catholics who find themselves in situations that make them react in ways that do not really fit their conservative mindset:

Let us first take a look at naïve unworldly Father Kipling. He is hilariously innocent as to what will happen in the film he is watching (*While the Cat's Away*[83], an indecent story featuring a seductress, an infidel husband and many potentially disturbing scenes). In the Kipling cinema scene Lodge juxtaposes the official reason of the visit to the cinema (to see *Song of Bernadette*[84], a biographical film about the life of Bernadette Soubrious, the Saint from Lourdes) with the curiosity as to what has been attracting so many of his parishioners to this 'pit of total darkness and stifling heat' (*Picturegoers*, 19). Eventually, curiosity wins the day and although he can see 'no reason why he should continue any longer to witness this unsavoury performance' (*Picturegoers*, 67) he stays on and becomes witness to an undressing scene: 'But this was disgraceful. Why one could almost see her … He could swear he could see her …Behind his spectacles, Father Kipling *strained his eyes to see if he could see her …*' (*Picturegoers*, 67, my emphasis)

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[83] which is basically a thinly disguised parody of Billy Wilder's *The Seven Year Itch* (1955) with Marilyn Monroe in the leading role.
[84] *Song of Bernadette* (1943), story by Franz Werfel, screenplay by George Seaton, directed by Henry King.

The other – formally rather similar – scene features Damien O'Brien, Clare's cousin from Ireland. He is depicted in the evening in his room, reading the Office, when he suddenly closes his breviary with an irritable snap, because

> it was completely impossible tonight, with the murmur of Clare's and Underwood's voices floating up from the street. […] Why were they there, talking? It was most inconsiderate of them. […] Clare, too, ought to have more care for her good name. Why, they might be a couple in the shadows behind a dance hall. *He strained his ears to catch the conversation below, but without success. Perhaps if he eased the window open a little*… (*Picturegoers*, 88, my emphasis)

This scene does not so much aim at the institution but at the basis of the Church – its individual members. Jealous, self-righteous, hypocritical, eavesdropping Damien reflects the worst aspects of religious life. According to Martin, 'Lodge apparently preferred to keep us emotionally distant from Damien' (Martin, 103). This emotional distance allows the reader to detach himself from all the absurd notions of religious belief, morality and spirituality Damien stands for. Sometimes he may detect traces of "Damienism" in his own thinking. The mirror Lodge holds up here resembles the mirrors in a hall of mirrors – the distorted pictures that are thrown back to the spectator make him laugh and yet – there is a grain of truth in the aspect. In the character of Damien Lodge makes use of humour in the sense Colletta describes it:

> Humor […] is essentially a function of perceived superiority, and we laugh when we see someone slip on a banana peel and suddenly, gloriously, realize that it could have just as easily been ourselves.' (Colletta, 18)

Sometimes the effect Lodge achieves is tragically comic, as with a careless remark Father Finbar makes in *British Museum*. Adam picks up Father Finbar on his way to Westminster Cathedral where there is 'some Monsignor or other who's giving a lecture on the Council to the priests of the diocese. One priest was invited from each parish, so we tossed up for it, and *I lost*' (*British Museum*, 28).

The concept of juxtaposition of known world and unexpected turn of events is used in a refined form in Adam's daydream scene when he imagines how it would be if he were elected Pope. We must remember that as the novel is set during the time of Vat II and was published shortly after the Council's conclusion readers would have distinct memories of the last election of a Pope (John XXIII died in 1963). The informed reader would also know about the Council's hesitation on making a definite statement on birth control. Lodge first establishes a realistic context in that he has Adam glance at a newspaper article about the Vatican II debate over re-examining the Church's teaching in this area and the pope's noncommittal stance:

> A headline in the evening paper about the Vatican Council caught his eye, and he bought a copy. […] Cardinal Suenens[85] […] had called for a radical re-examination of the Church's teaching on birth control. Cardinal Ottaviani[86] had countered by asserting that married Catholics should place their trust in Divine Providence. On no other issue, the paper's correspondent reported, were the liberal and conservative factions at the Council so clearly defined. A prolonged and bitter debate was in prospect, which was likely to be resolved only be the personal intervention of the Pope, who had not as yet indicated the direction of his own thinking on the matter. (British Museum, 71)

Next Lodge has Adam drift into a daydream. He has a vision of being Pope. An English Pope[87] – the first for eight centuries[88] – and a man who has been married and has four children at that. He very accurately describes the ceremonies accompanying the election and introduction of the new Pope – Conclave, black smoke, election, white smoke, the question which name the new Pope proposes to take, the joyous words "Habemus Papam!" – and then he has Adam proclaim, 'We take the name of Alexander.' What a shock for the congregation of cardinals! ''*Alexander!*' hissed Scarlettofeverini. 'Will you make a mockery of the Papacy that you take the name of the most infamous man who ever disgraced its annals?'' (*British Museum*, 72) Why is this so much of a problem? Alexander VI, around 1500, was born Rodrigo Borgia, a Spaniard, vice-chancellor to the Pope; his mistresses were Vannozza de Catanea and Julia Farnese (whose brother was Pope Paul III); with Vannozza he had children (Lucrezia Borgia, Cesare Borgia) and led a family life starting from the time he was Cardinal.

In the following, Pope 'Appleby' Alexander VII writes his first encyclical entitled '*De Lecto Conjugale*' (an allusion to Pius XI's 1930 encyclical *Casti Connubii*).

> It is concerned with the role of sexuality in marriage and related problems of birth control, world population problems *etcetera*. The Pope made moving reference to his own wife, who died in her fourth childbirth. […] Scarlettofeverini, however, waxed more and more indignant as the reading proceeded. […] The Pope concluded by asserting that, in the present state of theological uncertainty, the practice of birth control by any method was left to the discretion and conscience of the Faithful. At the same time he called for the establishment of clinics in every parish to instruct married Catholics in all available techniques. […] The impact of the new encyclical has been prodigious, despite attempts to have it banned in Sicily and Ireland. The Anglican Church has come over to Rome in a body. So many lapsed Catholics are

[85] Leo Jozef Suenens (July 16, 1904—May 6, 1996), Belgian prelate of the Roman Catholic Church, Archbishop of Mechelen-Brussel (1961-1979), elevated to the cardinalate 1962, leading liberal voice at Vat II, advocate of reform in the Church.
[86] one of the authors of the Minority Report.
[87] The story of Padre Appleby is interesting: we are informed that prior to his election to Papacy he was 'secretary to the English Cardinal' (*British Museum*, 71), a side-blow at Cardinal Heenan, one of the radically conservative English cardinals.
[88] Adrian IV, born Nicholas Breakspear, 1154 – 1159.

> returning to the practice of their Faith that the churches cannot accommodate them. *Gloria in excelsis Deo*. (British Museum, 73)

In this instance, however funny on the surface, in the end the juxtaposition does not work because the unexpected turns the events take are at the same time just what the Catholic reader has been and still is hoping for. But on the whole *British Museum* is a very accomplished novel as far as the undermining of authority[89] is concerned.

> The 'system' depicted in *The British Museum is Falling Down* was specifically Catholic, but in writing the novel in the comic mode I was hoping to engage the interest and sympathy of non-Catholic and non-Christian readers as well, by presenting the ironies and absurdities of married life under the dispensation of the 'Safe Method' as one instance of the universal and perennial difficulty men and women experience in understanding, ordering and satisfying their sexuality. (Lodge, Afterword, *British Museum*, 166)

The topic of satisfying their sexuality is central to the characters of the book, and incongruities are many, take for example the discrepancy between the mechanical methods of the Knaus-Ogino method and the Church's designation of it as the Natural Law. Looking back at the earliest period of the Applebys' marriage, the narrator claims:

> Their sexual relations were forced into a curious pattern: three weeks of patient graph-plotting, followed by a few nights of frantic love-making, which rapidly petered out in exhaustion and renewed suspense. This behaviour was known as Rhythm and was in accordance with the Natural Law. (*British Museum*, 10)

Those outside the Catholic Church meanwhile regarded the topic of birth control with amused or puzzled interest, and Lodge's novel ministered to their curiosity. He remarked that the problem 'seemed to … [him] a part of experience which could only be treated comically if it were not to be tedious, and rather absurd' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 6). And so he lets Adam provide a rather comical description of Roman Catholicism for any outsider who would mind to know more about this queer religion: The entry in the Martian encyclopaedia Adam mentally composes (see above, 3.2).

How Far is completely different in nature from *British Museum*. While *British Museum* is an openly farcical book using parody, pastiche, and all kinds of satire to undermine the authority of institutional Catholicism in the field of sexual morality, *How Far* deals with the problem in a more realistic way, and it introduces additional theological topics, sin and salvation the most prominent among them. Much of the humour in *How Far* derives from the fact that Lodge introduces a cast of characters who are young and Catholic, 'and therefore sexually and theologically naïve' (Morace, 176). They stumble through the

[89] cf. Morace, 137.

sixties liberation about a decade late, generating a gap between their fictional lives and the reader's experience. Derision of concerns (about, say, the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception or the Assumption some of them have[90]) never becomes sarcastic[91], however, as Lodge achieves that aim 'without merely dismissing the people who have them' (Morace, 176).

Every time the outlook threatens to become too bleak, the narrator draws back from the scene and makes some inappropriate observance in order to create a greater distance for the reader. The humorous attitude of the narrative resists pain and suffering.

When Edward finds out that Angela's fourth child suffers from trisomy 21, the narrator dryly comments 'I did say this wasn't a comic novel, exactly.' Later, when Anne, Angela's third child, is knocked down by a lorry and dies, the narrator explains:

> I have avoided a direct presentation of this incident because frankly I find it too painful to contemplate. Of course, Dennis and Angela and Anne are fictional characters, they cannot bleed or weep, but they stand here for all the real people to whom such disasters happen with no apparent reason or justice. One does not kill off characters lightly, I assure you, even ones like Anne, evoked solely for that purpose. (*How Far*, 125)

The most openly comic scenes are those where he sets up analogies between religious practices and mundane activities, as for example in the Game-of-Salvation-episode: 'there would still be some *detention* to do in Purgatory', 'praying for them was like *sending food parcels to refugees*', 'an indulgence was a kind of spiritual *voucher'*, 'plenary indulgence, which was a kind of *jackpot'* (*How Far*, 6-8, my emphasis).

How Far also has a high rate of biblical intertext, which is in many cases used completely incongruously:

> 'Blessed are the good-looking, for they shall have fun.' (*How Far*, 26) // the beatifications (Mt 5:3-11)
>
> 'BY THE WATERS OF DISNEYLAND I SAT DOWN AND WEPT' (*How Far*, 179) // 'By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea we wept, when we remembered Zion.' (Ps 137:1)
>
> 'Miles: There must be no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female … (pause) straight and gay.' (*How Far*, 232) // 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.' (Gal 3:28)

On the whole *How Far* is more bitterly funny and full of comic despair in view of the many changes and the instability Vat II has brought about. Interestingly, the more

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[90] cf. *How Far*, 112.
[91] i.e. "sarcasm" in the sense of "verbal irony intended to insult or wound."

disrespectful *British Museum* remains more loyal to Rome (it struggles with the birth-control question but it never doubts Rome's decisions) whereas the more circumspect *How Far* presents the doubts of its cast as justified and ends with the sarcastic statement that 'a changing Church acclaims a Pope who evidently thinks that change has gone far enough. What will happen now?' (*How Far*, 243) As if he had known that John Paul II's first encyclical *Familiaris Consortio* (22. Nov. 1981) would turn back to the teaching of *Casti Connubii* (1930).

Paradise News shows that in order to take life less seriously it is not enough to take Catholicism less seriously. Or is it the other way round? Do you have to start taking Catholicism and all its implications more seriously in order to be able to cope with your life? Had Bernard taken Catholicism more seriously, he would not have become a priest in the first place: 'I suppose I thought that by committing myself to the priesthood, I would solve all my problems at a stroke: sex, education, career, and eternal salvation' (*Paradise*, 181). But entering upon that experiment without being sure of its consequences it was destined to fail. Lodge uses the form of the Penny-catechism to present Bernhard's state of mind at the outset of his Hawaiian adventure:

> *Who made you?*
> God made me.
> *Why did God make you?*
> God made me to know him, love him and serve him in this world, and to be happy with him for ever in the next. (Note: no mention of being happy in this world.)
> *To whose image and likeness did God make you?*
> God made me to his own image and likeness. (Awkward, that construction – should be '*in* whose image', surely? Some subtle theological point in the preposition, perhaps.)
> *Is this likeness to God in your body, or in your soul?*
> This likeness is chiefly in my soul. (Note the 'chiefly'. Not 'exclusively'. God as man-shaped. Father-shaped. Long white beard, white hair, in need of a trim. White face too, of course. Frowning slightly, as if he might fly into a nasty temper if provoked. Sitting on his throne in heaven, Jesus on his right, Holy Spirit hovering overhead, chorus of angels, Mary and the saints standing by. Carpet of cloud.)
> *When did you cease to believe in this God?*
> Perhaps when I was still training for the priesthood. Certainly when I was teaching at St Ethelbert's[92]. I can't remember, exactly.
> *You can't remember?*
> Who remembers when they stopped believing in Father Christmas? It's not usually a specific moment […]
> *Are you equating belief in God with belief in Father Christmas?*
> No, of course not. It's just an analogy. […]
> *How could you go on teaching theology to candidates for the priesthood if you no longer believed in God?*

[92] Ethelbert King of Kent, ~560 - 616: first king of England to convert to Christianity.

> You can teach theology perfectly well without believing in the God of the Penny Catechism. In fact there are very few reputable modern theologians who do.
> *So what God do they believe in?*
> God as 'the ground of our being', God as 'ultimate concern', God as 'the Beyond in the Midst'.
> *And how does one pray to that kind of God?*
> A good question. […]
> *But why should anyone wish to be religious if there is no personal God to reward him for being so?*
> For its own sake. (*Paradise*, 57-58)

On the one hand, this reads like a parody, but on the other it is much more earnest than the other penny-catechism scene in *Picturegoers*. Somehow *Paradise* is beyond poking fun at Catholicism, it enters upon the more general topic of man's search for paradise, independent of any concrete religion. The most strikingly funny scenes concerning Catholicism are those featuring Bernard's father, an old Irish Catholic who does not like his religious habits being disregarded. There is a hilarious scene at the airport when the officer at the security barrier demands that he take the medal of Our Lady of Lourdes off his neck for a second so he can pass the checkpoint.[93] It is completely fine by him to stay behind as long as he can keep the medal where it is. A wonderful instance of superstition replacing deeply felt belief. The novel enters upon the question of belief every now and again, but on the whole it is more concerned with the critique of ideologies.

Throughout his Catholic novels Lodge makes abundant use of doubly-oriented discourse, and he gives an explanation of the importance of doing so in one of his works of literary criticism:

> There is an indissoluble link […] between the linguistic variety of prose fiction […] and its cultural function as the continuous critique of all repressive, authoritarian, one-eyed ideologies. As soon as you allow a variety of discourses into a textual space [...] you establish a resistance to the dominance of any one discourse. (*After Bakhtin*, 22)

Basically, this is what Lodge does when he introduces characters with clearly perceptible social, regional and individual traits; when he parodies other literary styles; when he enters upon theological discussions; and when he mingles historical facts with fictitious stories. He helps us gain a more comprehensive view of Catholicism; he finds refreshing new ways of seeing the seemingly very strict teaching of the Church; by ridiculing the results of unquestioning conformity he takes the wind out of the sails of fundamentalism.

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[93] cf. *Paradise*, 16.

4 Manifestation of Catholicism in the novels of David Lodge

> "Catholicism is so complicated. I mean, it's difficult enough to believe in God, - why make it more complicated with Transubstantiation and the Immaculate Conception and indulgences and all that?" (*Ginger*, 168)

> 'But Greene's awfully sordid, don't you think?' says Polly. 'But Waugh's so snobbish.' 'Anyway, it said in "The Observer" that they're the two best English novelists going, so that's one in the eye for the Prods.' (*How Far*, 172)

This conversation takes place at a party given by the undergraduate Catholic Society of a London University college on St Valentine's Day, 1952. It is a testimony to the sense of apartness Catholics still nurtured in those days. 'All notable achievements by Catholics […] were triumphantly proclaimed to Protestants or unbelievers' (Bergonzi, "Decline and Fall", 172).

When we look at *Picturegoers*, *Ginger*, *British Museum*, *Shelter*, *How Far*, and *Paradise* we become witnesses of the changes in Catholic self-awareness and also of the theological changes that occurred between 1951 and the nineteen-eighties.

The first four[94] novels treat Catholicism as a rather static system and although – most prominently in *British Museum* – changes are hoped for[95] and Catholics are shown to struggle with their loyalty towards an institution that sometimes makes it difficult to believe in a mild and merciful God, in the end all problems are resolved 'without fundamentally disturbing the system which provoked them' (*British Museum*, Afterword, 166).

The one novel that enters on the topics of change and its acceptance and rejection, and on the significance of the individual's conscience in this context, is *How Far Can You Go?* 'Many conservative believers, of whom Evelyn Waugh was one of the most prominent, were distressed or angered by the changes' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 33). This is reflected in many of Lodge's characters, most prominently in Miles, a convert, who is not willing to accept the changes that have taken place in the wake of Vat II. At the end of the novel he goes back to the Church of England 'because, he says, there doesn't seem to be much difference between Anglican and Roman beliefs any more and he prefers the liturgy of the former' (*How Far*, 243). Most of *How Far*'s other characters are thrown into an abyss of insecurity first but come to terms in the end (the exception is Violet who ends up a psychic

[94] *Shelter* was published in 1970 but it is set in 1951, apart from the epilogue which only makes a brief mention of the changes in liturgy and an allusion to a compromise in family-planning.
[95] *British Museum* was published in 1965, the year in which Vat II completed its sessions, three years before *Humanae Vitae* was issued.

wreck). The merit of the novel is that in introducing so many different characters, Lodge can explore many different ways in which people were affected by the changes. This is confirmed by Lodge:

> *I assume you wanted to have so many characters in order to underline the idea that the historical dilemmas of Catholicism are communal?*
> Yes, it was an historical project in that way. It was a subject nobody else seemed to have dealt with, what had happened to the Catholic Church over the last twenty-five years. Even the people in the Church haven't realized how it's changes out of all recognition, because it was a gradual change, and I needed a large number of characters in order to illustrate all the varieties of change – priests dropping out, for example, and nuns having to throw off their habits and adjust to the modern world; sexual problems in marriage, mixed marriages, changes in the liturgy – I could immediately think of a whole set of incidents and situations that I wanted to incorporate. (Interview with Haffenden, 155)

Paradise takes a look back at the changes and tells the story of a man who was prepared to go the ways of reform in the first place, but failed for various reasons and ended up an agnostic. Or did he?

Basically all of these novels feature at least one specifically Catholic discourse. The question of sexual morality crops up most prominently, but salvation plays a great role, too, which means that Lodge also incorporates questions of dogmatic theology. The bearers of all the good and bad news in these contexts are the various types of parish priests and bishops who do not really depict the ideal pastoral situation and often serve a similar purpose as a Shakespearean Clown – the of comic relief. Rather untypically of a Catholic the Bible very prominently serves as a source of intertextuality, as do liturgy and the Catechism, and sometimes even the Code of Canon Law. All these features together amount to a very densely woven net of Catholicism that permeates the novels on various levels.

