Chapter 1: **Introduction**

1.1 **Introduction**

Molinism reappeared in the late twentieth century, vying to be the best account of divine providence and the best solution to the divine foreknowledge dilemma. Adherents of Molinism claim that the theory can provide an account of strong libertarian free will that is compatible with God's foreknowledge. It achieves this alleged status by occupying the position between theological determinism on the one hand, and open theism on the other. Occupying a 'between' or middle position is not necessarily a virtue, although 'between' suggests that it might have something new to offer, composed of the merits, but not the failings, of each of the two alternate positions. To succeed in explaining how God plans and has control over future contingents, and especially actions of contra-causally free human agents, while also having full foreknowledge of these undetermined actions, would be a very remarkable achievement indeed. Stated simply, contemporary Molinists make two main claims:

- The Solution Claim 1: *Molinism is the best solution to the foreknowledge dilemma*.
- The Model Claim 2: *Molinism is the most plausible model of divine providence*—better than Calvinist/Augustinian models, and better than the various models of open theism.

These claims are interdependent.[1] The truth of each claim depends on the truth of the other. If Molinism fails as a solution to the foreknowledge dilemma, then its virtue as the best model of providence would fail, because providence depends in part on

---

[1] Alfred Freddoso writes that the doctrines of divine foreknowledge and divine providence are intertwined, which generates important consequences for the reconciliation of divine foreknowledge and free will (Freddoso 1988:5).

foreknowing the future, or more precisely, of having middle knowledge of what would happen if a particular world were actualized. Alternatively, if Molinism fails as a theory of providence, then it cannot reconcile foreknowledge with free will.

It is argued by the Molinist that if God can foresee what could or would happen, then he can plan accordingly in a way that a *Simple Foreknowledge* model of God cannot. To some, simple foreknowledge has been thought not to be providentially useful to God as it comes too late. Once God foreknows something, he cannot do anything about it.[2] On the other hand, the reciprocal interplay between foreknowledge, (or rather at this point, *middle knowledge*), and the divine will, creates Molinism's alleged success as a theory of providence.

Nevertheless, there has been some concern expressed in the literature that this view of God makes him out to be too controlling and even 'manipulative'. Indeed, if God's middle knowledge is providentially useful because he can choose which *counterfactuals of creaturely freedom* (**CCF**) to actualize, potentially this power is a double-edged sword.[3] It shows God's power over creation, but it may also show that he has too much power over free creatures. If that which is unique about Molinism is that which makes it successful both as a solution and a model—if it is ultimately *because* this conception of God is manipulative—then this undermines its efficacy as a solution to the foreknowledge dilemma as well as its status as a viable model.

---

[2] Simple foreknowledge is rejected by thinkers such as Hasker (1989:59-63) because it comes *too late to be useful* for God for providential control. David P. Hunt argues the case for simple foreknowledge in Beilby and Hunt (2001:96-101), and in Hunt (1993:394-414). David Basinger takes the view that simple foreknowledge could not aid God in providence (1993:421-427). It is also rejected by John Sanders as providentially useless (1998:200). The Hunt/Hasker debate continued with William Hasker (2009:537-44) and David Hunt's response (2009:545-550).

[3] The acronym 'CCF' and its variations are fairly common in the literature. I refer to the work of Perszyk and Mares (2011) for a good working definition, "Counterfactuals of freedom are conditional propositions stating with respect to one or more creatures that God may create, or creaturely essences God might instantiate, what each *would* do if placed in some possible (complete) situation in which they were left free" (Perszyk 2011:96).

There are different senses of 'manipulation' that have been applied to Molinism, yet all of these at first glance are to varying degrees critical of Molinism. For the moment, I distinguish three senses of manipulation:

1. **Literal, morally-neutral manipulation of impersonal objects**: God has *power to control* events, circumstances and states of affairs for a particular goal, much as a physician manipulates limbs, or an accountant manipulates numbers. It could be said that any risk-free model of providence entails that God manipulates in this manner, hence this indictment might be leveled not just against Molinism.

2. **'Objectionable manipulation' of persons**: Manipulation, whether divine or human, implies control over other impersonal things or objects, but over another *person* it is wrong and improper. Levy and McKenna call this *objectionable manipulation* which undermines "the proper operation of our capacities as morally responsible agents" (Levy and McKenna 2006:107). This sense of manipulation is put forward by some as *freedom undermining*. Gale's nomenclature is much more emphatic, as he writes of *freedom cancelling* control (1990, 1991). However, just because objectionable manipulation undermines the moral capacities of an agent, it might not undermine freedom. In this case manipulation and freedom might be compatible, but the agent is exploited.

The above two senses are distinguished in terms of whether manipulation is of persons (2) or of things (1). Sense (2) is far more serious than (1) and invites discussion on whether a person remains free if they are manipulated by another agent to perform *A*.

A third sense of manipulation put forward is that:

3. **God has *too much power to control* events, circumstances, etc.** That is, God does not *take risks*, but controls everything in every detail. This may include the manipulation of people, as well as their circumstances, or more generally of

events and states of affairs. This is like an exaggerated version of sense (1) in that God is *too skilled* at manipulating events and circumstances and does not offset this with risk. This can be understood as the vice of manipulation in (1).

My purpose in classifying the manipulation challenge against Molinism in this way is to ask if there is any particular kind of manipulation in Molinist theory that distinguishes it from other non-benign senses of manipulation, as in (1). That is, does the kind of God presented in Molinism manipulate in such a way that he manipulates free creatures *improperly* (2) or *too much* (3). This second sense of manipulation is the most serious for a model of providence. If it transpires this second claim is proven, then the kind of God presented by Molinist doctrine manipulates free creatures in a way that somehow undermines their freedom. This potentially has the reciprocal effect of presenting God as morally culpable or at least responsible, by analogy with strong morally-repugnant human manipulation.

This cluster of possible objections against Molinism has been deemed more a matter of its 'application' to theological issues than a direct objection against the coherence of middle knowledge itself. Perszyk distinguishes the species of objection that I am interested in as a member of the class of 'alternative line of objections.'

- This 'alternative line of objection' relates middle knowledge *to* providence. The question of control relates to the "negative overall effects on God's providence" engendered by middle knowledge. It may give God too much or too little control. Too much control robs him "…of his ability to create free creatures or relate to them in the right way" (Perszyk 2011:10).[4]

This is the same general field or 'line of objection' that I wish to investigate, yet I do not think that the root problem that I am investigating is an 'application problem' if it

---

[4] Perszyk considers Zimmerman (2009) as representative of this line of objection. Alternatively, *too little control* would rob God of his sovereignty, a charge brought by Thomists against Molinists (Perszyk 2011:10).

is interpreted as *just* an application. Rather, I believe the essential core concepts of Molinism itself are tainted when taken to their logical conclusion, despite the fact that these core concepts are viewed by some as 'applications' of Molinism.[5] To be precise, the problem here is not middle knowledge *per se*, but what God does with it; how the will interplays with his knowledge. This is no mere application of Molinism.

If the charge of too-much-control against Molinism succeeds, whether over things or persons, it then starts to look like a version of Calvinism: a model of divine providence that has generally been criticized for its strong divine determinism and correlative inability to account for creaturely freedom. Though adherents of the Calvinist model of providence generally think that libertarian free will is a misguided notion, the corollary of this view for non-Calvinists is that God's responsibility increases because of his increased control. A moral problem emerges from providential models that are strongly deterministic and controlling over other moral agents, and a theodicy is required to defend them.[6] Calvinist models do not have a 'divine foreknowledge problem', since if God predetermines *p* then God also foreknows *p*. This lack of a 'problem' sounds like a positive, but it is negated by the transfer of moral responsibility from the human agent to the divine, since God predetermines *p*. Generally, it is thought that Calvinist models require a theodicy more than other models.

If Molinism moves closer to the Calvinist model of providence, then it may lose its merit as the in-between model of providence—the one that portrays God with some control, and human agents with libertarian self-control and freedom. More importantly, its merit as a viable solution to the divine foreknowledge dilemma is potentially

---

[5] The theory/application distinction in Molinism goes back to at least 2000 and can be witnessed in the work, *Middle Knowledge*: *Theory and Applications*, edited by William Hasker, David Basinger and Eef Dekker. Although there is a clear division of content and topic in the kind of papers written under the categories of theory or application, any 'application' of Molinism is obviously only as good as the theory that the application presupposes. There is no real difference between theory and practice.

[6] Thomas Flint notes variance in the meaning of theodicy and cites Plantinga's definition and Hasker's 'different sense' which resembles something more like a defence in Plantinga's vocabulary, according to Flint (2013:251-252). My use of the term in this research is fairly broad, pertaining to either defending or justifying God against the charge of evil, suffering and moral wrong. The language of theodicy is legal in character due to its relation to justice and the scope of usage in this research includes this kind of 'forensic' responsibility for bringing about moral wrong as well as causal or instrumental responsibility.

threatened if God under the Molinist conception is 'manipulative'. This claim will need to be sustained by my thesis—*that manipulation undermines our freedom*. We generally feel resentment towards people who manipulate us. We do not feel free after all, if our freedom is manipulated by another person. We often feel 'used' as part of the means towards the manipulator's greater plan. These reactions, normal though they may be, do not themselves provide a strong case for the thesis that manipulation undermines—in a significantly metaphysical or moral sense—our freedom, or free will.

The apparent similarity of Molinism to Calvinism led Jerry Walls to ask, *Is Molinism as Bad as Calvinism?* (1990). Walls asks whether Molinism is too much like Calvinism in relation to providence and predestination. What Walls has in mind is that the sense of God's goodness may be threatened if Molinism is too much like Calvinism.[7] Hence, even if libertarian free will remains metaphysically intact by a successful charge of manipulation, what I then ask is whether God can also remain good under the Molinist theory of providence, despite humans remaining free or partly free? This in effect suggests another potential dilemma that replaces the foreknowledge dilemma (if Molinism does solve the foreknowledge dilemma): the Molinist dilemma of God's

---

[7] I purposefully leave a fuller discussion of Walls (1990) until the final chapter. The other quotations that I cite in this introductory section I discuss later in this chapter and in Chapter 6. Here I merely allude to these quotes and views to paint an overall picture of my research project. I note also at this point that there may be equivocation between the sense of Calvinism that I have referred to above as a broad label for divine determinism, and Walls' use of the term as a particular theology. Walls' question, 'Is Molinism as bad as Calvinism' implies of course that he thinks Calvinism is bad. In what way though? Here there is a double meaning. The concept of God under Calvinism is deemed *not good* because he withholds grace to some and gives it to others. This is a theodical problem. Hence, if God is not good under a Calvinist model, then the model itself is not good, ergo, it is bad. By symmetry, if Molinism as a divine model is as bad or worse than Calvinism, then God under its model is also not good or just. I add some further indictments of Calvinism which are more to do with its representation of theological determinism. If God can determine anything, why did he not determine the world to obtain with no evil? If the response is, he could not without giving humans free will, my response is to ask what value is this free will if it is determined? Furthermore, God could have given us the illusion of free will and made everything perfectly good, consistent with Skinner's *Walden Two*. Andrea M. Weisberger asks a similar question, "Given the choice between this world and a world in which there is no evil and merely the appearance of free will, which is more valuable?" (Weisberger 2007:177). The author contends that the answer is dependent on the respondent's perspective, for he sees no good theoretical solution to this answer. My view is that there is something wrong about living with the mere appearance of free will, despite also being confounded as to *why* it is wrong. And so I reject free-will illusionism, Skinner-worlds and Calvinism for their inconsistent assertions that everything is meticulously determined, but we are somehow free. That for me is an illusion, despite the non-illusoriness of the existence of evil and suffering determined by a Calvinist God.

goodness and human libertarian free will. Can God be good, while foreknowing and having power over future contingents, and manipulating our freedom?

Essentially, what some see as the cleverness of Molinist theory, that God can control his providence and that human creatures are libertarianly free, implies two potential contraries. But they are not real contraries for the Molinist, they only appear to be so:

1. The God of Molinism has 'control' over …

2. The God of Molinism 'determines' …

Or, instead,

1'. The God of Molinism has no 'control'.

2'. The God of Molinism does not 'determine'.

Put this way, these pairs of statements, (e.g. 1 and 1') may be contraries, or the terms within each set may mean different things. If they did mean different things then they would not be contraries, and so they can both be true statements ([1 & 1'] and [2 & 2']). On the other hand, if they were contraries or contradictories, the senses have to be understood univocally, that is

$$(1)\ \text{CONTROL} = \quad (1')\ \text{CONTROL};$$
$$(2)\ \text{DETERMINES} = (2')\ \text{DETERMINE}.$$

I wish to see if it is possible to assert these seemingly contrary statements without contrariety or contradiction. My view is that we cannot, and either there is some kind of double-speak at hand—equivocation over the meaning of these terms, where contextualizing them does not avoid the equivocation[8]—or there is outright contradiction

---

[8] I follow the sentiment in Hasker (2011:2, note 8), that the Molinist position is equivocal because we are meant to have libertarian freedom, but God knows exactly what we would do in a set of possible circumstances. I wish to take this further and explore why this is inconsistent. Hence, I take these claims

in asserting both. Either of these charges, if successful, would show that Molinism is self-inconsistent.

1.2 **Brief Literature Overview**

For the moment I briefly refer to some sources and data from the philosophical and theological literature that point to a view of Molinism which implies one or more of the following assertions. (A fuller analysis of the majority of these sources is given in Chapter 6, titled "Anti-Molinist Arguments from Analogy.") I have intentionally avoided references to the voluminous literature that asserts that the doctrine of middle knowledge *per se* leads to either determinism or creaturely unfreedom. I am more interested in the Molinist literature of how the divine will, with or without divine middle knowledge, points to the following:

The full Molinist doctrine…
1. …portrays God as a manipulator.
2. …undermines human freedom, or
3. … offers a diminished version of freedom.
4. …shares similar moral implications with Calvinism.
5. …is too determinist because of the use of God's will.

- **Dean Zimmerman**[9] (2009:89) discusses what he calls *'transworld manipulability'* as a consequence of Molinism:

> Something has gone terribly wrong if one is forced to admit the possibility of divine voodoo worlds; … the supposition, dubious to begin with, that free creatures can be infallibly manipulated while remaining free — that they can be deliberately put in circumstances where they freely do

out of the footnotes and into the main body of the argument. See also Trakakis (2006, note 68), where he too says something vital in a footnote, but does not say so as emphatically in the main text of his article.

[9] Zimmerman (2003) also discusses a related theme of whether God is a 'puppet-master'—a charge levelled by Richard Gale against the conception of God in Plantinga's free-will defence. Wes Morriston (2003) also responds to Gale while defending Plantinga's position.

something, even though the one who put them in those circumstances has, in advance, infallible knowledge of what they will do. It is the hypothesis of the availability of CFs [counterfactuals of freedom] at the first stage in God's foreknowledge, together with the contingency of CFs, that has generated the voodoo worlds in which we are too easy to control to be free.

- **Nick Trakakis** (2006 [52])[10] suggests that God is a manipulator under the Molinist conception which removes or diminishes the manipulee's free will:

  > A neglected but deep flaw in the Molinist account concerns its ability to deliver the goods of free will that have been squandered by the divine determinist. The problem, specifically, is that God's strategy of actualizing a world on the basis of information obtained from various counterfactuals of creaturely freedom – that is to say, the counterfactuals that spell out what would result from all possible combinations of creatures if they are created with libertarian freedom – turns God into a *manipulator* of his creatures' behavior and hence removes, or at least diminishes, their free will. (Trakakis' emphasis)

- **Bruce Langtry** (1996:316 -318).[11]   Assuming libertarianism and that there is a set of circumstances where free creatures always,

  > "choose and act rightly", God has the power, "by actualizing the specified circumstances, to weakly actualize its being true that free creatures always choose and act rightly". (316)   Hence,

  > …even if God does not cause and determine any creaturely actions, he systematically arranges laws and initial conditions with the overriding intention that no person performs a morally wrong action. If so, then no one is free to act wrongly, for the non-occurrence of morally wrong

---

[10] Trakakis (2006) is from an online journal where square brackets refer to paragraph numbers.

[11] The problem that Trakakis discusses that I quoted previously was inspired by this passage from Bruce Langtry's *God and the Best* (Trakakis 2006: note 67).

choices and actions is built in to the structure of the creation just as much as if it were a law of nature. (317)

Langtry then tells the story of

> a prison governor who is able to predict accurately, five minutes in advance, when a prisoner will form the intention to try to leave. The governor normally leaves all the doors of the prison unlocked, but when she predicts an attempt to leave she initiates a process which, four minutes later, locks all the doors. Plainly, if the doors are unlocked at a given time, then there is a sense in which a prisoner can, during the next four minutes, leave the prison: if he tries to leave, then there is nothing the governor can do to stop him. Nevertheless there is an obvious sense in which no prisoner is free to leave. After all, the prisoners have all been confined against their will for years. They all want to leave, but they are as securely held as if they were chained to the walls. The upshot: *There are many very different ways in which you can be deprived of your freedom. From a libertarian viewpoint, one of these ways is by having it built in to the nature of the system, unalterable by you, that you will never perform a certain type of act.* (318, my emphasis)

- **Joseph Keim Campbell** (2011:17) suggests that Molinism is looking too much like determinism, not because of manipulation *per se*, but because it looks like a version of divine determinism. Elaborating on a theme from William Hasker, he writes:

> In regards to counterfactuals of freedom, William Hasker asks: 'Who or what is it (if anything) that *brings it about* that these propositions are true?' [1989, 39] One might argue that it can't be the agent, for counterfactuals of freedom are eternally true (given the tenseless view of truth). They are part of the data that God uses to determine how the world goes. But if counterfactuals of freedom are not up to agents, then they start to look like laws of nature, generalizations that can be used to predict a person's behaviour yet over which the person seems to have no control. The problem of free will and foreknowledge starts

to look a lot like the problem of free will and determinism. …Given Molinism, complete foreknowledge is as problematic as the thesis of determinism. This is only a relative critique but since the consensus view is that complete foreknowledge is less problematic for free will than is determinism, it is worth noting.

Michael J. Murray and Michael C. Rea (2008:59) observe that middle knowledge can give God a great deal of control. Their analogy of controlling friends through human middle knowledge leaves it unclear whether this control constitutes manipulation of friends since they remain free. This, I claim, is highly questionable:

[Middle knowledge gives God a great deal of control]. To see why, just imagine what it would be like if you knew with certitude what your friends would do in response to anything – anything at all – that you might do. It would not be difficult in that sort of situation, to manipulate them like puppets. And yet they would not be your puppets, for all of their responses to you would still be free.

- **Terrance L. Tiessen** (2000) is a theologian and 'Middle Knowledge Calvinist'.[12]

Those who know us best are most able to manipulate us if they choose to do so. When we use the term manipulation to describe the influence one person exerts on another, we imply a misuse of that power for self-serving goals. To manipulate people is to get them to do what we want for reasons that are important to us but that may not be in the best interests of the persons being influenced. On the other hand, benevolent influencers such as loving parents are able to lead their children to do what is in the children's best interest by understanding the desires and values of their children.

---

[12] 'Middle Knowledge Calvinists' are compatibilists about human free will. For more on this view, see Terrance L. Tiessen (2007) and John D. Laing (2004). My research will not investigate Middle Knowledge Calvinism since my aim is to inquire about the compatibility of foreknowledge and providence with libertarian free will, that is, free will that is undetermined and thus 'incompatibilist'.

- **William Hasker** (1990:124) has charged that a God who does not risk is a "manipulator which no greater can be conceived." Hasker does not directly attribute this to the Molinist model of God.[13]

- **Jerry L. Walls** (1990): As I have commented above, Walls compares Molinism to Calvinism and concludes that they both possess disturbing moral problems as theories of providence:

  > Now then, it should be clear what I mean when I ask whether Molinism is as bad as Calvinism. This is shorthand for the question of whether Molinism is equally beset by the sort of disturbing moral implications which plague Calvinism. (87)

  > Let us try to state what the critics have in mind. It seems to be something like this: Molinism is just as bad as Calvinism because according to it, God puts people, or allows them to be put, in circumstances in which He knows they will choose evil and be damned. If this is so, the Calvinist may urge, the seeming moral superiority of Molinism is really an illusion. (90)

- **Pierre Bayle** (1991:183-184). From the Modern period of philosophy, Bayle's portrayal and critique of Molinism is significant. I quote from his famous *Historical and Critical Dictionary*:

  > The disputes [about predestination] that have arisen in the West among Christians since the Reformation have so clearly shown that a man does not know what course to take if he wants to resolve the difficulties about the origin

---

[13] The background to this claim is in response to Thomas Flint's review of Hasker's book, *God, Time and Knowledge*. In discussing the traditional view of divine providence and government *versus* a risk-taking God who lacks middle knowledge and foreknowledge, Flint (1990:114) remarks, "I would like to register my strong preference for the traditional picture over the Haskerian alternative in which God becomes the odds-maker extraordinaire, or as we might say, the bookie than which none greater can be conceived."

of evil, that a Manichean would be much more formidable than previously: for he would refute each side by the others. "You have used up," he would tell us, "all your mental ability. You have invented something called *scientia media* as a *deus ex machina* to get you out of your chaos. This invention is chimerical. It cannot be understood how God could see the future other than in his decrees or in the necessity of causes. It is no less incomprehensible in metaphysics than in ethics that he who is goodness and holiness itself should be the author of sin. I refer you back to the Jansenists. See how they attack your 'middle science' both by direct proofs and by throwing your arguments back at you; for it does not prevent all the sins and miseries of man from proceeding from the free choice of God*;* nor does it prevent one from comparing God—Absit verbo blasphemia [I mean this without blasphemy],…to a mother, who, knowing with certainty that her daughter would give up her virginity if, at such a time and in such a place, she were asked by a certain person, should then arrange that interview, lead her daughter there, and leave her to conduct herself as she sees fit." The Socinians, overwhelmed by this objection, try to get out from under it by denying foreknowledge. (Original emphasis)

It might be noteworthy to point out that there are theists who are not themselves libertarian, nor open theist nor Arminian, who see an inherent defect in Molinism's 'libertarianism'. The defect amounts to inconsistency. For example, in *The Westminster Theological Journal,* Travis James Campbell presents "Middle Knowledge: A Reformed Critique" (2006) and concludes that "on the doctrine of middle knowledge, humans do not possess libertarian freedom" (21-22). One of his five "theologico-philosophical" (15) conclusions why God does not possess middle knowledge is that,

- Middle Knowledge seems to entail an (environmental) determinism of the circumstances. I paraphrase Campbell's important section as follows:

    If there was nothing in the circumstances that influences Peter to deny Christ, then we should wonder about the relevance of claiming that there was something about the circumstances that informs God that Peter would make this choice. If the answer is that, *there is something* about the

circumstances that influences Peter in order for God to know what he would do, then they become the determining factor in Peter's decision, not Peter himself.[14] This is to "embrace an environmental determinism which destroys every plausible account of human freedom and responsibility (compatibilist or libertarian)." (2006:19-20)

Travis Campbell[15] does not elaborate upon the detail, but where he states that middle knowledge entails an environmental determinism, he may or may not be picturing actualized circumstances, which require the divine will. Although 'environmental determinism' obtains in the theoretical, merely possible counterfactuals of freedom, Campbell writes that God's decision to choose some over the others is also significant (3). Campbell supports his case with the important Thomist, Garrigou-Lagrange.

- **Garrigou-Lagrange** "…the *scientia media,* devised to safeguard liberty, destroys it," cited in Campbell (2006:20).

> If it is maintained that before any determining divine decree (positive or permissive), God forsees infallibly such a *conditional free act of the future* by reason of the virtual priority of truth over goodness, one falls back into fatalism or determinism of the circumstances. For, after all, according to the hypothesis, this free act of the future is determined neither by the divine decree nor in the created will which is free or indifferent. For it to be foreseen infallibly and not merely conjecturally, it must therefore be determined by circumstances. (Travis Campbell 2006:20 citing Garrigou-Lagrange, *God: His Existence and Nature*, 2:484-85, original italics.)

---

[14] Campbell footnotes here that if the Molinist or Suárezian "insists that, at the moment of choice, Peter could, if he had wanted to, chosen otherwise, we respond that all compatibilists agree. In fact, this sort of response vindicates the compatibilist view of freedom!" (2006:20, note 66). I add that it isn't likely that *wanting* to do otherwise is enough for the libertarian who requires something much stronger such as the metaphysical possibility of 'able to do otherwise' if one wanted to.

[15] Some background information: though I have not cited or used Travis J. Campbell's doctoral dissertation, it is titled, "The Beautiful Mind: A Reaffirmation and Reconstruction of the Classical Reformed Doctrines of the Divine Omniscience, Prescience, and Human Freedom," Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, 2004.

My final source for this brief review of the literature comes from Richard Gale.

- **Richard Gale:** God has 'Freedom-Cancelling Control' over created persons. (1990:397-423 and 1991:131-178)[16]

A critique of Plantinga's free-will defence by Richard Gale offers an early and significant argument against Molinism where God would have 'freedom-cancelling' control over created individuals. Gale does not mention the term manipulation,[17] and instead uses the neutral term 'control', but its equivalence to manipulation is clear with his anthropomorphic arguments (as he calls them). Gale distinguishes between two types of control: *causal responsibility as sufficient*—the kind physicists are interested in—and *forensic responsibility,* which is a legal and moral form of responsibility. Gale thinks that Plantinga's (Molinist-style) free-will defence does not absolve God from forensic responsibility. I take this position up later in §8.4.[18]

1.3 **Are there really theologically moral implications of 'Manipulation'?**

I note that Zimmerman (2007) considers it doubtful that a "free creature can be manipulated while remaining free," while Tiessen suggests that the charge of manipulation only applies to the manipulator whose control over another person is selfish, while control over another person for this person's best interest is not a case of manipulation (2000). In other words, the theologian Tiessen views manipulation as the always unethical control of another person; we cannot 'manipulate' a person for their own good. This is a kind of definition by stipulative fiat, but it does correspond to our intuitions that manipulation is bad, never good.

---

[16] Richard Gale's paper "Freedom and the Free Will Defense" (1990) is incorporated in his volume, *On the Nature and Existence of God* (1991: 131-178).

[17] Wes Morriston invokes the term 'manipulation' several times in his discussion of Gale's critique of Plantinga. For example, Morriston writes, "Gale first asks us to imagine a cyberneticist who manipulates his wife's brain in such a what that she is 'always amorous' and always eager to eat and clean" (Morriston 2003:67-77).

[18] For the record, Dean Zimmerman (2003) has given a detailed rebuttal of Gale's arguments of 1990 and 1991. Wes Morriston (2003) also is critical of Gale's attack on Plantinga's free-will defence.

These examples of the use of the term 'manipulation' in contexts of Molinism and providence show a broad range of applications and moral implications in relation to freedom. I summarise these different claims as the following hypotheses:

- Being manipulated and being free are incompatible, or
- Manipulation undermines or cancels freedom, or
- Manipulation is illicit control over another person for the sake of the manipulator's own gains.
- We cannot 'manipulate' someone for their own good; this kind of control would be called something else, such as Tiessen's *benevolent influencer*.

The broad semantics of manipulation and its various alleged moral implications will need to be discussed in detail, which I do in a later chapter. For the moment, and without more precise elucidation, I submit the thesis statement that:

Molinism cannot satisfactorily solve the foreknowledge dilemma if it is also a model of providence that is inappropriately manipulative.

This is because, as other criticisms of Molinism have suggested,[19] if libertarian freedom cannot be sustained from the hypothesis of Molinism, then, *ipso facto*, it cannot reconcile God's foreknowledge with something that is not even sustained by its own theory. It cannot reconcile divine foreknowledge with a freedom that does not exist.

1.4 Research Themes

It is common for a research project to change emphasis as one discovers certain factors along the way. I started investigating the claim that Molinism can give a coherent account of libertarian free will in order to provide a solution to the foreknowledge dilemma. However, I discovered, or at least *thought* that much has been overlooked in

---

[19] I am here referring to the various objections about the counterfactuals of creaturely freedom that God is purported to know via middle knowledge and whether these need grounds or truth-makers, or whether they are actually counterfactuals *of freedom*, or how God is able to know them.

relation to the role of God's will as the third logical moment in the Molinist doctrine. My focus developed away from the logic or metaphysics of creaturely freedom that is often discussed and argued—that which is solely at the logical moment of God's middle knowledge—towards a more comprehensive picture of Molinism. Hence, I 'zoom out' to a wider-angle picture that shows the whole figure of Molinism, *completely¸* as opposed to the partial 'head and neck' portrait of middle knowledge semantics and metaphysics.

