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PROPOSITIONS

Gary Keogh, 'Reconstructing a Hopeful Theology in the Context of Evolutionary Ethics', 11th June 2014, Leiden University

- 1) The asymmetrical and anthropocentric narrative of a paradise lost is an untenable framework for ethics in light of evolutionary theories of morality.
- 2) In the context of evolutionary ethics, a theological axiology must be developmental but appreciate our present moral responsibilities.
- 3) Given the problem of evil, a non-teleological naturalistic ontology can be defended as more coherent both scientifically and theologically than any mode of divine action.
- 4) Christian ethics can be considered a teleological expansion of the non-teleological development of ethics from natural selection, if *agape* is considered its *telos*.

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- 5) Theological ideas must be able to stand up to rigorous intellectual debate, and should not be based on 'faith alone'; otherwise they become as Paul Tillich argued, superstition.

"Every religion which cannot stand ultimately the radical question that is asked by the intellectual critic, is superstition" – Paul Tillich.¹

- 6) In an age of science, reasoned philosophical approaches to God are more appropriate than those of faith or mythology.

"[T]he mythic idea of God shows its inner finitude and gets surpassed in a few decisive intellectual steps by philosophy." - Hans Urs Von Balthasar.²

- 7) A clear set of criteria which distinguishes humanness from non-humanness needs to be established in order to engage in ethical debate on transhumanist issues, such as genetic modification of humans and artificial intelligence.

- 8) Theology can be studied objectively (insofar as objectivity is possible) as a field of inquiry concerned with the philosophical and religious beliefs of various thinkers, as well as the sociological, anthropological, psychological, and other characteristics of religious beliefs.

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- 9) It has been said that when Christianity first spread to Ireland in the fifth century, descriptions of heaven and hell were reversed to make heaven fiery and warm, as the natives were discontent with Ireland's damp climate.

¹ Paul Tillich, 'Religion and Its Intellectual Critics', *Christianity and Crisis*, (Mar. 1995) <http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=494> accessed 27th Mar. 2014.

² Hans Urs Von Balthasar, 'The Inconclusiveness of the Human Search for God', *The Von Balthasar Reader*, Medlar Kehland and Werner Loser eds., (New York: Crossroad, 1997) p. 100