4.1 Liturgy

> This liturgy had one indisputable spiritual edge over the old: it was virtually impossible to lapse into some private, secular day-dream while it was going on, because you could never be sure from one moment to the next what was going to happen. (How Far, 133)

Throughout his novels Lodge time and again makes mention of various religious services his characters attend. The form of worship presented most prominently is the Mass. The presentation is always rendered in very realistic terms by an extensive use of intertext – whole passages are cited from the Ordo Missae. Thus we can follow the

development liturgy has taken throughout the years, but there is also a development in the way the characters participate in the liturgy.

The first Mass we encounter in Lodge's novels is a classical Tridentine Mass held in the year 1955, with a relatively passive congregation:

> The church was stuffy. […] The congregation did not seem to mind. But they were stuffy too, in ugly felt hats and buttoned raincoats, behinds tilted ungracefully on the edges of the benches, mostly staring vacantly ahead, with a few ostentatiously following the service in their missals, making a great show of turning over leaves. (*Picturegoers*, 103)

Mark Underwood – sceptical at first but with a basic respect for the 'liturgical drama' (*Picturegoers*, 59) which he finds 'something you couldn't get away from, […] it became more interesting with each repetition' (*Picturegoers*, 109) – follows the Mass in his missal. An English translation is mentioned, but the 'very heart of the Mass' (*Picturegoers*, 109), the Eucharistic Prayer, is read in Latin (which was to remain so until 1965). While listening passively to the prayers, Mark has time enough to continue the observation of the congregation. 'Everyone was bowed and hunched, but there was no feeling of worship and devotion' (*Picturegoers*, 110). Lodge uses this scene in the middle of the novel, right at the heart of the Mass, to mark a shift in the relationship between Mark and Clare. It is at this point that 'belief …[leaps] in …[Mark's] mind like a child in the womb[96].' and at the same time Clare begins to realise that her faith is dwindling: 'In her head she knew […] that it *was God*, but her heart did not thump with the knowledge' (*Picturegoers*, 111).

Mark is not the only one who has a foible for observing people during Mass, the narrator of *How Far* uses the occasion of a Thursday morning mass to introduce us to the main cast of his story. He takes us back to the year 1952[97]. 'It is a dialogue mass, a recent innovation designed to increase lay participation in the liturgy' (*How Far*, 1). The Mass is read according to the Tridentine rite, with the priest turning his back to the congregation most of the time, facing the altar, which was then still installed at the head of the church. Although the congregation is invited to say the answers, these are still held in Latin, but Lodge makes a note of there being a translation in the missals already:

> "*Dominus vobiscum.*"
> "*Et cum spiritu tuo.*" […]

[96] cf. Lk 1,44: 'As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.'
[97] In Lodge's novels there is only one Mass that dates further back, namely the one Timothy witnesses in Heidelberg in 1951. He is expecting to confirm the theory that the Latin liturgy is the same all over the world and is quite disappointed to find that the service seems completely different from what he is used to from home. (cf. *Shelter*, 134) This is a hint at the first changes in liturgy that emerged on the continent, predominately in Germany.

> As the priest turns back to the altar to read the Offertory prayer, and the rest flutter the pages of their missals to find the English translation in its proper place. (*How Far*, 2)

The liturgy is rather 'secretive', the Prayer of Consecration for example is muttered instead of prayed loud enough for the congregation to hear, which leaves the cast of the novel ample time to follow their own thoughts. Absentmindedly they join into the Latin dialogue at the appropriate points. Lodge creates a very incongruous situation here by letting the characters' thoughts drift into various fields of sexuality, calling them back to the Mass by the bell Edward rings at the point of the *Domine, non sum dignus*. Communion is taken kneeling at the altar rail and it is placed directly on the tongue:

> On the altar is Edward, his rubbery clown's face locked into an expression of exaggerated piety, the first to receive the wafer from Father Brierley's fingers, shooting out a disconcertingly long tongue like a carnival whistle. (*How Far*, 14)

Behind this comic invocation of a burlesque picture lies hidden the sad fact that receiving communion in the palm of your hand was strictly forbidden before Vat II. There is also a mention of the fact that 'it is not at this date Catholic practice to administer Communion under both kinds to the laity' (*How Far*, 19).

The description of the Order of Mass is very accurate, ending with the 'last Gospel', a feature of the Tridentine rite that was given up with the reform of the liturgy. Up till Vat II, there was only a limited number of biblical texts read during the liturgical year, and the Last Gospel, read after the last Prayer and the *Ite, Missa est*, was always the beginning of the holy Gospel according to John, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God' etc. (John 1:1-14). This was to change with the implementation of the reforms decreed by the Constitution on the Holy Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*[98]:

> The rites should be distinguished by a noble simplicity; they should be short, clear, and unencumbered by useless repetitions; they should be within the people's powers of comprehension, and normally should not require much explanation.
> That the intimate connection between words and rites may be apparent in the liturgy: In sacred celebrations there is to be more reading from Holy Scripture, and it is to be more varied and suitable. (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 34-35:1)

In reference to the changes in liturgy that were implemented by the Second Vatican Council[99] the narrator explains:

> The mass was revised and translated into the vernacular. The priest now faced the congregation across a plain table-style altar, which made the origins of the Mass in

[98] implemented on Dec. 4th 1963, with 2147 having voted pro and only 4 contra. (cf. Rahner, 37)
[99] cf. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*

> the Last Supper more comprehensible, and allowed many of the laity to see for the first time what the celebrant actually did. All masses were now dialogue masses, the whole congregation joining in the responses. The Eucharistic fast was reduced to a negligible one hour, before which any kind of food and drink might be consumed, and the laity were urged to receive communion at every mass. (*How Far*, 81)

He further describes the many little reforms that led to a more comprehensible liturgy that was less tedious and better tractable to its roots: Real wholemeal bread is consecrated and broken, the congregation shares the chalice[100] , students choose their own readings in the college's Sunday morning mass[101], music is chosen according to what musicians are there, at the bidding prayers everyone is free to 'chip in with a petition' and at Communion, most of the congregation receive the Host in their hands and take the cup.[102] All of these practices were still forbidden in public worship at the time, but congregations such as these all around Europe helped the reform to finally take root.[103]

The changes are welcomed by most of the characters in *How Far*, but there is also some reference made to problems that accompanied the development in liturgy. Miles, the convert, is the first to venture to criticise the in his eyes deplorable situation:

> "What a transformation! No, not a transformation, that was the trouble, it hadn't been transformed, just meddled with. […] and quite honestly the mass itself seemed to me to be the same sort of muddle, bits of the old liturgy and bits of the new flung together, and nobody quite knowing what to do or what to expect." "These things take time," said Miriam. "Catholics aren't used to participating in the liturgy. They're used to watching the priest and saying their own prayers privately." (*How Far*, 83)

Miles thinks that many of the changes have led to a protestantisation that undermines the specifically Catholic features of the Church. While the others gradually learn to accept the new forms, he very openly criticises the growing and at times even chaotic diversity in the liturgical experiments he witnesses when he takes part in one of the Masses Michael's circle usually attends:

> "My dear Michael," he said, emerging from the College chapel with his hand to his brow, like someone with a migraine, "this is madness. This is anarchy. This is Enthusiasm. Ronnie Knox[104] must be spinning in his grave." Miles drew an analogy between what he had witnessed and the development of antinomian sects in the seventeenth century. "It won't be long," he prophesied, "before you're dancing naked in front of the altar and sharing your wives and goods in common." (*How Far*, 136)

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[100] cf. *How Far*, 124.
[101] cf. *How Far*, 132.
[102] cf. *How Far*, 133.
[103] cf. Emminghaus, 144-150.
[104] Msgr. Ronald Knox (February 17, 1888-August 24, 1957), a convert who greatly influenced Chesterton and whose biographer was Evely Waugh.

Miles is not the only character who finds it hard to cope with the changes[105]. Michael's father is deeply upset when a child taking the Communion lets the chalice slip. He does not think it right to let children have the chalice, 'not even for adults', because of the risk of accident, and he does not like the way the priest simply wipes the wine up. '"In my day, the carpet would have been taken up and burned […] to avoid desecration"' (*How Far*, 135). This remark triggers a dispute about transubstantiation which Michael shrugs off as purely metaphorical. The ensuing discussion shows that none of them, neither father nor son, have a really profound notion of the theology they are discussing.

This, however, and the general lack of orientation that is made felt throughout the liturgical passages, is not the parishioners' fault but the fault of the clergy.

> Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy. […]
> In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else; for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit; and therefore pastors of souls must zealously strive to achieve it, by means of the necessary instruction, in all their pastoral work. (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 14)

The only priest in *How Far* who tries to do his job and pass the new teachings on to his parishioners, Father Austin Brierley, is taken out of harm's way and sent on courses by his parish priest, who undoubtedly finds it more convenient to retain naïve parishioners who do not question the system. There is no mention of any priest who is competent in implementing the liturgical changes (Bede Buchanan seems quite willing, but one would not call him competent), so with the uncertainty on the clergy's part and the coinciding exuberant enthusiasm on the laity's part it is small wonder that it all ends in chaos. In the end

> the enormous difference between Father Bede's 'experimental' liturgy including Beatles' songs, communion under two kinds taken round by laymen and freely chosen readings and more conservative masses raises the question where the limits of liturgical renewal are to be drawn. (Prehsfreund-Kriegshammer, 61)

As the story enters the mid-seventies, much of the liturgical reform has taken root and not much mention is made of liturgy any more. The more absorbing discussion around the encyclical on the regulation of birth has killed off all interest in other matters. Then,

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[105] There is also a brief reference to the changes in the epilogue of *Shelter* when Kath tells Timothy that she has gone back to the church. 'More like the Protestants, now, wouldn't you say? It's funny, I miss the Latin mass, though I used to find it boring. (*Shelter*, 268)

suddenly, out of the shadow of the aftermath of *Humanae Vitae*, a new threat to unity emerges

> in the person of a French archbishop called Lefèbvre, who was right wing enough to think that Pope Paul was a crypto-communist and that the Vatican Council had betrayed the Catholic faith to modernism. This point of view he cleverly associated with a campaign to bring back the old Latin mass – a cause which aroused ready support in the breasts of older Catholics nostalgic for the spiritual certainties of their youth and dismayed by the rapidity of recent change. Tridentine masses, celebrated in defiance of ecclesiastical authority by priests sympathetic to Lefèbvre, attracted large congregations and great publicity. The threat of schism loomed. Frantically, Rome tried to steady the rocking boat: Lefèbvre was admonished, but so was the modernizing theologian Hans Küng, for questioning the doctrine of papal infallibility. (*How Far*, 209)

With this last comment the authorial narrator makes a clear statement as to where his preferences lay – he seems to be quite content with the changes implemented by Vat II and deplores the way in which some people cling to the old ways.

In the succeeding novels, there is only one brief mention of a change in liturgy, namely in *Paradise* when Yolande describes Ursula's funeral. She mentions that she has not attended a Catholic Mass for ages except for a wedding and then 'the whole thing seemed to me like a TV spectacular, with the altar boys in their red robes, and the priest in his brocade get-up, parading in and out, and the candles and bells' (*Paradise*, 361) – obviously this must have been before the liturgical changes of Vat II were implemented. When Yolande and Father McPhee set out to the beach to scatter Ursula's ashes, they choose the time to coincide with the Hawaiian Folk Mass that is held there each Saturday afternoon.

> It was quite different, just a simple table set up on the beach, and the congregation sitting or standing around in a loose circle on the sand. […] There were young local people handing out little booklets with the service printed in it. […] most of the service was in English, but the sung parts were in Hawaiian, accompanied by some kids on guitars, and during the hymns some *local girls in traditional grass skirts danced a hula*. (*Paradise*, 361, my emphasis)

This is a tribute to the Council's endeavour to implement changes in a way acceptable to Catholics all around the world:

> Even in the liturgy, the Church has no wish to impose a rigid uniformity in matters which do not implicate the faith or the good of the whole community; rather does she respect and foster the genius and talents of the various races and peoples. Anything in these peoples' way of life which is not indissolubly bound up with superstition and error she studies with sympathy and, if possible, preserves intact. Sometimes in fact she admits such things into the liturgy itself, so long as they harmonize with its true and authentic spirit. (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 37)

4.2 The Bible

In Lodge's first novel, *Picturegoers*, the use of biblical intertext seems rather clumsy at the beginning and does not always achieve the effect it does in his later novels.

When Mark meditates on the character of the congregation present at Mass, he comes to the conclusion that

> the so-called Bohemians were the only true Christians. They toiled not, neither did they spin; often they didn't know where the next meal was coming from, or where they would sleep from one day to the other. Yet they were condemned outright by the cautious, prudent, God-fearing church-goers as beyond the pale. (*Picturegoers*, 108)

This is an allusion to Mt 6:25-34[106], a rather well-known text among regular churchgoers and one of the biblical sources of the hymn ("Just for today[107]") that triggers Mark's thoughts, but rather unlikely to be part of a young agnostic's repertoire. This passage, just as the pompous 'belief leapt in his mind like a child in the womb'[108] (*Picturegoers*, 111), neither contributes to the making out of Mark's character nor does it serve the purpose of irony as the slight incongruity that may be felt does not aim at anything specific. In the course of the book, when Mark becomes more and more involved in matters of belief, the biblical allusions become more creditable, for example the passage when he tries to explain to Clare the meaning the plural in the title of the film *Bicycle Thieves*:

> The man himself becomes a thief out of sheer desperation, and a sense of injustice, and, ironically, accepts the pardon which he is not willing to accord to the person who stole *his* bike.[109] (*Picturegoers*, 142)

This passage fits Mark's disposition as it encompasses critique of society, one of Mark's strengths. A similarly fitting reference is hidden in the insight he has that it is 'reassuring to get things into some kind of cosmic perspective, to realize that the total of

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[106] Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? […] So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

[107] Words: Sybil F. Partridge, 1877; Music: Horatio R. Palmer, 1897.

[108] cf. Lk 1:44 'As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.'

[109] cf. Mt 18:23-55 The servant's master took pity on him, cancelled the debt and let him go. But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow- servants who owed him a hundred denarii. […] 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded. […]'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I cancelled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow- servant just as I had on you?' In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.

man's activity is no more than a faint line on the infinite creativity of God's hand.'[110] (*Picturegoers*, 146)

There is a relapse into exaggeration later when Clare feels that 'all she wanted was to kneel at his feet, kiss them and bandage them. But he had blocked all her attempts to anoint him'[111] (*Picturegoers*, 147). The comparison is totally inapt as Clare has led anything but a 'sinful life.'

Towards the end there is another rather queer reference when Mark has scruples about getting too close to Patricia emotionally, and in the turmoil of his twisted thoughts suddenly the ninth commandment crops up: 'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, which had always seemed superfluous after the Sixth' (*Picturegoers*, 170, || Ex 20:14-17), an absolutely inappropriate allusion as Patricia is no-one's wife yet. At the best, the legitimacy of this reference lies in the fact that it illuminates Mark's perturbed emotional life.

It is interesting that Father Kipling is almost exclusively furnished with dogmatic or catechismal code. Apart from the cinema-scene where he has four hits in a row[112], there is only one biblical allusion in his plot line, namely when he muses on the disposition of his parishioners and wonders: 'Did they not realise that the God of Israel was a jealous God?[113]' (*Picturegoers*, 126) Apart from these references, Father Kipling is completely disconnected from the bible.

When Lodge uses biblical references in his later novels, he usually does so either to reinforce the impression of realism or to create a feeling of incongruity that leads to the satirical resolution of a tension. The last is achieved 'either by twisting the original quotation or simply by applying it inappropriately' (Amann, 78).

The method of twisting the original quotation is applied in the only biblical allusion we find in *British Museum*, where Lodge uses the comparison with the meeting between

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[110] cf. Eccl 3:9-11 What does the worker gain from his toil? I have seen the burden God has laid on men. He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

[111] cf. Lk 7:37-38 When a woman who had lived a *sinful life* in that town learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume, and as she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them. (my emphasis)

[112] Mammon – cf. Mt 6:24; decision over seats – cf. Lk 14:7-10; Jezebel – cf. 1 Kings 16:29-31; Colour by Almighty God – cf. Gen 1

[113] cf. Ex 20:5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God.

Moses and God to underline the power of the head of the English department who has Adam's fortune in his hands:

> As was his custom on such occasions, the Head of Department sat in a corner of the room with his back to the company. […] There were many students present who, when they eventually left the Department with their Ph.Ds, would only be able *to say, with Moses, that they had seen the back parts of their Professor*.' (*British Museum*, 123, my emphasis)

The corresponding text in the book of Exodus says:

> Then Moses said, Now show me your glory. And the Lord said, I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the Lord, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. But, he said, you cannot see my face, for no-one may see me and live. Then the Lord said, There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will remove my hand *and you will see my back*; but my face must not be seen. (Ex 33:18-23, my emphasis)

Apart from the one or the other "straight" quotation catering to realism[114], *How Far* on several occasions makes use of twisted quotations for the purpose of irony:

Biblical text	Lodge's alienation
Mt 5:3-12 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. […]	*How Far*, 26 Blessed are the good-looking, for they shall have fun.

[114] On the relationship between God and this world: 'Not a sparrow falls without His willing it.' (*How Far*, 17) = Mt 10:29; epistle at Angela's wedding: 'Brethren: let women be subject to their husbands […] Husbands, love your wifes as Christ also loved the Church' (*How Far*, 67) = Eph 5:22-25; Austin Brierley's sermon on the book of Job in connection with the catastrophe of Aberfan = Job 9:32-10:3; Ruth's insight that 'the heart of this nation has grown coarse' (*How Far*, 178) = Isaiah 6:10 || Mt 13:15; at the festival: 'after all, the psalm says: "Let them dance in praise of his name, playing to him on strings and drums."' (*How Far*, 229) = Ps 149:3

Biblical text	Lodge's alienation
Dtn 8:3b Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.	*How Far*, 136 Man cannot live by orgasm alone.
Ps 137,1 By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion	*How Far*, 179 …[Ruth] wired her Mother Superior: BY THE RIVERS OF DISNEYLAND I SAT DOWN AND WEPT STOP HAVE FOUND WHAT IVE BEEN LOOKING FOR STOP RETURNING IMMEDIATELY
Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.	*How Far*, 232 Miles: There must be no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female … (pause) straight and gay.

Usually, these passages follow dreary scenes and furnish the plot with comic relief. But *How Far* also comments on the development of biblical studies. When Father Brierley is sent on his first course, he finds that things have changed a lot since his seminary days:

> When he was a student, the methods of modern demythologizing historical scholarship had been regarded as permissible only in application to the Old Testament[115]. The New Testament was taught as a historically reliable text, directly inspired by God and endorsed as such by the infallible authority of the Church. It came as something of a shock to discover that views mentioned formerly only to be dismissed as the irresponsible speculations of German Protestants[116] and Anglican divines who could hardly be considered seriously as Christians at all, were now accepted as commonplace by many Catholic scholars[117] in the field. The infancy stories about Jesus, for instance, were almost certainly legendary, it seemed, late literary accretions to the earliest and most reliable account of Jesus's life in Mark. (*How Far*, 88)

The problem is that Father Brierley cannot work with these new methods in his parish:

> It was understood that one did not flaunt the new ideas before the laity, or for that matter before the ordinary clergy, most of whom were deplorably ill-educated and still virtually fundamentalists when it came to the interpretation of the New Testament. (*How Far*, 89)

One of his more spirited sermons on the book of Job, after the catastrophe of Aberfan, even triggers another admonition by his Parish Priest.