As Edwin Mares and Ken Perszyk (2012) point out, there are four problems to do with the counterfactuals of God's middle knowledge. They are the problems of:

1. the *semantics* of counterfactuals of creaturely freedom (CCFs),
2. the *truth-makers* of CCFs (viz., the Grounding Problem),
3. how CCFs can be true prior to creation, (viz., the Priority Problem), and
4. how God can know CCFs prior to creation.

Mares and Perszyk deem (1) [obviously], as a *semantic* problem, while the Grounding Problem and the Priority Problem are both *metaphysical*. They do not report on what kind of problem (4) is, but I suggest it is either or both a divine *epistemological/ metaphysical problem*.[20] To this list, I add a fifth problem:

5. the *pragmatics of using* counterfactuals of creaturely freedom.

The pragmatics of using God's middle knowledge include but also transcend the semantics of counterfactuals. If pragmatics are concerned with actions and deeds, this fifth item is a problem that needs to be investigated, for providence and foreknowledge is achieved by God's actions of his will controlling CCFs. As well, by analogy, as in language-pragmatics, the intentions of the speaker are relevant to the final meaning of the

---

[20] The authors (2012:97) are not particularly interested in this fourth problem, so they do not classify it as metaphysical or semantic. Godehard Brüntrup & Ruben Schneider (2013:95) name and attribute the fourth problem of Mares and Perszyk as the *determinism/compatibilism problem,* (and also 'metaphysical') . Does the prevolitional truth of the CCFs undermine free will in the libertarian sense? However, Mares and Perszyck do not even raise *this* issue as their fourth problem.

utterance, so we should also factor in the role of the intentions of the divine agent. There might be a right way and a wrong way of doing things. Control at best, or manipulation at worst, are both types of actions and should be subsumed under this fifth problem of 'Molinist pragmatics'.

1.4.1 Molinism and Manipulation—A Moral Problem?

Collating these problems to do with middle knowledge, we have *semantic, metaphysical* and *epistemological* problems to which I add a fourth, the ostensible *moral problem* of Molinism if we broaden our scope to include Molinism as the combination of middle knowledge and the divine will. I do not say that my dissertation area is solely in any of these fields of problems, but submit that looking at Molinism more broadly *includes* moral considerations which have hitherto generally been overlooked in the contemporary literature.

In addition, even if counterfactuals of creaturely freedom are true and exist, and there is libertarian free-will, I wish to investigate also whether 'we can be deprived of our freedom.' This is a metaphysical and existential issue because of a version of theism that is manipulative, and is a moral or theodical problem. This is to ask whether it is still plausible for counterfactuals of creaturely freedom to be considered 'true' despite the deprivation of freedom. If my argument is successful, this would render the truth of CCFs to be a necessary condition for Molinism to succeed as a solution to the divine foreknowledge problem, and not a sufficient condition. Something else is needed to demonstrate libertarian free will under the Molinist theory.

With regard to manipulation, I anticipate that there are many senses of manipulation relevant to theism and Molinism, and so there are likely to be many senses of the constraint of freedom. This assumes an inverse reciprocal relation, or even an antonymic relationship, between different senses of freedom and different senses of constraint.[21]

---

[21] Here I take my cue from Joseph Keim Campbell, et al. "Since there are many kinds of constraints, there are many negative freedoms. But the kind of freedom that metaphysicians are interested in – call it 'metaphysical freedom' – can also be described in a positive way, as an *active power* to do things that are *up to us*. In this sense, metaphysical freedom seems more fundamental than the other,

1.4.2 Broad Research Questions

My broader research strategies are:

1. <u>Satisfying the Dilemma:</u> Can Molinism provide a solution to the divine foreknowledge and libertarian free will dilemma? Does it resolve the dilemma by satisfying true foreknowledge compatibility?

2. <u>Satisficing a worthless form of freedom:</u>[22] If it does satisfy the dilemma, does it do so by merely '*satisficing*', by providing a good-looking *prima facie* solution between the inconsistency of foreknowledge and free-will; but is really, *ultima facie* unsatisfactory, giving a species of freedom that is not genuine or not appealing for the libertarian?

3. <u>No libertarian free will at all:</u> Worse still, does Molinism in the end provide a model of theism where libertarian freedom is completely undermined and cancelled?

4. <u>The Manipulation Thesis:</u> Several anti-Molinists have remarked that Molinism presents God as a manipulator. Given that manipulation and free will sit together uncomfortably, is there any truth to the claims that God viewed as a 'Molinist God' manipulates creatures and their freedom? Even if manipulation does not cancel or undermine creaturely freedom, is there anything else that is entailed by manipulation, such as exploitation, which removes some of the appeal of the Molinist solution?

5. <u>Is it 'Theism'?</u> Do the answers to the above questions result, accumulate, or amalgamate, to make it more likely than not that Molinism loses its appeal as a form of *Theism* generally? More particularly, would the classical theist have concerns about accepting Molinism as a theory of providence?

---

merely negative freedoms" (Campbell, et al. 2004:2).The authors attribute the term 'metaphysical freedom' to Peter van Inwagen (1983) and 'active power' to Thomas Reid.

Galen Strawson alludes to the multiple meanings of 'free will': "Do we have free will? It depends what you mean by the word 'free'. More than two hundred senses of the word have been distinguished; the history of the discussion of free will is rich and remarkable" (Strawson 1988, 2004).

[22] 'Satisfice' according to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary means "to purse the minimum satisfactory condition or outcome." The noun is 'Satisficer'. The word is a blend of 'satisfy' and 'suffice'.

6. <u>As Bad As Calvinism</u>: Is the control that is presented by the Molinist picture of God so strong and meticulous that it verges on a form of Calvinism or theological determinism? Is it no longer 'in the middle' situated between Calvinism and open theism, but situated more towards Calvinism? Moreover, is it too much like Calvinism or even *as bad as Calvinism*? (Walls 2006).

Simply put, does Molinism resolve the foreknowledge dilemma or is it too much like a form of rigid theological determinism in the same vein as Calvinism, where God manipulates his creatures like puppets? Can Molinism resolve the dilemma, but with the kind of freedom advocated ending up a kind not worth wanting? If so, is this God—the Molinist conception of God—good, holy, moral, personal, relational, and worthy of worship and creaturely adoration?

1.5 **Will and Intellect**

The significant divine-intellectual component of Molinism is middle knowledge which is usually articulated in contemporary Molinism as

God knows that if person s were in C they would perform A freely.

- $gK(s/C \,\square\!\!\rightarrow As)^{23}$

Yet these true propositions that are the objects of God's middle knowledge are supposedly true independently of his knowledge, so that he discovers their truth, he does not make them true. It is the possible person or creaturely essence in the circumstance that makes a counterfactual of freedom true. Hence the abstracted form can be asserted, independently of God's knowledge:

- $\vdash (s/C \,\square\!\!\rightarrow As)$

---

[23] Regarding my formulism, the first place holder, here *'s'* is the human agent where *'/C'* denotes 'in circumstance *C*'. The slash '/' indicates that the prior individual is 'in' the latter. '$\square\!\!\rightarrow$' is Lewis' symbol for the counterfactual conditional. Upper case *A* is the action predicated of the agent *s*. The predicate is placed first. The variable '*C*' for circumstance is in the singular purely for clearer expression, but it may well represent a plurality of circumstances. Hence read '*C*' either as an individual circumstance or a set of circumstances.

This is a controversial matter where there has been much discussion on what grounds these truths. I shall not be focusing attention on this, but looking towards other problems by essentially looking forward to the role of God's will. Here we have something like,

God wills person s to be in C.

- gW(*s*/*C*)

From this it follows, by *modus ponens* as it is often alluded to, that the person performs the action. Therefore, *s* performs *A*. Not only is it the case that the agent performs the action, but they perform it *freely*. Including a 'freedom' operator, we have '*FAs*'.

If it were true that the agent performs the action freely, then it should be the case that the agent is the source or cause of their own actions, since the actions are not determined by external causes. So, according to Molinist theory, since we can assert ⊢ (*s*/*C* □→ *As*), we can also assert ⊢ *FAs*.

Any positive property of God's will in Molinism is attributed to its special role in providence. So the divine will is useful for providence, but is underestimated if it affects the modal status of *FAs*. I ask then, how exactly can, gW(*FAs*) without affecting creaturely freedom?

To summarise so far, my strategy to address the above 'Broad Research Questions' is to move attention away from *middle knowledge* and towards the 'third logical moment' of the *divine will* where God wills *s to be in C,* g(W*s*/*C*), in order to ascertain if the divine will affects *F,* the freedom operator predicated of the person's action in the actual world.

I do this because the important considerations in my five questions assume to a large extent the priority of divine will over the divine intellect; that is, theological determinism and divine manipulation are commonly thought to belong to an agent's volition and not their cognitive capacities.

I define two stages or perspectives of the investigation into Molinism:

Stage One Molinism: the demonstration of pre-volitional counterfactuals of freedom that form the basis of the resolution of divine foreknowledge and libertarian free will. But Molinism is not just 'middle knowledge'. I argue therefore, that a proper critique of Molinism must go to **Stage Two** and take into account the third moment of divine will.

This is a trivial claim, for no one denies that *Molinism = Divine Middle Knowledge + Divine Volition*. The Molinist account of God sees him as indirectly controlling free creatures by directly controlling the circumstances in which they are, would be, or will be. This control is a double-edged sword. The beauty that the Molinist sees is a face of God that can guide and control libertarian creatures along a path that fulfills his providential purposes, but a critic sees a portrait of a dark manipulator who uses circumstances and uses creatures' behavior despite their being 'free'. This manipulation portrait is Janus-faced. The aesthetically pleasing view is that of the intellect, while the ugly view is the will that uses what the intellect has to offer. I quip at this moment that although two heads are better than one, it is better not to be two-faced. I ask then, are the goods that the Molinist God has to offer duplicitous? Does the divine will ruin what the intellect has to offer?

1.6 **Molinism—An Agential Solution to the Divine Foreknowledge Problem**

In addition, I believe there is a further reason to concentrate on the divine will. The various uses of Molinism as an *apologia* for a traditional conception of theism, themselves imply that there is no solution to the *simpliciter*[24] version of the foreknowledge dilemma. If there were another solution to the *simpliciter* problem, we would not need Molinism. Molinism is an ostensive solution that relies on more than just God's attribute of omniscience or of middle knowledge. It also relies on his will to choose and to actualize the *counterfactuals of creaturely freedom* that have so famously and steadfastly been advocated by Molinists as the means by which foreknowledge is made compatible with libertarian freedom. This willing, choosing, deciding and actualizing amalgamates with middle knowledge to form a complex relation that generates a certain kind of personhood or agency. Here I define 'agency' to be the property of a being that can both affect and be affected by other agents or objects outside itself.

Neither divine intellect nor divine volition, are on their own sufficient to create this agency. While both intellect and will may not jointly provide enough properties for full

---

[24] I discuss the *simpliciter* version of the divine foreknowledge dilemma in Chapter 5.

agency, they assimilate a virtual kind of agency. Hence, I call Molinism an 'agential' solution to the foreknowledge dilemma where the existence of a particular agent with appropriate attributes, (i.e., 'God', although not just any model of God, but a Molinist account of God), is needed to resolve the alleged incompatibility. What Molinism attempts, which makes it *sui generis* in its field, is an agentive solution to a logico/metaphysical problem. The agentive solution invokes another attribute of general agency, that of the will in conjunction with the intellect. It invokes the will because middle knowledge on its own does not explain *how* God's foreknowledge is compatible with future contingents.

As Linda Zagzebski has pointed out, there are problems of *theological fatalism* that result in a particular view of God's omniscience (intellect). The *simpliciter* 'divine foreknowledge and human free will' dilemma is a case in point where it ostensibly generates *foreknowledge fatalism* to the conclusion that there can be no libertarian free will. In addition, there are problems of *theological determinism* that on other models of providence result in theological determinism. As I have already stated, I believe it has been overlooked that Molinism has issues on both accounts of God's *will and intellect*, and so, provisionally there are charges against both fatalism and determinism (using Zagzebski's distinction), that Molinism needs to defend itself against.

My suspicion is that on some occasions both the Molinist and anti-Molinist have forgotten the divine will. The Molinist believes that middle knowledge is virtually or almost *sufficiently* able to ground the compatibility of divine foreknowledge and human freedom, while the will, (*qua* third logical moment), is invoked *occasionally* just to explain how superior the Molinist model of God is, by resolving the dilemma and giving a fuller theory of providence so that Molinist-style foreknowledge is 'providentially useful' in contrast to the Simple Foreknowledge view. There is too much here for it all to be true, and in the end, I argue, it is just too good to be true. There has been a tendency, not intentional, to overlook the fact that the divine will is an integral part of the proposed Molinist solution, *for Molinism is but middle knowledge plus will* in a particular complex

of both of these attributes.[25] Hence, if the divine will is part of the proposed solution—an agentive solution as I call it—then I suggest that unless Molinism can be defended against typical objections hurled at Calvinism and theological determinism, then the will is not so much part of the solution, but part of the problem.

1.7 Assumptions

My assumption in talking about divine and human *agency* in relation to free will is that they are 'both species of the same genus.'[26] Many of the assumptions and distinctions I make in this research may give the impression that I am an anthropomorphite with regard to characterizing God. This is not a worry if it is a consequence of accepting a univocal theory of religious language, which I do as well. However, I reject the thesis that this project is anthropomorphic. It is not that it is making God out to be human, but that the divine and human share something of the *same*. Nevertheless, it will be seen that some major arguments for the claim that the Molinist conception of God is manipulative are arguments from analogy, where the analogue is human agents and human manipulation. An argument from analogy where the analogue is human does not mean that we are anthropomorphites.

To say that an agent is, for example, guilty of manipulation, is to express disapproval regardless of whether the agent is human or divine, for we are speaking univocally about manipulation. To avoid the charge of impiety in calling 'God' a manipulator, I shall propose various labels below that signify various versions of providence-models discussed in this research. These labels, though awkward-looking and

---

[25] An example of the tendency to improperly view *middle knowledge* in itself, rather than *Molinism* as a solution to the foreknowledge problem is found in David Kyle Johnson (2009). He writes that "the assumption that Molina espoused the 'Middle Knowledge' solution to theological incompatibilism is common" (28). Two things I note here. First is the improper substitution of the term 'middle knowledge' where 'Molinism' would have been more accurate. Second, although Johnson is right that Molinism *in toto* as a solution to incompatibilism is still question-begging, (in a similar fashion to John Martin Fischer's claim), Molina *did believe* that his philosophy provided a solution to what Freddoso called 'The Reconciliation Question.' The title of *The Concordia* is more than a hint of Molina's belief about his proposed solution. Nevertheless, a precise determination here on whether Molina and later Molinists thought that it was a proposed solution depends on what is meant by 'theological incompatibilism'.

[26] Peter Forrest said something like this at the *Australasian Philosophy of Religion Conference*, University of Sydney, June 2009.

unnatural, are essential, since really, what is up for scrutiny here is a theory or model of providence. A psychological theory of human agency can be criticized without criticizing the humanity that the theory is about. Moreover, the value in a map or a model, if successful, is how closely it tracks the territory that it attempts to represent faithfully, and this speaks of a kind of *sense/referent* relationship. That is, if the sense of the model or theory is coherent and passes other examinations, it is more likely to refer to the real thing.

1.7.1 Models of God

For the sake of clarity, I shall use the following label to signify the respective models of theism. This is also to avoid sounding impious if I write 'God is a manipulator,' for it is the *Molinist conception* of God (as a logical fiction) that is manipulative. My belief is that God_M does not refer… in the same way that Zeus does not refer to an actual Hellenistic god.

- God_M: The basic Molinist conception of God.
- God_C: A collective term to refer to God under a general divine determinist understanding, including Thomistic and Augustinian approaches.

Thus God_M has Fregean sense or 'meaning' which is the general understanding of God expressed via Molinist teaching, but God_M may not refer. My overarching dissertation argument is that God_M does not refer to the actual God. For the sake of avoiding monotony I may refer to God_M with the more informal expressions of 'the Molinist God' or 'the Molinist conception of God.'

1.8 Research Method and Strategy: Deductivism

My research strategy, in order to affirm or deny the thesis claims, needs to be articulated at the outset. Previously I distinguished between the recent focus on middle knowledge semantics with metaphysics and the broader theory of Molinism where there have been concerns about its plausibility as a theory of providence. I do not want to overlook one because of the other, so my strategy is the following. It is as if I hold in one

hand the Molinist solution to the divine foreknowledge problem, and in the other hand, the claims of some anti-Molinists that the providential model is too controlling, or even manipulating—I bring them together, to see what happens.

I foresee that some readers might agree with me that our freedom is undermined by the amount of control God$_M$ has, while others who view Molinism more positively, won't be convinced. These others may view God$_M$'s ways as *sui generis* and say we cannot compare her to us. This is to reject my parity thesis, given above, that human and divine agency are species of the same genus. This, I said, was an assumption of the thesis. This is the nature of the subject matter of providence which Ken Perszyk gives as an "alternative line of objections" (2011:10), apart from the standard objections given so far to do with semantics and truth-makers of counterfactual conditionals. How do we arbitrate on the truth of these *alternative* lines of objections…for they lack the analytic precision of deductive argumentation? Perszyk gives a very good answer with which I agree,

> Arguably the best, if not the only, way to rebut or sustain the charge that Molinism either gives God too much control or too little — more generally, to assess the Molinist's overall account of God's providence — is to roll up one's sleeves and dig deeply into particular aspects of providence and Christian faith to see how Molinism fares with respect to them. Doing this will inevitably involve a comparison with, and assessment of, rival accounts of them. (2011:11)

What is not so clear, admits Perszyk, is which method to use to assess the three main models of providence—Molinism, Opennism, and Thomism. He speculates about "tallying up the ticked boxes" and declaring a winner, but asks whether some boxes that are ticked (or unticked) are worth more points than others. And what are the correct rules for deciding these things? Should we be "more holistic" and compare the theories to scripture? These are disputed methods where there will be serious disagreement (2011:11-12).

"In the end," concludes Perszyk, "I strongly suspect it will come down to *plausibility arguments* and *appeals to intuition*" (12, my emphasis). I concur in every way

with Perszyk's remarks here. My plausibility-argument strategy is to posit a *reductio* of Molinism—to suppose that it is correct, then to see if it is plausible by analogy and inductive inference. I do not, however, remain convinced that resolutions to disagreements about these alternate lines of objections are just matters of holistic methods, such as appealing to intuitions, comparing theories and other more dialogic methods that rely on reflective equilibrium. These are too response-dependent and if I may say, 'subjective' or relative to what a person already believes.

Hence, part of the underlying purpose of this research is to propose a more deductive-analytic approach to avoid answers to my research questions that are merely response-dependent and too reliant on one's own theological and philosophical presuppositions. This is attempting to practice 'deductivism' where we try to turn an inductive argument into a deductively valid argument.[27] If this can be done then it would help to make criticisms of Molinist applications objective, so that they might convince the Molinist and non-Molinist without relying on metaphorical, anthropomorphic and analogical arguments. Because there is no essential difference between good theory and good practice, application-type arguments for Molinism can also be scrutinized with the precise and careful methods that have been applied to the more traditional objections against Molinism: the existence of true counterfactuals of freedom and other associated problems with middle knowledge first spawned by critics such as Robert Adams and William Hasker.

If my deductivist strategy succeeds then it should illuminate whether the kind of control that God$_M$ has will give humans the kind of free will worth wanting. If it's not a kind of free will worth wanting, is it still worthwhile to suppose that the foreknowledge problem *could* be solved? What are the costs involved? More indirectly, is the God exemplified by this model worth worshipping?

---

[27] Here I understand 'deductivism' to be the view that some inductive arguments can be expressed as deductive arguments by identifying them as enthymemes with suppressed premises, or by adding further explicit premises to the argument or re-arrangement of the argument's structure, or by providing an entirely new deductive argument which entails the same conclusion as an inductive argument. However, I disagree with the stronger view that only deductive arguments are valuable, or that every inductive argument can or should be re-presentable as deductive.

Chapter 2: Some Concepts: Free Will, Modality and Incompatibility

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is a discussion of disparate concepts and terminology and serves as a foundation for arguments in subsequent chapters. I shall discuss freedom and libertarianism, the meaning of 'would', different senses of modality, two senses of incompatiblitity, and end with a discussion of different approaches to foreknowledge incompatibilism—as dilemma, paradox or conundrum.

2.2 Libertarianism and Kinds of Freedom

In his *Routledge Encylopedia* entry "Molinism", Freddoso writes that it presupposes "a strong libertarian account of freedom." (Freddoso 1998). It is unclear what brand of libertarianism is required for Molinism, though I assume that Freddoso means *agent causal* libertarianism when he refers to a strong account. Libertarianism in Molinism also seems to require alternative possibilities on the evidence of the debate concerning counterfactuals of freedom. (I refer to the language of *performing* and *refraining* from performing an action.) Given this, I assume that generally Molinism teaches some kind of leeway view.[1] Harry Frankfurt's rejection of the alternative possibilities condition is well known, yet I shall not be discussing his views or the mechanism of counterfactual interveners directly.

'Free will' is a term of art; there are many doctrines or conceptions of it.[2] It would not be viable to first define 'free will' or 'creaturely freedom' with a particular

---

[1] An exception is William Lane Craig who does not think libertarianism requires "the ability to choose then one chooses" (Craig 2001:262). Craig is inspired by Frankfurt cases of interveners that block the ability to do to otherwise and writes that this view has the advantage of showing how God is free without alternative possibilities, since it is impossible for God to choose to sin. See also David Werther's discussion on 'Hyper-Incompatibilism' (2005).

[2] Peter van Inwagen and Galen Strawson make interesting observations:

- Galen Strawson (1988, 2004): "Do we have free will? It depends what you mean by the word 'free'. More than two hundred senses of the word have been distinguished; the history of the discussion of free will is rich and remarkable."

conception of libertarianism and then to judge Molinism in light of this single determinate conception, since these conceptions are hotly contested in the literature. Instead, I look at what is 'left over' that can be said about freedom and free will *after* discussing the divine will and manipulation. For the purposes of being able to talk at least about some conceptions of freedom, below is a brief presentation of some ways freedom and free will are defined or philosophically analysed.

Free will in Molinism may require the following conditions and analyses.

- Indeterminism. This is a prerequisite since libertarianism is an incompatibilist account. Indeterminism of the causal or metaphysical kind is necessary for libertarian free will, but not sufficient. It is not enough that our actions are undetermined to warrant them are 'free'.

There are two main views of free will incompatibilism, *Leeway* and *Sourcehood*:[3]

- Leeway Conditions or 'The Principle of Alternative Possibilities.'[4] This condition requires 'regulative control' (Fischer).

- Peter van Inwagen (1998: 365): "There are many kinds of freedom – or, as I prefer to say, the word 'freedom' has many senses."

Peter van Inwagen relates constraint to freedom, "there are many different kinds of freedom because there are many different kinds of constraints" (365). I add manipulation to this mix, in that there are also many different kinds of manipulation which correlate to different kinds of constraint, and also to freedom.

[3] 'Sourcehood' terminology is Kevin Timpe's. His explanation of the differences between the two kinds of libertarian incompatibilism is as follows. Leeway and Sourcehood incompatibilism would be ruled out if causal determinism were true, but they differ as to why. Leeway requires alternative possibilities which is incompatible with causal determinism; while source incompatibilism maintains that an agent is free only if she is the source of that action. If causal determinism is true, "…that would mean no one is the ultimate source of her actions" (Timpe 2008:17).

[4] 'Leeway' is Derk Pereboom's term. "We might call those inclined toward the view that an alternative possibilities condition has the more important role in explaining why an agent would be morally responsible *leeway incompatibilists…*" (Pereboom 2001:5).

- Sourcehood Conditions, also known as Ultimate Responsibility, and Origination. Here references to sourcehood will assume 'source-incompatibilism' for consistency with libertarianism. (Fischer calls sourcehood conditions guidance control, though he usually has compatibilist accounts in mind.)

- Moral Responsibility. Out of the many reasons philosophers give for the importance of free will, whether from the perspective of compatibilism or incompatibilism, the most important element is that freedom is a necessary condition for moral responsibility. The free-will debate has more recently shifted towards arguments about whether or not *moral responsibility* is compatible with determinism.[5]

- Reactive Attitudes. Peter Strawson has tried to avoid the determinism and free-will debate by concentrating on 'Reactive Attitudes' (RA), where a person responds with praise or blame in relation to another agent's action or deed.[6] I add RA to the vocabulary to discuss the reactions a person might have when they are manipulated. Some of the anti-Molinist arguments from analogy that I analyse seem to reveal this response to control even though it is not directly a question of a person's metaphysical freedom.

---

[5] Neil Levy and Michael McKenna write that though they are two different concepts, the debate about moral responsibility is nearly "*co-extensive with the free will debate*" (2009:97). One explanation for the change of interest towards moral responsibility over free will can be attributed to Peter Strawson's 1962 essay 'Freedom and Resentment'. Strawson's essay shifts attention from the "obscure and panicky metaphysics of libertarianism" towards the focal point of moral responsibility—what is it in virtue of which we hold others to be *morally responsible agents.*

Richard H.Corrigan titles his book, *Divine Foreknowlege and Moral Responsibility* (Progressive Frontiers Press, 2007) implying that it is not important whether divine foreknowledge and free will are compatible, but rather that foreknowledge and moral responsibility should be.

[6] The Reactive Attitudes approach to the problem of free will makes the topic of determinism redundant, says Derk Pereboom, "...the truth or falsity of determinism is irrelevant to whether we are justified in regarding agents as morally responsible. These reactive attitudes, such as moral resentment, guilt, gratitude, forgiveness, and love, are required for the kinds of interpersonal relationships that make our lives meaningful" (Fischer 2007:119).

- Autonomy. Autonomy is sometimes distinguished as different from freedom, yet, "Autonomous agents are self-governing agents" (Buss, *SEP* 2013).

I include autonomy as a concept relevant to the critique of Molinism, even though it is often distinguished from freedom, on the basis that some anti-Molinist positions argue that our autonomy is threatened. This has strong Kantian overtones in relation to *not using people as means* only, but as ends in themselves.[7]

Patricia Greenspan (2003) has an important paper in which she discusses Kant and autonomy in relation to manipulation. She refers to the philosophical literature on similar topics which suggests two ways of approaching manipulation. The first is in Kantian terms around the violation of autonomy, if manipulation tactics involve "'use as a means only' to the extent that the ends they serve are optional ends that the manipulee does not share." The other is virtue-ethical, "in terms of the violation of trust" (156).[8]

---

[7]John Christman's entry in SEP regarding the link to Kant is as follows,

> Individual autonomy is an idea that is generally understood to refer to the capacity to be one's own person, to live one's life according to reasons and motives that are taken as one's own and not the product of manipulative or distorting external forces. It is a central value in the Kantian tradition of moral philosophy. (Christman, *SEP* 2011)

And,

> Some distinguish autonomy from freedom by insisting that freedom concerns particular acts while autonomy is a more global notion, referring to states of a person [Dworkin 1988: 13–15, 19–20].
> The idea of self-rule contains two components: the independence of one's deliberation and choice from manipulation by others, and the capacity to rule oneself [see Dworkin 1989, 61f and Arneson 1991]. However, the ability to rule oneself will lie at the core of the concept, since a full account of that ability will surely entail the freedom from external manipulation (Christman, *SEP* 2011).

[8] I concur with Greenspan in relation to autonomy that it is such an instrumental good for the agent that its reduction, in favour of other goods, must be justified. She also lists Kant's ideas on *dignity* and *respect* for other persons as important factors in valuing autonomy. "Someone who violates our autonomy shows a basic failure of respect for us as agents capable of setting and pursuing our own ends" (2003: 157). Yet she notes that interfering with autonomy does not in itself *interfere* "with freedom in the sense that involves putting limits directly on the ability to act or to refrain from action."

Greenspan also notes that the manipulee lacks awareness of the prior plotting of the manipulator so that that the manipulee's agency "is to some degree 'masked'" so that they are misled or deluded

2-4

In summary, the important conceptions to bear in mind concerning free will are the questions of indeterminism, alternative possibilities, sourcehood, moral responsibility, reactive attitudes and autonomy (understood both generally and from a Kantian perspective).

2.3 **'Would' and Modality**

Here I discuss some features of the modal 'would' that forms part of the semantics of the counterfactual operator.[9] 'Would' expresses the 'future-in-past' (or just 'past-future'), and may have either the aspect of *prediction* or *volition* (Peters 2004:498). This prediction/volition dichotomy can be seen in the pairing of the two modal auxiliaries 'will' and 'would', where each form may express either prediction or volition. This is perhaps why it is often unclear in contexts that are uncertain or indeterminate whether 'will' or 'would' act as tense indicators (prediction) or modal indicators (volition). On a simple reading of the modal verbs in the three logical moments in God's knowledge, there appears to be tense/modality ambiguity between 'future-will' and 'modal-will'. For example,

1. At Natural Knowledge: *Judas could do A* (*and could refrain from A*)
2. At Middle Knowledge: *Judas would do A in C*
3. At Free Knowledge: (as foreknowledge) *Judas will do A in C*

However, of course, the example in (3) is likely to be tensed anyway, since it refers to states of affairs that are actual. Even so, according to linguists and grammarians, there is

---

about the extent to which they are the agent of their own actions, therefore they lack complete knowledge and information on what is happening (157).

[9] Grammatically, 'would' is a modal auxiliary along with the "central modals" (Peters 2004:58), as follows,

CAN, COULD,

MAY, MIGHT, MUST,

 SHALL, SHOULD,

WILL, WOULD

often a tense/modality ambiguity despite the above example. This tense/modal ambiguity tracks, very roughly, a distinction not often articulated in the interpretation or use of Molinist counterfactuals of freedom, between the epistemic and metaphysical readings of '$\square\rightarrow$'.

Supposedly for the Molinist, if a CCF $(C \square\rightarrow Z)$ is true, then it is true 'before' or regardless of whether God knows it. Hence, the modality of $\square\rightarrow$ is taken to be metaphysical with the weak modal force of contingent. There might be some contexts where we can speak of epistemic modality as necessary or certain, where *God knows that* $(C \square\rightarrow Z)$. Yet here God's knowledge does not make it the case that $(C \square\rightarrow Z)$, even though he is certain that it is true. So on some readings '$\square\rightarrow$' is metaphysically *contingent* (only if there are true counterfactuals of creaturely freedom) but epistemically *necessary* qua certainty, if bound by the divine agent's knowledge: $gK(C \square\rightarrow Z)$.

2.4 **Modal Flavours**

In my subsequent discussions and arguments, I make use of the concept of a 'modal flavour' which is a finer-grained analysis of modality. This is a cognitive linguist's concept which I consider helpful in analysing some issues in Molinism, not by supplanting possible worlds, for it doesn't 'get rid' of possible worlds; it's a different viewpoint from an understanding of language and speech-acts.[10]

---

[10] For example, tracking the metaphysical and epistemic modalities already referred to, Fintel and Heim (quoting Kratzer 1981, 1991) give examples of these two general readings of modality.
- Circumstantial modal: *Hydrangeas can grow here.*
- Epistemic modal: *There might be hydrangeas growing here.* (2011:36)

Epistemic modals incorporate what must be the case given the evidence available, while circumstantial modals pertain to certain sorts of facts that either imply necessities, or 'open up' to possibilities (37). The authors caricature these distinctions by interested parties:

> Epistemic modality is the modality of curious people like historians, detectives and futurelogists. Circumstantial modality is the modality of rational agents like gardeners, architects, and engineers. A historian asks what might have been the case, given all the available facts. An engineer asks what can be done given certain relevant facts. (Fintel and Heim 2011, quoting Kratzer 1991:646)

A way to describe the multitude of modals is to view them as "different *flavors* of modality¸ varying in what kind of facts in the evaluation world they are sensitive to" (Fintel and Heim 2011:34, my emphasis).[11] This distinction is also qualified as different 'readings' of modal descriptions. Fintel and Heim go on to list these 'readings', alluded to in the general description of the following, as all possessing 'modal force' but "[w]hat differs is what worlds are quantified over." These readings are "epistemic, deontic, abilty, circumstantial, dymanic…" (34).[12] The labels are nothing new; they are 'traditional descriptions of modals', but the authors see the need to describe these as flavours of modality references to particular sets of evaluation-worlds, rather than ontologically distinct kinds of modality.[13] Epistemic modal sentences are those quantified over worlds compatible with the *evidence* available to us; deontic modals over worlds compatible with *rules or regulations*; while circumstantial modal sentences are those quantified "over sets of worlds which conform to the laws of nature" (2011:34). Circumstantial modality is also named dynamic modality in the literature.

So far, there might be a tendency to bifurcate modals into two categories, for instance, the metaphysical and the epistemic. This is not completely misleading.[14] However, there are further ways to add flavour.

---

[11] They actually write in a more concessionary way than this, saying: *"Apparently, there are different flavors of modality…"* (Fintel & Heim 2011). I do not think this slight de-emphasis detracts from their point or my application of it.

[12] They note that *"sometimes all non-epistemic readings are grouped under the term* ROOT MODALITY*"* (34).

[13] Here is why. Early in 2011, Fintel and Heim mention the locution, *It may be snowing in Cambridge,* where this is either true or false. It seems true if uttered in the 'dead of winter' with a Nor'Easter blowing. Or it seems false if *"said by a clueless Australian acquaintance of ours in July"* (2011:32). The authors argue that the contingency is not understood under currently accepted theories of semantics. For it turns out that this example of a *may* sentence is read under Lewisian semantics, (discussed in chapter one of 2011), in terms of which there has to be a world where it does snow in July in Cambridge, a world with different physical constants from ours. Fintel and Heim infer from Lewis' semantics that *"truth-conditions for may-sentences are world-independent. In other words, they make non-contingent claims that are either true whatever or false whatever"* (32). Furthermore, because of the great plurality of worlds, they are more likely to be true than false. The authors aim to fix this by claiming that we should *"only consider possible worlds* COMPATIBLE WITH THE EVIDENCE AVAILABLE TO US. Hence, the truth of *may*-statements differs from world to world" (33).

[14] What I mean here, for instance, is that it is generally accepted that there are paired modal distinctions such as the three modal meanings:

Fintel gives a further characterization of modals (Fintel 2006)[15]:

Alethic modality (Greek: *aletheia*, meaning 'truth'), sometimes *logical* or *metaphysical* modality, concerns what is possible or necessary in the widest sense. It is in fact hard to find convincing examples of alethic modality in natural language, and its inclusion in this list is primarily for reason of historical completeness. The following categories, however, are of primary importance in the study of natural language.

Epistemic modality (Greek *episteme*, meaning 'knowledge') concerns what is *possible* or *necessary* given what is known and what the available evidence is.

Deontic modality (Greek: *deon*, meaning 'duty') concerns what is possible, necessary, permissible, or obligatory, given a body of law or a set of moral principles or the like.

Bouletic modality, [Greek: *boulesis* meaning 'wish', 'want', or 'desire') sometimes *boulomaic* modality, concerns what is possible or necessary, given a person's desires.

Circumstantial modality, sometimes *dynamic* modality, concerns what is possible or necessary, given a particular set of circumstances.

Teleological modality (Greek *telos*, meaning 'goal') concerns what means are possible or necessary for achieving a particular goal. (Fintel 2006)

- permission and possibility/ability

- obligation and necessity

- volition and prediction

…where the first of each pair is *intrinsic* (it implies some human or agent control), while the second of the pair is *extrinsic*—it is not the result of human control but of human judgment. "In traditional grammar, the meanings of modality are divided into two categories, i.e. intrinsic modality covering permission, obligation and volition, and extrinsic modality that involves possibility, ability, necessity, and prediction." (Mahboob and Knight 2010:222, citing Quirk et al., 1985:219-21.)

[15] Fintel remarks that there is *"taxonomic exuberance far beyond these basic distinctions"* (2006:2). There is no unanimity about the categorization or terminology of these modal readings, kinds, or flavours.

There is also 'agent-oriented modality' which includes "all modalities in which conditions are predicated on an agent (obligation, desire, ability, permission and root possibility)." (Bybee 1985, and used by Bybee & Fleischman 1995:5.)

These modal flavours, I think, can help us understand what is going on in the purely 'metaphysical' reading of (C □→ Z). That is the truth of (C □→ Z) and the subsequent ability of God to know the CCF is dependent on many modal variables. Mere talk of an agent being in *C* suggests this but does not go far enough. Hence I propose to distinguish between,

- Agent-modality: which includes the desires, capacities, abilities, potentials and needs of the agent.[16]

- Circumstantial Modality: This concerns what is possible or even necessary given a set of circumstances, *C*.

Most of the discussion in Molinism has focused unawares on circumstantial modality, although knowledge of what a person would do in a circumstance involves much more than mere circumstantial modality. This is not to create an artificial split between the agent and the circumstance, for in many ways the circumstantial and the agential modals blend to form something, what a person *would* do in a unique situation. I

---

[16] Frawley (2006) also gives the basic categories as dynamic, deontic and epistemic, where dynamic modality "is traditionally characterized as an ascription of a capacity to the subject-participant of the clause [i.e.,] the subject is able to perform the action expressed by the main verb in the clause" (2006:3). The authors provide three modifications to this description.

First, a better definition of dynamic modality may be given "in terms of a property of the first argument of the predicate, or of the controlling participant in the state of affairs (usually the agent)…" (3).

Second, (citing Palmer 1979:91ff), this is not just restricted to ability, "but also covers the indication of a need or necessity for the first-argument participant," for example, "I **must** find a solution for this problem soon now or I'll go crazy."

Third,

> …this category not only covers capacities/abilities/ potentials and needs/necessities which are fully inherent to the first-argument participant (henceforth called *participant-inherent dynamic*). It also covers abilities/potentials and needs/necessities which are determined by the local circumstances (and which may thus be partly beyond the **power and control) of the participant (*we will call this participant-imposed dynamic*).** (Frawley et al., 2006:3, original emphasis)

will distinguish this as dynamic. (Sometimes however, the literature on cognitive linguistics treat the dynamic and the circumstantial as the same.)

- Dynamic Modality: Is the combination of agent and circumstantial modality, given a person and set of circumstances. Dynamic modality is distinguished from epistemic modality.

To summarise, my use of modal flavours is instrumental—to understand modality from the free creaturely perspective, the dynamic or root circumstantial perspective, and from the divine agent's perspective.

Circumstances

Having just discussed the concept of 'circumstantial modality', this is a good place to raise some considerations as to how to characterize circumstances as a way of painting a background for further discussions later in the thesis. I note that in the Molinist literature, there are various ways to characterize circumstances. Thomas Flint writes that we should understand circumstances as 'complete'. [17] William Lane Craig believes it is reasonable to suppose that counterfactuals have the following form and must be true or false,

> If *P* were placed in *c*, then *P* would choose *x* (*P* is any
> particular free person, *c* is a particular set of circumstances,
> which includes all of past history up to the point of
> decision, and *x* is a particular action), (Craig 1999:139).

We can call these two characterizations of circumstances, from Flint and Craig, as *rich* because they include all of past world history and causal activity by other agents prior and simultaneous to the agent and action the counterfactual is about. [18] Apart from actual-

---

[17] "That is, what God would know is how a free being would act given all, not just some, of the causal factors affecting her activity. Obviously, the safest thing to do here is to think of the circumstances as including all of the prior causal activity of all agents along with all of the simultaneous causal activity by all agents other than the agent the counterfactual is about. Circumstances which are all-inclusive in this way will be said to be compete circumstances" (Flint 1988:47).

[18] Hasker entertains this view as well. He writes, "The full specification of the circumstances may best be thought of as including the entire previous history of the actual world…" (Hasker 1999:293).

world history, other terms that might describe the nature of circumstances might also include, 'thick', 'thin' or 'broad' circumstances. I do not yet take a particular stance on this issue of characterizing circumstances in either of these ways. However, it will later be seen that I write as if they are 'thin', where a thin circumstance neglects past history and causal factors, and just focuses on aspects of the situation described in the abstracted form of the counterfactual conditional expressed. This might be seen as a failing of the way I talk about circumstances. As well, it may not be a charitable interpretation that the Molinist would agree to. For the moment, I do not think it matters *how* we characterize them. Later, in Chapter 9, I provide further reasons for this. I shall not say *why* now but must first develop my arguments and positions from here until the later chapters where I develop an argument against Molinism in relation to what circumstances are and how they are useful for God_M.[19]

2.5 **Manipulation**

2.5.1 Manipulation and the Philosophy of Action

Manipulation is an activity or *action*. If *M* manipulates *s*, *M* performs an action involving *s.* This concept of *manipulation as action* fits well, maybe too well, with divine providence understood as God's actions in arranging, providing for and caring for his creation. A caveat in this research is to not be too hasty in assimilating Molinist-style divine providence as a case of divine manipulation.

If the anti-Molinist arguments succeed in demonstrating that God_M is a manipulator, what are the results concerning the freedom of the manipulated agent? Are they still free, or not? This is the hard question and much of this research will be spent trying to decide on this issue. The two main opposing views are,

---

[19] I thank an anonymous Examiner (2) for the suggestion that I have left it "too late" in this thesis to develop my conception of situations or circumstances. As implied above, I must first discuss the will/intellect distinction and extract important information from a survey of Anti-Molinist arguments from Analogy*,* etc., before I can justify my case of using thin circumstances.

(A) The generic Molinist thinks that Molinism is consistent with libertarian free will.[20]

(B) The anti-Molinist thinks that Molinism undermines free will.

However, as will be seen in Chapter 6 ("Anti-Molinist Arguments from Analogy"), much of the reasoning against the Molinist model of God, because of manipulation, is by way of analogy with human-to-human manipulation. Here though, human-to-human manipulation is very complex and on some accounts the manipulee *is still free* in some respects despite being manipulated. So on the one hand, the anti-Molinist charge against Molinism is that it cancels out or undermines freedom through manipulation, but on the other, it is not so clear-cut that human-to-human manipulation is freedom undermining; yet the analogy between the human and divine is meant to argue that they are the same in this respect. I elaborate the idea of whether human manipulation is freedom undermining as follows.

2.5.2 Human Manipulation, Ethics and Freedom

If manipulation of another person's actions is unethical, this places the action of manipulation in the moral domain, but who is morally responsible to receive blame, or even praise, if

M manipulates s to do A, where A is wrong.

This is a complex issue, and it depends partly on what is meant by 'manipulation'. Our experiences of human-to-human manipulation, even after reflection, often leave us with little doubt that we acted freely. Moreover, if moral responsibility is tied to free will, both within theory and our own phenomenology of action, then likewise we still consider ourselves blameworthy despite manipulation. Yet our feelings are mixed and we may wish to attribute some blame to the manipulator, not for the action that we performed, but

---

[20] 'Generic Molinism' is the standard view that assumes that the correct theory of human freedom is incompatibilist-libertarian. Generic Molinism excludes Maverick Molinism, Compatibilist/Calvinist versions of middle knowledge, 'might-counterfactuals', et cetera.   Generic Molinism includes Molina's own view. Elsewhere, the term 'Contemporary Molinism' is generic Molinism defended or understood along with contemporary possible worlds semantics, especially about counterfactuals.

for them using us to perform the deed, and the accompanying deceit, mistrust, and imbalance of power.

Manipulation in the human realm may even be motivated by the unconscionable practice where,

M is causally responsible in getting *s* to do *A*, but *s* is morally responsible in performing *A* since *s* performed *A freely*.

An analysis of this type of manipulation appears to have the following properties:

[GENERIC MANIPULATION SCHEMA[21]]

(1) The Manipulator *M* intends *s* to do *A* by arranging *C*.

(2) *M* is counterfactually-causally responsible in getting *s* to do *A* via *C*.

(3) *s* intends to do *A* given their limited cognitive awareness of the situation *C*.

(4) ∴ *s* performs *A freely*

(5) ∴ *s* is morally responsible for doing *A*.

(6) ∴ *M* intends *s* to do *A* in such a way through *C* that *s* is morally responsible for A.

The moral element this analysis shows concerns *justice* more than direct moral responsibility and blameworthiness. It violates a condition of justice, despite other second-order unfairness conditions such as *M* acting deceitfully, indirectly, clandestinely. The justice condition violated is seen more clearly if we exaggerate (6) by simplifying it as:

---

[21] Throughout this thesis, I distinguish between paradigms of sentences as either 'arguments' which inferentially justify a claim, and 'schemas' which are collections of ordered propositions to provide explanations of concepts and positions. Schemas may be argumentative but not necessarily put forward as deductively valid.

(7) $\therefore$ M intends, and 'virtually' performs action A, but gets s to take the blame for M's action. That is, the alleged dual-agent intention to A by both s and M [(3) and (6)][22] reduces to the state of affairs that s only *putatively* intended to A because if M had not created the situation C, s would not have A'd.

If we remember the element of counterfactual control implied by (2): *if C had not obtained, s would not have A'd*, then the exaggeration in (7) is not that extreme.

So far in the above schema, s is not aware of being manipulated to do A and is likely to be willing to personally take responsibility. But even after debriefing, or if it comes to light that they were only placed in C because of M's counterfactual control, s is likely to find it difficult to give a defence against charges of wrongdoing. This speaks to what I consider to be a property of human-to-human manipulation itself, and that is the moral confoundment of the manipulated person when it comes to giving a consistent viewpoint about either their own blameworthiness or the ethics of the manipulator, because of,

Justice and Moral Problems with the above schema:

(A) s now knows that they were controlled to do A despite agreeing that they performed A freely.

(B) s now knows that M intended s to perform A, but s also believes that M's *having an intention* for s to do A is not sufficient for moral blameworthiness.

(C) s seeks to find strong agential causally sufficient conditions where M *directly* causes s to A, so that s can argue that their intention can now be seen to be only putative, therefore vacuous, but there are none to be found; there are only indirect non-sufficient, counterfactual conditions, the circumstance. Despite being counterfactually relevant to s's performing of the action, the performing of the

---

[22] A theologian may call this 'congruence', but if it was a case of unethical manipulation, the 'con' of congruence takes on a new meaning.

action in *C* is an inchoative action: nothing caused *s* to do it; the action was voluntary. Moreover, *M*'s defence is that *M* did not 'make' *s* do *A*. That is, the combination of the circumstantial-modality of that particular *C,* and the agent-modality of *s*, obtains in the state of affairs *A*.

(D) ∴ An idealized cognizant third-person perspective of the whole situation observes that *M* intends *A, M* uses *C* in order to get *s* to do *A,* thereby being counterfactually-causally responsible, but not morally responsible for *A*. Because *A* was performed voluntarily, *s* is responsible.

(E) *But* action *A* has 'telicity' for purpose *T.* Therefore, *C* was used to get *s to A in order for T.* So, *s* was used for *T*. However, the imbalances of power and covert control reveal a violation of justice.

(F) Claim: to interfere with a person's autonomy without consent violates justice since violating a person's autonomy or freedom may reduce their blameworthiness. Violating a person's autonomy can change the justice relations of the situation between *M* and *s*.

(G) If *M* acts unjustly in violating *s*'s autonomy, then *M is* (partly) responsible for *A* since actions that are not just are not right, *ergo* unjust actions are wrong.

(H) Therefore, though *s* may have performed *A* freely, *s* may not be morally responsible; *M* is morally responsible for *A*.

I take my above analysis of human-to-human manipulation as a fairly plausible interpretation:

- The philosophy of action—of manipulation—in numbered propositions (1) to (7).

- An interpretation of the justice-based and moral responses we have to manipulation in propositions (A) to (E).

I note at this point that no mention of *M's* knowledge, middle knowledge or predictive power has been integrated into the analysis of human-to-human manipulation. Though I will argue later that God's middle knowledge is the means by which he can be certain of what a person would do, this epistemic condition offers little comparability between a human's predictive powers and God's middle knowledge. The anectdotal evidence from our reflections suggests that a human *M* is extremely intelligent and cunning, while the psychological evidence from the literature on the sociopathy of manipulation points to a deficit in emotional functioning, especially empathy. For if *M* empathises with *s*'s plight, *M* would feel, guilt, shame or blame for manipulating in such a way.[23]

2.5.3 Two Kinds of Manipulation re Freedom

It looks as if the motivation to manipulate is for the manipulee to take moral responsibility and blame for the action they perform, (not the manipulator), whether or not this is just. The manipulator gets *s* to do *A,* but also gets *s* to take the blame. For the

---

[23] An interesting corollary of this empathy-deficit is whether God_M has correlative empathic responses fit for a divine being, mainly love and compassion. A divine being could only manipulate in a Molinist way if he has a deficit in benevolence, on par with an empathic deficit in sociopaths and manipulators.

I thank Professor Richard Bryant from the psychology department of the University of New South Wales for some information on sociopathy and empathy, (in conversation, April 2013). The following are some sources that link empathy with sociopathy and manipulation.

- Patricia S. Greenspan. In her paper of (2003) titled 'Responsible Psychopaths' Greenspan writes that, "Psychopaths are agents who lack the normal capacity to feel moral emotions (e.g. guilt based on empathy with the victims of their actions)"and, "[d]etails and emphases differ, but on one fairly conventional understanding they [psychopaths] lack emotions based on empathy with their victims, and hence an important source of moral motivation" (417).

The idea behind this is that if *N* tries to manipulate *s*, if *N* also empathizes with *s's* situation, the resultant emotional responses like guilt are likely to motivate *N* not to manipulate. However, if *M* attempts to manipulate, the lack of empathy with the manipulee's situation and plight does not prevent *M*'s motivation. What is more interesting though is that,

> There is a sense in which psychopaths are indeed able to empathize with others, and in fact are particularly good at it: in terms from current cognitive science, they can run "offline" simulations of others' mental states—at any rate, their states of desire and belief, if not their emotions—for the purpose of anticipating likely responses to what they do. (419. Greenspan here refers to a hitherto unpublished work by J.Prinz, *Emotional Perception*, New York, OUP.)

purposes of categorizing subsequent uses of the term 'manipulation', I provisionally suggest two kinds of manipulation relevant to arguments about Molinism; yet I do not consider these two to be foregone conclusions, only hypotheses. These are not senses of manipulation in the literal or controlling senses but are more to do with the effects.

(1) 'Herethelic' Action (or Manipulation) that preserves freedom.

In a remarkably similar mood to the above outline of human manipulation, the political scientist William Riker[24] has coined a term for political manipulation, 'heresthetic' from the Greek word 'to choose'. Heresthetic "refers to the art of strategically setting up, to one's advantage, the alternatives among which others get to choose. The basic idea is that even when one's choice among alternatives is completely free, the content of those alternatives is determined" (Sabl 2011:229). It is important to note that heresthetic manipulation refers only to manipulation in politics and voting where the primary conduit for this type of manipulation is speech and rhetoric. There are comparisons though between different fields where manipulation is common. Sabl refers to psychiatry where, "manipulation involves using people for one's own gratification… on this view [manipulation] is a *failure of compassion*" (230 original emphasis). In ethics

---

[24] Iain McLean describes Riker as follows.

> W. H. Riker (1921–93) was the most innovative political scientist of his generation. Founder of the 'Rochester school' of analytical political science informed by rational choice theory, he had extremely broad interests that belie the common characterization of 'ratchoicers' as narrow technocrats. (2002:535)

Regarding the terminology, McLean puts forward this case,

> Riker states that he coined *heresthetic* from a Greek root denoting choosing and electing (but, in reality, Greek democrats thought that choice by lot was the only fair mechanism). I think that he was intrigued that the root of *heresy, heretic* etc. denotes 'finding out for oneself': 'Gr[eek]. taking, choosing, choice, course taken, course of action or thought, "school" of thought, philosophic principle or set of principles, philosophical or religious sect; [from *hairein*]* to take, middle voice, to take for oneself, choose' (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. on-line, etymology of *heresy*). So he coined 'heresthetic' by analogy with 'aesthetic'. The 'th' represents the Greek middle voice 'to take for oneself, choose'. (541, note 23, *my English transliteration inserted here instead of Greek characters)

it is "a failure of respect." Sabl refers to Patricia Greenspan's work on manipulation where the manipulator trades, "on the victim's ignorance of, or lack of attention to, a choice situation…[which] leaves victims with the impression that they have more agency in the situation than they in fact do" (230). In politics, Sabl then refers to Robert Goodin's position where manipulation, "is said to involve deception and getting victims to do something 'they would not otherwise have done…contrary to their putative will.' Hence, manipulation is a failure of *political equality*" (Sabl 2011:230, citing Robert E.Goodin, *Manipulatory Politics*, Yale University Press, 1980:13, original emphasis). Sabl presents Riker's view of manipulation as avoiding these moral issues because manipulation, as [Riker] defines it, *does not operate on persons.* Riker consistently and explicitly speaks of manipulating impersonal entities—instituations, agendas, selections… outcomes, most generally 'the world'—rather than human beings' desires, wills, impulses or goals" (Sabl citing Riker, *Art of Political Manipulation*, ix,xi, 142).[25]

The above account is uncanny in resemblance to the pro-Molinist position that one's choices can be controlled, yet we still remain free (Craig 2011:160),[26] yet there is enough criticism of Riker's heresthetic that is consistent with the anti-Molinist position that God$_M$ manipulates. For a position that is *prima-facie* broad enough to cover both the neutral view of Molinist providence, and the critical view that Molinism is manipulation, I invent the neologisim *herethelic*, (inspired by Riker's term, and similar to it, but more useful to my application), which is a combination of two terms from *hairein* 'to choose' and *thelein* 'to will'. 'Herethelic' action, (or manipulation, if it is proven), is the shared action where God *chooses* what an agent *wills* to do.[27] Here, ostensibly, the agent's will is agent causal and libertarianly free. Herethelic action can be very powerful if the Choosing agent knows the Willing agent's vulnerabilities and weaknesses. If the Chooser

---

[25] Sabl writes that Riker has phrases for coercive kinds of domination "that keeps individuals from voting as they choose: 'crude manipulation' or 'physical control'" (Sabl 2011:241, note 11). I note that very few authors, if any, agree with Riker's suggestion that there is nothing wrong with heresthetic manipulation.

[26] See also my discussion of Craig's *FBI Sting Operation*, § 6.8.

[27] Note, the 'th' in *herethelic* is not indicative of the middle voice, (as in Riker's term), but *theta*—the first Greek letter of the word *thelo*—'I will'.

knows these things they could get the Willer to do *A* by *exploiting* these vulnerabilites. If this transpired, the issue of the victim's freedom reappears in the question of whether or not it is possible, compatible or meaningful to be free but exploited.

(2) Compatibilist Manipulation

The other hypothetical form of manipulation, with respect to the question of freedom, is simply Compatibilist Manipulation, where it is understood that this might still be wide-ranging in scope. My two distinctions here are definitions of manipulation with respect to the agent's freedom and not manipulation with respect to prior control or causation. Nevertheless, Compatibilist Manipulation is likely to be control by a more direct form of determinism than herethelic control/manipulation.

2.5.4 Causative Verbs

I introduce several common causative verb constructions as a way to articulate some of the important differences between Molinism and Calvinism; and between different kinds of controlling or manipulating acts over another's actions. Common causative verbs are: *get, make, let, have*.

(1). Make/Made: *X makes* or *made Y do Z*

(2). Get/Got: *X gets Y to do Z*

(3). Let: *X lets Y do Z*

(4). Have/Had: *X had Y do Z*

The first three verbs have relevance to divine and human action. An example of (4) shows that there is strong relationship of mutual respect and open awareness of motives between X and Y such that X gives Y some kind of power, right or responsibility. For example, *I had my sister drive me to the airport*, meaning, I asked her and she accepted the responsibility, versus *I got my sister to drive me to the airport*, which could imply, I used clandestine, subversive means to get her to do it. Thus, *have/had* may not be as

2-19

useful as the first three in expressing different theories of divine action. The verb *let* implies permission and might be suitable to express willing-permissing in Calvinism or Molinism, if these positions do in fact require divine permission. *Make* and *get* fit well into Calvinist and Molinist action schemas, with a little bit of brutal simplification to make the case:

Calvinism/Determinism: 'God makes *s* do *A'*

Molinism: 'God gets *s* to do *A'* (or, God lets *s* do *A*). A fuller expression should includes circumstances: 'God uses *C* to gets *s* to do *A'*. Even though my use of these causatives is instructional, not argumentative, the use of the causal *get*-constuction is remarkably similar to the herethelic account of control, and looks more like an account of manipulation because of the direct and indirect distinction between *C* and *s*.[28]

2.6 **Two Kinds of Incompatibility**

In the free-will literature, compatibilism as a term usually refers to free-will compatibilism with natural determinism—the view that the antecedent states of the universe plus the laws of nature determine the future. The effort and attention in this research in Molinism is focused on the question whether *divine foreknowledge* is compatible with libertarian—'incompatibilist'—free will. I set out some remarks about terminology, neither affirming nor denying any of the positions yet. Using Mark Linville's abbreviated labels, we have:

(**CF**)[29] *Compatibilism about Foreknowledge* = Human freedom is compatible with divine foreknowledge.