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[115] cf. *Dei Verbum*, dogmatic constitution on Devine Revelation, promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Nov. 18 1965

[116] e.g. Eberhardt Nestle (1883-1972) and Kurt Aland (1915-1994), German Protestant theologians, co-editors of the famous *Novum Testamentum Graece*.

[117] e.g. Norbert Lohfink, *1928, Erich Zenger, professors of biblical studies, OT, and *1939, Jacob Kremer *1924, professor of biblical studies, NT (*the* pioneer of modern New Testamental studies; I had the pleasure of attending the last lecture course he held at the University of Vienna)

> The point of the story – which was, of course, a myth, a poem – was that God only spoke to Job because Job complained to God, gave free rein to his complaint and let his embittered soul speak out. We should be less than human if we did not, this dark weekend, do the same on behalf of the victims of Aberfan. (*How Far*, 108)

The result of this daring interpretation of a biblical book is that his Parish Priest recommends he goes on a holiday or retreat. 'Or perhaps you'd like to go on a course of some kind' (*How Far*, 108). The Parish Priest does not seem to grasp that the abovementioned sermon was the result of one of these courses.

Towards the end of the book, in 1978, people have come to accept the new way of biblical exegesis, at least as far as the Old Testament is concerned:

> VOICE OVER (*Austin*): Catholics, like most other Christians, have accepted that Genesis is a poem, a myth, not a factual account of the creation. It's rather more difficult for them to accept that a lot of the New Testament may not be literally true either. (*How Far*, 236)

4.3 Dogmatic theology

4.3.1 Dogma versus Conscience

> So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself by what he approves. (Romans 14:22)
>
> Because men that are free, well-born, well-bred, and conversant in honest companies, have naturally an instinct and spur that prompteth them unto virtuous actions, and withdraws them from vice, which is called honour. (Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*)

From its beginnings, the Church has always tried to formulate binding statements in order to define its faith:

> The Church's Magisterium exercises the authority it holds from Christ to the fullest extent when it defines dogmas, that is, when it proposes truths contained in divine Revelation or also when it proposes in a definitive way truths having a necessary connection with them. (CCC, 88)

This has been important to distance itself from other religious groups. The statements have grown into a system of mutually connected dogmas that the Church speaks of as a 'hierarchy of truths' (CCC, 90).

Dogmas are core principles that must be upheld by all members of a denomination. The generation of dogmas is a complicated matter that sometimes takes centuries[118]. It is not surprising, then, that changes in dogmatic teaching are not readily accepted by the

[118] For example, the dogma 'Jesus is the Son of God' was formulated at the Council of Nicaea, 325, almost 300 years after the foundation of the first Christian communities.

community of the faithful. While the Catholics in *Picturegoers*, *Ginger*, *British Museum*, and *Shelter*, brought up and very much at home in the Tridentine system, are quite sure of their belief, those in *How Far* need to come to terms with changes that are sometimes hard to grasp: 'So they stood upon the shores of Faith and felt the old dogmas and certainties ebbing away' (*How Far*, 143). The narrator explains that the reason for the difficulties they encounter in connection with these changes is the fact that

> our friends had started life with too many beliefs – the penalty of a Catholic upbringing. They were weighed down with beliefs, useless answers to non-questions. To work their way back to the fundamental ones – what can we know? why is there anything at all? why not nothing? what may we hope? why are we here? what is it all about? – they had to dismantle all that apparatus of superfluous belief and discard it piece by piece. But in matters of belief […] it is a nice question how far you can go in this process without throwing out something vital (*How Far*, 143).

At the end of the novel, an unidentified voice (the authorial narrator, see 3.1) states that

> many things have changed – attitudes to authority, sex, worship, other Christians, other religions. But perhaps the most fundamental change is one that the majority of Catholics themselves are scarcely conscious of. It's the fading away of the traditional Catholic metaphysic. (*How Far*, 239)

The changes in dogma also led to changes in the perception of the individual believer's responsibility for the community and for his own spiritual welfare. When we look at *How Far*, the old rigid system seems to have been easier to follow than the new way of a 'pilgrim Church' (*Lumen Gentium*, 48ff.) in which every single person is called to act according to his or her own conscience. And yet, the Church says that 'man […] day by day builds himself up through his many free decisions; and so he knows, loves, and accomplishes moral good by stages of growth' (*Familiaris Consortio*, 34).

The importance of the individual conscience is time and again stressed by renowned theologians. In a letter to the Duke of Norfolk, Cardinal Newman once even wrote: 'I shall drink to the Pope, if you please, still to Conscience first, and to the Pope afterwards' (Newman, letter). Yet Newman does not allow conscience to have free play:

> If in a particular case, [the conscience] is to be taken as a sacred and sovereign monitor, its dictate, in order to prevail against the voice of the Pope, must follow upon serious thought, prayer, and all available means of arriving at a right judgment on the matter in question. Unless a man is able to say to himself, as in the Presence of God, that he must not, and dare not, act upon the Papal injunction, he is bound to obey it, and would commit a great sin in disobeying it. (Newman, letter)

When Catholic doctrine speaks about the conscience it calls it a 'law which … [man] does not impose upon himself, but which holds him to obedience' (*Gaudium et Spes*, 16). It is a law written in man's heart which encourages man to the 'love of God and neighbour'

and is given to man in order to bring to pass a 'genuine solution to the numerous problems which arise in the life of individuals from social relationships,' but the Church warns that 'Conscience frequently errs' (*GS*, 16). It regrets that people often 'foster it perversely as a license for doing whatever pleases them, even if it is evil' (*GS*, 17). In *Dignitatis Humanae*, the declaration on religious freedom, the fathers of the Council try to bring the two concepts, dogma and conscience, together by claiming that 'in the formation of their consciences, the Christian faithful ought carefully to attend to the sacred and certain doctrine of the Church,' because it is the Church's duty 'authoritatively to teach […] those principles of the moral order which have their origins in human nature itself' (*DH*, 14). Unfortunately, this fusion of dogma and conscience sometimes leads to uncertainties, as can be seen in the characters of Lodge's novels.

Basically, according to Catholic doctrine, anyone who thinks that he can in his private theory or reality deviate from the not infallible teachings of the Catholic Church has to candidly and self-critically consult his conscience whether he can take responsibility for his actions before God.

Throughout *How Far* people grapple with their consciences and with the question whether they should follow their own convictions or adhere to external norms put before them. A look at the moral theologian literature shows that this question also posed itself to the theorists. The answer is usually something in the way of

> Catechists, preachers and parents cannot be content to teach mere conformity to a few external norms. Rather, education aims at forming a mature person who can respond to his *own conscience* in making necessary decisions in the complicated reality of life. (Curran, 33; my emphasis)

The characters of Lodge find themselves raised in a system of exactly such external norms. They have to learn to get along with it, each of them in his or her individual way. Lodge's novels are neither fatalistic (though *The British Museum* might seem so at first glance) nor do they present Catholicism as a religion you have to embrace, wholly submit to and finally get defeated by (as Waugh does in *Brideshead Revisited*). Lodge uses satire to illuminate the deficiencies of Catholicism and thus manages to humanise it in a way that leaves the reader in no doubt of what it really is all about. It is decidedly not about blind faith and the strict adherence to rules. In the end it all boils down to making the right choices, according to your own conscience, the formation of which you yourself are responsible for. Each rule needs interpretation before it can be put into practice. This insight comes slowly, gradually developing from novel to novel. It is a process of learning that what seems right in one situation may prove wrong in another and that conscience

must do for the twentieth century Christian what obedience to the law and probabilism[119] did for the Catholic in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The characters in the pre-Vatican II novels are not at a point yet where they dare make an individual decision, but by the time of *British Museum* they dare question the teaching of the Church and expect changes:

> For … [Adam and Barbara] the long-term solution to their sexual frustration is assumed to lie in the prospect of some *change in their Church's teaching*. The possibility of making a *conscientious decision* to ignore that teaching is *not raised*. (*British Museum*, Afterword, 166, my emphasis)

In *How Far* Lodge depicts the developments in this sector, and apparently these are almost universally seen as liberating:

> Das Aufbrechen der Abgeschlossenheit und Exklusivität des Systems Katholizismus und die Loslösung von der Autorität der Kirche zugunsten der Gewissensentscheidung des Einzelnen wird von den meisten Romanfiguren als Befreiung empfunden. (Kühn, 64)

In the later novels the Catholic charactes are presented as people with little doubts of the legitimacy of deciding on their own conscience (Bernard and Ursula in *Picturegoers*, Maureen in *Therapy*, Helen Reed in *Thinks…*).

4.3.2 The Concept of Salvation

> It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, Who then can be saved? (Mk 10:25-26)
>
> Only saints would be in that happy position, and to consider yourself a saint was a sure sign that you weren't one. (*How Far*, 7)

The Roman Catholic Church has a long tradition of teaching on salvation. At all stages the theme has been connected to the sinfulness of man and to the mercy of God, in different proportions and with differing attitudes towards the possibilities and motives of God and man.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church opens its instructions on the point with the following words:

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[119] According to the theory of probabilism, if a sufficient number of authorities maintain that an opinion favouring freedom from a particular obligation is probable, an individual may follow such an opinion in good conscience. (cf. Curran, 103)

> Called to beatitude but wounded by sin, man stands in need of salvation from God. Divine help comes to him in Christ through the law that guides him and the grace that sustains him: 'Work out your own salvation with *fear and trembling*; for God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.[120]' (CCC, 1949, my emphasis)

There has always been a tension between the role of God and the response of man. Curran sees an emphasis of both elements in the scriptures, 'the primacy of God's loving gift and the need for man's response to the gift.' He concludes that the solution may ultimately lie 'in seeing the whole of salvation as completely dependent upon God's acting in his way and also dependent on man's acting in his way.' (Curran, 47) This last point seems to hint at the freedom of man to decide on his own impulse, but freedom in theology has a deeper meaning. Catholic theory of the past centuries likes to quote from the Pauline epistle to the Romans, explaining the freedom of the Christian as a 'freedom from sin, death and the law', "law" meaning the entire Mosaic law (the Torah) insofar as the Mosaic law is an example of a general economy of law. The Christian is freed from living under an economy of law in that his salvation does not depend on the observance of certain laws or precepts. Salvation comes through faith in Christ Jesus. Freedom from law, however, does not mean that the Christian can now do as he pleases:

> For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them. (Rom 2:13-15)

History, however, shows a much stricter adherence to a given set of rules in the process of dealing with sin and praying for salvation. The Jesuits introduced a curriculum of studies which called for a two year course in practical moral theology to train confessors especially for their role as judges in the sacrament of penance. At the end of the sixteenth century these classes, taught by the Jesuit professors, evolved into the *Institutiones Theologiae Moralis*, manuals that emphasized what constituted sin and the differences between mortal and venial sins. Mortal sin breaks man's relationship with God and ultimately leads to total death and separation from God. The emphasis in distinguishing mortal sins from venial sins fell on the gravity of the matter involved. If the action was grave matter (theft, adultery), the sin was grave. If the action was light matter (lying, slight

[120] Phil 2:12-13.

disrespect), the sin was venial. Subjective involvement of the person did not play too great a role.

The tone and outlook of these manuals was negative, minimalistic, and legalistic. The main problem was that subsequent generations of theologians accepted those manuals as the totality of moral theology despite their very limited scope and purpose. Moral theology as taught in Catholic seminaries (and reductively on all educational levels) until the fifth decade of the twentieth century had the rather limited scope of those manuals; which worked out quite well because they were mainly used for the training of future confessors as judges in the confessional. The Council of Trent decreed that all Catholics must receive the sacrament of penance once a year, and penance required the confession of all mortal sins according to their number and species. Obviously, the teaching of Trent on penance was rather one-sided and overly juridical.[121]

In the nineteenth century a reaction set in against the negative attitude, the legalistic approach, and the overly casuistic methodology of the manuals of moral theology, with first attempts at renewal in Germany that did not reach very far. The twentieth century brought more attempts, both inside and outside Germany, which were still not very readily accepted. This is reflected in an outburst of Father Finbar Flannegan in the *British Museum*:

> Don't talk to me about thim German[122] and French! … They're worse than the Protestants thimselves. They're deshrtoying the Church, leading the Faithful astray. Why, half the parish is straining at the leash already. One hint from the Pope[123] and they'd be off on a wild debauch. (*British Museum*, 30f.)

The most prominent theologian of the "new way" was Bernhard Häring[124]. His central idea is very Pauline: 'The life of the Christian is not merely a eudaemonistic[125] self-fulfilment nor the dutiful performance of divine obligations' (Curran, 148). Man does not save himself by his own works and efforts, rather, he is saved by the merciful love of the Father through the redemptive activity of Christ. The moral life is man's response to the new life received in Christ Jesus. External action cannot be set apart from the person, as man bears a responsibility to the order of the world to which he contributes by his external

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[121] cf. Curran, 146.
[122] Döpfner, Häring, Küng, etc.
[123] The world is awaiting *Humanae Vitae*
[124] Häring argues that the ultimate distinction between mortal and venial sin lies in the subjective involvement of the person. Mortal sin engages the core of the person, the fundamental project of his existence; whereas venial sin remains a somewhat peripheral action which does not totally involve the person as such. (cf. Curran, 153)
[125] From *eudaimonia*, Greek: εὐδαιμονία, a classical Greek word commonly translated as 'happiness'. Etymologically, it consists of the word *eu* (*good* or *well being*) and *dai* (*spirit* or *minor deity*, used by extension to mean one's lot or fortune). An alternative and more adequate translation is 'human flourishing'.

action, which makes his heart visible, and true moral value arises from the depths of the human person, his motives and intentions.[126]

This insight must not lead to the Pelagian misapprehension that man can save himself. 'If we are not lost in a situation from which we are unable to rescue ourselves, then there is no need for a saviour, and the very core of the gospel is missing' (Woodman, 141). Ordinary human morality is not sufficient to extricate us. It is not enough to count the beads and tick off the single paragraphs of the catechism, such attitude easily exposes itself to ridicule. Ultimately, Salvation is a work worked by God, even if centuries of Catholic practice witness to the contrary.

4.3.3 Lodge's answer: The Game of Salvation

> Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained. (John 20:23)
>
> The name of the game was Salvation, the object to get to Heaven and avoid Hell. (*How Far*, 6)

Some twenty years before he wrote *How Far*, Lodge laid the foundations for one of its best known episodes – the vivid description of the simplistic concept of salvation penny-catechism-educated Catholics used to be indoctrinated with. It is a scene in *The Picturegoers* that introduces first doubts on the legalistic concept of salvation. Clare Mallory, reflecting on a previous encounter with Mark Underwood, asks herself whether she might not be in a state of mortal sin:

> She hadn't considered the possibility of being in a state of mortal sin since that Christmas when she was eight and Boxing Day was a Sunday and she had pretended to be ill because she didn't want to go to church two days running. All that week she had gone about in *fear and trembling* in case she would die before she could go to confession on the Saturday. (*Picturegoers*, 97, my emphasis[127])

Clare has not retained that childish conscience however, so that at the age of nineteen 'she felt no such guilty panic – just a tired academic curiosity' (*Picturegoers*, 97). Although she partly blames that on her spiritual lassitude, she is also aware of the fact that there are always more sides to one matter and that morality is not as unambiguous as one would in some situations wish for.

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[126] cf. Curran, 152.
[127] cf. CCC 1949, see above: 4.3.2.

> She had been shocked lately to find herself wondering whether the Catholic moral code wasn't just *a tedious and complicated game* with which theologians amused themselves at the expense of ordinary people's happiness. (*Picturegoers*, 98, my emphasis)

Unfortunately, there were many 'ordinary people' who did not think this game an impediment to their happiness at all, as is shown in the character of Damien O'Brien[128], who later in the novel

> adored the Sacred Host, with faith, piety and love, saying inwardly, 'My Lord and my God!' and mentally *deposited another seven years in his bank of indulgences*. (*Picturegoers*, 126, my emphasis)

Apart from these hints, however, *Picturegoers* is free from the big questions of mortal sin, peril of the soul, and salvation. On the whole, the novel is more concerned with pragmatic considerations that rather keep an eye on society and the conduct of life of the individual. The discipline Catholicism imposes on its members has nothing to do with fear of hell or the prospect of eternal beatitude.

This is slightly different in *Ginger, You're Barmy*. One of its rare theological scenes enters on the themes of damnation and salvation. After Percy's death, Mike Brady is eager to explain to Jonathan Brown the nature of Percy Higgins's upbringing and the minority position of his people even among English Catholics (Percy stemmed from an "Old Catholic" family). He proceeds telling him about the consequences suicide would have had upon Percy's immortal soul, and Jon resents the arrogance with which Mike stoops to explain things: 'Why did Catholics always assume that their theology was beyond anyone else's comprehension' (*Ginger*, 99). But apparently it is, because a few lines later Mike indignantly points out that 'the trouble with you Agnostics is that you regard theology as a kind of cold mathematical science like economics. It's not like that at all' (*Ginger*, 100). From a more objective point of view one must admit that the concepts of salvation and damnation as understood by most Catholics in the mid of the twentieth century lend themselves to just the way of interpretation Mike reproaches Jon for.

The 'tedious and complicated game' mentioned by Clare in *Pictuergoers* is described in full detail in *How Far*[129]. For the sake of visualisation the narrator introduces the medium of a widely known board game, the game of Snakes and Ladders:

> Snakes and Ladders has been a favourite race game in Britain for over 100 years. When it was originally devised Snakes and Ladders was a moral game with virtues in

[128] He is the most dedicated and proficient player of the Game of Salvation in Lodge's novels. He is the kind of guy who will try to turn a 'banal bus journey (indifferent) … to good account by silently reciting the Rosary' (*How Far*, 6; cf. *Picturegoers*, 28).
[129] cf. *How Far*, 6ff.

> the shape of the ladders, allowing the players to reach heaven quickly, while the vices, in the shape of snakes, forced the player back down.[130]

The board is chequered and the player approaches by throwing a single die. The squares on the bottom of the ladders show children doing good deeds and at the top of the ladders there are images of the children getting a reward. At the head of each snake there is a picture of a child engaging in misbehaviour and the square at the snake's tail shows the child suffering the consequence. As the player approaches he is to follow the numbers of the squares. Whenever he comes to the bottom of a ladder he "ascends" it and whenever he comes to the head of a snake he "slithers down" and is thus thrown back in the game. The winner is the player who gets to Heaven first. The others are not really losers, unless any of them reach the square called "purgatory". When you get to "purgatory", you miss a turn and get back into the game by throwing any number other than six. Throwing a six at any stage of the game means that you have been run over by a bus without having had a chance to repent your sins, which sends you directly to hell.