(**CD**) *Compatibilism about Determinism* =   Human freedom is compatible with determinism. (Linville 1993:165-186)

---

[28] Similar uses could be made of 'stit' theory: *X sees to it that Y Z'ds.*

[29] My first use of capitals to abbreviate a concept will be in bold type, but normal type at subsequent uses.

I add the following labels for their contrary positions:

(INCF) *Incompatibilism about Foreknowledge* = Human freedom is <u>not</u> compatible with divine foreknowledge.

(INCD) *Incompatibilism about Determinism* = Human freedom is <u>not</u> compatible with determinism.

Agglomerating these positions by conjunction, we can develop four views:

1. (CD & CF) = Free Will Compatibilism about determinism, and about divine foreknowledge.

2. (CD & INCF) = Free Will Compatibilism about determinism, but incompatibilism about divine foreknowledge.

3. (INCD & INCF) = Free Will Incompatibilism about determinism, and about divine foreknowledge.

4. (INCD & CF) = Free Will Incompatibilism about determinism, but compatibilism with divine foreknowledge.

The basic intuition about these combined pairs is that it is easy to affirm (CD & CF) on the grounds that CF follows from CD. (If determinism is true, and free will is compatible with determinism, then a correctly positioned epistemic agent can foreknow what will happen by prediction via extrapolation from the past, or by causally determining everything.) In opposition, it is harder to assert (INCD & CF), for CF cannot be grounded in CD, since CD is false.

Must one be CD if one is CF? Some foreknowledge incompatibilists argue that CF *must* be grounded on CD. For example,

- Hasker (1989:139,143): The compatibilist on foreknowledge cannot consistently affirm libertarian free will.

- Alston (1985): Plantinga's argument for the compatibility of *Jones being able to do otherwise* with divine foreknowledge is equally applicable to the compatibility of *Jones being able to do otherwise* with causal determinism.

The claim that Hasker and Alston make is that if it is possible to give an argument *for* compatibilism about foreknowledge, then it should be possible to give an argument for compatibilism about determinism. Linville (1993:165) believes they are partly right in that the positions in some CF defences are vulnerable to Hasker and Alston's attack, but he denies there is anything intrinsic to the CF positions that they must suffer the independent attacks from Hasker and Alston. Hence, Linville's position is that it is possible to be a CF while not a CD.[30] It is not the place to divert attention to investigate these claims and counterclaims; suffice to say that I adopt for the sake of argument the Molinist presumption that one may be a compatibilist about foreknowledge and an incompatibilist about natural determinism, yet remain alert as to whether any evidence adduced in this research affirms or denies Hasker or Alston's position.

Under this distinction between two types of compatibility, Molinism proposes (INCD & CF). This conjunction of CF and INCD, some might say, is courageous because of the difficulty in presenting a divine foreknowledge (DF) solution and model of providence that is consistent with both.

2.7 Terminology: 'Incompatibility' as Dilemma, Paradox, Antinomy and Conundrum

On the assumption that free human acts are tokens of contingent events, the above introductory discussion presents the incompatibility argument between divine foreknowledge and human free will. Yet the charge of incompatibilism is value-neutral. To say that A and B are incompatible is just to say that they cannot co-obtain. Perhaps A and B stand for states of affairs that no one would ever worry about; for instance, that it was metaphysically incompatible, and therefore impossible, to put both salt and sugar on chips. Most of us would not care about that incompatibility. With respect to caring that an incompatibility obtains, I propose to discuss attitudes to the alleged

---

[30] Linville's footnote 1 refers to Hasker (1989:96-143) and Alston (1985:19-32).

incompatibility of divine foreknowledge and human freedom, as dilemmas, paradoxes and antinomies and finally, as conundra.

The divine foreknowledge problem **(FP)** is first of all a philosophical problem, where divine foreknowledge (DF) is ostensibly incompatible with human free will (FW).[31] For the sake of this investigation into Molinism, we assume both assertions that God has exhaustive foreknowledge (DF), and that humans have libertarian free will, (FW). Being assertions, DF and FW have truth-values. To obtain is a metaphysical concept; cannot obtain is a modal judgment about a metaphysical claim—it is not possible for both DF and FW to obtain in the same world. Consistency is to compatibility as logic is to metaphysics. $\sim \lozenge$ (DF & FW) is the logic expressed by the foreknowledge problem.[32] If $\sim \lozenge$ (DF & FW), then it is inconsistent to assert both DF and FW. This is to define inconsistency as a set where at least one member is false.

Inconsistency is sometimes confused with contradictoriness. In the classical-logic tradition exemplified in the classical square of opposition, two propositions are inconsistent if contrary. They cannot both be true but they can both be false. FP claims that DF and FW cannot both be true, but there is nothing to suppose that they cannot both be false.[33] The incompatibility problem concerns contrariness more than contradiction. Though I maintain that (DF and FW) is not contradictory in the sense given in the square of opposition, there are a few important senses[34] where contradiction may be relevant for the FP. We may speak of contradictions as,

---

[31] There are, of course, theological solutions to this philosophical problem, and philosophical answers.

[32] I abbreviate it as $\sim \lozenge$(DF & FW) from ($\lozenge$DF v $\lozenge$FW) & $\sim \lozenge$(DF&FW). The abbreviated version is slightly misleading. It says it is impossible for there to be DF and FW; the longer exact version says each are individually possible (which is commonly supposed in the foreknowledge debate), but jointly impossible.

[33] This would be, for instance, if God did not exist and hard determinism was true.

[34] Another sense that I have not listed may be found in the notion of *antonymic inference,* discussed by Neil Tennant, *Negation, Absurdity and Contrariety* in Gabbay and Wansing (1999:199-222). "For any two antonyms…" (he gives examples of various antonym pairs, A and B that entail $\bot$) *"... such antonyms A and B are antonymic not on the basis of their logical form, but on the basis of their primitive non-logical contents. The tension between them – their mutual exclusivity – is a matter of deep metaphysical necessity."* There may be a case for arguing that DF and FW are disguised antonyms because of their metaphysical impossibility. For instance, an action X that has the property of being

- *Speaking against*: The sense that DF and FW entail each other's negation.
- *Superficial Contradiction:* That prima facie $\sim\Diamond$(DF & FW), but after analysis (ultima facie), we assert (DF & FW) with no contradiction. This would be to find a solution to FP and solve the incompatibility.

It is unlikely that FP has this sense. If it were superficial then someone would have resolved it.

Patrick Grimm (2004:49-72) discusses various approaches in the philosophical literature to the idea of contradiction: "semantic, syntactic, pragmatic, and ontological." And there are other 'complications', for we can speak of different kinds of contradiction as,

- *Formal contradictions are* 'explicit contradictions'. A further qualification of contradiction should be articulated, between *explicit* contradictions that*"wear their status… on their sleeves"* (54), and,
- *Implicit contradictions* [which] *"are single statements or pairs which in some way imply, entail, or commit us to explicit contradictions down the line"* (54).

In relation to FP, an *explicit* contradiction would be (DF&~DF) and (FW&~FW). Grimm points out that it is only with explicit contradictions that it is somehow irrational to believe or accept. A person does not fail in their epistemic duty if they believe a contradiction that they are not aware of. If there is an implicit sense of contradiction in the pair [DF, FW] where each member entails the other's negation—this has to be made explicit. Assuming for this moment that we have epistemic duties in religious contexts, it would be hard to succeed in one's epistemic duty while knowing about the FP, unless one invoked a way out by appealing to a different *attitude* towards the FP, such as paradox or mystery.

---

foreknown cannot be a contingent or libertarian free act, and vice versa. The logical notion of contradiction discussed here is then a secondary consequence of this antonymic inference.

2.7.1 FP as Dilemmatic

The FP as dilemmatic is to invoke an epistemic condition from an *agent's perspective*. Hence, incompatible propositions or beliefs become dilemmas *for* a person. Incompatibility arguments to the conclusion that free will does not exist (on the assumption that divine foreknowledge does exist) become dilemmatic arguments to the conclusion that it is rational to believe in only one horn of the dilemma, not both. Inconsistency or compatibility is therefore necessary for something to be a dilemma, but it is not sufficient—not all pairs of inconsistent propositions are dilemmas.[35] DF and FW could be mutually inconsistent, but if I have no desire to believe in both DF and FW, then I will not find myself in a dilemma.[36]

When one *knows that* DF and FW are incompatible, and one has a reason to believe in, or to assent to both DF and FW, then one finds oneself *in a dilemma*. A dilemma is a "situation" (Priest 2002:11). The person knows *de se* that they are in a dilemma. This is an invitation to find their way out of the dilemma, by resolving it. As there is a difference between a superficial contradiction and a formal contradiction, George Mavrodes makes the distinction between a *hard dilemma* which consists "of propositions that are in fact logically incompatible" and a *soft dilemma* where propositions "are only mistakenly believed to be incompatible" (Mavrodes 1970:106). Molinism as a solution to FP claims to resolve it, which would be to declare the problem a soft dilemma.

2.7.2 FP as a Paradox or Antinomy

The tension between God's sovereignty and human agency has been called a paradox or antinomy. This is more likely to be from laypeople invoking mystery about

---

[35] As Graham Priest indicates, *"A dilemma is not a contradiction of the form ϕ and $\sim\phi$. Let us use the operator O, 'It is obligatory that', from standard deontic logic. Then the paradigm dilemma is of the form: $O\phi$ and $O \sim\phi$., where ϕ and $\sim\phi$ is a statement to the effect that something be done. More generally, in a dilemma there are two such statements ϕ, φ, such that $\sim(\phi \& \varphi)$ is necessarily true, yet $O\phi$ and $O \phi$."* (Priest 2002:11).

[36] Of course, a philosophically interested non-theist may choose to resolve the inconsistency that exists *qua* dilemma for the theist and theologian. "For some people are interested in alleged logical incompatibilities even if they do not believe the propositions involved, while others who do believe them may be uninterested in the alleged logical problem" (Mavrodes 1970:100).

divine matters, but there is a history of theologians using these terms in this context. The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines 'antinomy' as "*a contradiction between two beliefs or conclusions that are in themselves reasonable; a paradox.*"[37] The investigation of paradox in its many guises is widespread in philosophy, so I will limit my focus to how the term has been applied to the FP. To say that the FP is a paradox implies that we just have to live with it or even that it is a positive recommendation.[38] Or perhaps we should have a Kierkegaardian attitude that paradoxes are somehow essential to the Christian faith. By contrast, to say something is a dilemma is to invite a diagnosis to resolve it. Dilemmas are bad and unwanted. Paradoxes are strange and interesting. It may be thought that the person of Christ in Chalcedon theology is paradoxical—the union of the two natures, divine and human; we however, do not posit this as a dilemma to resolve. Orthodoxy requires Christ to be divine and human, not divine or human—we do not speak of 'the dilemma of the two natures of Christ.'

There is little recent textual evidence from the literature that professional philosophers refer to the FP as a paradox. But, "some philosophical theists contend that there is no contradiction between freedom and foreknowledge but at worst a paradox or mystery" (Taliaferro 1998:116). 'Philosophical theists' may deem it a paradox, but *theistic philosophers* tend to be more robust in their definitions. One might suppose that those who *continue* to think it is a paradox, do so without any particular need to resolve it. On this account the paradox is insoluble—there is *no solution*, but there is no problem. Philosophers on the other hand, like to resolve problems by finding solutions. For a theologian, there may be more doxastic value in maintaining the paradox than the need to disarm it. Such might be the view of *theologians of paradox* as David Basinger (1993)

---

[37] The antinomy or paradoxist approach is favoured by some evangelical theologians, for instance J.I. Packer (1961:18). Packer defines a theological antinomy as not a real contradiction but an *apparent* contradiction. Hence, from the human perspective, the foreknowledge dilemma *seems* to be paradoxical but isn't from the divine perspective. I conjecture that the position that the dilemma is only an *apparent* contradiction is favoured by evangelicals so that a high view of the authority and logical integrity of Scripture can be maintained. If 'Scripture cannot contradict Scripture' then doctrine cannot contradict doctrine. And on account of this 'Apparentist' approach, it is only apparent that there is a doctrinal contradiction between God's omniscience and human responsibility.

[38] That there is something good, profound or clever about paradox is expressed in the saying, attributed to G.K. Chesterton, that *a paradox is a truth standing on its head to attract attention.*

calls them.[39] For example, James Packer, an evangelical theologian whose views have influenced many lay Protestant Christians, calls a version of the FP a kind of antinomy or paradox. The evangelical New Testament scholar, D.A. Carson follows suit and avoids the difficulties of theodicy and the alleged logical inconsistences of divine sovereignty and human responsibility by claiming that a kind of ignorance or the "divine 'unknown-ness' is known to be such [only] because it has been revealed. Thus it attacks man's arrogance, defines the limits of his knowledge, and makes the only 'solution' one of faith" (Carson 1981:218).

2.7.3 FP as a Conundrum

FP has been called The Foreknowledge Conundrum by Hasker, albeit in a paper's title (2001:97-114). In this sense, FP is viewed as an enigma or a puzzle. Paradoxes and antinomies do not usually require solutions; they are stable. Dilemmas on the other hand require solutions as do conundra and puzzles. What, if anything, is the difference between a dilemma and a conundrum? I suggest that it has to do with the element of surprise. It is not surprising to consider that free will may be logically incompatible with determinism. Though a compatibilist would disagree with the disjunctive premise in a dilemmatic argument that we must choose between free will and determinism, she would still be able to appreciate what the incompatibilist is claiming. With philosophical conundra and riddles, there is surprise. The surprise in FP is why does merely foreknowing a state of affairs make it necessary? Again, even a compatibilist could appreciate the incompatibilist's claim that God's will cannot cause a human will to act freely. Regardless of whether one agrees or disagrees with that claim, there is *prima facie* something surprising when it is claimed that God's intellect and not his will becomes a sufficient condition for a state of affairs to become necessary. This essentially is the

---

[39] Basinger's paper is a response to a paper delivered by V.C. Grounds to The Evangelical Theological Society in 1978. Grounds considers the first problem of "how Jesus Christ could have been simultaneously both God and man" as the same logical type as "the question of how a given event can be the result of free human choice and yet under total divine control at the same time" (Basinger 1987:206).

Foreknowledge Conundrum. Moreover, the puzzle obtains regardless of whether the foreknowledge is divine or is understood *simpliciter*. The Foreknowledge Conundrum is not so much another problem apart from the conclusion of the basic argument that divine foreknowledge and freewill are incompatible, rather, the FC is the phenomenology of finding it surprising that divine foreknowledge should deductively result in creaturely unfreedom.

2.7.4 Summary

The following dictionary of labels will be used in the interests of conciseness.

- 'DF|FW' stands for the alleged incompatibility between divine foreknowledge and human free will. The use of the Scheffer stroke represents the sense of the joint denial of the operands, where each of DF and FW are independently asserted as true but not both-and (NAND).[40]

- 'DF!FW' stands for the paradox of divine foreknowledge and human freedom. I have briefly argued that there is little warrant to claim such a thing, nor any merit, following Basinger, that apparent paradoxes have any final explanatory value.

- 'DFΔFW' stands for the epistemic dilemma which is hence person-relative: a person is in an epistemic dilemma if she is in the situation of knowing that DF|FW, and wants to believe consistent propositions; so DFΔFW = *S believes that* DF|FW & *S wants* DF&FW. S does not want to fail in some kind of religious epistemic or doxastic duty. Molinism may present itself as a solution so that, (M + DFΔFW) $\vdash$ (DF&FW).

- '(DF $\rightarrow_?$ ~FW)' stands for the conundrum that the existence of DF entails a denial of human free will.

---

[40] DF|FW abbreviates and is equivalent to = ($\Diamond$DF v $\Diamond$FW) & ~$\Diamond$(DF & FW)

DF|FW is logically prior to both DFΔFW and (DF →? ~FW); DF!FW is usually understood to be a merely apparent contradiction.

     To summarise my position on terminology, I do not consider the foreknowledge problem to be a paradox or an antinomy. Rather, the essential logical feature is one of incompatibility. This incompatibility becomes a dilemma for those who want both disjuncts to be true. It becomes a puzzle for those who cannot understand why one disjunct should affect the modal status of the other. In this sense, one can be a dilemmacist and an enigmatologist at the same time.

Chapter 3: **The Divine Foreknowledge Dilemma**

> Everyone who believes in God at all believes that He
> knows what you and I are going to do to-morrow. But if He
> knows I am going to do so-and-so, how can I be free to do
> otherwise?[1]

3.1 **Introduction**

In his popular textbook on the philosophy of religion, William Rowe (2001),
introduces a chapter titled "Predestination, Divine Foreknowledge, and Human
Freedom," with the thoughtful and honest account of coming to grips with the mental
conflict[2] of believing in human free will and moral responsibility *and* believing in the
doctrine of predestination, as presented in the Westminster Confession: *"God from all
eternity did … freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass"* (cited in
Rowe 2001:147).

Concerning divine predestination and human freedom and responsibility, Rowe
explains, *"I came to the view, rightly or wrongly, that I not only could not see how both
could be true, I could see that they could not both be true"* (2001:148). But, says Rowe,
if we reject divine predestination, since by it God would 'make something happen,' we
should reject divine foreknowledge on similar grounds. Though foreknowledge can be
true or considered plausible without presupposing divine predestination, one might think
that there is no conflict with foreknowledge and human freedom (2001:150). Rowe does
not say that foreknowledge 'makes something happen' in the same way that divine
predestination does. That would be far too strong a thesis. However, the very conundrum
of the foreknowledge problem is that it does not seem possible that foreknowledge *could*
make something happen, but it is *inevitable* that whatever is foreknown will happen.[3]

---

[1] C. S. Lewis (1977:145).

[2] Having mental conflict over theological issues is consistent with the concept of an epistemic
religious dilemma, see §2.7.1

[3] In a similar vein, Hasker points to Jonathan Edwards' explanation of this phenomenon: "...even if
divine foreknowledge doesn't *make* our actions necessary, it *shows* that they are necessitated…" as a
response to the Origenist intuition that divine foreknowledge doesn't cause human actions, but it is the
action which causes what is known by God (2001:99, original emphasis).

In this chapter, I discuss why divine foreknowledge (DF) and human freedom cannot both be true by first looking at Rowe's method of explanation. He explains the puzzle of divine foreknowledge and human freedom by presenting a fatalist argument from predestination and—with a minor change of a verb—presents a very similar argument that leads to foreknowledge fatalism. My reference to Rowe's explanatory method is relevant to my analysis of Molinism, for this model of providence purports to disqualify *any* kind of fatalism, whether it is a result from the divine will via predestination, or the divine intellect via foreknowledge.[4]

Rowe gives a simple argument that begins with divine foreknowledge but ends with the denial of human freedom:

1. God knows before we are born everything we will do.
2. If God knows before we are born everything we will do, then it is never in our power to do otherwise.
3. If it is never in our power to do otherwise, then there is no human freedom. Therefore,
4. There is no human freedom.[5]

However, if were to replace the word 'knows' in premise (2) above with 'ordains', it 'seems surely true' that,

- "If God *ordains* before we are born everything we will do, then it is never in our power to do otherwise."

---

[4] Molinism presents a model where God foreknows free human actions *because* he puts them in particular situations, which effectively means he *predestines* them. This is not so much a theological version of predestination to salvation, but the present sense could imply it. This link between God$_M$'s foreknowledge and predestination is significant, but overlooked in the literature. I discuss predestination in §0

[5] In a previous section Rowe gives his preferred account of human freedom as *the power to do otherwise* (2001:149-150), over a compatibilist version of *choosing what you want* (148).This libertarian account is generally accepted as true, and is assumed in the rest of Rowe's fatalist argumentation.

And 'it does not seem to be true that'

- "If God *knows* before we are born everything we will do, then it is never in our power to do otherwise" (Rowe 2001:150).

Hence, Rowe concludes there is no benefit in abandoning divine predestination for divine foreknowledge. Each acts as a sufficient condition that guarantees that it is never in our power to do otherwise. Yet *to foreknow* and *to foreordain* are such disparate concepts.

Augustine was the first Christian thinker to articulate the issue at hand. In *De Libero Arbitrio*, Augustine asks the question via the words of the interlocutor, Evodius. Here is Alvin Plantinga's rendition of Evodius' argument against human freedom, by way of a hypothetical syllogism:

(1) If God knows in advance that S will do A, then it must be the case that S will do A.
(2) If it must be the case that S will do A, then it is not within the power of S to refrain from doing A.
(3) If it is not within the power of S to refrain from doing A, then S is not free with respect to A.

Hence,

(4) If God knows in advance that S will do A, then S is not free with respect to A. (Plantinga 1986:236)

3.2 **Worrying about the Divine Foreknowledge Problem: An Intellectual Amusement?**

Augustine speaks of the conflict between God's foreknowledge and human free will as *tormenting*.[6]

---

[6] Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will,* Book 3, Section II:16. He informs the reader that asking whether God's foreknowledge is inconsistent with man's freedom is to ask the question in the wrong way, with the incorrect motive of finding a reason to excuse their sins, "instead of confessing them."

From the two assumptions that God is omniscient and that humans are free, it is intriguing that so much effort has been expended in the attempt to show that they are compatible.[7] Linda Zagzebski (1991:109) writes that there has not been much success:

> The divine foreknowledge dilemma is so disturbing, it has motivated a significant amount of philosophical work on the relation between God and human beings since at least the fifth century. A really good solution should lay to rest the gripping worries that have motivated all this work. Sadly, none of the solutions I have proposed…really do that, and I have never heard of one that does.

This quote from Zagzebski has become a popular citation.[8] I suspect this is because it is such an honest confession from a leading figure in the debate.[9] William Hasker gives

---

Augustine's emphasis is more theodical and concerned with absolving God of being responsible for our sin than with making our freedom consistent with divine foreknowledge.

[7] For a broad overview of the twentieth century debates over foreknowledge, future contingents and freedom, see William Lane Craig's preface (1988:xii). Craig traces the debate from Lukasiewicz's three-valued logic applied to future contingents through to A.N. Prior, Charles Hartshorne, and G.E.M. Anscombe's new interpretation of Aristotle's *De Interpretatione 9*. In 1965, Nelson Pike published his influential paper with insights borrowed from Richard Taylor's fatalism. The debate continued as Craig briefly outlines, via Michael Dummett on backwards causation through to Robert Nozick's work on Newcomb's Paradox in 1969.

John Martin Fischer's edited volume (1989) was published about 24 years after Pike's important article, *Divine Omniscience and Voluntary Action*. The collection contains this article of Pike's and the numerous responses that have been published in journals, along with a very comprehensive introduction to God and Freedom debates by Fischer. In this volume, the only mention of Molina (apart from Fischer's introduction), is Pike's original essay where he briefly discusses Molina's view on the direction of causation between an object known, *towards* God's knowledge. In Fischer (1989:68), Pike quotes from Molina's *Concordia* (John Mourant translation, 1954:426) "…on the contrary, it was because such things would happen through the freedom of the will that He foreknew it; and that He would foreknow the opposite if the opposite was to happen." Although Molina's actual doctrine of Middle Knowledge is not discussed by Pike, (nor, as I said, anywhere else except for Fischer's introduction), he does find this position of Molina 'incoherent' (Fischer 1989:68). To summarise Pike here: If God knew and believed that Jones would do X at a particular time, t, then Jones was not able to do other than X at t, and thus not freely.

Further publications that have summarised and evaluated solutions to the foreknowledge debate instituted by Pike's paper are John Martin Fischer (1992:91-109), Nelson Pike (1993:129-164), and William Hasker (2001:97-114). These latter two discuss Molinism and middle knowledge.

Both editions of *The Oxford Handbook of Free Will* contain synopses about the foreknowledge dilemma. The first edition contains an entry by Linda Zagzebski (Kane 2005:45-62); the second edition by William Hasker (Kane 2011:39-54). Zagzebski also briefly discusses Molinism in her recent summary of the foreknowledge problem; see the entry "Foreknowledge and Free Will" in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2011 Edition).

[8] For example, Deane-Peter Baker (2005:60-71) and Hasker (2001:98).

two possible conclusions as to the meaning of the "abundance of replies" that the problem has generated. It could be that the argument is "flawed many times over"; alternatively, the multiple replies could be evidence that the problem is "resistant to solution" (2001: 98). As Hasker alludes, the voluminous attempts to resolve the dilemma corroborate, but do not prove the thesis that the problem is unresolvable.[10]

3.2.1 Deane-Peter Baker's So What?

Towards the opposite end of the spectrum—away from the analysis of the foreknowledge problem *per se*—Deane-Peter Baker considers Zagzebski's lament over the dilemma's insolubility as trivial and he asks us to take a step back from the dilemma to consider "what it is that is 'so disturbing' about it?" (Baker 2005:60-61). Baker's strategy is borrowed from Daniel Dennett (1984a, 1984b). After quoting in full Hasker's incompatibility argument to the conclusion that *Cuthbert does not purchase an iguana freely at* t_3,[11] Baker (2005:63) sides with Dennett and applies a Frankfurtian counter-example to the problem of divine foreknowledge, as Dennett applied to the standard free will and causal determinism problem. Hence, supposedly, since a common intuition about Frankfurt's thought-experiments is that Jones still pulled the trigger freely but was not able to do otherwise, we should not be troubled thereby if God foreknows what we do when we are unable to do otherwise.

---

[9] See also Zagzebski's other works on this subject (1985, 1991, 1999, 2002).

[10] Recently, in some sectors of Christendom, controversies have arisen over theism and free will among advocates of different doctrinal positions. In the *Divine Foreknowledge* volume of the popular 'Four Views' series of books, the editors claim that:

> The debate over the foreknowledge of God has come to be one of the most controversial theological issues disputed among evangelicals. Indeed, some claim it is the most heated controversy to hit evangelicalism since the inerrancy debate of the 1970s. One distinctive aspect of this contemporary debate is that it is taking place not only in elite theological circles, but also in churches, on campuses, at denominational conferences and in popular Christian magazines. (Beilby and Eddy, 2001:9)

[11] I note that even though Baker quotes Hasker's lengthy and complex deductive argument, he does not analyse or evaluate it, but merely uses Dennett's Frankfurtian precedent, almost like a legal precedent, as a permission to apply Frankfurt's examples to the question of divine foreknowledge and human freedom.

Baker quickly assumes a compatibilist conception of free will that is inspired by Frankfurt and then Dennett, which resolves the dilemma if compatibilism were true.[12] Baker then dismisses the *logical* problem of the dilemma as again something not worth worrying about, but which gives way to the alleged *existential* problem that might be worth worrying about. He attempts to effect this transformation by exaggerating Zagzebski's 'gripping worries' to those of existential anxiety rather than a problem of the rationality of belief.[13] Really, thinks Baker, it is not that we have no freedom that troubles us, but that we would feel *vulnerable*, "[but], to repeat, a sense of vulnerability in the face of the existence of an all-powerful, all-knowing creator God is entirely appropriate…and possibly…valuable" (2005:64). This smells like a red herring to lead us away from the worry about whether there is free will, because of the way the world is, to our feelings of vulnerability lest we have lost our freedom, if indeed, we have these feelings. Whatever the case, no argument has been given to defend or critique the dilemma apart from citing Dennett and Frankfurt. Zagzebski's 'gripping worries,' which I understand to be partly over the logical inconsistency of the traditional theistic conceptions of freedom and foreknowledge, become via reinterpretation, the anxious state of having realised we have lost our freedom.[14] This is to understand a different sense of freedom which may or may not be relevant to the metaphysics of free will. Baker, I say, commits an *ignoratio elenchi*. As he has not provided a case against

---

[12] If compatibilism with causal determinism is true, then the compatibilism with divine foreknowledge problem is likely to be resolved, or at least greatly ameliorated as a problem.