Image: Snakes and Ladders[131]

[130] quoted from: http://www.vam.ac.uk/images/image/29178-popup.html
[131] source: http://www.vam.ac.uk/images/image/29178-popup.html

The narrator uses the concept of this game in order to give the reader an idea of the 'metaphysic or world-picture these young people had acquired from their Catholic upbringing and education' (*How Far*, 6). They have obviously experienced a very normative Catholic education with a rather legalistic view of Catholic doctrine and morale; they see Catholicism as a do-ut-des system in which you do certain things to obtain certain amenities, and omit doing other things in order to avoid punishment. The do-s and don't-s are strictly defined, and in theory it ought to be quite simple to get to Heaven – the system does not negotiate the ambiguities of questions of morality. 'This was certainly the frame of reference of the old Catholic novel, with its perilous spiritual dramas and ever-present danger of Hell' (Bergonzi, "Decline and Fall", 185).

Superficially seen this scene is highly comical, most non-Catholics will not comprehend the full impact of what is said in this chapter. Conservative Catholics will have problems with the fact that their belief is ridiculed in such a seemingly blasphemous way. For them

> [t]he drama of good and evil […] has to work itself out on the human plane through the realities of death, suffering, sin and grace. […] These are indeed the great Catholic themes, the matters on which the Church claims a special expertise and has a library of traditional lore to contribute. (Woodman, 128)

From the theological point of view, we need to detach ourselves from the black-and-white-theory of pre Vat II days which tended to a deontologically casuistic explanation of the interrelation between sin and salvation. Basically, in those days it really all boiled down to the 'rule of thumb' given in *How Far*, namely that 'anything you positively disliked doing was probably Good, and anything you liked doing enormously was probably Bad' (*How Far*, 7), and the concept of Purgatory overshadowed the *eu-angelion* of the redeemer.

It is philosophically totally illogical to speak of a '*certain amount of time* in Purgatory' (*How Far*, 7, my emphasis), when at the same time theology and philosophy claim that God is not tied to a concept of time and that in death we enter another sphere where we leave all concepts of time or space behind us[132]. Besides, it is quite illogical that your sins are forgiven, but you have to do 'detention' in Purgatory. Such interpretation neglects the

[132] To understand this doctrine and practice of the Church, it is necessary to understand that sin has a double consequence. Grave sin deprives us of communion with God and therefore makes us incapable of eternal life, the privation of which is called the "eternal punishment" of sin. On the other hand every sin, even venial, entails an unhealthy attachment to creatures, which must be purified either here on earth, or after death in the state called purgatory. This purification frees one from what is called the "temporal punishment" of sin. These two punishments must not be conceived of as a kind of vengeance inflicted by God from without, but as following from the very nature of sin. A conversion which proceeds from a fervent charity can attain the complete purification of the sinner in such a way that no punishment would remain. (see CCC, 1472)

original meaning of "temporal sin", which Lodge gets quite right as a 'relic of the canonical penances of the medieval Church, when confessed sinners were required to do public penance […] for a certain period of time' (*How Far*, 8).

The categorisation of sins into venial and mortal sins added to the misapprehension. What people usually mixed up (and still do) was the Law of the Church and the consequences of breaking it and the moral laws as traded by the Bible and the tradition of moral theology.

> Sin […] should never be conceived as a penalty for the violation of Church law. Sin is not primarily a penalty or a punishment. Rather, sin is the reality of man's breaking his relationship of love with God. If man has not broken his relationship with God, the Church cannot say that he did. The Church has no right to use sin as a penalty for its own laws. (Curran, 131)

The reason why satire works so well here is that 'there is no denying that something like this caricature was what cradle-Catholics often grew up with' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 38). Catholics who grew up in the Tridentine[133] tradition really used to be full of existential *angst* as far as their salvation was concerned, although this *angst* is neither philosophically nor theologically justifiable. As there have at all times been few people who dared question the structures of dogma (or people who have been aware that dogma is a historical category that is subject to change), most Catholics were very much in the position Eagleton describes: although the neo-scholastic categories that are basic ingredients of the Roman Catholic dogma do not seem to relate to daily life, they concern the deepest truths of human existence, and many Catholics find that a complex, dissociated discourse orders their routine life[134].

Thus the only reason the characters of the novel can give for their attendance at mass is that 'they believe it is good for their souls to be at mass when they would rather be in bed, and that it will help them in the immortal game of snakes and ladders' (*How Far* 9), which basically leads to a never ending circle of guilt, bad conscience, *angst*, penitence and repeated trespasses, a circle that can only be broken by their finally learning to use the instruments of reason and conscience. The beginning is made in their younger years when 'most of them […] have given up collecting indulgences, as something rather childish and undignified' (*How Far*, 8), but in outline they are still not quite sure whether it is safe not to believe 'all this'.

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[133] As opposed to the younger generation of Catholics whose formative years fell into the time after Vat II.
[134] cf. Eagleton, "Silences", 97.

The absurdity of the whole concept of collecting indulgences, praying for one's soul or the souls of others, trying to maintain one's soul in a state of grace, acquiring a plenary indulgence, differentiating between venial and mortal sin, light and grave matter, the whole pharisaic to do is revealed when Michael contemplates the relative fairness of being punished equally heavily for a private act that hurt no other person, as for living a life that was dedicated to the killing of millions:

> Is it possible that if he should die in the act [of masturbation] … that he would suffer eternal punishment just the same as, say, Hitler? (In fact there is no guarantee that Hitler is in Hell; he might have made an Act of Perfect Contrition a microsecond after squeezing the trigger in his Berlin bunker.) It seems self-evidently absurd. (*How Far*, 9)

On the one hand, this is a perfect example for the ironic treatment Lodge submits exaggerated dogma to: he develops religious belief to a point where its inherent irony is recognized.[135] On the other hand, this scene makes one realise with Karl Rahner that in the end, if one believes in a merciful God, one ought to hope that hell is empty. Lodge goes a step further and gets rid of hell completely, as his characters gradually realise that salvation is not a game, but they do not come to their new conclusions by consciously rethinking Catholic doctrine (the only character that does so in the novel is the intrusive authorial narrator), but 'by a steady change in their sense of what seems credible' (Bergonzi, "Decline and Fall", 185).

The loss of the fear of hell is presented as a progress, and basically the cast of *How Far* are completely right in realising that they are competent to decide for themselves in certain questions of moral conduct. The development in Lodge's oeuvre does not stop there, however. *Paradise News* topples the concept of "paradise" with its 'insistent and ultimately meaningless repetition of the word' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 42). As Paradise is what Catholics expect to meet them after a life of privations and faithful observation of the Law (both the Torah and the Church Law), it comes as some kind of a shock to the terminally ill Ursula, who has only just returned to the Church, that Bernard, the theologian, who is an authority on the subject in her eyes, does not seem to believe in the Last Things at all:

> 'Do you believe in an afterlife?'
> […] 'Well, modern theologians tend to be a bit shifty about the afterlife, I'm afraid. Even Catholic ones. […] Take Küng's *On Being a Christian*[136], for example, one of the modern classics. You won't find anything in the index under "Afterlife" or "Heaven".'

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[135] cf. Streichsbier, 98

[136] Interestingly, Lodge uses an intertext here to strengthen Bernard's position, and he chooses a text he has already used someplace else: the questions in the epigraph to *How Far* are taken from the same book.

> ‘I don’t see the point of religion if there’s no heaven.’ said Ursula. ‘I mean, why be good, if you’re not going to be rewarded for it? Why not be bad, if you’re not going to be punished in the long run?’
> ‘They say that virtue is its own reward,’ said Bernard.
> ‘The hell with that,’ said Ursula […] ‘And what about hell? Has that gone down the tubes too?’
> ‘Very largely, and good riddance, I’d say.’ (*Paradise*, 257)

The difficulties Ursula has with this new view of things is clear – she was raised in the old system of ‘Snakes and Ladders’ and cannot comprehend the motivation behind acting according to the Gospel if there is no immediate or future result to be expected.

Much earlier in the novel Bernard illustrates the hopes his parishioners have of an eternal reward with texts from the Catholic liturgy, and he is quite right when he observes, ‘Dip into the Missal at random […] and you will encounter the same theme, endlessly repeated’ (*Paradise*, 189). He follows this comment up with quotations from the Roman Missal, citing passages from the Second Eucharistic Prayer, an Opening Prayer, a Prayer over the Gifts and a Prayer after Communion[137]. One could proceed in the experiment through all liturgical books; one always comes upon these kinds of passages. There seems to be a discrepancy between this kind of hope and the development in modern theology as presented by Bernard.

The tension is resolved, as all the other tensions in the novel, at the end. In the lecture Bernard gives on the “Sermon on the End” (Mt 25:31-45), he compares secular humanism with Christianity and comes to the conclusion that ‘doing good in an unselfish but pragmatic and essentially this-worldly sort of way’ (*Paradise*, 356) is the core of Jesus’ message. ‘It’s as if Jesus left this essentially humanist message knowing that one day all the supernatural mythology in which it was wrapped would have to be discarded’ (*Paradise*, 356). The novel ends with the reassuring answer to the question whether the news he has got were good or bad, ‘Very good news’ – a phrase that also refers to the Gospel and the Christian hope for the future. The Hawaiian experience may not have restored Bernard’s faith, but it has most certainly given him hope, and love, which are equally important theological virtues.

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[137] Have mercy on us all; make us worthy to share eternal life […], God our Father, may we […]reach the joy you have prepared for us beyond all imagining. […] Lord, we make this offering in obedience to your word. May it cleanse and renew us, and lead us to our eternal reward.[…] Almighty God, we receive new life from the supper your Son gave us in this world. May we find full contentment in the meal we hope to share in your eternal kingdom. (Paradise, 189, cf. Schott)

4.3.4 Conversion

> The time has come, he said. The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news! (Mk 1:15)

If we say with Curran that 'conversion (*metanoia*), the change of heart, represents the Christian's response to the loving call of God' (Curran, 149), then basically there is no real conversion in the novels our discussion covers.

Mr Mallory had converted to Catholicism long ago, for the love of his wife, and it is made felt throughout the novel that he is not very much concerned with religiosity, on the whole he follows his wife's leadership as long as it does not go too far[138].

Mark Underwood, the 'lapsed Catholic of raffish and cynical temperament' is 'captivated by the essential goodness and decency of the Mallory family' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 2). In his visits to Mass he 'finds his faith dramatically returning' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 2): 'The priest stretched up, lifting the Host on high. Mark stared at it, and belief leapt in his mind like a child in the womb' (*Picturegoers*, 111). But as Mark 'plunges from one conviction into the next', his conversion 'from cynical scepticism to Catholicism, from his craving for self-actualisation to the altruistic self-abandonment' (Morace, 71) does not seem creditable. It is not due to a sudden deeply felt, the motives remain vague and the main incentive is the possibility to impress Clare.

There is no perceptible change of heart in any of the converts of *How Far*. Miles, who is described as a convert at the outset of the novel, is the only one who has been drawn to the religion. He has little problems with the 'more stifling aspects of day-to-day Catholic life', compared to the rest of the basic cast of the novel. He is the type who is attracted by the 'sense of authority' in the Catholic faith, and whose 'Catholicism continues to reinforce the deep conservatism that drew … [him] to it in the first place' (Woodman, 28). That is why he has problems with the changes that occur in the wake of Vat II, and it is also the reason for his ultimately returning to the Church of England.

The conversions of Miriam and Tess are described in the context of their preparation for marriage. They do not convert from inner conviction, but for the sake of their fiancés.

'Miriam's conversion took longer than Tessa's. Every now and again she dug her heels in and refused to go any further' (*How Far*, 58). 'As a convert, Miriam lacks the 'childhood conditioning' of the cradle Catholics, and rationally questions many of the

[138] e.g. he sees no need in going to Benediction on Saturday evenings: 'It was making a fetish of religion' (*Picturegoers*, 129).

doctrines she is asked to believe in' (Trinder, 61). This comes as a surprise, though, as Miriam's reasons for being attracted to Roman Catholicism are rather superficial:

> Catholicism, to which Michael introduced her, seemed to be just what she was looking for: it was subtle, it was urbane, it had history, learning, art (especially music) on its side. (*How Far*, 58)

In contrast to Miriam, Tessa does not have any problems to accept the new faith, not because she is less of an intellectual, but because the reason for her conversion is very pragmatic: she needs to become a Catholic in order to have a proper wedding, and that is that. 'The Catholic service for a mixed marriage was almost as short and bleak as a Registry Office ceremony – no candles, flowers or even music being permitted[139]' (*How Far*, 54).

Towards the end of the novel, Tess admits that she does not 'bother too much about theology, to be honest', one of the reasons being that '[a] lot of the things I had to subscribe to when I joined the Catholic Church even Catholics don't believe now.' She has evidently retained her pragmatic view of things. 'I sometimes wonder if it matters whether it's true, as long as it helps people to cope' (*How Far*, 236).

4.4 Moral theology

The morality of norms is clearly reflected in Lodge's pre-Vatican II novel *The Picturegoers*, where almost every act of devotion is in some way linked to a previous trespass against (mostly moral) church law. For example, after having had impure thoughts about Clare, Damien

> rattled off a quick *Act of Contrition*, and thumbed hurriedly through his mental picture book of the Four Last Things: Death, Judgement, Hell and Heaven. His soul tidied for the night, he composed himself to sleep. (*Picturegoers*, 90)

The insight that personalism and conscience are characteristic features of morality and ought to be taken into account much more seriously leads to a satirical tension when we read Lodge's explanation of the "Game of Salvation" in *How Far Can You Go?* – a concept of salvation very much open to the pre-Vatican II do-ut-des morality; a simplistic, legalistic and negativistic approach which does not leave much room for interpretation or personal variation in matters of "living the good Catholic life" (see 4.3.3). You cannot

[139] cf. CIC 1917, can.1019 ff.

escape the question of personal moral responsibility, however, 'for the issues is not to go as far *As Far As You Can Go*[140] but to ask *How Far Can You Go?*' (Morace, 188).

Mr Haffenden asks whether Mr Lodge does not sometimes draw short of enunciating logical or moral conclusions, to which Mr Lodge answers

> I think I am by temperament tentative, sceptical, ironic, […] I tend to play off different ideological or moral attitudes against each other, and […] I hope it comes across in the novels more as honest doubt than as evasiveness. […] I tend to balance things against each other; my novels tend towards binary structures – with, for example, opposite characters – and they very much leave the reader to make up his own mind. *How Far Can You Go?* is an example which deals with very specific controversial issues but has been read in two very different ways: both conservative and progressive Catholics read into it, in a way, what they wanted to see; and the novel really doesn't take up a clear position on the question that the title raises, it explores the question. (Interview with Haffenden, 152)

It is interesting, though, that the issue treated most extensively in the critical literature on Lodge's Catholic novels is not liturgical reform or social changes but the question of sex. The traditional triad of temptations facing the Christian, drawn from Christ's testing in the wilderness (Lk 4, 1-13), consists of the world, the flesh and the devil.

> More scholarly modern exegesis has clarified that St Paul does not mean by the 'flesh' (*sarx*), that wars against the spirit, flesh in any purely physical or sexual sense. But usages like 'sin of the flesh' have confirmed the conclusion, and popular Catholicism is notorious for its over-attention to sexual matters.[141] (Woodman, 145)

4.4.1 Sex

> Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (1 Kor 6: 18-19)
>
> «Please, father, how far can you go with a girl, father?» (*How Far*, 4)

'For most people 'sin' means sex' (Woodman, 145), and there is the 'banal Catholic error of mistaking sexuality for morality' (Eagleton, *Silences*, 96). How come? Having sexual intercourse is just about the nearest we can get to another human being physically, and violating the rules we made ourselves concerning sex can be seen as a gross violation of human bondage. Now sin is what keeps us apart from God. So naturally, sin and sex have similar drawbacks. Still, to reduce the concept of sin to bodily inter-human

[140] a novel by Julian Mitchell (1963).
[141] vielleicht vergleichbar mit der Obsession der Amerikaner für Sexualdelikte designierter oder amtierender Präsidenten, wodurch sie von den wirklich wichtigen innen- und außenpolitischen Dingen ablenken?

relationships seems odd. The fact remains that in the history of moral theology sex is the most prominent and most controversial theme. Maybe that is due to the fact that the Bible, one of the sources moral theology derives its ideas from, is often read and interpreted with a sententious bias. The dilemma begins with the beginning: Let us take a look at Genesis 3:1-4:10[142], the story of The Fall of Man. This passage from the bible is often presented as an explanation of "how sex became dirty":

> The man and the woman eat the fruit which the serpent offers, and at once find that there is a price to be paid for what they have done: if men are not really "as God" the attempt to live as if they were must create a strain, and the stain shows first in the most intimate […] relationship, the sexual relationship: shame enters in and "they knew that they were naked" (Keeling, 23)

Keeling does not stand alone with this evaluation. The scene in Genesis is always automatically associated with sex, although the Bible makes no direct mention of it. Today's exegetic approach focuses more on the general vulnerability of the naked body and does not take this scene as a reference point for explaining sexual uncertainties or for an obsolete discussion of the sexual connotation of original sin. But Keeling's explanation is exactly what Lodge's characters have in mind when they think of original sin and its connection to sexuality (and sexuality alone). The effect is strengthened by classical biblical hermeneutics of the New Testament that held a similar view concerning the usage of the Greek word 'sarx' in the epistles of St Paul, which, however, does not mean flesh in any purely physical or sexual sense. 'But usages like 'sin of the flesh' have confirmed the conclusion, and popular Catholicism is notorious for its over-attention to sexual matters' (Woodman, 145).

It does not take one by surprise, then, that sex is the most prominent moral issue in the novels of Lodge. One very telling incidence is Michael's reaction to Miriam's 'How would *you* know?' He has tried to comfort her about her imminent first confession with the remark that she could not have anything very dreadful to confess. Now he is confused and immediately assumes that she must have had sex with some other boy. It is the most dreadful sin he can imagine. The truth is that 'she had joined in the persecution of a girl whom nobody liked and who had eventually been driven to attempt suicide' (*How Far*, 60). When she finds out the reason for Michael's morose thoughts, she confronts him with his obsession with sex: 'You can't imagine people feeling guilty about anything else, can you?' (*How Far*, 60)

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[142] In effect, although it is set later in text, this passage developed much earlier than the first account of creation in Genesis 1, which dates from the time of the Babylonian Exile 550 B.C., while Genesis 2-4 dates back to the time of King Salomon, around 900 B.C.