[13] Here are more clues to this exaggeration of 'gripping worries' by his…

a. Asking what is *so disturbing* and *so worrying* about the dilemma (60-61);
b. Speculating that the *anxiety* is not about giving God control but denying God control over our lives (62);
c. Wondering what is so *alarming* about the thought that God might foreknow everything about our lives (63);
d. Considering if Dennett's arguments can allay our *fears* about determinism, or whether not having the ability to do otherwise is something that really *bothers* us (63);
e. Deploying Dennett's Frankfurt argument to the *'threat'* of Divine Foreknowledge (63), I note that here, *threat* is in 'sneer' quotes, and this is the only occasion of the term in Baker's article and is not itself a quote from another source;
f. Finally, 'troubling' occurs three times; and "*contra* Zagzebski…we are not *really* reduced to sweaty palpitations" (64).

[14] Perhaps Baker replaces the analytic problem with the phenomenological.

libertarianism, the doctrine of alternative possibilities *could be true*, as could our still feeling vulnerable in the face of God's infallible foreknowledge.

Baker's strategy is *reductio*-like, except instead of inferring a falsehood from a supposed truth, we are meant to infer that even if it were true that there is a foreknowledge dilemma, it is not worth wasting time on; or better, it's not an 'absurd *qua contradictory*' proposition that is concluded by the *reductio*, but the absurdity of a philosopher spending her time thinking about it.[15] Baker concludes his article:

> So it seems, contra Zagzebski, that we are not really reduced to sweaty palpitations by the dilemma of divine foreknowledge, and that if the dilemma actually does, in some deep metaphysical way, deny us free will, then it is a sort of free will that we don't care much about, whatever it is. So, somewhat ironically, as we conclude our investigation we do in fact find ourselves siding with Dennett – at least in relegating the foreknowledge conundrum to the box labeled 'intellectual amusements', filled with interesting puzzles that, for all their perplexities, have little bearing on real life. (2005: 64-65)

My critique of Baker's article ends somewhat favorably in support of my thesis in two ways: first, by his alluding to Dennett's famous statement as to whether particular kinds of freedom are freedoms worth wanting, and second, whether the kinds of 'reactive attitudes'[16] that Baker suggests we have about God's foreknowledge are really significant. I propose that these concerns are applicable to the Molinist theory of providence, viz., is the kind or quality of free will that Molinism is theoretically able to deliver a kind that is worth wanting; and would we be worried, bothered, threatened, or fearful if God under the Molinist conception of providence manipulated our freedom? I aim to turn Baker's attribution of 'intellectual amusement' on its head. For we get to

---

[15] Understood this way, Baker's dismissal of the foreknowledge problem is more like a *reductio ad ridiculum* —the position that it is ridiculous to worry about the dilemma, (not a fallacy of showing ridicule or mockery). My take on this *ad ridiculum* is as follows: for all we know something might be true, but to think about it not worth the trouble, is time-wasting and does not get to the real important existential issues. Therefore, it is ridiculous to spend time thinking about it, (even though it could be true).

[16] To borrow P.F. Strawson's term from his paper "Freedom and Resentment" (1961).

choose the kind or the model of God we worship, and if it turns out Molinism cannot deliver a view of God that is free from disturbing implications over his providential control then we may choose another. I say this, agreeing with Howard Sobel and his quotation from Peterson et al (1991), that

> Whatever else [would] be true of God, it must at least be said that God [would be] a worthy object of worship. (Sobel 2004:17)

This sort of stuff has a bearing on real life. The relation of God's nature to our freedom is not just a puzzle.

3.3 **Nelson Pike and John Martin Fischer's Contribution to the Foreknowledge Problem.**

I return to Plantinga's hypothetical-syllogism interpretation of Augustine's argument expressed through the words of Evodius. Plantinga points out, with an allusion to Aquinas, the common understanding that a modal fallacy is committed if we fail to distinguish between the necessity of the consequence and the necessity of the consequent (1986:260).[18] It does not follow from $\Box(P \supset Q)$ that $(P \supset \Box Q)$, but Evodius' foreknowledge dilemma argument requires the necessity of the consequent $(P \supset \Box Q)$, which is false or at least there seems to be "not the slightest reason to endorse it." On the other hand, $\Box(P \supset Q)$ according to Aquinas (writes Plantinga), is clearly true but not applicable to Evodius' argument. Therefore, the first premise can be rejected as fallacious. If God knows in advance that S will do A, then it must be the case that S will do A. There is no modal notion of must or necessity that S will do A.[19]

---

[17] Sobel discusses this in his section, the "Core Attitudinal Conception of God" (2004:9-12). The *common conception* and the *philosopher's conception,* he thinks, do not differ that much, if at all. It consists of "a proper object of religious attitudes, par excellence" including *worshipfulness*.

[18] Plantinga writes, "Thomas Aquinas, however, saw the argument for the snare and delusion that it is," and cites a section from *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book I, chapter 67, 10 (1986:260, and note 2).

[19] The fallacy is also pointed out by Zagzebski (1991:9). A.N. Prior (1962:114-129) discussed a similar point. Here Prior mentions what he sees to be the most persuasive argument from Aquinas, argument number 7 out of 12 from *De Veritate*, Question 2, Article 12. Prior qualifies the alleged modal *non-sequitur* by adding the extra information that Q would necessarily follow from P, *and* would itself

Fallacious or dubious forms of the foreknowledge dilemma have given way to much more robust versions that gain their strength through concepts such as,

- God's essential omniscience: Nelson Pike argued in 'Divine Omniscience and Voluntary Action' (1965), that if God exists, he has omniscience as an essential property. From this premise, Pike argues to the conclusion that God's essential omniscience is incompatible with human freedom. This is a stronger claim than arguing that *simpliciter* forms of divine foreknowledge are incompatible with human freedom.[20] Indeed, Pike maintains that God's existence is incompatible with our voluntary action.[21]

And,

- The 'fixity of the past' (Fischer 1989:6).

---

be necessary and not contingent as a consequent, *if P were also necessary 'in itself'*, which in this case, it isn't (118). Prior's paper is another important contribution to mid to late 20th century analytic philosophy of religion on questions of God's omniscience, antedating Pike's 1965 work by a few years.

[20] Plantinga (1986:260-264) presents Jonathan Edwards' argument for theological determinism and introduces Pike's argument as a variant of Edwards' "from the stability of the past" (264).

[21] Pike: "I have argued that if God exists, it is not within one's power to do other than he does. I have inferred from this that if God exists, no human action is voluntary" (Fischer 1965:72). Of course, from this hypothetical, the contrapositive could be asserted: *If human actions are voluntary, God does not exist.* The bigger picture for Pike's incompatibilism is between the existence of God and human freedom. Hence, Plantinga (1974:66) calls this argument, *"perhaps only mildly atheological"* in his catalogue of atheological arguments. This is an interesting classification even given its tentativeness of 'mildly'. The argument from omniscience is an argument *for* theological fatalism, viz., God exists but human freedom doesn't. It would not trouble theological fatalists. It would only be atheological via disjunction-denial if human freedom was affirmed along with the incompatibilist premise, resulting in a denial of God's existence. Hence, a premise with an exclusive or opposite conclusion *could* be inferred by alternate denial depending if God's existence is true, or human free will is true, assuming their incompatibility. In Chapter 2, I distinguished between arguments for *incompatibilism* and *dilemmatic arguments* when speaking and arguing about the foreknowledge free-will tension. They are not the same thing. The dilemmatic argument presupposes the incompatibilist premise as an exclusive disjunction, but one can be an incompatibilist about *X* and *Y* without *being in a dilemma* about what to believe, if one did not particularly care about what to believe.

Pike's 1965 article had a huge influence in reviving the foreknowledge/free will debate in 20th century philosophy: if God has omniscience essentially, God cannot fail to be omniscient, which thereby entails God's infallibility.[22]

The language of 'essential omniscience' and 'infallibility' involves a turn from discussing the foreknowledge dilemma purely in terms of God's knowledge towards discussion of God's beliefs on the assumption that divine knowing entails divine believing. Foreknowledge implies God's 'forebelief'. This connection, Pike sees, is an analytic connection between knowing and believing-truly, a connection which would be hard to resist.[23] This is a major shift in the foreknowledge debate, for it means that God's infallible beliefs can be spoken about in such a way that they are temporally indexed. Thus, formulations of the foreknowledge dilemma or incompatibility arguments since Pike's 1965 article mostly present God's essential omniscience in terms of his beliefs. This has had the effect of presenting a new kind of foreknowledge dilemma without the obvious modal fallacy of affirming the necessity of the consequent.

The 'fixity of the past' is Fischer's contribution to the modern versions of the foreknowledge dilemma since Pike. In his introduction, Fischer (1989) presents three versions of what he calls 'The Basic Argument' for foreknowledge incompatibilism, but they all rely on the fixity of the past.[24] If the concept of a hard-fact[25] is viable, no person can act in such a way as to falsify a hard-fact about the past, that is, so that it would not

---

[22] Edward Wierenga's "Omniscience" entry in the *SEP* puts it well, "a being who could not possibly fail to be omniscient could not possibly be mistaken—but the reverse does not hold, for a being who could not possibly believe a falsehood might nevertheless fail to believe all truths" (Wierenga 2012).

[23] Pike mentions but does not attempt to refute the view that God's knowledge is different from human knowledge and so, the analytic equivalence of *knowing* with *believing truly* does not apply to God (Fischer 1989:72).

[24] Fischer defines the 'fixity of the past' principle as (FP): For any action *Y*, agent *S*, and time *t*, if it is true that if *S* were to do *Y* at *t*, some fact about the past relative to *t* would not have been a fact, then *S* cannot at *t* do *Y* at *t* (Fischer 1965:2).

[25] Pike introduced the hard/soft fact distinction in his paper "Of God and Freedom: A Rejoinder" (1996) in response to John Turk Saunders. (See Pike 1993:132 note 3.)

have been a fact. If God's belief at t_1 is a hard-fact about t_1, then S cannot act at t_2 in any way that would make God's belief at t_1 false.[26]

Pike's introduction of essential omniscience and Fischer's fixity of the past are examples of philosophical analyses and application that demonstrate the contemporary transformation of the problem of foreknowledge and the free-will problem from the fallacious version of Augustine's foreknowledge dilemma to those that are much more complex and resilient to criticism. It is generally accepted that various foreknowledge and free-will incompatibilist arguments are deductively valid and so the onus is on the foreknowledge compatibilist to demonstrate that a premise is false, or at least rejected on some grounds, if one wanted to question the soundness of the argument.[27]

3.4 **The Divine/Simpliciter Foreknowledge Dilemma Distinction.**

> AUGUSTINE: *Why do you think that our free choice is inconsistent with God's foreknowledge? Because it's foreknowledge, or because it's God's foreknowledge?*
> EVODIUS: *Because it's God's foreknowledge*
>
> (Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*)

---

[26] The relevant Pike passage is, "Last Saturday afternoon, Jones mowed his lawn. Assuming that God exists and is (essentially) omniscient in the sense out-lined above, it follows that (let us say) eighty years prior to last Saturday afternoon, God knew (and thus believed) that Jones would mow his lawn at that time. But from this it follows, I think, that at the time of action (last Saturday afternoon) Jones was not *able* - that is, it was not *within Jones's power* - to refrain from mowing his lawn" (Fischer 1965:61).

[27] An example of this is Zagzebski's *SEP* entry on "Free Will and Foreknowledge" (Fall 2011). In this entry she presents a nine step *Basic Argument for Theological Fatalism.* She writes, *"This argument is formulated in a way that makes its logical form as perspicuous as possible, and there is a consensus that this argument or something close to it is valid. That is, if the premises are all true, the conclusion follows."* She continues, "Each various counter-position to this argument for theological fatalism rejects one or more premises. For example, the Ockhamist would reject any premise that presumed the necessity of the past, while a follower of the Boethian/Aquinas eternalist position would reject any premise that presumes that God is in time; while a Frankfurtian-compatibilist would reject any assumption that requires an alternative possibility account of human freedom. It is noteworthy however, and I discuss this elsewhere, that Molinism itself does not reject any particular premise in the basic argument for theological fatalism."
Zagzebski refers to Thomas Flint's 1998 work, *Divine Providence: The Molinist Account*, and mentions that though he rejects some steps of the argument for theological fatalism, middle knowledge and the Molinist account of providence is "neither necessary nor sufficient to avoid theological fatalism by itself."

The question why exactly there is a problem to do with foreknowledge invites a discussion on the divine foreknowledge and foreknowledge *simpliciter* distinction, (DF/FS).

Zagzebski (1991) understands foreknowledge *simpliciter* as that which belongs to a *human* 'foreknower'. This does not mean that it is necessarily *non-divine foreknowledg*e. Humans do not have infallible beliefs about individual future events, so this is a slight misapplication. She gives the example of a human person having a belief about the future but it turns out to be wrong (1991:10). Nor is it any longer '*simpliciter*' as we have put a qualification on the term, so it is no longer simple or absolute. Nevertheless, it is instructive to consider various kinds of foreknowledge *simpliciter* **(FS).**

FS can be further qualified as that of a hypothetically infallible but non-divine being—*Hypothetical-Infallible Foreknowledge Simpliciter* **(HIFS)**. The classical theist generally grants that God has foreknowledge because he is omniscient, but a being with HIFS need not also be omniscient. It is conceivable at least, that a being can have restricted foreknowledge without knowing every true proposition.[28]

Eliminating *fallible human foreknowledge* from our inquiry (since it is not 'foreknowledge' as justified *true belief*), we are left with a question whether there is an essential difference in problematic between (1), the infallible foreknowledge of an idealized person (HIFS), a type of person which I take is at least conceivable and logically possible; and (2), divine foreknowledge (DF) which presents a richer but more complex conception.[29] In regard to various fatalist arguments, do arguments that start with premises that involve a subject with either HIFS or DF all conclude with the assertion of fatalism because of foreknowledge *simpliciter*? If so, there would be

---

[28] Consider here if time travel were possible and my older self from a future time came to visit me today. He warns me not to do research on free will as I will go mad. Supposing that my future self's memory was accurate and intact, my memory 'of the future' would qualify as infallible foreknowledge. (I would like to thank Peter Forrest for reminding me of this kind of time-travel scenario in respect to non-divine foreknowledge. Email correspondence June 12, 2013)

[29] Foreknowledge *simpliciter* should be distinguished from *simple foreknowledge,* which is the view that God has foreknowledge of all actual free choices, even the ones not yet made, but not choices that *might* have been made as the doctrine of middle knowledge teaches. See footnote 2, Chapter 1.

sufficient parity between fatalism arising from HIFS and from DF to eliminate the need to distinguish between them.

An affirmative answer that there is sufficient parity between HIFS and DF, where each conclude with a claim of fatalism, invokes the 'Reducibility Thesis', that alleged arguments for theological foreknowledge fatalism are reducible to logical fatalism. For if HIFS = DF, then they are substantively identical as incompatibility arguments, or at least sufficiently comparable, because each is reducible to the problem of logical fatalism. To be precise, there are actually two different assertions here, the question whether theological fatalism (i.e., foreknowledge fatalism) and fatalism arising from HIFS are substantively 'the same', and whether theological fatalism is reducible to logical fatalism. If for the sake of supposition, theological fatalism and HIFS-fatalism are the same or comparable, then I take it that we may infer that HIFS is also reductively analysable in terms of logical fatalism.

Examples of philosophers who affirm a reductive analysis from theological to logical fatalism are Susan Haack[30] and William Lane Craig. It is to be noted that even if the reducibility thesis is correct, it does not follow that arguments to defend logical fatalism are successful: The reducibility thesis is correct just when theological fatalism is logically equivalent to logical fatalism, while the logical fatalism thesis is itself false.[31] Nelson Pike discusses Haack and Craig, and according to him, Craig merely defers to Haack's argument and does not present his own defense of the reducibility thesis. This is true at least in Craig (2000:67-68). Pike gives a counterfactual objection to Haack's argument for logical fatalism (1993:141-149). Though the debate about the reducibility thesis is significant for the general problem of theological fatalism, this divergence would

---

[30] Haack criticized Pike's rendering of the problem as "a needlessly (and confusingly) elaborated version" of Aristotle's argument for logical fatalism based on the notion of prior truth (cited in Pike 1993:136). The theological import of Pike's argument, according to Haack, was superfluous and could be done away with, since "(t)he foreknowledge argument is centered on the concept of foreknowledge simpliciter and in no way depends on the claim that the foreknowledge involved is, specifically, *God's*" (Haack, cited in Pike 1993:137).

[31] But that would also mean that DF arguments are false, and if one already knew this, one would not be motivated to argue *for* the reducibility thesis. Two invalid arguments might ultimately have the same invalid form upon closer inspection and be logically equivalent.

take us further from this thesis' purpose, so I shall not spend any more time arbitrating between Pike versus Haack and Craig.[32] However, I shall now argue for the non-equivalence of HIFS with DF by examining another related distinction. I do this as a kind of 'principle of charity' towards the Molinist conception of providence by claiming on its behalf that a theological problem of divine foreknowledge is in no way the same as a problem of a hypothetical infallible foreknower (HIFS), which it seems, is the target of Pike's essential omniscience premise in his basic argument for theological fatalism.

David P. Hunt (1998) discusses the *simpliciter*/divine distinction under the guises of the *metaphysical problem* and the *theological problem*. His definition is as follows:

- Metaphysical Problem **(MP)**—the mere fact that an action is foreknown, even infallibly so, should have no effect on its status with respect to libertarian free agency (1998:21).

    I claim that this tracks HIFS.

- Theological Problem **(TP)**—the theistic God and instances of libertarian free will and instances of libertarian free agency both exist. (1998:20)

    I claim that this tracks divine foreknowledge DF.

Hunt argues that we should focus on the metaphysical problem since:

1) To deny, for example, God's exhaustive foreknowledge of future contingents still leaves the quandary of the metaphysical articulation of the problem. That is, even if it is admitted that a divine being cannot know future contingents for say either epistemic agent-centered reasons, or because of an open view of time, that still leaves the metaphysical problem. Open theists and other forms of neo-theism

---

[32] More recently, David Kyle Johnson also argues (and emphatically) for the reducibility thesis, "the incompatibility expressed in logical incompatibilism is responsible for the incompatibility expressed in theological incompatibilism. The majority view—that theological fatalism is the more severe problem—is mistaken" (2009:445).

will need to answer the MP problem even if they deny that any being could foreknow future contingents.

2) MP has family resemblances to other problems that have no essential 'theological component', like Newcomb's paradox and the paradoxes of time travel. He shares this view with W.L. Craig that MP is of the same type of argument as Zeno's paradoxes that are examples of "'ingenious' arguments with unacceptable conclusions" (Hunt, 1998:27).

Hence, according to Hunt, if the theological problem was solved or proven irresolvable, or shown to be dissolved, that still leaves open the metaphysical problem. This is a kind of *pragmatic* argument against the reducibility thesis, or at least the identification of HIFS with DF (and in comparison, MP with TP). It is a pragmatic argument since it would get us nowhere if we did resolve or 'dissolve' the theological problem of incompatibility.[33] Here, 'dissolve' is a way of saying that a *prima facie* problem has been reinterpreted so that it is now understood never to have been a substantive problem apart from misunderstanding or misconception.

I would now like to ask, where in Pike's parlance about the theological fatalist argument from essential omniscience, could Hunt's distinction between the metaphysical and theological versions of the problem be placed? The essential-attribute characterization of God that Pike invoked understands 'God' as a proper name of a person and not a title (Pike 1965). As a proper name, it has a *denotatum* picked out by the term 'God', and this *denotatum* has other attributes essentially as well. So, since "it is part of the 'essence' of God to be omniscient" then "any person who is not omniscient could not be the person we usually mean to be referring to when using the name 'God'" (Pike 1965:28).

---

[33] Nevertheless, I do find it perplexing that Hunt assimilates the metaphysical problem of foreknowledge with other allegedly analogous paradoxes and then deems that they *must be wrong somewhere* because their conclusions are unacceptable. As a logical argument from analogy, it could bounce back and render MP to be itself irresolvable like these other paradoxes.

So is Pike's basic argument metaphysical or theological? It is difficult to say either way; it is really a bit of both. For, on one hand it looks like a straight forward *simpliciter* or metaphysical problem, yet on the other, Pike needs the theological assertion that God is essentially omniscient. Without it, the analytic equivalence of omniscience to temporally indexed infallible beliefs would not succeed. To resist making this assertion would be to say that God's essential omniscience could be argued for philosophically through natural theology, but I don't think that is so straightforward. The metaphysical/*simpliciter* problem *is* the difficulty of any infallible fore-knower.

My previous point above—to argue charitably in favor of Molinism against Pike's basic argument—goes like this: Pike's fatalist argument is not metaphysical but theological,[34] and since theological, it cannot define itself in such a way as to exclude other attempts at a theological solution. But it does construct itself to exclude Molinism at least, and this is attested to by Zagzebski's claim that middle knowledge does not address any premise in the basic argument, and that middle knowledge is neither necessary nor sufficient to reject the basic argument (Zagzebski *SEP,* Fall 2011).

This promotes the view that we *should* view the problem of divine foreknowledge as a theological problem in disagreement with Hunt. Now this might sound like a trivial claim that divine foreknowledge problems are theological problems, but it is not. Why? Simply on the grounds that if basic foreknowledge *simpliciter* arguments are generally modally fallacious, and if the robustness of a fatalist argument from foreknowledge can only be attained by including a theological premise of essential omniscience, then the kinds of foreknowledge arguments worth worrying about are theological—those that involve God's 'omni' attributes which thus incorporate the divine will.

3.5 **Divine Will and Power as Part of the Solution to DF|FW**

We should be allowed to include God's other attributes such as omnipotence. Since it is part of the essence of God to be omnipotent, then any person who is not

---

[34] Here the theological problem is that presented by Hunt as quoted previously—that *the theistic God exists and there are instances of libertarian free will.* A theological solution to such a problem must itself be found in a consistent theological understanding of God represented by the same version of theism under question.

omnipotent could not be the person picked out by the name 'God'. The two divine attributes of omniscience and omnipotence have independently formed well-known problems *vis-a-vis* human freedom. In theory however, they may dependently form a new problem or even dependently offer a new solution.

This sentiment is expressed by others such as:

- Zagzebski (1991:12). My paraphrase with quote:

  > The divine foreknowledge problem is harder than the problem of an infallible non-divine passive knower. His relationship to contingent things is unlike the relationship between human knowers since God wills or permits contingent events to obtain and does not merely 'foreknow' them. Any proposition of the form God wills that *p* is equivalent to the proposition *p*. The divine will "creates special problems for a solution to the problem of divine foreknowledge… In fact, many Christian philosophers have thought that God knows the future precisely by knowing his will." (35)

- Freddoso (1988:2). My paraphrase with quote:

  > Belief in divine foreknowledge is not "in itself a foundation tenet of classical Theism." Rather, it derives its "lofty theological status from its intimate connection" with God's providence. And the doctrine of providence contains causal implications that almost guarantees that no solution to simple precognition can also satisfy a solution to divine precognition.

  And,

  > Each effect in the created order is either "knowingly *intended* by Him (*providentia appropationis*)," or "knowingly *permitted* by Him… (*providentia*

---

35 In addition, Zagzebski views Arthur Prior, specifically Prior (1962), as failing "to appreciate the need for a theological premise in the statement of the divine foreknowledge dilemma"; and similarly, sees William Lane Craig (2000) as committing this error by not distinguishing "between the problem of future truth and foreknowledge" (discussed above). By contrast, she regards Nelson Pike (1965) as correctly stating the need for a theological premise, though it could be made clearer that Pike's 'theological premise' is the full development of God's omniscience as essential, and not by way of alluding to God's providence, power or will. I find it slightly ironical that Pike is deemed correct in including a theological premise.

concessionis)....So divine providence has both a cognitive
and volitional aspect....Unless we keep the close bond
between providence and foreknowledge vividly in mind,
we are likely to be tempted by solutions to the problem of
divine precognition which are compatible with the doctrine
of divine providence." (1988:3, original emphasis)

To summarise my discussion so far, I have distinguished between simple and theological versions of the foreknowledge problem. I have mentioned some philosophers who think that a solution to the foreknowledge dilemma should involve God's will or power. Pike's argument about God's *essential* omniscience suggests that we should include God's other attributes in a solution. This inclusion of the divine will leads me to discuss Freddoso.

3.6 **Freddoso's 'Two Questions' about Foreknowledge**

There are various questions that can be raised about the relation between God's omniscience and human freedom. Following Molina's lead, Alfred Freddoso separates two issues by asking two different questions:[36]

- The *source-question* (**SQ**): How is it that God knows future contingents with certainty, that is, what is the source of and explanation for the fact that God knows future contingents with certainty?

- The *reconciliation-question* (**RQ**): How is this divine foreknowledge to be reconciled with the contingency of what is known through it? (1988:1)

The SQ is an epistemological question while the RQ is metaphysical, but in particular, the SQ is a '*how*-epistemological' question while the RQ presumes a '*what*-

---

[36] Freddoso refers to Part IV of Molina's *Concordia* (1988:1). Regarding the term source in this context, Molina actually distinguishes *three* questions in Part V of the *Concordia,* Disputation 47, sec.1: "In order that we might return to the explication of St.Thomas and to the issues that pertain to this article, we must now, *first of all, investigate the source of contingency,* so that the contingency of future things might thereby be fully and more clearly established. *What's more, we will explain the way in which God knows future contingents*, and, finally, *we will reconcile divine foreknowledge with our freedom of choice and with the contingency of things*" (Freddoso 1988:85, my emphasis). Here, source for Molina means the source or origin of contingency. In Freddoso's first question, it is the source of God's knowledge.

metaphysical' problem of the alleged incompatibility between the *whats* of foreknowledge and contingency. That is, it is trying to point to an answer to a problem, and not so much asking a question. Therefore, the RQ is motivated negatively, or *away-from* to avoid incompatibility, while the SQ is motivated positively or *towards* to explain how God knows these future contingents.

Freddoso adds that, contrary to our intuitions, "the problem posed by the reconciliation-question cannot be fully comprehended until we grasp clearly the criteria for an adequate answer to the source-question" (1988:2). He is *not* saying that SQ must be answered before RQ. This would be an exaggeration of his position, but he is claiming that the source question has a logical priority over the reconciliation question: we need to understand the *criteria* that an answer to the source-question satisfies, and not necessarily *answer* the source question first. Furthermore, he considers it "misguided" just to concentrate on the reconciliation-question and says that the contemporary discussion is too "detached from the theological context within which perplexities about foreknowledge and contingency have traditionally arisen" (1988:2).[37] If this detachment from theology is true, it is consistent with the view that there should be another divine premise somewhere in the basic argument for fatalism, as Zagzebski mentions and as Pike relies upon in his essential-attribute premise.

The general intuition that Freddoso is pointing to is that each of these questions are at least related and likely to be intertwined, but I do not understand him without *begging the question* at the point where he says that we need to comprehend the criteria of an acceptable SQ solution before applying it to the RQ. To speak of 'source' in relation to either divine or human knowledge is to speak of the causal origin of knowledge, of a

---

[37] This notion of misguided 'detachment' is alluded to by the theologian and open theist, John Sanders, where he discusses what he sees as the unhealthy divide between theology and philosophical theology. He thinks that philosophical theologians must pay more attention to the Bible and the evidence of God working in history if they are to better understand providence. Sanders dislikes natural theology as it ignores divine revelation (1998:13). He adds that, "*Sometimes philosophers do not pay much attention to what the Bible says on their topic and thus seem to simply create views of God out of their own imagination*" (14). I do not think that Scripture is clear on these matters, and also hold that we are more likely to interpret it through eisegesis–the meaning of the text coloured by philosophical world-view. I concur with Thomas Flint, "…virtually all Christians look upon Scripture as authoritative. But I take it as an obvious truth that Scripture does not offer clear answers — answers that just anyone can see — to disputed questions; if it did, the question would not be disputed" (1998:4).

contingent event. It is fairly uncontroversial that something like a causal theory of knowledge (even if understood as a counterfactual theory), is correct in regard to human perceptual knowledge, and so there are source-type answers for questions of *how we know* in human perceptual epistemology. But things are not so straightforward concerning divine knowledge for us to be able to answer what the source or origin of God's knowledge of future contingents is.[38] This seems explanatorily circular as least, and at worst, argumentatively question-begging, if the logical or divine moments within the Molinist solution are taken to be answers to both source and reconciliation questions.

Yes, Molinism appears to present an answer to the RQ because counterfactuals of freedom are known *before* God's will, preserving libertarian free-will; and it also appears to provide an answer to the SQ, since God wills some of these counterfactuals to obtain in the actual world, hence he foreknows them (by virtue of free-knowing them). But this merely presents a consistent theory or story and not a substantial account of *how* it can work in practice with a consistent theism and libertarian free will.[39] It *looks* rather like Freddoso has presumed the truth of Molinism and *then* articulated his distinction between and priority of the SQ over the RQ.[40] The assertion of the explanatory priority of the

---

[38] I jump ahead here briefly to mention that in my interpretation, Molinism answers the SQ by utilizing both middle knowledge and divine will; it is neither just one nor the other for it cannot be just one or the other, *ex hypothesi* of Molinism. The direction of fit between source and effect is what I call a 'Euthyphro-type' question. Molina discusses this direction of fit in Part V Disputation 52*, sec.19-22, of the *Concordia* and I elaborate on the Molinist Euthyphro-type question and answer in Chapter 5.

[39] Furthermore, a SQ-type question can be asked of the objects of God's middle knowledge: how is it possible that God knows counterfactuals of creaturely freedom with certainty? This is to defer the SQ from God's free-knowledge 'back' to God's middle knowledge. This looks like a case of *obscurum per obscurius*, if super-comprehension, for instance, is posited as the means by which God knows what a possible person would do if placed in a situation. The SQ of how God 'free-knows' or foreknows what a person *will* do is dependent on this obscurity or something like it, according to Molinism. That is, the SQ and RQ as an answer to the divine foreknowledge dilemma presupposes how God knows what a possible person would do.

[40] I grant that it is *because* foreknowledge and providence are intertwined in traditional theistic perspectives, that positively we can separate the source and reconciliation question, but negatively, not state what has explanatory or logical priority. Freddoso uses the term itself in a cognate form: "This intertwining of the doctrines of divine foreknowledge and divine providence has two important consequences for our understanding of the reconciliation question…" The first and obvious consequence is that a complete answer to the reconciliation question must solve *both* problems of simple precognition *and* the problem of reconciling God's foreknowledge with future contingents *because* he has providential control over them (5).

source-question is deeply theologically-laden and biased towards theories that present God's knowledge of future contingents, in part by him willing them or the circumstances that they obtain in.

Nelson Pike reacts to Freddoso's favouring the source question over the reconciliation question and writes,

> It is hard to see how any theory concerning the source of God's knowledge could provide a solution to the foreknowledge problem. This is because the problem is generated by a single claim, viz, that God holds infallible beliefs about future human actions. How God comes to hold such beliefs would thus appear to be irrelevant. (Pike 1993:153)

Because Pike is convinced of the truth of theological fatalism by his incompatibilism argument, it is difficult to see how, if one were convinced by the basic argument, that any proposed source-answer is *relevant* to the premises and assumptions of the basic argument, which would form a basis for denying the conclusion of the basic argument.

3.7 The Basic Argument and Molinism

Does Molinism reject any premise of Pike-style Basic Arguments? Or rather, is it even *able* to do so? I have cited Zagzebski who notes that Molinism does not address the basic argument. Hasker concurs that "the Molinist position does not by itself incorporate any particular answer to the 'reconciliation problem' with which the foreknowledge debate has been primarily concerned" (Hasker 2011:50).[41]

To remind the reader of the point of this discussion, I am discussing whether Molinism is a solution to the foreknowledge dilemma. Summarizing so far, Molinism and basic-fatalism arguments are incompatible. The basic argument won't allow Molinism to solve it, and Freddoso's Two-Question distinction renders basic fatalism arguments

---

[41] It would be interesting to allow a theological premise pertaining to divine will or power into Pike's basic argument to see if this would resolve the incompatibility. But Molinism's rejection of the notion that accidental necessity is closed under entailment precludes this option. Flint's defence here is to charge some incompatibility arguments with equivocation. He refers to a few different ways that 'accidental necessity' can be interpreted (Flint:1988).

misguided by favouring source over reconciliation questions. Furthermore, Molinism unsurprisingly seems too consistent with the Two-Question distinction, and because of this, incapable of escaping its own circularity to become a competitor with other alleged solutions against the basic argument.

This suggests that it is either the case that,

a. Molinism is not true or plausible because it cannot answer the basic argument.[42]

b. Molinism is either correct or provisionally a good contender for a solution and the basic argument is misguided, though valid.

Now, if Molinism can solve DF|FW then it does this by adding the divine will to the argument. This might sound strange, but we should not rule it out *a priori*. Though now, the addition of will to help answer the source question (in order to answer the reconciliation question), may make God out to be a manipulator. There are three major positions that can result from this attempt of adding will to the source and reconciliation answers to (DF|FW):

1. Molinism cannot answer the basic argument, even by the inclusion of will.

2. Molinism can answer the basic argument, but turns the conception of God into a manipulator and/or the freedom attained by the solution is undermined.

3. Molinism solves DF|FW by answering the SQ, with no unwanted effects or consequences.

3.8 **Conclusion**

Molinism presents itself with the full resources to answer the divine foreknowledge dilemma (DFΔFW). Though (DFΔFW) presupposes incompatibility (DF|FW), defenders of Molinism tend to render Pike-style incompatibility arguments as

---

[42] Or, as John Martin Fischer claims, (Perszyk 2011:208-226), it might be a good model of divine providence, but because it presupposes the compatibility of foreknowledge with free will, it is not a solution.

generally misguided and see Molinism's source and reconciliation answers as *sufficient* to resolving the dilemma.

I have highlighted some essential differences between the divine and *simpliciter* versions of the foreknowledge problem. Using David Hunt's terminology, this is to compare the theological with the metaphysical versions of the problem. Historically, there have been fallacious versions of the foreknowledge *simpliciter* dilemma and it might thus appear that there is no valid incompatibility argument. However, Pike's famous basic argument for incompatibilism, and similar versions, have furthered the debate by the inclusion of a premise that, if God exists, then he must have omniscience essentially. I have contrasted Pike's perspective with Freddoso asking the source and reconciliation questions. As space has limited my judgment between them, I have taken what they hold in common: that the concept of God that figures in foreknowledge problems must have various divine attributes. Freddoso, as well as others, grants that God's will should be involved in the source and reconciliation solutions. This is the approach that Molina takes with the dual attributes of will and intellect.

Hence, I call Molinism an 'agential solution' to DFΔFW and DF|FW in that a full and proper understanding of the nature and powers of a divine being is factored into the solution, factored in at least by showing Molinism some charity and partly ignoring the difference of opinion over whether the basic argument is applicable on the basis of Molina's denial that accidental necessity is closed under entailment. Assuming then that the divine will is part of the solution to the divine foreknowledge problem, (as well as less controversially a part of God's providence), I act henceforth on this assumption and critique Molinism on account of the divine will with intellect.

Chapter 4: **Divine Will and Intellect**

4.1 **Introduction**

In the last chapter I discussed the divine foreknowledge dilemma and how the case is presented that Molinism has the resources to solve the incompatibility problem by the inclusion of God's will in the solution. In this chapter I analyse the relationship between the divine will and intellect that is supposedly needed for Molinism to both resolve the foreknowledge dilemma and offer an account of providence. The explanatory background to this discussion contains the keynote assumption that Molinist providence is best understood by viewing the divine will as operating on CCFs known at middle knowledge.[1]

4.2 **Will and Intellect: The Dual threat from Fatalism**

Linda Zagzebski uses the distinction between the divine intellect[2] and the divine will to explain the dual threat posed by the doctrines of divine infallible foreknowledge and divine providence. The threat is that there are two paths to fatalism:

> In the first doctrine the source of the fatalist danger is God's intellect; in the second it is God's will. Foreknowledge threatens fatalism because if God knows the entire future in a way that cannot be mistaken, then it looks as if nothing can happen differently than it does. If so, and if human freedom requires the ability to do otherwise, it appears that we are not free. Divine providence threatens fatalism because if everything occurs under the control of the divine will, then apparently

---

[1] Here the divine will incorporates functions such as making *decisions* about which world to actualize, and *selecting* which antecedents of CCFs to make actual in order to achieve this goal. I also understand the divine will to include the *power* to actualize states of affairs.

[2] Muller defines *intellectus* as "the divine intellect or understanding" where "Both the divine knowledge…and the divine wisdom…belong to the *intellectus Dei*. It is of the nature of the divine understanding that it knows all things and knows them wisely" (1985:157). A proper understanding of 'the divine intellect' would include God's wisdom as well as knowledge. Zagzebski's use of the phrase implies that she is only referring to divine knowledge. This should not complicate matters. It would however, be interesting to see how God's wisdom could influence his will and knowledge.

> everything happens the way God determines it and, again,
> it looks as if we lack the power to act differently and so we
> are not free. (2002:45).

In my discussion of Rowe's comparison between predestination and foreknowledge, I presented the view that it is not so strange to acknowledge that, under a theological determinist model, God's will is a sufficient condition for whatever non-contingents obtain by his will. But it is strange to understand why his foreknowledge acts *as if* it is a sufficient condition for what is foreknown, which thereby 'entails' that 'future contingents' lose their contingent status. This is the conundrum of the foreknowledge problem.

Under the *will/intellect distinction* **(WID)** and the consequent potential fatalism resulting from either foreknowledge or will, Molinism is in an interesting position. It attempts to side-step either version of fatalism—from *foreknowledge* or from *will*—by combining the elements of both will and intellect; indeed, it aims to side-step these fatalisms *because* of the divine intellect *and* will. Not only that, but under models of theological determinism, God foreknows because he foreordains; yet again, Molinism allegedly avoids this entailment that God wills p therefore he foreknows p.[3] On the basis of knowledge and will, I called Molinism an agential solution to the foreknowledge problem. It is a solution that involves an agent's fuller capacities, rather than intellect alone.

Exactly how does Molinism sidestep both fatalist charges? It does so by positing that God has both control and no control over CCFs. That is:

1. No control, pre-volitional: He has no control over their *truth*; this is meant to explain how indeterministic freedom is eventually predicated from human action in future conditional statements.

---

[3] Here I say allegedly because it is not that clear in Molinism which 'direction' the relation travels between God's foreknowledge and the object foreknown. I discuss this in the section titled, 'The Gordian Knot'. Regarding determinism, Molinism claims to avoid it by the concept of weak actualization. God directly willing is strong actualization. These are Plantinga's terms.

2. Control, post-volitional: He has control over *which* CCFs *obtain* or become actual. Not every feasible CCF will be actualized.[4] This I shall call factuals of creaturely freedom. They are no longer counter-factual.[5]

Here we contrast the *truth* of counterfactuals with their *obtaining*, and I understand 'obtaining' to mean becoming actual.[6] To say that 'God has control and no control' over CCFs does not imply contrariety, for each conjunct is correct from the aspect of will, which acts as a pivot point or hinge. What I find overlooked in the literature is the delineation of a process, for want of a better term, showing how CCFs that are objects of middle knowledge are *selected* by God to become actual and hence objects of free knowledge. Questions of the following sort have had little cover in the Molinist literature:

- How does God choose which CCFs become actual? Is it by his middle knowledge or his will? This question may have strong historico-theological presuppositions.

- Is the concept, or divine attribute called 'will', sufficiently able to explain the important processes that must succeed for some CCFs to become factuals? This is a demand for a fine-grained understanding of 'will' as the third logical moment. I do not think it sufficiently explains the processes or movement whereby some CCFs become actual.

- Does the logical moment distinction—between natural knowledge, middle knowledge, divine will, and free knowledge—imply the separation of the

---

[4] This claim sounds intuitively true but it is presumptuous. We do not know how many CCFs there are that are *feasible*, to use Flint's language.

[5] Actually, they never were 'counterfactuals' either, but I adopt this innocent way of speaking about *would-conditionals* that God knows via middle knowledge.

[6] On a related point, there is a huge difference between a counterfactual of creaturely freedom being pre-volitionally true and a CCF being instantiated as actual—just as there is a huge difference between the merely possible *Judas betraying Christ* and the real flesh and blood Judas, the man, betraying Christ to the soldiers at Gesthsemane for handing over to Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin.

modules of will and intellect; secondly, does it imply an ordering of dominance between will and intellect as one of the following?

- o The divine will is logically prior to intellect, or
- o The divine intellect is logically prior to will

4.3 The Seperation Thesis and the Theology of the Divine Will and Intellect.

Aquinas discusses the divine will and intellect with respect to providence.[7] He raises the question whether the intellect/will distinction is possible (and thus how providence is a product of God), given the doctrine of divine simplicity:

> Objection 3: Further, there is nothing composite in God. But providence seems to be something composite, because it includes both the intellect and will. Therefore providence is not in God.

His reply to this objection is that

> Providence resides in the intellect but presupposes the act of willing the end. Nobody gives a precept about things done for an end; unless he wills that end…. Even if Providence has to do with the divine will and intellect equally, this would not affect the divine simplicity, *since in God both the will and intellect are one and the same thing*, as we have said above. (Q. 19, my emphasis.)

It might be, however, that the foreknowledge problem obtains because *we can*—or we think we can—*separate* divine knowledge from will.

William E. Mann calls the assumption that we can do this the *separation thesis,* which is the view that "the will and intellect are two separate (but interacting) modules" where each module is roughly responsible for desires or for beliefs (Mann 2009:66). He states that the thesis has been popular in psychological and philosophical accounts of the human person and that it has been "natural to project it onto the divine mental structure"

---

[7] "Having considered all that relates to the will absolutely, we must now proceed to those things which have relation to both the intellect and will, namely providence, in respect to all created things; predestination and reprobation and all that is connected with these acts in respect especially of man as regards his eternal salvation." (*Summa Theologica* I, Q.22.)

so that we also suppose that "divine behavior results from God's will interacting with God's intellect" (66). Although the separation thesis itself does not propose which is dominant, the philosophical world has been unable to resist speculating "which module is, or should be, in charge over the other." Mann rejects the separation thesis when applied to God and in doing so, hopes to present a picture of God who "is not like ordinary folk"; this is the picture of divine simplicity (66). He puts forward two propositions that he thinks, from the perspective of DDS, "necessarily make the same claim."

(1) The world is an outpouring of a supremely loving will.
(2) The world is an expression of a supremely rational intellect.[8] (2009:67)

These two claims are the same, thinks Mann, from the viewpoint of the DDS, because "an outpouring of the divine will just is an expression of the divine intellect" (67). Mann gives the analogy of Smith and Jones considering the highest mountain. Jones calls it 'Everest' while Smith calls it 'Chomolunga'. This dispute is "merely verbal"[9] or epistemological: "they are necessarily pointing to the same fact." Now, what the DDS defender claims is that statements (1) and (2) encourage "continued and unwarranted application to God of the separation." Mann concludes that we should not invent misleading terminology, so he creates a neologism, WINTELLECT, which fuses both statements into

(3) The world is an outpouring of a supremely loving and rational *wintellect* (67).

Mann does state that this analogy is not perfect. Both Smith and Jones claim something that is itself "accurate and unproblematic" (67). Even though Mann admits that the analogy is not perfect, I think we should resist appealing to merely verbal

---

[8] Mann discusses Leibniz, who is taken to assert the second claim, assigning priority to God's intellect, and Frankfurt, who is understood to assert something like the first claim, which assigns priority to God's will.

[9] This notion of a verbal dispute will reappear when I discuss Stump's synonymy defence of the DDS.

disputes. I return to the language aspect of DDS below. What I want to borrow from Mann is his title of the separation thesis, from which I shall elaborate further versions, as well as the two main options for accepting the DDS which punctuate the discussion, for we are no longer able to state anything significant or meaningful in human terms about God. Nor can we reject DDS and accept the separation thesis in the hope of finding whether the will has domination over the intellect, or vice versa. I do not think there is any practical merit in the separation thesis unless we do try to answer what comes 'first'.

I propose a further division in the separation thesis, which leaves us with three main choices:

1. The Real Separation Thesis: there is a real, composite, will/intellect distinction, which…

    a. generates the set of foreknowledge problems, FP = [DF incompatibilism, conundrum, dilemma]; but also…

    b.   'allows' Molinism to provide a solution to the set of foreknowledge problems, [FP],[10] and

    c. allows us to comprehend discourse about providence and to offer models of providence, where…

    d. one such model is Molinism, which by many standards is superior, in theory, over Simple Foreknowledge models, since middle knowledge is useful for God to plan and control his creation.

    e. implies that God is composite, not simple.

2. The Ersatz Separation Thesis: The distinction is not real, but a way of speaking about divine nature and action, which

    a. *might* generate a fake set of foreknowledge problems, [FP]

---

[10] Molina proposes that his doctrine also reconciles grace, predestination and reprobation, as indicated by the full title of his *Concordia*. To this list we could add the many applications for Molinism that have been proposed recently. This 'applied Molinism' (Perszyk 2011:12) is essentially a practical application of its brand of providence. Indeed divine foreknowledge of future contingency is a by-product of this providential theory.

b. generates a fake resolution to [FP]

c. implies our religious discourse language is possibly anthropomorphic and just *a way of speaking* about God, where…

d. … where models, such as 'Molinism,' are *just a model* and have little probable correspondence to divine realities,

e. implies that God is unknowable. There is a 'Kantian limit' and an epistemic border that we cannot cross to reach the divine noumenon.

f. for all we know, God may be simple, but the Ersatz Separation Thesis is our attempt to make sense of divine nature and action.

3. Divine Simplicity Thesis: the doctrine of divine simplicity (DDS) is true and coherent. Here I question that if DDS is true, is there any worthwhile distinction between will and intellect, or any problems of foreknowledge or providence that actually need solving? We could, after all, just assert the DDS and be silent about many substantive problems in the philosophy of religion, yet most of us would not be satisfied with this Wittgensteinian-style—*what we cannot speak of, we must remain silent about* creed.

At this juncture I will pause for a moment to talk about the DDS. The above quote from Aquinas demands some kind of explanation in the face of the two possible positions I have proposed about the separation thesis, the real and the ersatz. However, at this early stage, it does appear that the Real Separation Thesis is more appealing to the Molinist.

4.4 **Divine Simplicity**

The DDS teaches that there are no *real* distinct ontological parts or properties in God and Aquinas views this as preeminent among the divine attributes. One problem *for* the will/intellect distinction is that, if the DDS is true, there is no will/intellect distinction. Contrariwise, there is a problem for the DDS if we wish to assert a real distinction between these two attributes. And if DDS is true, not only are there no real distinctions between God's will and intellect, but also none between any other divine attributes.

Hence, there is a *prima facie* tension between asserting the DDS and the will-intellect distinction. And if we decide to impose an anthropomorphic distinction upon God for instrumental reasons (so we can talk and make knowledge claims about God's nature and action), we do not know we are not making things up by this forced attribution.

For this and other reasons, the DDS has been criticized on the grounds of its incomprehensibility. Alexander Pruss ("On Three Models of Divine Simplicity", unpublished) discusses the 'multiple attributes' problem.[11] He asks whether 'mercy' and 'justice' lose their ordinary language meaning when each is ontologically identical to the other. For our purposes, 'mercy' and 'justice' are place holders for *any* two divine attributes, which, when taken together, seem to render their distinction in ordinary language puzzling or incomprehensible. Thus I take these placeholders to hold for both the divine will and intellect, along with the associated problem with intelligibility.

The problem of multiple attributes arises when we assert divine simplicity, yet wish to be able to talk about God *as if* we are talking about a familiar moral agent. (This is where this discussion of DDS and WID intersects with my thesis questions about Molinism.) The reasoning is as follows. If, on the basis of DDS, both justice and mercy are each identical to God's essence, then, via the transitivity of identity, justice is identical to mercy. This conclusion seems strange, since justice and mercy are commonly thought of as morally different. A way out of this conundrum is to argue, as Aquinas does, that although each attribute has the same reference—the divine essence—the attributes are not synonymous, and thereby can *mean* different things.[12]

Stump elaborates on the non-synonymy of the divine attributes (although not necessarily appealing to Aquinas' views):

> The absence of real distinction among divine attributes
> such as omniscience and omnipotence can be explained
> analogously. What human beings distinguish conceptually

---

[11] Available online at http://www9.georgetown.edu/faculty/ ap85/papers/On3ProblemsOfDivineSimplicity.html (accessed 24 February 2013).

[12] *Quaestiones Disputatae De Potentia Dei*, Q. VII: Article VI E.g. Reply to the First Objection. *"*These terms signify one thing indeed, but under different aspects, as stated above: hence they are not synonyms." Available online at http://dhspriory.org/thomas/QDdePotentia.htm#7 (accessed 6 June 2008).

as divine omnipotence and omniscience is the single thing
that is God but recognized by us under differing
descriptions or different manifestations. (Stump 1999)

Stump goes on to give the common analogy that the phrases "the evening star" and "the morning star" are not synonymous, yet still refer to the same thing but under different "descriptions" or "manifestations", implying that God's attributes are also just descriptions or manifestations (251).

Inherent in Aquinas and Stump's non-synonymy claim is an appeal to *language* as a way of maintaining coherence in our discourse and the *metaphysical* presumption of simplicity; that is, if we learn to speak properly—which involves using the right analogies about God—then we can make proper metaphysical assertions about God. This I see as a way to keep the bath water and the baby. The Stump-Aquinas non-synonymy solution resembles the Ersatz Separation Thesis, which I claim is *ad hoc*; for there is no reason to think that different 'senses' that are analogues of different divine properties, co-refer to the same simple nature, unless we already accept the DDS on trust.[13]

Another disadvantage of the DDS (as I have earlier alluded to with Pruss), is its lack of intelligibility. Stump writes that out of all the divine attributes, it is "the strangest and hardest to understand" (1999:250).[14]

Plantinga writes of two problems with it: "It is exceedingly hard to grasp or construe this doctrine.... [and] it is difficult to see why anyone would be inclined to accept it…" (1980). Furthermore, this is so on the account of simplicity, because God doesn't so much *have* a nature, he *is* that nature. By way of *reductio* and appealing to the transitivity of identity, Plantinga argues,

And this is a hard saying. There are two difficulties, one
substantial and the other truly monumental…if God is
identical with each of his properties, then each of his
properties is identical with each of his properties, so that

---

[13] On a positive note, although Stump deems the DDS "notoriously difficult" she yet thinks it "offers impressive advantages for constructive rational theology" (2003:92).

[14] And, "Some argue that the doctrine is incoherent, and others maintain that it is inconsistent with certain other …claims about God" (Stump 1999:250).

> God has but one property….in the second place, if God is identical with each of his properties…. he is a property… Accordingly God has just one property; himself. (1980:46-47)

To summarise my discussion so far, the DDS suffers from intelligibility issues which for some are good reasons to reject it.

4.5 Divine Simplicity and Compatibilism

Aside from arguments rejecting the DDS for its unintelligibility, or its perplexing implications for God's nature, as in Plantinga, I believe there is a more robust reason to reject the DDS that does not rely so much on logic or semantics.

4.5.1 Simplicity entails Compatibilism

I think the most important reason to reject the DDS in this research is because it results in compatibilism, and this is a result irrespective of whether adherents of the DDS are themselves compatibilist (which is likely to be the case). On the basis of the DDS, God foreknowing that Peter denies Christ three times equates to God willing it to happen. If God's knowledge is equivalent to his will, or more accurately, *knowledge is will*, any individual token p that God knows he wills and any individual token q he wills, he knows. But if Peter's act is to be free, then God's determining it has to be compatible with Peter's freedom, which therefore cannot be construed as libertarian freedom since it is logically impossible for God to determine or directly cause Peter's indeterministically free act. Hence, DDS entails creaturely compatibilism.

Jeffrey E. Brower (2009:120-123), discusses a somewhat similar issue concerning divine aseity. Truths such as 'God knows that *Smith is freely choosing to mow his lawn'* violate aseity, because they make God dependent on something else, here a created person's free act, "…unless, of course, we are prepared to accept some form of compatibilism about human freedom" (120). Interestingly, Brower considers a Molinist answer as 'the only obvious one' to the question *what else apart from Smith's free choice could God's knowledge depend on?* This is an obvious attempt to break free from the compatibilism entailed by aseity. So, if God's knowledge depends "not only on his will…

but also on his knowledge of what Smith would freely do in any circumstances in which he is created and left free," then this places the source of God's knowledge within himself. Yet Brower quickly dismisses this, or rather sees that it just defers the problem one step back to how God has middle knowledge of what Smith would freely do if placed in such and such a circumstance. These deferred problems are well known as the grounding objection and the related epistemic question of how God knows Smith's individual essence.

Invoking Mann's neologism 'wintellect', we see that there is a lot more to defending DDS through semantics. The metaphysics of creaturely freedom must be compatibilist. Notwithstanding there may be good reasons to accept compatibilism, the focus of this research is incompatibilist free will consistent with Molinism. If there is no free will that is not incompatibilist, then Divine simplicity is incompatible with creaturely freedom. It becomes fairly conclusive that traditional conceptions of God as simple, immutable and not dependent on anything, conspire to generate corollary difficulties with his knowledge and will with regard to entities outside of himself.[15]

4.5.2 Conclusion (DDS)

For various reasons, viz., intelligibility, coherence, compatibilism, I think we should conclude that it would be difficult to be a consistent Molinist and accept the DDS.

4.6 **Understanding the *Distinctio* of Will and Intellect in Medieval Thought**

The will/intellect distinction had its share of analysis in early and late medieval theological history. Debates focused on whether the distinction was real or merely conceptual-nominal, or somewhere in between. This subject matter is complex and I present some differences of opinion in order to inquire if any version is relevant to Molina's priority of middle knowledge over will.

I have briefly mentioned some of Aquinas' views. Scotus' position is also famous and influential. Later, it was considered by the Augustinian Johann Von Staupitz, Martin

---

[15] There are also difficulties with *divine* freedom and simplicity. "The most recalcitrant difficulties generated by the doctrine of simplicity are those that result from combining the doctrine with the traditional ascription to God of free will" (Stump 1999:252).

Luther's associate.[16] Steinmetz traces Staupitz's influence from Aquinas and Giles of Rome.[17]

Staupitz moves away from Aquinas' position that the distinctions are real distinctions in the nature of God (42). Steinmetz presents Staupitz's position that, "…divine knowledge…divine providence…and divine predestination are words used to describe the same activity" (43). However, any terminological distinction for Staupitz does not originate "in the divine essence itself"; they are distinguishable "due to imperfections in the human intellect, which can comprehend the divine essence only by drawing such multiple distinctions" (43).

There are hence multiple ways to understand the distinction in medieval thought. I cite the following from Richard A. Muller's *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*. We have, for instance, the *distinctio realis* which is the "real distinction between two independent things"; the *distinctio formalis* which is a formal distinction within the essence of a thing, though, not separable, just distinguishable; and the *distinctio rationis ratiocinate*, the distinction by reason of analysis. This distinction is "purely rational", for it does not reside "between things nor in a thing" (Muller 1985:93-95) .[18]

The full Latin tag for the formal distinction is *distinctio formalis a parte rei* 'the distinction on the part of the thing,' which is commonly accredited to Scotus. Since the

---

[16] See the section titled, "Distinction of Intellect and Will: The Problem of Divine Simplicity" in Steinmetz (1968:39-43).

[17] Steinmetz presents Aquinas' view:

> Every act of creation presupposes divine knowledge. In the broadest sense, therefore, one could say that God's knowledge is the cause of things. Acts of intellection, however, and acts of volition can be distinguished. Properly speaking, divine knowledge is causative only when the divine will cooperates with it to produce an effect. To attribute causality to divine knowledge without immediately emphasizing the role of the will is to be guilty of theological imprecision. (Steinmetz 1968:39)

[18] Muller writes, "Most of the Protestant scholastics reject the formal distinction and accept the *distinctio rationis ratiocinatae* "(1985:94). Steinmetz says that Ockham and the nominalists denied both the *distinctio realis* and the *distinctio formalis*, contra the Thomists and Scotus. The view of the nominalists is that the divine attributes are just "mental concepts, created by the mind in its attempt to understand the simple essence of God, but corresponding to no objective distinctions in the nature of God himself" (1968:42-43).

distinction is a 'part of the thing'—that is, a part of the object under consideration, it is extra-mental. According to Ingham and Dreyer (2004:34), "The most common use of the formal distinction…is that between persons of the Trinity and the divine nature. Each person of the Trinity is formally distinct from the divine essence and cannot exist independently from the divine nature." [19]

Having considered briefly the various distinctions within the WID, should we conclude which version of distinction Molinism needs—real, formal, or rational-nominal? For the moment I posit a real distinction over maintaining simplicity. If middle knowledge must come *before* the will, then this speaks of a distinction that is much more significant than a mere nominal distinction, and one that is more decisive even than a formal distinction—where formal means not distinct in essence, but somehow 'distinguishable'. This concept of middle knowledge, or intellect before will, thankfully moves away from the distinction *per se* towards the idea of the order of the parts.