Basically, one can say with the words of Barbara Appleby:

> There's always a snag perhaps that's the root of the matter there's something about sex perhaps it's original sin I don't know but we'll never get it neatly tied up you think you've got it under control in one place it pops up in another either it's comic or tragic nobody's immune. (*British Museum*, 160)

4.4.1.1 Premarital sex

> Nor must We omit to remark, in fine, that since the duty entrusted to parents for the good of their children is of such high dignity and of such great importance, every use of the faculty given by God for the procreation of new life is the right and the privilege of the married state alone, by the law of God and of nature, and *must be confined absolutely within the sacred limits of that state*. (*Casti Connubii*, 18)

> Those who are engaged to marry are called to live chastity in continence. They should see in this time of testing a discovery of mutual respect, an apprenticeship in fidelity, and the hope of receiving one another from God. They should reserve for marriage the expressions of affection that belong to married love. They will help each other grow in chastity. (CCC, 2350)

Each of the novels in our discussion is concerned with the question of premarital sex. *Picturegoers* is the most reticent book in this respect, hinting at the problem more than bringing it out into the open. There is a mention of a girl having been expelled from Patricia's school because she had been taken to school by her boyfriend[143] , the Len-and-Bridget plotline features many scenes including embraces and kisses, but there is no reference to sex. It is quite clear that marriage comes first, although Len is not a Catholic.[144] Mark, the lapsed Catholic, is not indisposed to a more bodily relationship, but Clare has scruples:

> Was it wrong of Mark to put his hand there? Was it wrong of her to like it? *Had* she liked it before she broke away? Had she broken away because it was wrong, or because of the noise of the window? Should she be angry with him? Or couldn't he be expected to know better – was it really her fault that it had happened? […] Should she go to Communion tomorrow? Well, it couldn't be a mortal sin, because there hadn't been full knowledge or full consent. (*Picturegoers*, 97)

There is only one person who has even more scruples as far as bodily contact is concerned: For Damien it is the final condemnation of Clare when he witnesses her kissing Mark in the middle of the street. 'She had soiled herself to the point of revulsion by submitting to this pawing in the public street – as shameless as the casual coupling of two

[143] cf. *Picturegoers*, 32.
[144] cf. *Picturegoers*, 35.

dogs' (*Picturegoers*, 158). In the end, none of them has premarital sex, they all remain chaste. Damien, Mark and Clare end up as singles and Len and Bridget get married.

One of *Ginger's* plotlines is the story of Jon and Pauline. At the outset of their relationship they go through a similar courting-but-not-touching period like Mark and Clare, but in the end they end up in bed. Jon anticipates the event, from Pauline's statement that 'Catholic teaching on marriage …[is] squalid' he deduces that 'Pauline would have no objection. […] No doubt that had been one of the knottiest problems in her tangled relationship with Mike' (*Ginger*, 129). The consequences of their doing are pregnancy and marriage.

There are three more couples in Lodge's novels who get married while the bride is pregnant, namely Edward and Tessa and Violet and Robin in *How Far*, and Kate's and Timothy's parents in *Shelter*. There is no telling what shocks Tim more: this discovery or the story of Kate's first lover, a man who raised false hopes of marriage in her and then turned out to be married already.[145] In the end, Timothy has a rather unchaste experience himself, with a girl named Gloria. A scene of heavy petting is followed by the following dialogue:

> She looked very vulnerable and waif-like, with her *white*, tender breasts and her long bare brown legs and the brief *blue* pants.
> - *Gloria* …
> - Yes?
> - D'you think this is right then? What we just did?
> - Don't you?
> - It's a *sin*, he said. He thought to himself: I must go to Confession tomorrow before I leave for home. *Trains could crash, ships could sink*. *Gloria* looked uncomfortable, and *crossed* her arms over her breasts.
> - Are you a *Christian*? she asked.
> - I'm a *Catholic*. (*Shelter*, 241f., my emphasis)

The code of the passage is highly Catholic[146]. *White* and *blue* and the name "Gloria" refer to the Blessed Virgin, and *Trains could crash* refers to the fear lest he should die in an accident before having had a chance of repenting his *sin* (see 4.3.2).

British Museum only enters on the question of premarital sex in connection with Adam's attempted affair with Virginia Rottingdean. *Virginia* is very keen on losing her *virginity*, and Adam is prepared to go to the utmost in pursuit of the manuscripts that could mean a fundamental change in his life – the money this discovery must bring would extinguish all his problems at a stroke – or at least so he thinks. Somehow it does not seem

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[145] cf. *Shelter*, 166.
[146] This is only one level of dialogism in this passage, the more prominent connection being the one to Joyce's "Nausicaa"; for a detailed analysis of that connection see Amann, 96-106.

very credible that Adam would really go this length to obtain the papers, not with the picture Lodge has created of his hero, and so it does not come as too much of a surprise that Adam ends up sticking a thermometer into Virginia's mouth and explaining about the basal-temperature-method, leaving her with the reader knowing that he had left for good.

All of the characters of *How Far* are confronted with the question of premarital sex in one way or the other. But to begin with, at the outset of the novel none of them have very much of an idea about how sex works and what its consequences can be:

> They know about the mechanics of basic copulation, but none of them could give an accurate account of the processes of fertilization, gestation and birth, and three of the young men do not even know how babies are born. (How Far, 12)

That babies are conceived by the act of copulation seems to be quite clear to them, but they are not very sure about other forms of sexual intercourse. On their camping holiday in Brittany, Polly asks Angela if it is possible to get pregnant from petting to climax.[147] This insecurity in matters of sexual intercourse is to accompany them well into the later years of their marriages.

Although all of the basic cast of *How Far* are confronted with the question of premarital sex, only Violet, Edward and Polly actually end up having sex before marriage, every one of them out of completely different situations.

Violet's boyfriend Robin wants to spend a weekend away with her to see 'how [they] suit each other physically.' Violet says she couldn't do that. '"Isn't that what they call a trial marriage? Catholics aren't allowed."' (*How Far*, 45). He argues that it is madness to contract an indissoluble marriage without knowing whether they are sexually compatible. She pleads that if they love each other, it is bound to work out all right. In the end she gives in. On their way to the hotel, Violet asks Robin to drive carefully, because she is 'in a state of mortal sin'[148] for she couldn't say she was carried away by the impulse of the moment. When she worries about pregnancy and he says he has taken precautions, she says that's 'another mortal sin on top' (*How Far*, 46).

Edward and his fiancé Tessa are quite content to wait – but things turn out differently. When they go on a weekend conference for Catholic engaged couples, the nun in charge of the front desk brings them to one room as she thinks that they are there for the conference for married couples. One thing leads to another and in the end they have sex. The reason is

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[147] cf. *How Far*, 36.
[148] cf. Game of Salvation, 4.3.3.

curious: Edward has scruples spilling his seed[149], 'it seemed to him that their sin would be less […] if they performed the act properly' (*How Far*, 56f.).

> Having made love once, Edward and Tessa were unable to resist further opportunities that came their way, though each time it happened they solemnly vowed it would no recur. Soon Tessa discovered she was pregnant, and they made arrangements to get married rather sooner than they had planned. (*How Far*, 57)

Polly loses her virginity in Italy:

> After college she went to Italy to be a kind of *au pair* with an aristocratic Catholic family in Rome. […] The head of the family was a count, a handsome, charming man who deflowered Polly quite quickly and skilfully on what was supposed to be her afternoon off. […] A couple of months later she had an affair with the young Italian teacher from whom she took language lessons. After she slept with him the first time he said he would have offered to marry her if she had been a virgin, but as she wasn't, he wouldn't. Polly said she didn't want to marry him anyway, upon which he sulked. (*How Far*, 38)

Polly is the most emancipated character of the novel. She writes for a newspaper, first as consultant in sexual matters[150], later under her own name. Her character serves as a promoter of modern ideas on sexuality. Premarital sex became more and more and issue. Apparently, 'the starry-eyed praise of sexual happiness – in marriage, naturally – by the new theologians meant that young Catholics were disinclined to wait patiently for marriage before enjoying it' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 38).

Towards the end of *How Far*, the sexual morality at Michael's College is discussed. Now, in the 'liberated seventies' (Trinder, 68), premarital sex has become the rule rather than the exception: 'Many of the students who had come up as good, obedient Catholics […] were having fully consummated relationships under the very roof of the College' (*How Far*, 197). The staff are not quite certain about the way they ought to react to that. Michael sees it pragmatically: '[I]t isn't all cant about serious interpersonal relationships and so on. I reckon most of the students who sleep together while they're here get married eventually.' And he adds, 'That was our generation, wasn't it? You weren't allowed to have sex outside marriage, so naturally having sex came to seem the main point of getting married' (*How Far*, 198).

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[149] cf. Gen 38:9-10, the story of Onan.
[150] "Ask Ann Field", cf. *How Far*, 96 ff.

4.4.1.2 Birth-Control – Between anticipation and shattered dreams

> "Do you think I enjoy this performance every morning?" (Barbara in *British Museum*, 13)
>
> But Onan knew that the offspring would not be his; so whenever he lay with his brother's wife, he spilled his semen on the ground to keep from producing offspring for his brother. (Gen 38:9)

While birth control does not play a very great role in Lodge's early novels *Picturegoers* and *Ginger*[151], *British Museum* is wholly dedicated to the question. The novel 'appeared at a time when many Catholics entertained hopes […] that the ban on contraceptives would be lifted, and it reflects their state of mind' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 6).

> What is bothering Adam most of the time we encounter him, and what inspires his most amusingly frustrated responses, is his dilemma as a healthy sexual being seemingly doomed to repeated parenthood and the attendant worry about parenthood through his obedience to a religious authority whose position on birth control seems arbitrary and even inhumane. (Martin, 113)

'Pent-up frustration and overexcitement prevent their having much pleasure even when it is safest to enjoy sex' (Martin, 113) – which is completely in accordance with Catholic morality: sex is not to be fun, it is only a means of begetting children, in obedience to Gen 1:28, 'God blessed them and said to them, be fruitful and increase in number.' (see 2.2.1.1)

It may seem that Lodge is over-liberal in ridiculing Catholic understanding in sexual issues. When we look at the historical situation, it becomes clear that a Catholic who did adhere to the doctrine of the Catholic Church really had to face these problems.

> Die grotesken Ausformungen dieser Vorgangsweise […] lesen sich in *British Museum* zwar (auch aufgrund der zeitlichen Distanz) sehr humorvoll, waren für die Betroffenen aber tatsächlich, wie Lodge selbst es nennt, 'inhumanly difficult and demanding.'[152] (Pfandl-Buchegger, 248)

It is very well for a man who lives in celibacy to tell fathers of growing families what (not) to do about family planning. He does not have to feed these families. Father Finbar of Tipperary, however, is not to be bargained with. When Adam asks him whether he sees any chance of the Church's teaching on Birth Control to change, Father Finbar answers in the negative. He points out that the 'true purpose of marriage is to procreate children.' A

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[151] Mr and Mrs Mallory have eight children, the youngest well above seven years old, they still find each other attractive, and they still make love. As Mrs Mallory cannot have entered menopause after the birth of the twins, the question arises how they arranged not to get pregnant again, since contraception is firmly forbidden to Catholics. The issue is never raised throughout the whole book. In *Ginger*, Jon first makes a great fuss about obtaining condoms and when he finally gets some, he flushes them down the toilet on the train home. (cf. *Ginger*, 46, 128, 218).

[152] *British Museum*, Afterword, 165.

discussion of biologically possible numbers of siblings and their chances of survival 'with modern medical care' leads to Adam's question, 'But how could you house and feed even seven in London today? What are we supposed to do?' Upon which Father Finbar retorts, 'Practice self-restraint. […] *I* do' (*British Museum*, 30f.).

The spiritual problems Catholics were faced with when contemplating artificial birth control are described in more detail in *How Far*:

> They had been indoctrinated since adolescence with the idea, underlined by several Papal pronouncements[153], that contraception was a grave sin, and a sin that occupied a unique place in the spiritual game of Snakes and Ladders. For unlike other sins of the flesh, it had to be committed continuously and with premeditation if it was to have any point at all. It was not, therefore, something that could be confessed and absolved again and again in good faith, like losing one's temper, or getting drunk, or, for that matter, fornicating. […] It excluded you from the sacraments, therefore; and according to Catholic teaching of the same vintage, if you failed to make your Easter Duty (confession and communion at least once a year, at Easter or thereabouts) you effectively excommunicated yourself[154]. So, either you struggled on as best you could without reliable contraception, or you got out of the Church; these seemed to be the only logical alternatives. (*How Far*, 79)

British Museum uses irony to criticise the system, but it does not question the decisions of the Church, rather its protagonist hopes for a change in Catholic doctrine. 'Der Held scheitert nicht am Zwiespalt von Gebot und Neigung, sondern er versucht sich in der gegebenen Lage zu arrangieren' (Kühn, 60).

The reason for this caution is that at the time of the publication of *British Museum* there was no way of challenging the Catholic Church's teaching on birth control without challenging the Church's authority as a whole. Yet, 'such a challenge to the Church's monologic authority is precisely what his parodic technique implies' (Morace, 140).

The last chapter of the novel features Barbara's thoughts. In a passage very much kin to Molly Bloom's interior monologue in *Ulysses*[155], Barbara reflects her relationship and also her sexuality. In contrast to Molly's marker "yes", Barbara's is "perhaps". This "perhaps" suggests two things: First, it points to the possible changes in the Church's teaching on birth control, and second it hints at a possible change in the future response of the people affected by the teaching, namely their decision to ignore the rules.

The hopes for a change in doctrine were not far-fetched, as during the nineteen-sixties, especially in the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council, when *British Museum* was

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[153] Arcanum 1880, Casti Connubii1930, Gaudium et Spes 1963.

[154] CIC 1917 can. 859 and 1983 can. 920 §1: After being initiated into the Most Holy Eucharist, each of the faithful is obliged to receive holy communion at least once a year.
§2. This precept must be fulfilled during the Easter season unless it is fulfilled for a just cause at another time during the year.

[155] cf. Joyce, 871-933.

written and published, some feeling of change was in the air. This is also mentioned in *How Far*:

> In 1962[156], Pope John actually set up a Pontifical Commission to study problems connected with the Family, Population and Birth Control. This was encouraging news in one sense, since it seemed to admit the possibility of change, but disappointing in that it effectively removed the issue from debate at the Vatican Council, which began its deliberations in the same year. Pope John died in 1963, to be succeeded by Pope Paul VI, who enlarged the Commission and instructed its members specifically to examine the Church's traditional teaching with particular reference to the progesterone pill. Catholics, especially young married ones, waited impatiently for the result of this inquiry. (*How Far*, 80f.)

Time passed, the Council closed, and there was still no decision. The cast of *How Far* were more than ever confronted with the question of birth control, as most of them already had children and would have liked to know how to go on in matters of family planning.

> In October [1966], perhaps disturbed by evidence that increasing numbers of Catholics around the world were, like Michael and Miriam, anticipating a change in the Church's attitude to birth control, Pope Paul declared that there would be no pronouncement on the issue in the immediate future, and that the traditional teaching must be rigidly adhered to. (*How Far*, 105)

Then the publication of *Humanae Vitae* utterly destroyed the hopes of married couples for a more relaxed teaching:

> For the Catholics […] the event of the year [1968] was undoubtedly the publication, on 29 July, of the Pope's long-awaited encyclical letter on birth control, *Humanae Vitae*. Its message was: no change. (*How Far*, 114)

The question of birth control via "Safe Method" is not only a moral issue, in *How Far* it becomes a medical issue as well. Edward, who is a doctor, is troubled by the failure rate of the Rhythm Method. At first he attributes this to the lack of attention on the part of the patients, but after some time he starts having doubts about the reliability of the method itself. Then he notes that there is a high incidence of non-hereditary abnormalities in babies born to Catholic patients whom he has counselled in the rhythm method. The relevant research suggest that there is a greater chance of such abnormities occurring when the egg is fertilized near the end of its life span, a situation more likely among couples who restrict sex to the postovulatory period. As a consequence, he 'terminate[s] his voluntary work for the Catholic Marriage Advisory Council, and recommend[s] the basal temperature method to Catholic patients in the practice with more caution than previously' (*How Far*, 78). When he speaks out on behalf of contraception, he is 'cold-shouldered by his Catholic

[156] one of Lodge's rare mistakes, that was in March 1963, see 2.2.1.1.

colleagues in the medical profession' who fear that if they join the pro-contraception lobby they will be associated with the pro-abortion and pro-euthanasia lobbies. 'Thus Edward found himself pushed […] into identification with the radical Catholic Underground, though by natural inclination he was far from radical'(*How Far*, 144).

When Lodge wrote *British Museum*, he worried lest the Catholic Church's action on the question of birth control might cut short its shelf life as a 'live issue' for fiction. 'I need not have worried,' he states in his 1981 introduction to the reprint of the novel. Although Rome had spoken in the meantime, the case was nowhere near closed.

4.4.1.3 Roma locuta, causa finita?

> But in the democratic atmosphere recently created by Vatican II, Catholics convinced of the morality of contraception were no longer disposed to swallow meekly a rehash of discredited doctrine just because the Pope was wielding the spoon. (*How Far*, 114)

> Instead of the resigned obedience which such a pronouncement might have prompted before the liberal climate initiated by Vatican II, there was a storm of protest. Married Catholics, at least in the western world, decided that if there was not to be a change in the law about contraception then they would ignore it. *Humanae Vitae* provoked a crisis not only about sexuality but about authority in the Church that is still unresolved. (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 34)

Usually, as soon as one rule is lifted, many others are undermined, and the whole system threatens to collapse. The birth-control controversy led to a challenge of the attitude of the hierarchy in matters of homosexuality, the celibate, submission to authority and autonomous conscience. In explaining these developments in chapter four of *How Far*, 'How They Lost the Fear of Hell', Lodge justifies the sexual bias of *How Far*, and even that of *British Museum*, as it reveals the importance of the seemingly irrelevant topic of contraception as the bone of contention in the development of Catholic teaching[157]. In the end it all leads up to the question 'how an ancient religious institution can possibly be relevant in modern times and on what basis (and by whom) its jurisdiction is to be determined' (Martin, 124f.).

> Thus it came about that the first important test of the unity of the Catholic Church after Vatican II, of the relative power and influence of conservatives and progressives, laity and clergy, priests and bishops, national Churches and the Holy See, was a great debate about – not, say, the nature of Christ and the meaning of his teaching in the light of modern knowledge – but about the precise conditions under

[157] cf. Pfandl-Buchegger, 339.

> which a man was permitted to introduce his penis and ejaculate his semen into the vagina of his lawfully wedded wife, a question on which Jesus Christ himself had left no recorded opinion. (*How Far*, 115)

In consequence of not being able to believe any longer 'in the authority of a Church that taught such mischievous nonsense' (*How Far*, 79), some people left the Church. Others lapsed over this issue and retained 'a residual belief in the rest of Catholic doctrine and thus lived uncomfortably in a state of suppressed guilt and spiritual deprivation' (*How Far*, 79). Others again studied the matter more deeply, the statements of the Church as well as the response of theologians, journalists, co-religionists and non-Catholics. That was quite easy because 'the Catholic press, and even the secular press, was full of correspondence and articles about Catholics and birth control' (*How* Far, 103). After having read a good deal of this material, Miriam decides to go on the pill. As a consequence, she and Michael continue to go to Communion, but not to Confession. 'People went to Confession less and less frequently, anyway. […] From time to time Michael checked his conscience for symptoms of guilt. Nothing' (*How Far*, 103). Michael and Miriam are the first couple in *How Far* to make up their own mind on how to cope with the problem. Their peers gradually follow their example:

> Angela went on the Pill immediately after the birth of her mentally handicapped child; and Tessa, though happily her new baby was born sound and healthy, followed suit, with Edward's full support, neither of them being inclined to take any further risks. […]Some couples needed the impetus of a special hardship or particular crisis to take this step, […] but once they had done so it seemed such an obviously sensible step to take that they could hardly understand why they had hesitated so long. […] If a Catholic couple decided, privately and with a clear conscience, to use contraceptives, there was nothing that priest, bishop or Pope could do to stop them. […] Thus contraception was the issue on which many lay Catholics first attained moral autonomy, rid themselves of superstition, and ceased to regard their religion as, in the moral sphere, an encyclopaedic rule-book in which a clear answer was to be found to every possible question of conduct. (*How Far*, 118)

'Indeed, it could be said that those who suffered most from *Humanae Vitae* were not married layfolk at all, but the liberal and progressive clergy' (*How Far*, 118). At the outset of the discussion, in August1968, Dr. Hans Küng[158], Professor of Dogmatic and Ecumenical Theology in Thübingen, said:

> Diejenigen von uns, die nach ernsthafter, reiflicher Überlegung vor sich selbst, ihrem Ehepartner und vor Gott zur Einsicht kommen, dass sie, um der Erhaltung ihrer Liebe und um des Bestehens und Glücks ihrer Ehe willen, anders handeln müssen als die Enzyklika vorsieht, sind nach traditioneller katholischer Lehre, auch der Päpste, verpflichtet, ihrem Gewissen zu folgen. Sie werden sich somit nicht dort der Sünde

[158] The same whose text Lodge used in the epigraph of *How Far*.