4.6.1 The Ordering of the Distinction

As noted by Sylwanowicz, the divine will and intellect were often thought together in terms of contrasts and relations, especially with regard to the matter of free will:

> The attitude of comparing and contrasting the intellect and will makes itself felt in almost every department of medieval thought. (1996: 43)

> The tendency to ask whether the will or intellect is nobler stretches across debates about human conscience (often termed *synderesis* or *apex mentis*, "the highest part" of the

---

[19] For more on the formal distinction of Scotus, see Ingham and Dreyer (2004:33-38). These authors claim that the distinction doesn't originate with Scotus for it resembles Bonadventure's *distinctio rationis* and Henry of Ghent's intentional distinction (35).

Further evidence for variation in understanding the terminologies of the *distinctio* can be found in a scholarly exchange between Mary Beth Ingham and Thomas Williams over the interpretation and philosophy of Scotus' views of the divine nature. Beth Ingham criticizes Williams for consistently separating and 'driving a wedge between' the divine will and the divine intellect by overlooking what Scotus states about the importance of the divine simplicity (Ingham 2001: 173-216). During my discussion I will keep this accusation of driving a wedge between divine intellect and will in mind, as it applies potentially both to Molinism and my criticism of Molinism.

soul (is intellect or will?), about the location of human freedom- and about the nature of God Himself (is He primarily Will or Intellect?).   (1996: 43)

Here we see the notion of 'ordering' or 'priority'—what comes first, or what is more important either in God or humans. I tread cautiously here because to deem something more noble or more important does not have to mean that it comes first in a logical or explanatory order. But there is more evidence to assume this than not, as I now explain. The concept of 'first' is meant to be taken as logical and not temporal, at least in relation to the divine distinction. There is difficulty in maintaining consistency in Aquinas' thought. As Sylwanowicz reveals, Aquinas followed this path of finding what is nobler or more important by illustration of the relation between cause and effect, (hence my claim that 'importance' does imply logical priority in Aquinas). Sylwanowicz writes,

> Aquinas, for all his insistence on the unity of man, instantiates this way of thinking. He sees the intellect as a purely cognitive faculty as opposed to the "desiring" will. This gave rise to the problem of the relation of intellect and will which was to torment his commentators. Aquinas says the intellect is superior to the will: it is its final cause. Cause is more perfect than effect. But how is a *purely cognitive* faculty able to "command" the will that X is "more desirable" than or "preferable" to Y? As such it clearly cannot. Aquinas thus needs to postulate an influence of the will in the intellect. (43)

This quote does talk about human will and intellect, but I do not think we need to differentiate between divine and human ordering within Aquinas. Sylwanowicz does not make any claims otherwise and often discusses Aquinas without distinguishing the human from the divine.

The above sentiment expressed by Sylwanowicz is very relevant to my suspicions about the priority of the intellect over will in maintaining the truths of counterfactuals of freedom in Molinism. There seems to be a hopeless circularity and an inability to claim emphatically that middle knowledge precedes God's will. For example, how is a purely cognitive faculty of middle knowledge able to 'command the will' as Sylwanowicz

inquires of Aquinas's theory. Here I am assuming a parallel between Aquinas' ordering with Molina's ordering, but think I have good reason to do so.[20] Indeed, I would argue, that there is hopeless circularity and an ability to reliably maintain a consistent logical ordering of will versus intellect in any model of theism, (as Sylwanowicz indicates with Aquinas's preference). It's just that the Molinist must maintain middle knowledge before will to be a proper card-carrying Molinist. Some theists would not have been made familiar with the ordering of the logical distinctions apart from Molinism. Logical momentism matters more to the Molinist that the more classical 'three moment accounts' of theism.

Whether it be divine or human will and intellect we are talking about, different sides thought that either the will or intellect had priority over the other. The intellectualists such as Aquinas favoured the intellect, while the voluntarists such as John Duns Scotus promoted the divine will (and omnipotence) over the intellect. There was a tendency then to view both will and intellect as metaphysically necessary components in faculty psychology[21] but also to prioritise logically one over the other as competing alternatives.

This question of the logical priority of will/intellect is very relevant to Molinism: was Molina an intellectualist or a voluntarist? It looks as if his interpolation of middle knowledge after natural knowledge, but before will, makes him an intellectualist. If so, it is difficult to state consistently how middle knowledge decides what the will does, unless the will 'looks back' to the previous logical moment, and picks counterfactuals to

---

[20] My understanding of contemporary Molinist literature is that there is very little discussion on whether Molina was an intellectualist or voluntarist; or even whether it makes sense to talk this way about the 'four logical moments' in Molinism. Again caution advises me that I might be trying to make too much out of something, for the ordering of the four logical moments suggests that Molina and *any* medieval theologian could be either or both intellectualist and voluntarist over the divine nature. That is, the sequence of (i) *natural knowledge/middle knowledge* — (ii) *will* — (iii) *free knowledge* provides evidence of both positions depending where you start to count from. If there is such ambiguity, it might also undermine the significance of the Molinist insistence of middle knowledge before will as a way to maintain true creaturely freedom that not even God can control. As I will argue later, God can control these counterfactuals, and manipulate them to potentially affect human freedom in another way.

[21] Sylwanowicz argues that neither Aristotelian faculty psychology nor Augustine influenced the medieval tendency to view will and intellect in this way. Instead, he proposes that the origin came from mystics like St. Bernard of Clairvaux.

actualize. But have we then placed the will in front of middle knowledge, and have we lost the very important strength of counterfactuals of creaturely freedom, in that they are no longer *entirely* pre-volitional, and hence not absolutely unconditioned by God's will?

4.7 'Adding to' or 'Layering' the Distinctions

4.7.1 Flint's Speculation on Two Wills

In a lengthy and complex discussion concerning 'culled' and 'chosen worlds', Thomas Flint writes that we should avoid positing two moments of will such as in the following manner:

Second moment – the Conditional creative acts of will…

Third moment - Middle Knowledge…

Fourth moment - Unconditional creative acts of will. (Flint 1988:64).

Flint gives a few reasons for avoiding *fifth momentism's* inclusion of a second moment of will before middle knowledge. He admits that these reasons for maintaining "an undivided single divine act of will" to be "telling, but less than demonstrative," and so there may be good reasons to allow some variation in Molinist teaching. Despite this concession towards the fallibility of his own reasons, I believe they warrant a brief discussion to see if anything substantially relevant to the WID transpires. Here are two of Flint's reasons:

- Flint: Most followers of Molinism might be attracted by "the claim that God is absolutely simple, and simplicity would seem easy to endorse if we do not sanction distinct divine acts of will framing his middle knowledge." (1988:64)

My response: This appears to equivocate on the meaning of simplicity where the first is a reference to the DDS, while the second is simplicity *qua* minimising the number of logical distinctions. However, if the DDS is true, there would be *no* way to posit any real distinctions, let alone one more. If Flint was advocating a true appeal to simplicity, then why, or how, can we talk about a will and middle knowledge distinction, or of a

distinction between natural and middle knowledge?[22] Flint understands simplicity as parsimony, as if he is grasping at Ockham's Razor—it's better to have one divine will than two. But the Razor adds that we shouldn't multiply entities unless we can get away with it. I do not think we can get away with some form of will before middle knowledge to make sense of some of the Molinist claims, (see Flint's next reason and my response below).[23]

4.7.2 Divine Decisions

Flint's second reason for not positing a fifth moment of will before middle knowledge is to keep it undivided, even for those who reject the DDS. Here he speaks of God's "creative decision" made before middle knowledge. [24]

If God does not make any creative decision prior to middle knowledge, then it seems unlikely that the four logical moment distinction in generic Molinism can sufficiently account for providence. Admittedly, this is a complex question, so I do not dismiss Flint's point out of hand. Still, I think generic Molinism lacks full explanatory power without some account of will before middle knowledge. More importantly, I find

---

[22] I am cautious about the claim that Flint equivocates about simplicity, given his expertise and standing in the Molinist debate. His work I greatly appreciate and admire. However, I see no other way to make his views self-consistent beyond my suggestion that there is equivocation between the divine simplicity, and SIMPLICITY as numerical simplicity or parsimony. In addition, most of his claims in response to multiplying more divisions of will are disguised within numerous rhetorical questions, which, apart from the tentativeness of the embedded assertion disguised in a question, he leaves up to the reader, because in fact, there are no good answers to his rhetorical questions. Flint asks five important questions in this section (1988:64) and since he does not answer them, I interpret them as attenuated assertions.

[23] In relation to positing extra distinctions in the divine will, Didier Kaphagawani discusses Molina and Aquinas' influence on Leibniz's ideas (Kaphagawani 1999). Kaphagawani mentions Leibniz's three-fold distinction of antecedent, mediate and decretory wills and writes, "what we have in Leibniz is not *Scientia media*, but *voluntas media*" (101-102). The context here is a difficulty that Leibniz sees in Molina's work where God "…would decree something because he sees that he has already decreed it, which is absurd" (Kaphagawani 102, quoting Leibniz *Necessary and Contingent Truths,* 1686:103). Rather, Leibniz writes that God "…foresees also his own predetermination and his own decree of predetermination – but only as possible; he does not decree because he *has* decreed" (Kaphagawani 103, quoting Leibniz *Necessary and Contingent Truths,* 1686:103-104). I mention Leibniz's multiple distinctions in the divine will as more evidence for the claim that it is tempting to posit further distinctions so as to avoid certain difficulties. However, it is not when we should stop doing this. See my section below for the similar attitude regarding the intellect, "Layers of Middle Knowledge."

[24] "Why, they might ask, think of God as making any creative decision prior to his possession of all the knowledge pre-volitionally available to him?" (Flint 1998:64).

the insistence on making middle knowledge *totally* prevolitional is tendentious, pleading always the thesis that there are truths of creaturely freedom that God has no control over.[25]

My view is that the terms 'will' and 'intellect' are not adequate to fully describe the Molinist conception of *providence*, while also the motivation for positing logical moments in the divine mind is either misguided or results in confusion when applied to this topic. Molinists are keen to stress God's intellectual activity of knowing CCFs as pre-volitional—and thus are things that God has no control over—and *then,* in the sequence of logical moments, to introduce his will as the means by which he actualizes some of these CCFs. But I do not think Molinists or anti-Molinists have pointed out sufficiently how God *decides* which CCF to actualize. That is, does God choose those counterfactual truths by his intellect or will? If it is by his intellect, by which intellectual moment does he achieve this: natural, middle, or other?[26] Alternatively, if it is by his will, does this fact cloud or undermine the Molinist thesis that God knows counterfactuals of creaturely freedom pre-volitionally? The Molinist needs to give an account of divine decisions and where they fit in the logical moment schema.

On the use of 'decision' applied to God's providential activity, J. Martin Bac begins his very interesting work *Perfect Will Theology,* with a quote from the Dutch Reformed theologian, Melchior Leydecker, for a working definition of divine decision:

> The act of God as Spirit by which he has by himself established from eternity most freely and wisely what and how everything in time will be unto his glory. (Cited in Bac 2010:19)

In a footnote to this, Bac states he prefers 'decision' as a translation from the Latin words *decretum, determinatio* and *praefinitio* and gives the reason that decision

---

[25] Flint has a third reason to reject the revisionist quest to assert a fifth, pre-middle knowledge account of volition. This is the argument from *messiness*, for Flint thinks it would be even messier than the five-moment distinction that he is rejecting. This argument purports to show that the revisionist must allow *unconditioned* creative acts of will—those where God decides to create such-and-such which has no creaturely freedom propensities, (Flint gives the example of creating Alpha Centauri), within the new second moment of God's <u>Conditional</u> *creative acts of will.*

[26] On this conjecture, they cannot be known by his free knowledge since it is post-volitional.

expresses the "involved act of will in God." By 'involved', he means the joining of both 'will' (*freely*) and 'intellect' (*wisely*). This interpretation, where 'decision' includes wisdom (with knowledge) and volition has merit. It might be objected that importing the concept of divine decision into Molinism makes it look too much like a decretal theology—more at home with a Reformed view. Moreover, to remain impartial, we need to resist falsely identifying Molinism with a Calvinist view of providence, for that would make it too easy to conclude that the former is manipulation. We need a way to conceive of God as 'deciding' or selecting which CCFs to actualize which is neither too anthropomorphic nor too decretal.

4.7.3 Layers of Middle Knowledge

On the related notion of positing extra moments in the divine nature, whether extra moments of intellect or of will, the theologian Kenneth Keathley, who incorporates middle knowledge into his theological system, makes the interesting point that Reformed theologians posit extra moments in the divine will by exploring 'layers' of God's decree, while Molinists explore 'layers' of God's omniscience (Keathley 2010:150).[27] However, he does not say exactly why. It would be easy to speculate what the answer might be and ask whether the need to multiply extra moments of will or of intellect is more a matter of our personal preference, or our bias about what we think God should have *more of*— power and control, or wisdom or knowledge—which is in effect just to return to the beginning of this chapter and wonder if will comes before intellect or vice versa.

On this point of multiplying labels, theologian Kirk R. MacGregor does this to middle knowledge, arguing that there are two layers within middle knowledge. He calls this the "multilayered *sciential media* hermeneutic":

> …our dissection of *scientia media* has revealed that this
> second moment of divine omniscience is comprised of two
> layers: God's progressive apprehension of the truth-value
> of all counterfactuals of creaturely freedom as they unfold
> in logical sequence coupled with his original reactions to

---

[27] As an example of the number of distinctions in Reformed thought, Richard Muller (2003) lists and discusses in detail eighteen distinctions—that's thirty-six Latin phrases where each distinction is a pair— for Reformed distinctions of the *voluntas Dei.* (Cf. 2003:11,13, 453-475)

these counterfactuals; and God's transformation of each practicable world into a feasible world by fine-tuning it according to his full knowledge of everything that could or would happen in the entire history of that world as a result of different divine responses to creaturely choices. (MacGregor 2007:98)

Elsewhere Macgregor talks of this as two kinds of passes of middle knowledge: the first contains all logical counterfactuals of freedom, the second, a smaller set of accumulated knowledge of counterfactuals after he has responded (106). One cannot help thinking that this second layer of middle knowledge, posited by MacGregor, is getting awfully close to the divine will, as suggested by divine actions like 'fine-tuning' a feasible world and *taking actions* because of different responses to creaturely choices. This does imply, I think, some level of intentionality or willing.

One reason MacGregor divides middle knowledge into two parts is to offer an apologetic that explains some of the alleged anthropomorphisms of scripture. He is trying to rescue God's personal or relational character. In addition, he critiques the open theist position and identifies with Calvinism, where both make God out to be the author of sin, even though the opennist model tries to avert this charge that is often made against the Calvinist. Macgregor states that the two-layered model of the *scientia media* overcomes this because it upholds God's "moral purity and magnifies his goodness through its level-one disclosure that sin is always...contrary to the divine will…and through its level-two illumination of how God marvelously *utilizes* the (*sic*) even the most heinous sins on the creaturely landscape to *providentially* accomplish his salvific ends…" (107, my emphasis). Again, words like 'utilize' and 'providence' make it look as if some of the Molinist's third logical moment of the divine will is bleeding into the prior second moment of middle knowledge. My response to this strategy is to see it as a kind of special pleading. More importantly, if parts of middle knowledge are segregated and defined with a 'divine will' look about them, why not just become a believer in divine simplicity? Macgregor, once more demonstrates how his new hermeneutic is helpful by showing us what,

> "God's will" entails- something fully known by God in the second level of his scientia media plus his scientia libera which is formed in dialogue between any original reactions God may undeniably disclose to us, our prayers, desires, and deeds. (107)

I do think Macgregor's intentions are noble, presenting God as more relational with "genuine reciprocity between humans and God" (107). Yet genuine reciprocity would I think involve decisions, intentions and will. These things, on the logical ordering of Molinism, seem to creep back into middle knowledge for Macgregor.

My point in looking at Macgregor's work is not to criticize his position or motive, but to show the entanglement we find ourselves in when we use the concept of providential logical moments. It is difficult to maintain a clean cut between these moments without some fuzziness around the borders.

4.7.4 Conclusion

Molinism *explanatorily* relies on some version of the separation thesis between the divine will and intellect. By this I mean, it only succeeds as a solution to DF|FK and as a plausible model of providence if God from his own perspective has pre-volitional knowledge of counterfactual truths. The separation thesis may be a real ontological distinction, or a *manner of speaking* from the human perspective. To posit a real ontological separation thesis is inconsistent with the doctrine of divine simplicity, which maintains that there are no distinctions in God's nature. Moreover the DDS is 'more' consistent with compatibilism as (theological) determinism (CD), than mere foreknowledge compatibilism (CF). So, in affirming the DDS, we lose the explanatory power of Molinism as a way to account for prevolitional middle knowledge, and the subsequent free knowledge of future creaturely free acts, but ironically we lose the need for a solution to DF|FW in the first place, for DF|FW is 'dissolved' if theological compatibilism is true. If instead, the separation thesis is only nominal, then by *reductio*, any problem in philosophical theology could be 'solved' by just learning to speak properly. Surely, whatever the case would have to be like, to assert that God has middle knowledge before his act of will, it must be the case that he has it. If medieval

theologians *"were wont to assert that God's prevolitional knowledge is a cause of things,"*[28] then unless God's prevolitional knowledge is logically *pre*-volitional, middle knowledge would end up being a cause of acts of human creatures. I do not know how X can be logically prior to Y where X is not distinct from Y. Essentially, for Molinism to succeed, *middle knowledge* cannot be causal, or willing, otherwise it would remove the indeterminism of creaturely actions required for it to succeed as a theory of providence. Hence we should resist divine simplicity if we are a Molinist.

From the discussion covered in this chapter, some of us might be left with the impression that the complexity and confusion over the will and intellect distinction—and what must 'come first'—shows that any attempt to maintain these with consistency is misguided. Nevertheless, I shall mostly assume the truth of the priority of middle knowledge before will, which is what Molinism asserts, or will give alternate accounts of this. Contrary to what some Molinists would want, it seems that for Molinism to work, there needs to be some kind of will before middle knowledge. If there has to be, we need to figure out what kinds of losses are incurred over creaturely freedom or indeterministic actions in having a moment of will before middle knowledge.

---

[28] Freddoso (1988:3). This sentence is not limited to the followers of Molina. Freddoso cites Aquinas thus (3, note 4).

Chapter 5: **The Gordian Knot of Molinist Foreknowledge and Free Will**

5.1 **Introduction and Euthyphro-Type Questions**

A particular facet of the foreknowledge problem has been named by Boethius as a kind of knot—'the Gordian Knot' —that resists disentanglement or untying. Molina himself discusses at length his attempt to solve something very much like the Gordian knot problem, though he does not use this label. My discussion below analyses Molina's attempt to solve the Gordian knot and I present a case to show that he is unsuccessful. In brief, to unravel how God foreknows future contingents on the Molinist hypothesis, while preserving the integrity of libertarian free will, is more difficult than merely appealing to the progression of the four logical moments.[1]

Boethius, to Lady Philosophy, elaborates on the Gordian knot problem,

> I do not agree with the argument by which some people believe they can cut the Gordian knot. They say that it is not because Providence has foreseen something as a future event that it must happen, but the other way around, that because something is to happen it cannot be concealed from divine Providence. [2]

The legend of the Gordian knot is that Gordius tied a knot to attach his cart to a post, dedicating the cart to Zeus. The knot proved impossible to untie until Alexander sliced it in two with his sword. One understanding is that the knot had no ends as they were spliced together. The knot was created from a loop of rope which frustrated would be puzzle-solvers looking for loose ends to unthread. The phrase 'to cut the Gordian knot' pertains to a quick and easy solution.[3]

---

[1] In keeping with the theme of the knot metaphor, slicing the divine nature into four parts, at least for explanatory purposes, is an attempt to cut the Gordian knot into four parts, but is not untying it.

[2] Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy,* Book V, Section III (Vine translation 1969:150-151).

[3] See Encyclopedia Britannica Online, http://www.britannica.com/ EBchecked/topic/239059/Gordian-knot (accessed 25 May 2013). For an interesting angle on the Gordian knot metaphor and its application to mathematics, see Keith Devlin's post at

Divine Knowledge and Cause

There is a tradition in classical theism that views God's knowledge as wholly or partly causative. This is perplexing, for how can knowledge be a cause, given that human knowledge at least, is generally viewed as an effect?[4] Is God's knowledge a cause or an effect, or is it both cause and effect, when understood in the context of theism generally and Molinism specifically? This is to ask a Euthyphro-type question[5] like,

- Future Contingent Euthyphroid Question, (**EQ**)

> EQ: Does a future contingent obtain because God foreknows it, or does God foreknow it because it obtains?

Euthyphroid Questions

The aim in asking a Euthyphro-type question (or Euthyphroid Question), is to sort out what is logically (or causally) prior out of two propositions that share a relationship. The form is roughly, 'is P a logical condition for Q, or is Q a logical condition for P?' More colloquially, *is it that P because Q or Q because P?* This form is dilemmatic and I shall call it a *Vice Versa Dilemma,* because each disjunct is a mirror image of the other. In the present context, the Euthyphroid Question that is asked attempts to delineate the relation between God's knowledge and the contingent objects of God's knowledge. A 'common sense' answer to the Euthyphroid question is given by Origen:

> …it will not be because God knows that an event will occur that it happens; but, because something is going to take place that it is known by God before it happens. (Origen, Sheck translation 2002:90)

---

http://www.maa.org/external_archive/devlin/devlin_9_01.html (accessed 7 March 2011). One interpretation has it that the rope was actually a loop where the ends were spliced together. Any attempt to find the ends of the rope within the confines of the knot were futile. Alexander's 'solution' of cutting the knot in half could therefore be deemed clever as it showed that the rope had no ends.

[4] This is a generalisation. Here I have in mind the general position concerning human perceptual knowledge where a physical object in the world causes one to have a percept of it. There is a strong externalist component to human perceptual epistemology. We are not so lucky with other objects of knowledge, such as abstract objects with no causal powers.

[5] I owe the terminology of 'Euthyphroid Type Questions' in relation to Molinism to Peter Forrest. (Conversation, February 2011, *UNE*, Armidale, NSW.)

I call this the *Origenist assumption* of divine epistemology regarding future contingents: God foreknows P *because* it is a future event. Aquinas rejects Origen's account, since the concept of causality does not involve the divine will. The Origenist assumption appeals to two intuitions we have about knowledge *simpliciter*: first, that the causal theory of knowledge is true for many types of facts, and second, knowledge does not affect the modal status of the thing known. So for human knowledge, H knows P & ◊~P (P is contingent) and P causes H's knowledge, and H's knowledge does not affect the contingency of P. If we are to resolve the foreknowledge conundrum, it seems we must predicate these characteristics of divine knowledge as well.

As mentioned, Boethius also asks a Euthyphroid question "*Does foreknowledge of the future cause the necessity of events, or [does the] necessity [of events] cause the foreknowledge?*" (Vine 1969:150-151). Before saying this, Boethius refers to the problem that 'perplexes him' (the reconciliation of universal foreknowledge and freedom of the will) as a Gordian knot.

EQ can be understood as two questions joined by a disjunction, or one question with two possible answers. Neither the disjunction version nor the two possible answers reading of the question need exhaust all possible answers. The deconstructed question is simply: *How does God know future contingents?* This, unsurprisingly, is Freddoso's formulation of the Source Question, SQ. When EQ is unpacked we have:

Question: *How does God know future contingents?*
Possible Answers: (1) God's knowledge [causes] them to obtain.
                            (2) Their obtaining [causes] God to know them.

There is no reason to rule out the conjunction of (1) and (2) at this stage, but this does not reduce the complexity or dissolve the issue, while forcing the dichotomy that the answer is either (1) or (2), is akin to slicing the problem into two parts, or by analogy cutting the Gordian knot. After all, this is the aporetic nature of Euthyphroid Questions: both positions are assertable on reasonable grounds; different background assumptions favour one or other horn of the dilemma, while the results indicate there are positive reasons to

accept both of them, along with their respective negative consequences. It is not self-evident whether the correct solution is position (1) or (2) of this *vice versa* dilemma.[6] We can also posit a third alternative answer that is the conjunction of the simple propositions,

> (3) God's knowledge [causes] them to obtain and their obtaining [causes] God to know them.

The issue with this interpretation is that it renders the EQ explanatorily circular. For the moment we need not insist that the relevant verb is 'cause', which is why I inserted this term in square brackets. Other words or concepts, like 'make', may equally suffice.

Seeking an answer to the EQ question is important to the Molinist, since, if the correct answer is (1), it suffers from a lack of explanatory power and a high dose of incomprehensibility, for how does knowledge *cause*? Yet it does provide some answer to how God knows future contingents. He causes them. On the other hand, if the correct answer is (2), the contingency of the event is tainted as it produces the foreknowledge conundrum and does not really answer the source *how* question. Given that both (1) and (2) have positive and negative side-effects, conjoining them in (3) does look favourable if the negatives cancel out, although we are left with the circularity objection.

A position which is similar to (3) but more serious, is,

> (4) God's knowledge and causality are the same thing. [7]

I discuss this position, (4) as follows:

---

[6] Here I am also referring to the traditional Euthyphro question of whether an action is good because it is commanded by God, or whether it is commanded by God because it is good.

[7] I thank Peter Forrest for pointing out that the third position in (3) is the same as Mann's *wintellect* position, which, as it maintains consistency with divine simplicity, is a position of identity, and a denial of the separation thesis.   Rather than positing a slightly nuanced interpretation of (3) as say (3′), I have labelled the identity thesis as (4). Below I discuss further the positions of (3) and (4) by referring to Kretzmann (1983).

<u>A problem for Aquinas</u>

Whatever Molina's views are on the Euthyphroid question, he writes at length citing the ecclesiastical doctors and fathers in the attempt to demonstrate that they concur with his position that an action or event's obtaining is the cause of God's foreknowledge, rather than that God's foreknowledge is a cause of an event's obtaining.[8] Molina is perplexed by Aquinas' interpretation of Origen. He writes, "The rest of the Scholastic Doctors seem to share this view—though, to tell the truth… St. Thomas seems to intimate the contrary position when he expounds and tries to read the contrary sense into the text from Origen…a text in which Origen is clearly advocating the same position." (Disputation 52:20, Freddoso 1998:180)[9]

Despite Molina's misgivings about Aquinas' interpretation of Origen's proof text, Aquinas himself, and outside of specific Molinist discussions, appears to answer EQ by giving an answer in both directions, affirming both disjuncts, which implies that divine knowledge is both a cause and an effect of the objects known by it.

---

[8] See *The Concordia*, Disputation 52, paragraphs 20-28 (Freddoso 1998:180-183) where he refers to St Thomas, Justin Martyr, Origen (on his Commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Romans, 8:30), Damascene, Chrysostom (on the Gospel of Matthew 18:7), Jerome (on Isaiah 16:13 and Jeremiah 26:3), St Augustine, (*De Civitate Dei* V, ch. 10), Cyril, (the Gospel of John, ch. 10) and Pope Leo I, (Sermon 16).

[9] Freddoso's footnote at this point notes that Molina was discussing Aquinas' text from the *Summa* at I, q. 14, a. 8, ad 1. Aquinas understands 'cause' in terms of "logical inference and not a cause of existing. For it follows that if something is future, then God foreknows it; but the future things are not the cause of God's knowledge" (Freddoso 1998, 180-181, note 34). I am not able to arbitrate in the interpretation issue of Molina on Aquinas on Origen, nor is it significant to my arguments. Nevertheless, Molina appears to have a much wider understanding of 'cause' than efficient cause. In his discussion of Justin Martyr on Judas's betrayal and God's foreknowledge, though, he cites Martyr's text, "Foreknowledge is not a cause of that which is going to be, but rather that which is going to be is a cause of foreknowledge."