> anklagen, wo sie nach bestem Wissen und Gewissen gehandelt haben, sondern werden ruhig und in ihrer Überzeugung sicher am Leben der Kirche und der Sakramente teilnehmen.
> Mit dem *Verständnis der Seelsorger* werden sie bestimmt rechnen dürfen. (Böckle, 74-75)

He proved right – evidence shows that many priests were sympathetic. But the bishops who for fear of a schism were inclined to follow the encyclical strictly, did not approve of their progressive priests' conduct in the matter. One of the sufferers is Father Austin Brierley who, when a reporter on the local paper interviewed him, said that 'personally he thought the Pope was up the creek, or words to that effect, and some mean-minded parishioner sent a cutting to the bishop' (*How Far*, 121). In consequence he is suspended and Adrian founds 'Catholics for an Open Church,' a lay pressure group with the motto 'fight *HV* and help priests who are in trouble over it' (*How Far*, 121). COC meet in order to write an open letter to the Cardinal about Father Brierley. This is an allusion to Cardinal John Carmel Heenan, chairman of the English hierarchy. After his pastorally not very empathic dictum 'we should bear in mind that self-discipline and the way of the Cross are part of our Christian calling' (Horgan, 117, see also 2.2.1.1), it is no wonder he received open letters.

Father Brierley's dispute with his bishop is resolved 'like other crises in his priestly life, by sending him on a course – this time for a degree in psychology and sociology' (*How Far*, 131), under the condition that he resigns from 'that Catholics for an Open Church nonsense' (*How Far*, 132), which he grudgingly does, but he continues to advise them unofficially on matters of theology and ecclesiastical politics. When his bishop finds out that he is still consorting with COC, he suspends his allowance and forbids him to say Mass or perform any other priestly duties (*How Far*, 168).

> Meanwhile he collaborated with Adrian on the text of a pamphlet urging Catholics to make their own conscientious decision about birth control[159], feeling that in this way he was making some amends for all the times he had given contrary advice in the confessional as a young priest. (*How Far*, 169)

On the whole, although many Catholics continue to believe that the Pope's word was law, 'the most remarkable aspect of the whole affair was the newfound moral independence of the laity which it gradually revealed' (*How Far*, 118).

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[159] cf. Osman, Arthur. "Birth plan advice by Catholics." The Times 2. Sept. 1970, p.2.

4.4.2 The marital bond

4.4.2.1 Matrimonial situations

In his novels, Lodge basically presents two initial situations for matrimony. The couple either consists of two Catholics or a Catholic and a non-Catholic. In the second case, there are two possible ways of dealing with the situation. Either the non-Catholic party takes instructions and converts to Catholicism, or he or she has to 'sign the papers'[160]. In most cases, the non-Catholic opts for the first alternative, as this means that the couple can have a 'proper' wedding ceremony (see 4.3.4).

There are only four non-Catholics who do not convert, namely Robin in *How Far*, Timothy's father[161] and Sheila in *Shelter*, and Len in *Picturegoers*. In the case of Len, reference is made to the papers non-Catholics had to sign. Father Kipling has doubts whether it is right to marry Len and Bridget. 'As he's a non-Catholic it's worse. […] Still, there's nothing I can do. They're both over twenty-one, and he's signed all the papers' (*Picturegoers*, 214).

Until well into the second half of the twentieth century, it was not that easy to get married when one of the partners was not Catholic. The non-Catholic partner had to make promises as to the acceptance of the sacramentality of marriage and the raising of children in the Catholic faith.

The 1917 Code of Canon Law most severely condemned mixed marriages, such marriages were forbidden by divine law where there was a danger to the faith of the Catholic spouse or to the faith of any of the children.[162]

The Church granted a dispensation from the impediment of mixed religion[163] only for a just and grave cause, provided that certain promises were signed and there was moral certitude that the promises would be kept. The non-Catholic partner had to promise that there would be no danger of perversion to the Catholic partner's faith and both partners had to promise to baptize and raise all the children in the Catholic faith.[164]

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[160] In the case of Polly and Jeremy this option is void as Jeremy is divorced and there can be no Catholic wedding at all.

[161] According to Martin161, after World War II over half of the marriages in England involving Catholics were mixed, so his having Timothy enter into a "mixed marriage" does not only reflect Lodge's own family background but the social situation in England as well.

[162] cf. CIC 1917, can. 1060

[163] Note that "mixed" always meant marriage of a Catholic with another *baptized* person. Anyone non-Christian in belief was out of the question at any rate: Can. 1070. § 1. Nullum est matrimonium contractum a persona non baptizata cum persona baptizata in Ecclesia catholica.

[164] cf. CIC 1917, can. 1061

As *Picturegoers* is set in 1955/56, here the old Code of Canon Law is still in full use. On March 18, 1966, the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued an Instruction on mixed marriages[165] that modified the CIC 1917 legislation.

The first concepts leading up to the Instruction merely pointed out that future legislation should take into consideration the Conciliar Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio*. A 1964 *votum* on marriage declares that

> in all mixed marriages […] the Catholic party with a grave obligation in conscience will be obliged to make a sincere promise to provide for the Catholic baptism and education of all the children, to the extent that he can, the non-Catholic party is to be informed about these promises to be made by the Catholic party, and to agree that he or she will not oppose them. (Rynne, 229)

The debate of the question showed that a number of influential prelates, especially from the Anglo-Saxon countries[166], were not in agreement with the rather liberal (no more promises from the non-Catholic party, no more written evidence of approval) stance of the document[167]. The Instruction issued by the Sacred Congregation in 1966 made the following changes in the legislation concerning the promises made in mixed marriages:

1) The Catholic party alone is to make the explicit promise to provide for the baptism and education of all the children in the Catholic faith.
2) The non-Catholic party is to be invited to promise sincerely and openly that he will not impede the obligation of the Catholic party. If the non-Catholic party thinks that he cannot make this promise without violating his own conscience, the Ordinary is to refer the case with all its circumstances to the Holy See.
3) The promises are to be in writing, but the Ordinary can decide either in all cases or in particular cases that the promises do not have to be made in writing.[168]

The document attempts to apply the principle of religious liberty and respects the conscience of the non-Catholic partner. The non-Catholic is not asked to promise to bring up the children as Catholics, but only promises not to impede the obligation of the Catholic partner. The law now provided for a certain flexibility which was lacking in the older legislation. Greater powers were also given to the local Ordinaries. The document was still criticised for "Roman centralization", the Council's teaching on collegiality and the national councils of bishops received no mention, and both Protestants and Catholics criticised it for not going far enough. What about the Catholic whose non-Catholic partner

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[165] *Matrimonii sacramentum* (*Instructio de matrimonii mixtis*) AAS 58 (1966) 235-239.
[166] In their ultramontane attitude they were also those who insisted on the Holy See to be consulted in cases in which the non-Catholic could not make the promise in good conscience.
[167] cf. Rynne, 232 f.
[168] cf. *Matrimonii Sacramentum*, 4-5.

feels that he has a right and a duty to raise the children in his faith? In the face of such a conflict, the question cannot be resolved by saying the couple should not marry.

While the Church never arrived at a satisfactory solution to the problem, people found their own ways[169] of dealing with the situation. 'Pastoral experience points out that many people will make the promise just to be married in the Church, but they will not bother to fulfil them' (Curran, 193). This is reflected in *Shelter*:

> - How do you manage about religion, if I'm not being nosy?
> - Oh, no problems. Sheila doesn't mind the kids being brought up as Catholics. I don't mind her planning when to have them. (*Shelter*, 268)

Considering the terms on which such inter-confessional marriages were contracted, it does not take one by surprise that most of the non-Catholics decided to take instructions and convert to Catholicism.

4.4.2.2 Adultery

One of the funniest attempts at adultery by a Catholic is described in *British Museum*. It is the scene when Adam realises he could make a fortune out of the manuscripts Mrs Rottingdean is hiding, and so he decides to yield to Virginia's conditions and sleep with her. For the first time in his life he considers using artificial contraception, but as he cannot manage to obtain contraceptives (he is intercepted by Father Finbar), he decides to chicken out. '"I haven't taken precautions." – "Don't worry about that, darling […] I don't mind taking a chance."' (*British Museum*, 143) But he does, and so on the brink of adultery Adam bethinks himself and opts for – the Safe Method! He sticks a thermometer in Virginia's mouth, explains about the rhythm method, advises her to take her temperature every night and drop him a line when it rises sharply for three consecutive days, and then he promises they will see what they can do. 'Not very romantic,' Virginia says. His answer is prompt and disillusioning: 'Sex isn't' (*British Museum*, 143). This highly comic scene introduces (attempted) adultery at a level where we can laugh about it. 'Adultery can be treated comically within the comic mode […] but if it's in a serious context you have to face the real pain and anguish that it causes in reality.' (Lodge in Haffenden, 159)

Lodge takes this into account when he introduces the topic in his other Catholic novels. In *Shelter* he very sensitively describes Kate's disappointment when she finds out that her

[169] The children are not baptized and not instructed by either parent; the children are baptized, instructed by both parents, but left free to choose their own religion; the children are divided in their religious education; all children are educated in the same religion. The Church never made an attempt to officially sanction any of the "not entirely Catholic" schemes.

first love has deceived her and has lied to her about having to go to the front in order to get her into bed. Fortunately she finds out that he is married before she goes on the weekend trip with him.[170]

In *How Far* Robin has an affair with Caroline, his daughter Felicity's babysitter.[171] When she eventually deserts him for a younger lecturer, he and Violet enjoy a tranquil companionate marriage.[172]

Dennis has a brief but passionate affair with his secretary, who deems herself in love with him. He leaves his family and moves in with her, but after a few weeks which completely exhaust him physically and sexually, he goes back to them.

In *Therapy*, Laurence "Tubby" Passmore is very proud of his happy marriage, until his wife tells him that she is leaving him for someone else. He desperately tries to start an affair with his long-time friend Amy, but finds that he cannot. So he goes into pursuit of his first love, Maureen, whom he finally finds on her pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostella. He finds out that her marriage is rather dull and unsatisfactory and asks her to leave her husband and marry him instead. But as she is a Catholic, she will not consider divorce, so they end up in a functioning ménage à trois (which is basically an oxymoron), in my eyes a rather cowardly fairy-tale ending.

In none of these cases, however, is there any trace of a bad conscience. The sole reason for abstaining from committing adultery is that it does not bring any pleasures that would justify the pains (clandestine meetings, lies, uncomfortable living situations, fear of pregnancy). Where the joys prevail, adultery is tacitly accepted.

4.4.3 Sexual aberrations

> Aus dem Zusammenhang von ehelicher Liebe und vollem ehelichen Akt ergibt sich vor allem auch die Unsittlichkeit der Selbstbefriedigung und der Homosexualität, die in einer von vornherein entstellten Weise Elemente des Zeichens setzen, das nur in der Ehe und auch dort nur in einem von Liebe getragenen ganzheitlichen Vollzug sinnerfüllt ist. (Günthör, 105)

4.4.3.1 Homosexuality

When we look at the work of Keeling, it becomes evident that even in the relatively prudish times of the nineteen-sixties one could find theologians who were not prejudiced

[170] cf. *Shelter*, 166.
[171] cf. *How Far*, 188.
[172] cf. *How Far*, 243.

against homosexuals in the same way as the Church was. Contrary to the opinion that most psychiatrists, medics, sociologists and – as a matter of course – men of the Church held in those days, Keeling clearly states that 'homosexuality is not an illness'[173] (Keeling, 96).

> If homosexuality itself is a pathological condition, then it must be one of the most common psychological disorders known. It would be an illness from which over a million men and probably as many women were suffering (*sc. In the U.K.*), and would constitute a far bigger health problem than cancer, heart conditions or any single disease. (Keeling, 96)

The fact that none of the methods used to "cure" homosexuals (from deep analysis to aversion therapy) ought to have made "specialists" think again. Still it is disconcerting that the Catechism of the Catholic Church speaks of homosexuality as if it were a disease:

> The number of men and women who have deep-seated homosexual tendencies is not negligible. This inclination, which is objectively *disordered*, constitutes for most of them a *trial*. They must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided. These persons are called to fulfill God's will in their lives and, if they are Christians, to unite to the sacrifice of the Lord's Cross the difficulties they may encounter from their *condition*. (CCC, 2358, my emphasis)

Miles (*How Far*) is doubly charged by fate being a convert *and* a homosexual. He encounters quite a number of prejudices, starting from the time before his coming out. Even the narrator speaks of him in a biased tone: 'his graceful, wandlike figure … [bespeaks] a certain effaminacy' (*How Far*, 14). His peers soon discover that there is something different about him:

> He dances superbly, beautifully balanced on the pointed toes of his gleaming black shoes, but somehow coldly. There is no warmth in the pressure of his long fingers, splayed out across the small of her (i.e. Polly's) back, and when she tries to nestle against him he arches away from her. (*How Far*, 25, my addition)

At first he is not certain about his condition and he only wonders why he does not find girls attractive.

> His spiritual adviser, A Farm Street Jesuit, has assured him that he will come to like girls in due course, given prayer and patience, but so far there are no perceptible signs of it. His erotic fantasies are still of young boys in the showers at school. […] Perhaps, he had wondered aloud to the Jesuit, he should renounce sex altogether and try his vocation as a priest; but after a great deal of throat-clearing and tortuously allusive argument he gathered that only guaranteed heterosexuals were eligible for the priesthood. (*How Far*, 26)

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[173] According to Schofield, the increasingly prevalent idea of referring to homosexuality as a sickness was part of a common approach in modern society to regard non-conformity and mental illness as synonymous. (cf. Schofield, 112)

Miles gives up his plans of following the very vague vocation and invests his energies in his studies, ending up a Cambridge Don. His sexual frustration grows more intense in the surroundings of Cambridge. The 'homosexual subculture of Cambridge' doesn't have any incentive for him. When a friend tells him that he is sexually repressed, he secretly agrees. The source of this repression is his regular confessor. At one point Miles asks him:

> "Is it really better to live like this than to have a proper loving relationship with someone?" […] "You know very well that if you were doing that I wouldn't be able to give you absolution. Pray to Almighty God to give you strength."[174] Miles sank into a deep depression. (*How Far*, 137)

When he finally goes to a Catholic psychiatrist, the good man tells him, 'I can do nothing for you. Speaking as a doctor, my advice would be: find yourself a partner. Speaking as a Catholic, I can only say: carry your cross' (*How Far*, 138).

His last hope is a retreat to a monastery. Here a young monk, Bernhard, confronts him with the question whether he is gay. When Miles answers in the affirmative, Bernhard tells him that 'it's nothing to be sad about. Nothing to be ashamed of. God made you that way, didn't He?' And he advises Miles to 'accept it. Be proud of it. You have qualities straight people don't have' (*How Far*, 173). 'His life changes for the better when he accepts the idea that his sexual nature can't be intrinsically bad or perverted since it has been given by God' (Trinder, 63).

When Angela hears about his coming out and his relationship with Bernhard, she is surprised:

> "I didn't think Catholics could be practising homosexuals," said Angela. "Well, officially they can't, of course," said Michael. "But I suppose they can just decide to follow their own consciences, like us with birth control. Or the students who sleep with each other before they get married." (*How Far*, 199)

Once again, Lodge's treatment of a delicate topic does not end with anyone taking sides or with a definite answer as to how far you can go, but with the hint at the individual person's responsibility for his or her own deeds.

4.4.3.2 Masturbation

Most of the characters in *How Far* have a very restrictive attitude towards sex at the outset of the novel. They neither have a verbal concept for the wide field of human

[174] Homosexual persons are called to chastity. By the virtues of self-mastery that teach them inner freedom, at times by the support of disinterested friendship, by prayer and sacramental grace, they can and should gradually and resolutely approach Christian perfection. (CCC, 2359)

sexuality nor any practical experience apart from the occasional masturbatory act[175], which throws them into a state of insecurity and shame: Michael, for example, has erections (which are due to impure thoughts, as someone he knows had heard from a priest) very frequently. These, he thinks, are probably only venial sins, but he masturbates quite often, too, and that he takes for a mortal sin[176].

> But is masturbation a mortal sin? […] He could, of course ask a priest's advice on the problem – but that is part of the problem, he can't bring himself to confess his sin for shame and embarrassment. (*How Far*, 9)

As he 'believes the whole bag of tricks' he cannot go to Holy Communion as one can only receive the Eucharist in a state of grace. To acquit himself in the eyes of the others he pretends that he cannot go because he has doubts about certain parts of Catholic doctrine.

Polly has found a more convenient way of eluding the problem by arguing that she only does 'it' when she is 'half-asleep and no longer, as it were, responsible for her actions' (*How Far*, 10), which also spares her the shame of mentioning it in confession.

The teaching magisterium of the Church proposes that masturbation is wrong, but Catholic theologians in history have not been in agreement on the precise reason for the malice of masturbation.

> Some argue that the voluntary frustration of semen is intrinsically and gravely evil. Others place the formal malice in the complete venereal pleasure outside the marital act. Others find the malice of masturbation in the danger to the species, for men would not enter marriage and procreate children if masturbation were permitted. In the recent theological literature there appears to be a growing consensus that masturbation is intrinsically a grave evil because it is a substantial inversion of an order of the greatest importance. (Curran, 210 f.)

Older manuals of moral theology teach that 'direct and perfectly voluntary pollution is always and intrinsically a grave sin.' Only in the nineteen sixties, in the light of new psychological knowledge, did theologians cautiously start to consider the subjective imputability of masturbation, herewith refraining from the teaching that masturbation is always a mortal sin. During the second half of the nineteenth century moral theologians came to the conclusion that masturbation does not always involve grave matter, but the sinfulness remains. In the face of modern psychology this seems rather an antiquated notion. 'The *attitude* of the vast majority of these people of competent knowledge and

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[175] 'All … [of them] are virgins. Apart from Michael and Polly, none of them masturbates habitually, and several have never masturbated at all. They have no experience of heavy petting' (*How Far*, 12).
[176] Masturbation is an intrinsic sin as it violates the biblical concept of the human body as the 'temple of the Holy Ghost' (1 Kor 6:19).

good will *might be wrong*, but Catholic theologians must enter into dialogue with them in the search of truth' (Curran, 202; my emphasis). In the end moral theologians came to accept that masturbatory actions are generally symptomatic, as psychological studies have shown, and that 'such activity does not seem to involve a harmful influence on the maturity and development of the person' (Curran, 202). That does not mean, however, that the Church changed its attitude in any way. In the end it opted for a solution that speaks of objectively grave but perhaps not subjectively culpable situations. The 'prudent confessor' was prompted to 'judge the general disposition of the penitent on the gospel criterion of union with God and neighbour' (Curran, 202), a union that can hardly be endangered by such private and natural an act.

The problem with the "objectively grave – subjectively not culpable" approach is that firstly, if we follow the logic of the argument, if everyone were "normal", masturbation would be a mortal sin, but as the masturbator does not commit mortal sin we must conclude that he is not normal, secondly, psychological studies show that the teaching of always grave matter in masturbation occasions irrational and excessive guilt, and thirdly, the insistence on the teaching that masturbation always involves grave matter exposes the teaching of the Church to 'ridicule of many learned scholars and people of good will' (Curran, 203).

The problem with labelling masturbation as "grave sin" is that grave sin *per definitionem* involves the core of the person. It means that the person makes a fundamental option with regard to the act (see above). And yet it is impossible to conclude, even as a presumption, that every masturbatory act as such involves a fundamental option, or that it is a sin which is committed directly against the life of man, as the scholastic definition of mortal sin states. Besides, 'a theologian should not exaggerate the dogmatic value of the understanding of the philosophical difference between venial and mortal sin' (Curran, 208).

As a conclusion to the sexual thematic let a progressive moral theologian of the nineteen-sixties have a last say:

> Christian marriage is the nearest that human beings can come among themselves towards the love of God for man; it is the image of our relationship with Christ and indeed of the source of love itself in the divine union which we attempt to express in the idea of the holy Trinity. But the *quality* of this relationship […] is as important as its outward form: which is to say that we ought to be more shocked by an act that breaks up a family than by the fact that a father and mother are not legally married; that we ought to be more grieved by the lack of love for one another of a married couple than by an engaged couple developing their love in sexual intercourse; and

> that we ought to be more grieved for someone who does not love at all than for two persons of the same sex who are in love. (Keeling, 100)

4.5 Pastoral theology

As we have seen, legalism and overemphasis of obedience to rules and norms have led to a stifling situation in the Catholic Church, something that is distinctly felt on the pastoral level by all members of the Church. Legalism generally leads to a mediocrity that stifles all creativity and initiative. The overemphasis on the law served as 'a crutch which saves the teaching Church from exerting all its necessary efforts' (Curran, 133). To give just one example: It is much easier to say that to miss Mass on a Sunday is a mortal sin than it is to show by the celebration that the community believes the Eucharist to be an important matter in the life of the Christian. For a long time pastors and teachers relied on the Sunday obligation to coerce people to "hear Mass". There was no need to change anything in the presentation, as there was no open competition in presenting the meaning of the Eucharist to Christian people. The Church depended on the efficacy of its law system (meaning the Code of Canon law, the Catechism and its moral teaching as far as it was made accessible to the believers by means of homilies and instructions through their parish priests) and forgot all about the care for the *individual* believer's soul. Observance of the laws of the Church had become the infallible criterion of Christian life for many Catholics.

4.5.1 Your priest, spiritual guide or nurturer of your bad conscience?

> Father Finbar Flannegan, … Priest Most Likely to Prevent the Conversion of England. (*British Museum*, 28)
>
> I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (John 10:11)

The first priest we encounter in David Lodge's novels is *Picturegoers*' Father Martin Kipling, the parish priest of Brickley, who starts a campaign against the sinfulness of the cinema. He is 'an amiably ridiculous figure' and his portrayal anticipates the way most of Lodge's priests are portrayed – with the mild anti-clericalism 'sometimes found in cradle-Catholics' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 31).

Father Kipling is never presented as a source of spiritual inspiration for his community, but as a simple, lonely man who due to his religious and moral convictions cannot cope with the modern world. His prejudice against the cinema (damnation, in fact) can be seen as a symptom for the controversy between the "good old times" and the modern world.[177] He is genuinely concerned about the spiritual welfare of his parishioners, partly because of his own reactions to what he has seen in the cinema. He is appalled by his own sinful demeanour and wonders:

> But how had it escaped his attention that these cinemas were such cesspools? He could not think how his parishioners were able to reconcile the patronage of such corrupt entertainments with attendance at Mass and reception of Holy Communion. They must be warned of the grave dangers to their immortal souls from this source. (*Picturegoers*, 99)

The problem is one of proportion and perspective. Father Kipling sees going to the cinema and watching films that are candid about sexual relationships as a grave sin. Mark grasps the weakness of this argumentation:

> It had been an extraordinary sermon, […] but it had missed the point. The menace of the cinema was not surely that it was lewd and sensual, but that it encouraged people to turn their back on real life. Escapism! […] Father Kipling was fighting a losing battle. The cinema, or the whole system of processed mass-entertainment for which it stood, had already become an acceptable substitute for religion.

British Museum's Father Finbar, the '*echt* Irish curate' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 32), is described as a conservative priest who will never consider the possibility of any change in the Church's attitude towards birth-control. 'As far as he is concerned, the Church never changes on *any* subject whatsoever' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 32, my emphasis) – something that does not really take Adam by surprise. Father Finbar's attitude is symptomatic for most of Lodge's priests, who are at first 'naïve about the amount of change the Church was prepared to take' (Mihály, 141) and later, when changes are implemented, block them wherever they can. (See Father Brierley's fate in *How Far,* when his Parish Priest asks him to resign from work in the parish and go back to courses to be out of harms way.)

The novel's other priest, the radical Dominican Father Wildfire, who wears workmen's clothes and works on the brink of good society[178] as well as on the brink of orthodox teaching[179] (nomen est omen), is rather sympathetic; but his real concern is 'in larger spiritual dramas' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 32).

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[177] cf. Kühn, 59.

[178] 'He lived at the frontiers of the spiritual life, where dwelt criminals, prostitutes, murderers and saints, a territory steaming with the fumes of human iniquity' (*British Museum*, 64)

> In contrast, Adam's moral problem seemed trivial and suburban, and to seek Father Wildfire's advice would be like engaging the services of a big-game hunter to catch a mouse. (*British Museum*, 64)

Adam's encounters with both Father Finbar and Father Wildfire illustrate 'how little many clergy understand the implications of Church policies on the everyday lives of contemporary Catholics' (Martin, 114), particularly where sexuality is concerned. It neither helps to be unyielding nor to not care. The magisterium knows that and explicitly refers to the duties of the priests:

> It devolves on priests duly trained about family matters to nurture the vocation of spouses by a variety of pastoral means, by preaching God's word, by liturgical worship, and by other spiritual aids to conjugal and family life; to sustain them sympathetically and patiently in difficulties, and to make them courageous through love, so that families which are truly illustrious can be formed. (*Gaudium et Spes*, 52)

The problem is that the magisterium and (some of) the priests have different views on the way in which spiritual aid should be administered. In *How Far* the initially rather narrow-minded and 'priggish' Father Austin Brierley changes 'enormously during the sixties and seventies. He is one of the priestly rebels against *Humanae Vitae*, but is handled gently by his bishop' (Bergonzi, *Writers*, 36).

He is eventually removed from parish work and sent on courses to keep him out of the way. These courses encourage him to a more radical theology, so that he does not become more eligible for the job of a parish priest at all, because 'he feels morally obliged to pass on this knowledge to the laity' (Prehsfreund-Kriegshammer, 61), but the parishioners do not understand his new, historical-critical approach to the Scriptures: After his sermon on the problem of theodicy, in the context of the catastrophe of Aberfan, he looks up to find that his parishioners are relatively indifferent to what he has just told them:

> He saw the usual blank, bored faces, a few with their eyes closed, some perhaps actually asleep, […] He didn't know quite what he had expected. Tears? Shocked expressions? Heads eagerly nodding in agreement? Not really, but he felt disappointed that the response was as flat as on any other Sunday. (*How Far*, 107)

By the end of the novel Father Brierley has left the priesthood and has married. He is an example for the difficulties the clergy encountered during the time of Vat II and in the first years after the Council, up to the late seventies. Apart from the difficulties of reconciling the parishioners with the many reforms, it was also difficult for the younger priests who were eager to adopt the changes to stand their ground against the long-

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[179] 'This venial sin – mortal sin business is old hat. […] I was preaching at a men's retreat the other day, and I told them, better sleep with a prostitute with some kind of love than with your wife out of habit.' (*British Museum*, 64)

established parish priests who saw themselves incommoded by the changes. To add to this, Father Brierley is one of the priests who dared question the infallibility of *Humanae Vitae*. This is very audacious, firstly because the encyclical itself calls to the priests to promote its ideas unquestioningly and in unison:

> And now, beloved sons, you who are priests […] We turn to you filled with great confidence. For it is your principal duty […] to spell out clearly and completely the Church's teaching on marriage. In the performance of your ministry you must be the first to give an example of that sincere obedience, inward as well as outward, which is due to the magisterium of the Church. […] If men's peace of soul and the unity of the Christian people are to be preserved, then it is of the utmost importance that in moral as well as in dogmatic theology all should obey the magisterium of the Church and should speak as with one voice. Therefore We make Our own the anxious words of the great Apostle Paul and with all Our heart We renew Our appeal to you: "I appeal to you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment."[180] (*Humanae Vitae*, 28)

Secondly Austin's behaviour is audacious because of the secret letter the Pope issued to all bishops and priests together with their private copies of the encyclical:

> Finally, it is essential, in the confessional as well as by preaching, through the press and the other means of social communication, that every pastoral effort be made so that no doubt whatever remains among the faithful nor among outside opinion on the position of the church on this grave question. (N.N. "Secret orders", 8)

Bernard in *Paradise News* does not enter the priesthood out of deep dedication but because of his family's expectations. He did not grow up in a positive, friendly atmosphere as for example the Mallory children, but in an atmosphere of self-deception and bad faith. The story of Bernard's priesthood is doomed to end tragically by its very beginning. It does not get any better during the time he is in the seminary, and he never gets the chance of really learning how to work as a parish priest, as he is very soon given a job as a lecturer of theology at his old theological seminary. This lack of experience finally breaks his neck when he is forced by a shortage in personnel to take over a parish.

In his novels, Lodge does not only criticise and satirize the clergy. He also shows the human side of the priests, the way they cope with developments in society as well as the Church, and he also shows how priests can lose their vocation and end up laicised and sometimes even without belief. In *How Far*, Father Austin Brierley passes through many vicissitudes after his conventional beginning, leaves the priesthood and marries, but remains a Catholic nominally. Bernard Walsh in *Paradise* fails more profoundly. He does not only abandon the priesthood but Catholic belief itself.

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[180] 1 Cor 1:10

4.6 Spirituality

> And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites.
> (Mt 6:5a)
>
> Thank you God for not letting me be pregnant. There, that's short and sweet and from the heart. (*British Museum*, 157)

Traditional Catholic thought did not give as much place to the individual and the contingent as have more modern philosophies. For Thomas of Aquin, for example, man's spiritual individuality is not something positive but something negative. This position derives from Aristotelian philosophy which looks to the good of the species and considers the individual good primarily in relationship to the good of the species. As Thomism due to the neo-scholastics remained one of the most dominant theological schools up to the twentieth century, it does not take one by surprise that until Vatican II, the Catholic Church's concept of salvation (see above) is honeycombed with sublime traces of this Aristotelian trait. Only think of the fact that it was not *de rigueur* to acquire an indulgence for one's individual salvation but the indulgence counted far more when offered up to someone else's good, thus working for the whole of Christianity and belittling the importance of the individual believer. Spirituality was seen only from its ethereal side, the aim being the *visio beatifica*[181] and the means of achieving it constant prayer and rejection of worldly goods. In addition to the acts of faith, this attitude had given much more importance to the role of positive law in the life of the Church. Contesting this attitude, Spiritual theologians remind us that

> Canonical legislation should not occupy the primary role in the living of the Christian life. In discussions about eliminating Friday abstinence, some people object that the changes are doing away with all mortification in Christian life. Such objections betray a mentality that equates the Christian life with the observance of the positive laws of the Church. The greatest mortification remains always the attempt to live out the Paschal Mystery in everyday life. The attitude of some Catholics in the past which implied that laws make people holy is totally inadequate. (Curran, 127)

What then is it that spirituality stands for, if not the strict observance of times and rituals of worship and the obedience to commandments? One of the most important spiritual theologians of the twentieth century, Anselm Grün OSB, sees spirituality as something that permeates the whole human existence, manifesting itself on four different levels. First it is important for man to retreat from worldly business from time to time in

[181] a concept derived basically from the Tomistic spirituality, most comprehensively expressed in the Aquinate's well-known prayer "Adoro te devote" ("Prostrate I adore thee") which ends with the line: 'Ut te relevata cernens facie / *Visu sim beatus* tuae gloriae.' – 'That thy face unveiled, I at last may see / With the blissful vision blest, my God, of Thee.'

order to encounter himself. The more self-knowledge and self-acceptance man acquires, the easier he will converse with his neighbour. On a second level it is important to open up to the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are given in Gal 5,22-23 as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness. The third aspect of spiritual life is the willingness to serve, the fourth is the ability to let go[182]. Someone who can incorporate these traits in his everyday life will be able to live the two most important Commandments of Christian faith:

> 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these. (Mk 12,30-31)

The changes in the concept of salvation and the changes in the attitude towards spirituality go hand in hand. Both developments are reflected throughout the novels of David Lodge, but the changes in spirituality are a little harder to grasp as new theories do not necessarily get rid of old habits and so most of Lodge's characters maintain their old spiritual habits while their belief had developed in another direction, thus making some of their habits appear hollow and worthless.

A certain ambiguity is already felt in *Picturegoers*. The Mallory family are surrounded by 'religious bric-a-brac', holy water stoups, withered holy Palms, pictures of the Sacred Heart, statues of Saints (St. Patrick in particular, the logical choice in a family of Irish descent), etc. but they do not really "live" with these paraphernalia. Mark is the only one who finds anything strange in it, it does not really have a deeper meaning to the family, and to him it creates the impression of 'the dwelling-place of some inadequately evangelized savage tribe' (*Picturegoers*, 44). On the other hand, there are communal prayers – they say the rosary together after tea, they go to Sunday Mass together, they attend Benediction, they say Grace before having their meals. But all in all they have a very naïve expectation as to the effects of their spiritual efforts. When Mrs Mallory offers up her tripping over a step 'to Our Blessed Lord, who fell three times and hurt himself a lot more' (*Picturegoers*, 43) it never becomes clear what she means to achieve by this, and so this little outburst, among other similar ones, of "spirituality" does nothing more than illuminate her character, which is basically the "good Catholic Girl" from Ireland. There are many more mentions of spiritual acts in *Pictuergoers*, almost every character has his moment of worship or prayer, but those are sprinkled in the story rather randomly and are often connected to feelings of guilt or fear which the characters try to overcome by means

[182] cf. Eckensberger, 27-29.

of prayer: For example, when Patrick, after a heavy row with Patricia, is accosted by an anonymous visitor at the cinema, his thoughts are given as 'O God, please help. This was to punish him for being naughty to Patricia. Please, God, and I'll do anything You like' (*Picturegoers*, 74).

The most incongruent character concerning spirituality is Damien O'Brien. On the one hand, he is permanently presented worshiping and praying and thinking about salvation and how to achieve it, on the other hand, he is a hypocrite who pries on people and is envious of their relationships. He is the best example to show what is *not* to be understood by spirituality: he is the kind of person who would turn a 'banal bus journey (indifferent) […] to good account by silently reciting the Rosary' (*How Far*, 6f.); but at the same time he is watching people with disapproval and drawing up in his mind protests against harmless advertisements.[183] He has an argument with his landlady because of

> the way her daughter strewed her underclothes all over the bathroom to dry. […] It wasn't the inconvenience he objected to, but the immodesty. Why, at home his mother and sisters would not think of even washing such garments in his presence, (*Picturegoers*, 87)

but later we observe him fingering 'the black, transparent things hung up to dry in the bathroom' (*Picturegoers*, 203) and we learn that '[h]e had begun to keep track of her movements, to eavesdrop and observe' (*Picturegoers*, 203). Doreen is not the only victim of his self-righteous espionage, Damien is obsessed with Clare and follows her every move and word, especially when she is in Mark's company: He overhears one of Mark and Claire's conversations. He thinks them inconsiderate, disturbing him in his devotions, and he thinks that Clare 'ought to have more care for her good name'. And then the self-righteous Pharisee comes through: 'He strained his ears to catch the conversation below, but without success. Perhaps if he eased the window open a little…' (*Picturegoers*, 88) – a kind of behaviour one can hardly call considerate in return.

The only person in *Picturegoers* who seems to have given any serious fundamental thought to the spiritual side of the Catholic Faith is cynical Mark Underwood, Catholic by certificate, but agnostic by heart and mind. He hits the nail on the head with his sum of the rosary: ten Hail Mary's to one Our Father and one Glory Be – does that indicate a preference of Our Lady over Trinity? Runner up is God the Father who gets a whole prayer to himself and a mention in the Glory Be. In the heat of adoration the Catholics have forgotten who the source and aim of their lives really is, and that it all comes down not to

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[183] cf. *Picturegoers*, 28

how many rosaries you have said but how you have behaved to your neighbour. [184] Although his religious quest and the story of his conversion are embedded in a rather satirical context, his character is the one who appears the least hypocritical although that is exactly what he is charged with by others like Clare or Damien. He at least had given thought to the whole system of Catholic Faith, and there is a fair chance that he will not fail like his fellows who had been taught to embrace it from childhood without ever questioning it. He is one of the rare characters in Lodge's novels who learn that you can only succeed spiritually if you integrate all three parts of what constitutes the human being, namely: body, soul and mind[185], in your spiritual efforts. The experience of Student Cross, which seems to be a story of failure at first, turns out to be the starting point for his "new life":

> Why, having seen the leaflet, had he been unable to dismiss the idea? It was preposterous enough, […] its purpose […] no less than to perform an act of reparation for the sins of students everywhere. [...] the latter, had they been aware of it, would have strongly resented the interference of spiritual sanitary workers. […] No doubt his motives for going on the pilgrimage were varied. […] an agreeable consciousness of impressing Clare and the rest of the family had made his decision easier. […] But these motives would not have been sufficient in themselves. […] So what was it that had made him go, but a furtive […] sense that not to have done so would have been like turning one's back on the Crucifixion, […] his readopted faith? (*Picturegoers*, 173)

Somehow Damien comes back to mind on the only occasion when spiritual life is mentioned in *Ginger* (apart from Percy's Act-of-Contrition scene, which is more a question of fear of hell on Mike's part): Pauline complains to Jon: '"The trouble with Mrs Brady is that she's so pious. She goes to mass every morning before anyone's awake, and makes everyone else feel guilty at breakfast"' (*Ginger*, 167). Otherwise, *Ginger* does not go into detail about the spiritual lives or development of its Catholic characters (Percy and Mike).

Neither does *British Museum*, although it is basically about the problems of a young Catholic family. Here temperature charts have taken the place of the Holy Scriptures and the thermometer is the only paraphernalia of religious practice they know. Prayer or religious gestures are employed to heighten the satirical impact of scenes, as when Adam drives rather ruthlessly through the streets of London with Father Finbar on his pillion, and

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[184] cf. *Picturegoers*, 50f.

[185] by the way one of the prevalent misconceptions about the rule of the order of St Benedict: it says 'ora et labora' all right, but there's one missing: in full it is 'ora et labora et lege' – 'pray and work and read'!

the priest recites the Litany of Our Lady 'in a tone of increasing panic' (*British Museum*, 29); or in the scene where Adam goes to see Mrs Rottingdean:

- Won't you have some holy water?
- I'm not thirsty, thanks.
- I see you're not a co-religionist, Mr Appleby, said Mrs Rottingdean, dipping her hand into a holy water stoup fixed to the wall, and crossing herself. (*British Museum*, 104)

Out of the Shelter does not make too much mention of spirituality either. The title can be seen as a programme in this respect, it is not only out of the air-raid shelter and out of the shelter of the family that young Timothy emerges, he also leaves the shelter of the Catholic community. At home

> Sunday was mainly devoted to Church. They usually went to the ten o'clock Mass on Sunday mornings, unless they were going to Communion, in which case they went to the eight-thirty, because of the fast. Sometimes they went to Benediction in the afternoon. On Sunday evenings, after high tea, there was usually some homework to finish off, and after that he would listen to Variety Bandbox on the radio, with his parents. It was a safe, orderly life. (*Shelter*, 42)

In Heidelberg, however, life has taken a different turn in this respect. His sister Kate has long given up going to Mass. Sunday is dedicated to sleeping in, going for a swim, hanging around with friends and having fun. Spirituality is neither to be found on the ethereal level nor in the worldly doing of good deeds. There is a hint at development, however, in the Epilogue. On the occasion of his visit to her in America, fourteen years after his visit to Heidelberg, Kate tells Tim that she had gone back to the Church. Her explanation is that '[a]s you get older, you feel the need of something, especially living on your own' (*Shelter*, 268). She has gone through the phases of blind acceptance, doubt, rejection and return and now has a different perspective on religious things, and can integrate spirituality in her life much more authentically.

How does the cast of *How Far* answer our expectations?

> To a greater or lesser extent they have grasped the idea that Christianity is about transcendence of self in love of God and one's neighbour, and they struggle to put this belief into practice according to their lights, trying to be kind, generous and grateful for their blessings. … Angela neglects no opportunity to do a good deed, shopping for an old lady or baby-sitting for her landlady: and Ruth is a more systematic philanthropist, helping in the nursery of a Catholic orphanage on one afternoon a week … and Adrian is a cadet in the Catholic Evidence Guild, and spends every Sunday afternoon at Speaker's Corner … and Miles is a tertiary of the order of Carmelites … and Edward plans to practice medicine for at least two years in the mission fields of Africa … and Violet is liable to sudden … fits of self-mortification and good works. (*How Far*, 17f.)

But these fits of doing good deeds are juxtaposed with the odd rosary, act of contrition and Our Father quickly inserted between the characters and their fear of hell. At the outset of the novel none of them have yet incorporated the "real" spirituality into their everyday life. They are prepared to rise an hour earlier to attend the Thursday morning Masses and

> …[t]hey do so at considerable cost in personal discomfort. […] they travel fasting on crowded buses and trains, dry-mouthed, weak with hunger, and nauseated by cigarette smoke, to be present at this unexciting ritual in a cold, gloomy church at the grey, indifferent heart of London. Why? It is not out of a sense of duty, for Catholics are bound to hear mass only on Sundays and holydays of obligation[186] (of which St Valentine's is not one). Attendance at mass on ordinary weekdays is supererogatory (a useful word in theology, meaning more than is necessary for salvation). […]Why have they come here, and what do they expect to get out of it? Is it hunger and thirst after righteousness? Is it devotion to the Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament? Is it habit, or superstition, or the desire for comradeship? Or all these things, or none of them? (*How Far*, 3)

The motives for this sacrifice do not become quite clear. They seem to have a very illogical attitude as far as prayer is concerned –

> as far back as they could remember … [they] have been encouraged to pray for good fortune […]: fine weather for the School Sports Day, the recovery of a lost brooch, promotion for Daddy, success at the Eleven Plus. (*How Far*, 17)

This is nothing unusual and rather typical of the Catholic in general. The convent mentioned in *How Far*, p. 17, 'which advertises in the Catholic press the services of nuns, praying in shifts twenty-four hours a day for whatever intentions you care to send them' really exists, in fact, there are quite a number of such offers today, easily accessible through the internet[187]. The tragic thing about this attitude towards prayer is that it cannot be falsified, as people who believe that prayer works this way have an answer ready in case you should point out that it is impossible that such prayers should always be answered: 'this did not show that the system did not work, but merely that God had decided that it wouldn't be in your interest to gratify your wish or that you didn't deserve it' (*How Far*, 17).

Later, when doubts begin to stir and most of the characters finally start to reflect upon their religious upbringing and the way they integrate it in their life, they encounter a lack of understanding by the older generation. Michael has an unpleasant discussion with his father about the nature of Holy Communion. With his enlightened views he hurts the

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[186] cf. CIC 1917 the canones 1247 and 1248, amended in the CIC canones 1246 and 1247

[187] enter "prayer request" and you will be served - St Cecilia's Abbey on the Isle of Wight; The Franciscan Missionaries of St Joseph; The Claverian Sisters in Scotland; The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, etc. – take your pick.

feelings of his father, a conservative Catholic who shows no understanding for the explanation that "*This is my Body, this is my Blood*" might be a metaphor and that Communion is more about Thanksgiving (Eucharist – ephcharisto – Greek for "thank you") and sharing in a mutual belief, on the one hand, and sharing the meal of love (communio) than about incomprehensible concepts of transubstantiation. As a Catholic one might still wonder if the step most characters take here does not go too far and whether, as Bernard likes to joke in *Paradise News*, they have not thrown the infant Jesus out with the bath water when they cleared out the odd medieval relic:

> Our friends had started life with too many beliefs – the penalty of a Catholic upbringing. They were weighed down with beliefs, useless answers to non-questions. To work their way back to the fundamental ones – what can we know? why is there anything at all? why not nothing? what may we hope? why are we here? what is it all about? – they had to dismantle all that apparatus of superfluous belief and discard it piece by piece. But in matters of belief […] it is a nice question how far you can go in this process without throwing out something vital. (*How Far*, 143)

'Miles certainly felt spiritually orphaned by the times' (*How Far*, 137). On the other hand, the enlightened view they have on things helps them to cope with the changes in liturgy and spirituality the Second Vatican Council brings along. They are the generation who profits most from the liturgical reform. The old ways were not comprehensible any longer, they never really knew to what avail they went to Mass, they have finally recognized Game of Salvation for what it was: a legalistic system that had little to do with real life and spirituality; so when all the changes come on they embrace them readily and even those of them who have given up on the Church come back again to worship together. Michael's and Miriam's agapes[188] show the real spirit of Christianity: they affect soul, mind and body in that they pray, discuss and eat and drink in a brotherly communion.

Sometimes the old worries come through, as with Edward when Tessa is on a course and it is not certain whether she will be able to attend Mass on Assumption day, a holiday of obligation; 'the legacy of being taught as a child that "missing" was a mortal sin' (*How Far*, 184), but on the whole the cast of *How Far* achieve a rather mature attitude towards religious worship and learn to see it as a means of communication with God and their fellow men. They finally grasp that one should not do or refrain from doing things for fear of hell but in order to contribute to a more humane society.

With his introduction in *How Far* and in *Paradise* of the Pentecostalist movement, Lodge provides a detour to the seemingly straightforward development in spirituality. Still,

[188] cf. *How Far*, 141f.

from its rather marginal and limited appearance (limited as to the characters that go in for it – namely Ruth in *How Far* and Father Luke McPhee in *Paradise*) we can deduce that Pentecostalism only fills the void some people felt had been left after the liturgical reform of Vatican II. Most Catholics accepted and indeed embraced the new attitude towards spirituality, which is basically explained in Bernard Walsh's lecture in the final chapter of *Paradise News*, a scene which also points to the close connection between spirituality and salvation:

> 'But if you purge Christianity of the promise of eternal life (and, let us be honest, the threat of eternal punishment) which traditionally underpinned it, are you left with anything that is distinguishable from secular humanism? […] There is a passage in Matthew, Chapter 25[189], which seems particularly relevant here. Matthew is the most explicitly apocalyptic of the synoptic gospels, and this section of it is sometimes referred to by scholars as the Sermon on the End. It concludes with the well-known description of the Second Coming and the Last Judgement:
>
> *When the Son of Man comes in his glory, escorted by all the angels, then he will take his seat on the throne of glory. All the nations will be assembled before him and he will separate men one from another as the shepherd separates sheep from goats. He will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left.*
>
> 'Pure myth. But on what grounds does Christ the King separate the sheep from the goats? Not, as you might expect, fervency of religious faith, or orthodoxy of religious doctrine, or regularity of worship, or observance of the Commandment, or indeed anything "religious" at all.
>
> *Then the King will say to those on his right hand, "Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me." Then the virtuous will say to him in reply, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you; or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and make you welcome; naked and clothe you; sick or in prison and go to see you?" And the King will answer, "I tell you solemnly, insofar as you did this to the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me."*
>
> 'The virtuous seem quite surprised to be saved, of to be saved for *this* reason, doing good in an unselfish but pragmatic and essentially this-worldly sort of way. It's as if Jesus left this essentially humanist message knowing that one day all the supernatural mythology in which it was wrapped would have to be discarded.' (*Paradise*, 355f.)

This passage from the gospel of Mark and Bernard's explanation show the adequate relationship between spirituality, law and everyday life. It is tragically ironic, though, that the one man who lives a truly spiritual life is a fallen priest, a sceptical theologian and ultimately an agnostic. Something must be wrong with the system.

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[189] Mt 25, 31-40.

Conclusion

Coming from the Catholic theological field, reading David Lodge's novels gradually evoked the whole bulk of teaching offered at the department of Catholic Theology at the University of Vienna – moral, fundamental, eschatological, spiritual, sacramental, pastoral, dogmatic theology, liturgy, ethics, biblical exegesis; all of it crops up in his works. In that respect, if any author deserves the epithet "Catholic", it is David Lodge. Long discursive theological passages, subtle references, allusions, parody and the systematic use of intertext obviously require intense research and at least some kind or religious background[190], intellectual as well as social, to draw upon for the illumination of themes and characters.

The investigation of the manifestation of various Catholic topics in the works of Lodge shows that Lodge paints a realistic picture of Catholicism in England.

Sometimes the stories remain at the surface and problems are dealt with in too light a tone – as for example the birth control issue in *British Museum*. The question remains whether this is a failure or a success. A drab realistic novel could have transported more of the entailed problems – I doubt that it would have attracted a comparably big readership.

At all times, however, Lodge is very exact in delivering historical references, and his allusions, when identified, almost always turn out to be very much to the point (his first novel, *Pictuergoers*, being the great exception).

On the whole, Lodge's novels are sympathetic towards their Catholic characters and their respective problems. By their satirical undertone they criticise the Hierarchy, but never too harshly. In the end, everybody remains likeable, perhaps with the exception of pitiable Damien from *Picturegoers*.

Concerning the Catholicity of the author it does not behove me to deliver a diagnosis. Concerning the Catholicity of his works I can say: the stories he tells are not Catholic in the Greek sense of the word[191], as some of the things that happen there can only happen to Catholics in England. But they are Catholic in the sense we understand it today: they paint a picture of a Catholic community and show how those people cope with "the world".

[190] See Lodge's introduction to the 1993 reprint of *The Picturegoers*, esp. p. xiv - the reference to his wife's family.
[191] Greek *katholiké*: *whol*e, *pertaining to the whole world*

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Appendix I

Lebenslauf

18.4.1975	Geburt
1981-1985	Schülerin der bilingualen Volksschule Güttenbach (Unterrichtssprachen Kroatisch/Deutsch)
1985-1993	Schülerin des Bundesgymnasiums Oberschützen
1993	Matura
1993-1994	Studium an der Universität Wien: Lehramt Anglistik und Mathematik
1994	Entschluss zum Umstieg im Zweitfach auf Katholische Theologie
ab 1997	Angestellte in einer Firma für Ton-, Licht- und Bühnentechnik
31.12.1997	Geburt von Tochter Sarah
1998	Studienunterbrechung
2.1.2000	Geburt von Tochter Sophie
2000	Studienunterbrechung
2001	Ausbildung zur Wortgottesfeier-Leiterin in der Diözese Eisenstadt, entsprechende Tätigkeit in der Pfarrgemeinde (bis dato)
19.10.2004	Abschluss der Studienrichtung Kombinierte Religionspädagogik
2006	auf Anfrage des Schulamts der Diözese Eisenstadt Einstieg ins Unterrichtsfach Religion, Rückzug aus der Firma
2006-2007	Lehrtätigkeit am Bundesgymnasium Oberschützen
2007-2008	Lehrtätigkeit an der Bundeshandelsakademie Stegersbach
seit 2008	Lehrtätigkeit am Zweisprachigen Bundesgymnasium Oberwart

Appendix II

Zusammenfassung

David Lodge als Katholischer Romanschriftsteller

Die vorliegende Arbeit befasst sich mit den katholischen Romanen von David Lodge, einem englischen Literaturtheoretiker der nach jahrelanger Lehrtätigkeit an der Universität von Birmingham aus dem Lehrbetrieb ausgestiegen ist und nun als freier Schriftsteller arbeitet.

In einem ersten Schritt klärt die Arbeit die Definierbarkeit Lodges als katholischer Romancier. Anhand der zugrundeliegenden theoretischen Literatur wird auf verschiedene Wesensmerkmale des katholischen Romans verwiesen und die Ambivalenz des Konzepts herausgestellt. Geht man von einer weit gefassten Definition des Begriffs „katholischer Roman“ aus, so hat die Einordnung bestimmter Romane Lodges in dieses Feld durchaus ihre Berechtigung. Die Werke, auf die diese Einordnung angewendet wird, sind *The Picturegoers*, *Ginger, You're Barmy*, *The British Museum is Falling Down*, *Out of the Shelter*, *How Far Can You Go?* und *Paradise News*, letzteres wird allerdings als quasi post-katholisch in diesen Zusammenhang gestellt.

Um einen Eindruck von der spezifisch englischen Sichtweise des Katholizismus zu gewinnen, bietet die Arbeit als nächstes einen historischen Abriss über die Geschichte des Katholizismus in England, mit einem Schwerpunkt auf die Unterdrückung der Katholischen Bevölkerung. Die daraus sich ergebende „katholische Differenz“ wird in den Romanen immer wieder – sowohl offen als auch unterschwellig – thematisiert.

Ein weiterer historischer Teil befasst sich mit den Veränderungen in der katholischen Lehre, die für die Werke Lodges zu großer Bedeutung gelangen sollten: die Liturgiereform welche im Zuge des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils durchgesetzt wurde, und die Entwicklungen in der moraltheologischen Lehre, mit Hauptaugenmerk auf die Entwicklung der katholischen Sexuallehre, beginnend bei der Enzyklika Pius XI *Casti Connubii* bis hin zur Lehre Pauls VI, die er in seiner Enzyklika *Humanae Vitae* darlegte.

Die Theorie des Dialogismus nach Michail Bakhtin bildet die Grundlage für den anschließenden literaturkritischen Teil. Zunächst beschäftigt sich die Arbeit mit dem Verhältnis zwischen Fiktion und Realität. Satire in ihren verschiedenen Ausprägungen wird als wichtiger Beitrag zur Systemkritik und Selbstkritik identifiziert. Anschließend wird die Bedeutung der Intertextualität für das Verständnis von literarischen Texten

hervorgehoben und geprüft, wie weit dialogistische Sprechakte (Skaz, Parodie, Stilisierung, Dialog) der realistischen Darstellung von Sachverhalten zuträglich sind.

In einem nächsten Schritt wird untersucht, wie Lodge dialogistische Mittel einsetzt um mit Hilfe von Ironie und Komik dem drohenden Fundamentalismus den Wind aus den Segeln zu nehmen. Es wird gezeigt wie Lodge gekonnt Humor als Mittel der Systemkritik einsetzt und dafür sorgt, dass das Leben nicht zu ernst genommen wird. Eine solche Einstellung lässt dem zuweilen aufkeimenden Fundamentalismus keine Chance.

Der letzte Teil der Arbeit widmet sich den verschiedenen Manifestationen von Katholizismus in den katholischen Romanen von David Lodge. Beginnend mit den beschriebenen Messfeiern, in denen die Entwicklungen in der Liturgie reflektiert werden, geht es über die vielen biblischen Verweise und Anspielungen hin zur Lehre von der Erlösung und zum dominierenden Thema der Sexualmoral. In all diesen Gebieten zeigt sich über die Jahre gesehen eine Entwicklung in den Charakteren, sowohl von Roman zu Roman als auch innerhalb der einzelnen Romane, besonders aber in *How Far Can You Go?*, welcher den längten durchgehenden Handlungszeitraum bietet.

Es stellt sich heraus, dass die anfangs sehr systemhörigen, ultramontanistisch eingestellten Katholiken zunächst in einen Abgrund des Zweifels geworfen werden, aus dem sie schließlich als mündige Christen hervorgehen, die gelernt haben, ihrem Gewissen zu folgen. Die Gruppe, die mit Abstand den schwierigsten Entwicklungsprozess zu bewältigen hat, ist der Klerus.

Lodges Priester dienen einerseits aufgrund ihrer meist weltfremden Einstellung oft der Erheiterung, ihre Probleme sprechen den Leser aber immer auch auf einer mitfühlenden Ebene an. Die Schwierigkeiten, die sich ihnen daraus ergeben, wenn sie versuchen, mit der Zeit zu gehen, lösen mitunter heftige Proteste seitens ihrer Gemeindemitglieder aus, wie es in *How Far Can You Go?* geschildert wird. Die Einrichtung einer eigenen Organisation zur Unterstützung von Priestern, die sich gegen die Lehre von *Humanae Vitae* aussprechen, stellt sich als gar nicht an den Haaren herbeigezogen heraus. Nach Prüfung des historischen Sachverhalts erweist sich dieser ursprünglich recht erheiternde Handlungsstrang als bittere Realität.

Abschließend befasst sich die vorliegende Arbeit mit dem Thema der Spiritualität. Nachdem zuerst das gängige Missverständnis ausgeräumt wird, hierbei handle es sich um das versunkene Gebet in stiller Abgeschiedenheit das nichts mit der Welt zu tun hat, wird nachgeprüft, wie weit Lodges Charaktere das wahre Konzept der Spiritualität, das

Umsetzen des Glaubens in ihrem Lebenswerk, erfasst haben und auch danach zu handeln bereit sind.

Gesamt gesehen kann man sagen dass sich Lodge auf allen erwähnten theologischen Gebieten als kompetenter Berichterstatter in Sachen Katholizität erweist, der sehr penibel recherchiert und sehr treffende Anspielungen einzuflechten versteht, so dass die Katholizität seiner Werke weniger im braven Nachsprechen vorgefertigter Glaubenswahrheiten liegt, sondern vielmehr in der kritischen und mitunter (durchaus legitimen) humoristischen Auseinandersetzung mit den verschiedenen Aspekten der katholischen Lehre.