Molina writes, "He is not, however, using the term 'cause' to stand for a *real* cause; for the things are not a cause of Christ's foreknowledge… Instead, he is talking about the *explanation* of why this foreknowledge exists, since the relation of reason which the divine knowledge bears to the things that it knew were going to exist depends on the fact that those things would come to be from their causes…" (Disputation 52:21, Freddoso 1988:181)

These definitions of 'cause' show some justification that Molina does not insist that a creature's future action is the efficient or 'real' cause of God's knowledge, but that the free action 'comes to be' from its causes—the agent's own volitional powers executed within the situation—which in turn results in a state of affairs that includes the agent, the action and the specific situation, thereby providing God with 'explanatory' causal powers. Though an explanatory-causal power is still unclear, there are various ways in the present discussion of Molina, Aquinas and Origen in which we should view 'cause' as ambiguous.

<u>First: Knowledge is passive like human knowledge.</u>

Aquinas' analogies, which purport to show the compatibility of 'foreknowledge' with contingency, suggest that God's knowledge is reactive like human knowledge. This eternalist[10] perspective attempts to resolve the foreknowledge conundrum by reinterpreting 'foreknowledge', since if God is eternal, his knowledge is not tensed. [11] On the eternalist approach, the term 'foreknowledge' is misleading and best understood as *super-vision*—knowledge or vision from above. This, however, is still relying on the anthropomorphic analogy of human sight through space.[12]

Kretzmann (1983) discusses an inconsistency in Aquinas' view whereby the passive divine knowledge expressed by the analogy of *Socrates Sitting* is inconsistent with the active divine knowledge that Aquinas purports to teach elsewhere. Aquinas' use of the *Socrates is Sitting* analogy makes the distinction between the *necessity of the consequence* and the *necessity of the consequent*, and relies on the analogy between human seeing and divine 'seeing'.[13] Kretzmann quotes Aquinas, saying that God,

---

[10] The Eternal Perspective is the theory that God is outside of human time, suggested by Augustine and elaborated subsequently in Boethius and then Aquinas. This research presumes, unless otherwise stated, that God is in time. For an eternalist response to the foreknowledge conundrum, see chapter 11 in Brian Leftow (1991). See also Paul Helm (2011), especially chapters 6-8.

[11] A relevant text from Aquinas is,

> Things reduced to act in time are known by us successively in time, but by God are known in eternity, which is above time. Hence to us they cannot be certain, since as we know future contingent things as such but, they are certain to God alone, whose understanding is in eternity above time; just as he who goes along the road does not see those who come after him, although he who sees the whole road from a height sees at once all travelling by the way. (*Summa Theologica*: First Part, Section 14, Article 13, Reply to Objection 3)

[12] The Person on the Road analogy quoted above is similar in some respects to Aquinas' Circle analogy for the atemporality of God's intellect, where this is like the centre point of a circle that is equidistant to all points along the circumference. Cf. *Summa Contra Gentiles* (1,66:9-13). But the Person on the Road analogy is an analogy with a human's perspective of knowledge *qua* vision or sight. Both analogies aim to show God's atemporal perspective; one is by comparison to a human, the other to a circle.

[13] In *Summa Contra Gentiles,* 1.66.7, Aquinas does not make it evident that he is comparing human with divine 'seeing'. For God, in his intellect, *sees* Socrates pretty much in the same way we do:

> Since everything is known by God as seen by Him in the present, the necessity of that being true which God knows is like the necessity of Socrates's sitting from the fact of his being seated. This is not

…sees, altogether eternally, each of the things that exist at any time whatever, just as a human eye sees Socrates sitting down – in itself, not in its cause. (In *Aristotelis Peri Hermeneias*, XIV, 20)

Second: God's knowledge is causal.

Kretzmann identifies the inconsistency in that, on the one hand, God's likeness to human knowledge provides the solution to the problem of divine knowledge and contingency, while on the other hand,

> When Aquinas is discussing God's knowledge apart from the temporality problem, however, he makes it clear that in his view God's knowledge is the very opposite of ours in one fundamental respect: 'the thing known is related to human knowledge in one way and to divine knowledge in another way; for human knowledge is caused by the things known, but divine knowledge is the cause of the things known.' (Kretzmann 1983:644-655, quoting Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Ia-IIae, q. 2, a.3)

Kretzmann calls this the 'Mirror Image Theory'[14] of God's knowledge and sees it as a result of God's pure actuality (*actus purus*), (645). He possesses no potentiality, consistent with the divine attributes of impassibility (and immutability). By contrast, human knowledge is passive potentiality. However, as we have seen, Aquinas' solution to the foreknowledge problem relies in part on the analogy between God's knowledge and human knowledge, suggesting quite clearly that God's knowledge must be passive. Mirror image omniscience is causative knowledge and thus imposes its own kind of

---

> necessary absolutely, 'by necessity of the consequent,' as the phrase is, but conditionally, or 'by necessity of the consequence.' For this conditional proposition is necessary: 'He is sitting, if he is seen seated.' Change the conditional proposition into a categorical of this form: 'What is seen sitting, is necessarily seated': it is clear that the proposition is true as a phrase, where its elements are taken together (*compositam*), but false as a fact, when its elements are separated (*divisam*). All these objections against the divine knowledge of contingent facts are *fallacia compositionis et divisionis*.

[14] That is, God's knowledge, at least the causal relation between knower and known, is the mirror image of human knowledge.

determinism on contingent events.[15] And so, the mirror image theory of Aquinas 'spoils' his own attempt at resolving the problem of the necessity of foreknowledge via divine eternity and the reframing of the tensed sense of 'foreknowledge' by presenting it as 'super-vision'.

Kretzmann's consideration of Aquinas's mirror image theory takes the form of a Euthyphro-type question.[16] This does not leave much room for explaining how causative knowledge avoids imposing necessity on ostensibly contingent events.

Alternatively, the puzzle of Aquinas' divine causative knowledge could be presented to include the divine will. Thus, on the basis of another analogy, God is to all things as the artist is to her art, and so it is the intellect that involves both the knowledge and will in its causing of all things. Hence it is not necessary that whatever God knows, is, or was, or will be, but only what He wills to be, or permits to be. Further, it is in the knowledge of God not that they are, but that they are possible (Article 9, Reply to Objection 3). Supposing there is a clean division between God's will and intellect (at least in the Thomist conception), it seems that either will on its own causes that which is known by the intellect, or the intellect causes what is known, since it incorporates both 'knowledge and will'.[17] This is confusing. Either way, will is involved, potentially resulting in the clash of the free divine will and the free human will.

The problem in the strategy of interpreting God's knowledge as cause by invoking the divine will, is that it transforms one philosophical conundrum into the theological

---

[15] Kretzmann (1983) does not think that Aquinas was aware of this inconsistency in his philosophy, instead seeing God's causative knowledge as actually providing distance between the necessity and contingency of events by explaining that the divine knowledge is a formal cause, not an efficient cause.

[16] *"...God's eternal knowledge that you are reading these words at this time is not something he has because you are reading these words; on the contrary, you are, it seems, reading these words because he knows that that is what you are doing at this time. So how can your doing it count as contingent, or as up to you?"* (Kretzmann 1983:64)

[17] Anthony Kenny (1979:36) resolves the standoff between Origen and Aquinas in this matter as follows: "How can this be reconciled with the doctrine that God's knowledge is the cause of things? Aquinas replies by drawing the distinction between practical and speculative knowledge. In the case of God's practical knowledge we can say that things are as they are because God has knowledge plus the will that they should be so; it is true of God's speculative knowledge, on the other hand, that he knows that things are as they are because they are as he wills. There is a difference between the two kinds of knowledge even in the case of omniscience."

dilemma of how divine determination can be consistent with human freedom.[18] Divine determination, if true, does not answer the foreknowledge conundrum by invoking will. It just extinguishes the conundrum by rejecting libertarian free will, assuming, quite credibly, that divine determination is incompatible with human libertarian free will. Finally, though Aquinas is difficult and puzzling (even inconsistent as suggested by Kretzmann), I have discussed him as a warning that the spectre of will often hides itself in questions of intellect, as I shall show with regard to Molinism. This account in (4) effectively leaves the Gordian knot of foreknowledge untouched in that God's knowledge and causation are the very same thing. Call this an identity thesis of knowledge and causality. As I mentioned when I discussed William E. Mann's rejection of the separation thesis and his *wintellect* position, which assumes simplicity (§ 4.3), position (4) offers little for the libertarian as it reduces to compatibilism.

So far, we have not travelled very far, only to have pointed out the difficulties in choosing between four options (1), (2), (3) or (4), with their negative outcomes respectively: the meaningfulness of claiming that God's knowledge is a cause of future contingents in (1); the collapsing back into the foreknowledge conundrum in (2); explanatory circularity in (3); and compatibilism without hope of understanding the relationship between causality and knowledge in (4), which is to leave the knot untied.

5.2 **How Molina Actually Answers the Euthyphroid Question**

Molina raises the Euthyphroid question and attempts to answer it in fact. Molina claims,

> …nonetheless it is not because He knows that something is going to be that that thing is going to be. Just the opposite, it is because the thing will come to be from its causes that He knows that it is going to be. (Disputation 52, Section 19, Freddoso 1988:179)

---

[18] William Craig puts it this way (1988:126): "Therefore, it seems to me that having sought to escape the clutches of theological fatalism, Aquinas flees into the arms of divine determinism. In maintaining that God's knowledge is the cause of everything God knows, Thomas transforms the universe into a nexus which, though freely chosen by God, is causally determined from above, thus eliminating human freedom."

Call the phrase, "the thing will come to be from its causes that He knows that it is going to be" *Molina's Answer*. It tracks the Origenist Assumption that God foreknows P *because* it is a future event. To say that a thing will come to be from its causes speaks of, for example, a free human act performed through agent causation. This sees 'coming to be' as *inchoative*—there are no descriptions of external cause either by knowledge, will or determinism.

Molina even quotes Origen favourably, taking his stance against Aquinas. This shows, I think, that Molina himself was not aware of the gravity of the complications that his use of the divine will has in mediating between middle and free knowledge. Molina, I claim, has misunderstood his own theory, or unconsciously given it a gloss that makes it appear more favourably as a libertarian solution, against the Thomists (Dominicans), Lutherans and Calvinists. It is puzzling that Molina leans in his answers more towards the Origenist assumption than Aquinas' knowledge as causation.

Molinism relies on the *presumption* that neither God's middle nor free knowledge causally determines the objects of knowledge, for if either did causally determine P, then P could not be a middle or future contingent. Simply, if it did, then Molinism would not be able to resolve the foreknowledge dilemma. What this means then is that middle and free knowledge (and natural knowledge), *look as if* they are comparable to human perceptual knowledge in that they are not active (causal) but passive (reactionary). This resemblance is strengthened if we consider again what Molina states about God's knowledge of future contingents: "It is because the thing will come to be from its causes that He knows that it is going to be" (179). So if we were to ask what Molina would have said about the relation between God's knowledge and the objects of his knowledge, we would tend to assume that Molina's understanding would agree with Origen's presumption. For to disagree would be to introduce a causative element in God's knowledge, a causative element which may affect the contingency of free choice, and one that inconsistently leans towards Aquinas where Molina's polemic shows he leans more towards Origen.

5.2.1 Free Knowledge

I contrast 'free knowledge' as a conception or doctrine and 'foreknowledge' as a concept with dictionary or lexical meaning. Yet Molinist free knowledge of p would be foreknowledge if p were future with respect to God's now.

Viewing this relationship between free knowledge and foreknowledge, we should be able, in some cases, to substitute free knowledge for foreknowledge, while preserving meaning and truth conditions. So we get the 'Molinised' EQ question,

- MEQ: Does a future contingent obtain because God Free Knows it, or does God Free Know it because it obtains?

Now, *this* is a Euthyphroid type question where both disjuncts are allegedly true, given what we know about God's Free Knowledge being a composite of his free will and knowledge. This is because each of these two propositions, *'a future contingent* P *will obtain'* and *'God free knows future contingent* P*'*, is a sufficient condition for the other. We arrive at the bi-conditional, which I shall call,

The Molinist Co-Sufficiency of Free Knowledge & Future Contingency Principle, (just the Molinist Co-Sufficiency Principle).

- *A future contingent* P *obtains if and only if God free knows* P

However, Molina's Answer would have us accept the second disjunct of MEQ: *God free knows a future contingent because it obtains*, on grounds of the comparison in his text which speaks of the (Origenist) inchoative *coming to be of its (own) causes.* To translate Molina's Answer to a more perspicuous statement, *God free knows a future agent-causal event* because it is future. Putting this more clearly in standard form:

Premise: An agent-causal event P is future.
Conclusion: ∴ God Free Knows agent-causal event P

This is false by Molina's own reasoning. *Molina's Answer* is inconsistent with the Molinist Co-Sufficiency Principle. Molinism's conception of free knowledge does not share, contrary to what he has written, the Origenist assumption that future contingents cause God's knowledge. Either Molina's own explanation in his *Concordia* is inconsistent, or the theory of Molinism is incoherent because the inconsistent explanations: (1) Molina's Favoured Origenist Answer (contra Aquinas), and, (2) the Co-Sufficiency Principle are derivable from the same core theory.

5.3 **The Analogy of Memory**

In § 4.2, I utilized Zagzebski's (2002) distinction between fatalism that results from the divine will and fatalism that results from intellect. In medieval theology, intellect does not mean *just* knowledge, but for our purposes we can take it as such. Zagzebski's two kinds of fatalism can be presented as Will-Fatalism (WF) and Foreknowledge-Fatalism (FF). WF is an issue for strong theological determinism models of providence, while FF represents any simple foreknowledge view that results in the foreknowledge conundrum where, loosely, merely foreknowing p 'makes' p necessary by the virtual sufficiency of just foreknowing it. Molinism tries to avoid both of these fatalisms and more, by combining in such a way the two divine attributes which independently entail WF or FF. This is a courageous position and we cannot rule out its potential success *a priori*.

How do we combine middle knowledge and will in a single account, avoiding determinism, the foreknowledge conundrum, the dilemma and the incompatibility? Or more positively, how does combining them provide a source and reconciliation answer to Freddoso's SQ and RQ? I argued in Chapter 4 that we should avoid the doctrine of simplicity (DDS) in relation to Molinism. If we accept DDS, there is no non-nominalist account of the priority of middle knowledge to will. We need a real distinction, so we should reject any account of combining them which sees them as ontologically the same. This is to rule out an identity or a *parallel* operation of MK and W working together 'at the same time.' If not parallel, then a *serial* ordering might be the way to understand the

Molinist combination principle. This leaves us with two choices of series where any sense of ordering is of logical priority, but is based on temporal sequence. The second element in the series cannot obtain without the first element of the series; so either 'God wills *p, then* God knows *p*', or 'God knows *p then* God wills *p*'. 'Then' here is of course intentional equivocation between modal and temporal sense.

The alternative series are:

- Series 1: 'God wills *p,* then God knows *p*', paraphrases into the more colloquial, *God knows what he first wills;* or *God knows willed p.*

- Series 2: 'God knows *p* then God wills *p*', paraphrases into the more colloquial *God wills what he first knows*; or *God wills known p.*

    Hence,

    Series 1: God knows what he wills = g*WpKp*

     Series 2: God wills what he knows = g*KpWp*

Series 1 can be rejected as an option for understanding the combination principle because it is a version of theological determinism via W-Fatalism. Series 2 scarcely avoids the foreknowledge conundrum for God's logically first activity if knowledge *K* is understood as *fore*knowledge. This formula g*FKpWp* produces the conundrum, the incompatibility, the dilemma, because knowledge comes before will. The coherence of asserting foreknowing *p* then *willing p* is not open to question at this stage. However, if God just wills what he (already) foreknows, if that were possible, if that makes sense, divine foreknowledge is still logically prior to will. We need to reconfigure knowledge K so that it does not refer to *fore*knowledge. This is where the *complexity* of the combination begins.

I call the following scenario *throwing something from the past into the future.*

Pretend that something has already happened, say the signing of some treaty between two countries. Both the presidents signed the treaty freely at time t one hundred years ago. This fact is accidentally necessary.[19] Before t is what is not necessary but a contingent matter, while after t it is necessary as a matter of the past. It is both contingent and necessary from different aspects. God now past-knows (PK) the signing of the treaty. What would happen if we reconfigure the knowledge in the second series from foreknowledge to past-knowledge of p?

Series 2: God 'fore' wills what he past-knows = $gPKpWp$

Would there be any tainting of the modal properties of the signing of the treaty if this same state of affairs that has already happened, that is accidentally necessary, is projected into the future by God's will? It is neither willed directly nor known directly by his foreknowledge. He *already* knew it. Nothing can be done to change what has happened in the state of affairs of the signing of the treaty, but it didn't have to happen.

On the temporal to logical analogy with past-knowledge and middle knowledge, the latter has some property resembling accidental necessity. The state of affairs in a CCF did not have to happen, but if the circumstances conspire in the right sort of way with the right people, then the free signing of the treaty *would* happen again. This is on the assumption that repeating exactly the same circumstances elicits the same free responses. This throwing-forward argument (again, an analogy), shows how the existence and use of middle knowledge escapes the two horns of Will-fatalism and Knowledge-fatalism:

Historial Series 2:

God fore wills what he knows from the past = $gPKpWp$ = 'God wills past-known p'

Logical Series 2:

God wills what he middle-knows = $gMKpWp$ = 'God wills middle-known p'

---

[19] Accidental necessity is notoriously not a simple thing to define and there are many different accounts of it.

Sometimes experiences we have with particular friends or family on particular occasions—a day at the beach or a party—might be so enjoyable we want to have them again. Reminiscence might make us re-engineer that situation tomorrow with the same people, situations and familiar settings, sometimes with the accompanying naivety that the same state of affairs will eventuate if we set up the identical situation with the same people. We want it to happen, we might even will it to happen, but the actions will be performed freely, and of course, may end up producing different results. Aware of the potential that the results may differ, we may try to reconstruct the historical situation so closely that it raises the probability that it will be qualitatively the same situation. If everyone has fun and enjoys themselves like before, everything will have worked to plan, but if it is a complete disaster we may be blamed because we are responsible for it. Just having the memory is not a matter of responsibility, but using the memory is. Why, for example, did we choose *that* memory to re-instantiate? Knowledge as memory is not to blame, but how we use it by our will is. Fundamentally we are responsible for the choices of which memories to re-instantiate and whether or not they result in the same actions. Tacitly we are mini-Molinists when we try to actualize our reminiscences. Strengthening this analogy portrays God's re-actuating of middle knowledge as *anamnesis.*[20]

This is my explanation of how middle knowledge escapes both W&F fatalism, sidestepping along the way the foreknowledge conundrum. Moreover, God_M 'foreknows' p by his *free knowledge* which is a misleading label. It is not *knowledge that is free*, but it is knowledge about what *God's free will* actualizes, i.e., 'God knows what he wills', (God knows willed p), which is the Series 2. So then we can formulate the completed formula by binding g$MKpWp$ within an operation for 'free knowledge' (FrK), that is: gFrK($MKpWp$).

> 'God knows (God wills middle-known p)'

---

[20] It would be interesting to understand the anamnestic understanding of the Eucharist as reverse-Molinism. The sacrificial act has already happened, but the sacramental effects can be re-instantiated and conferred anew as a real sacrifice.

Accidental necessity is closed under entailment and the Basic Argument for incompatibilism relies on this. But here we cannot speak of the so-called accidental necessity of the past-known or of the middle known as entailing another necessary proposition, since at the Series 2 order it is God's will that makes the future obtain by throwing something from the past into the future, or actualizing an object of middle knowledge. The temporal analogy of throwing forward positions the agent at the logical moment of the will. This agent reaches back into the past and grabs something to throw forward. The strong/weak actualization distinction sounds like a means to avoid a comparable notion of volitional closure. This is true enough, for Molinism cannot have that God directly wills the state of affairs—he can only put the right people in the right situations—in the same way we cannot force people to have fun at a party that we would like to repeat.

Here ends my speculation, which attempts to achieve a better understanding of how will and intellect can be combined in Molinism and of how Molinism tries to avoid the fatalism charges that Zagzebski refers to. The result of the right way of combining will and intellect ostensibly means that God can control creatures who have libertarian freedom. This addresses Plantinga's caveat that God cannot do the logically impossible by causing us to act where our actions are free. It is logically possible to weakly actualize states of affairs containing libertarianly free creatures. Moreover, the power given to God concerning his knowledge is that he can foreknow future contingents. Therefore, God can control and foreknow future contingents by selecting some circumstances over the others.

The temporal understanding still has problems. Choosing and deciding are responsibility-conferring. Because there is a Series 2 logical order in Molinism, there is the potential for some form of foreordination or predestination, (i.e. 'Free Knowledge' = 'God knows what he wills', *God knows willed p*). This is what the *modus ponens* schema infers from premise 2 (and 1) to the conclusion. Hence I ask, is this a form of determinism or predestination?

There is also a question whether deferring to middle knowledge to solve the foreknowledge conundrum, just defers the conundrum back onto middle knowledge. It might be the case that a temporal understanding of God's middle knowledge as re-

actualizing the past might show that future contingents hurled into the future also remain accidentally necessary. However, once the story is modalised into the conventional understanding of middle knowledge as a logical moment before the divine will, it is not clear anymore why God's middle knowledge does not result in the Middle Knowledge Conundrum: that which God middle knows must be so. The sense of 'must' here pertains to why a CCF is '*accidentally* necessary', that is, why is it still *contingent*? To respond by saying that counterfactuals of freedom are just that— of freedom— is question begging.

5.4 **Conclusion**

Molinist theory teaches that God's free knowledge is a sufficient condition for future contingents and *vice versa*. The term 'free knowledge' is itself misleading since it refers to God's knowledge that emanates from his free will.[21]

In contrast, Molina's own views are really more like those of Aquinas than Origen, although he presents them in an Origenist guise in order to distance his position from Aquinas and the Reformers. Thus in Molinism, God partially, causally determines his knowledge of 'future' contingents. Although talk of middle knowledge gives the appearance that God's foreknowledge is passive like Origen's, the reality is otherwise. We have an issue reconciling God's will with creaturely freedom, in the same way that stronger forms of theological determinism (Thomism, Calvinism) do. The analogy of re-instantiating memories show that there are two forms of responsibility held by the agent who stands in the logical moment of the divine will. He or she is responsible both for choosing which memories to make real again, and for making them real. By analogy God$_M$ is potentially responsible for *what* he chooses to actualize, and *that* he actualizes it.

---

[21] Why not call 'Free knowledge' predestination, or 'free decree'? In Molinism they are just two different ways of speaking about the same thing using either an epistemic term or a volitional term.

Chapter 6: **Anti-Molinist Arguments by Analogy**

> *"A manipulator which none - greater can be conceived"*
>
> -William Hasker

6.1 **Introduction**

This chapter marks a change in emphasis from foreknowledge to providence. Having brought to bear the will/intellect distinction (WID) on Molinism's foreknowledge solution, in this chapter I begin to examine Molinism's theory of providence in relation to the WID and turn to the question of whether Molinist providence is manipulative.

Here I look at various arguments using analogy that are critical of Molinism. My strategy is to make a mini-inductive sweep of three main sources, i.e. philosophers William Hasker, Nick Trakakis and Pierre Bayle.[1] These three sources have two features in common in that they are all *critical of a Molinist position,* and use *analogical reasoning* in some form in the criticism. There is an interpretative element, however—on the part of the reader of the analogies and on my part in the analysis—concerning the level of force the 'analogy' has in these three texts.

6.1.1 Analogies

Analogies are powerfully persuasive. In an ironical combination of the concepts now under discussion—analogy and manipulation—Hofstadter and Sander (2012) tell us in Chapter 5 *"How Analogies Manipulate Us":*

> Is it possible that analogies have the power to manipulate us, to twist us around their little fingers? Certainly; in fact they do so in two senses of the term "manipulate". First, analogies often arise in our minds without our even being aware of them; they *invade* us surreptitiously and seize center stage. Second, analogies *coerce* us; they force our thoughts to flow along certain channels… They shape our

---

[1] I discuss Zimmerman (2009) in brief towards the end of this chapter.

> interpretations of situations and determine the conclusions of arguments. Put otherwise, an analogy will not be content with merely crashing the party; having shown up, it then dictates the rest of the evening. (Hofstadter & Sander 2012:257)[2]

What these authors say is very true, which just means that we should be more on our guard when assessing analogies and analogical arguments. Sometimes their persuasive effect on us still lingers even after analysis has shown that they are impotent. This is true of words like 'manipulation'. The feeling after hearing that someone else has been called a manipulator lingers on even after a proper defence has been made to exculpate them. It is a case of mud sticking once it has been thrown. We need to make sure we need to throw it before hurling it at a model of theism.

The use of analogy is more often a way of *pointing* than a way of *showing,* and so I distinguish between two levels or uses of analogy—the explanatory and the argumentative:

1. Explanatory: The use of *analogy* that points to the claim that *God$_M$ is like a manipulator.*

2. Argumentative: The use of *arguments from analogy* that demonstrate or give good reason to conclude that *God$_M$ is a manipulator.*

The three main texts that I will analyse may shift between these two different uses of analogy. In other words, they might use analogy in different ways, even within the same text. This is to be expected, given:

- the nature of analogies: they are messy in that they involve various facets of the discipline known as 'informal logic', which subsume problems regarding natural language and its interpretation (interpretation of speaker's intention, problems of ambiguity, equivocation, impreciseness, et cetera.) Also, arguments within the

---

[2] Their next chapter (6) is titled, "How we Manipulate Analogies."

discipline of informal logic tend to be more broadly inductive or abductive than deductive.

- the purpose of analogies: they are better at pointing to, rather than demonstrating conclusively.

In addition, it is often understood that analogies and analogical arguments are useful supplementary devices to complement an existing proof, but are not proofs in themselves. There are two good reasons for holding this view. The first is the obvious position that analogical arguments are inductive and hence defeasible. The second reason is that they are stories or explanations *by comparison* and are somehow indirect. David Hackett Fischer writes of "the fallacy of proof by analogy…which violates a cardinal rule of analogical inference—analogy is a useful tool of historical understanding only as an auxiliary proof." It should not be a substitute for proof (Fischer 1970:247).[3]

6.1.2 Anti-Molinist Analogies

For the anti-Molinist arguments that I begin to analyse in the next section, I am interested in:

- What is the inferential 'force' in the use of these analogies? Is it strong or weak?

- What is it that these philosophers are claiming is true about Molinism via these analogies?

- Can the findings of these philosophers, in relation to their anti-Molinist arguments, be presented in a form that is more robust and resilient than analogical

---

[3] Though Fischer's text (1970) pertains to 'historians' fallacies,' his remarks on the fallacy of perfect analogy is applicable to analogies in general. Fischer lists some other fallacies of analogy and I mention a few that are worth taking precautionary measures to guard against in the analysis of anti-Molinist arguments. Fischer lists the fallacies of *insidious analogy*, (an unintended analogical inference is embedded in the author's language and carried across to the reader by subliminal processes, 244); *absurd analogy*, (an inference is extended between two non-related properties, 253); *multiple analogy*, (a "structural deficiency which occurs when a second analogy is bootlegged into the main analogy so as to undercut the basis of the comparison," 253) and of course, the fallacy of *false analogy* (251).

argumentation? That is, can we be 'deductivists' and find forms of these

arguments that are deductive in order to present the insights of these analogies?

- Exactly what kind of manipulation is the Molinist God guilty of?

This last item is the most difficult. 'Manipulation' is a term with many secondary connotations apart from its primary meaning. Moreover, 'manipulation' is itself often used metaphorically, extending far past secondary connotations. We need to distinguish whether the anti-Molinist uses the term, and on what occasion, in a literal or figurative way, though even this division is not clear cut. On a Gricean account of metaphor as categorical falsity, to say that *God$_M$ is a manipulator* with a speaker's metaphorical intention, is to utter something literally false about God$_M$. There does not seem, however, to be anything literally false about asserting that 'one person manipulates another,' which suggests that we have on our hands, more properly, the distinction between literal and dead-metaphorical readings of the term. However, I will stick with the literal/metaphorical distinction as this is how some of the literature portrays the differences, (for example, Rudinow 1978). There are of course, benign claims that 'God manipulates X' where the sense of manipulation is morally neutral.

Literal or primary denotation of manipulation is rather inoffensive and benign, yet these three anti-Molinist arguments seem to be claiming much more than that God manipulates in the way a physician might manipulate a person's limb, or in the way an economist manipulates numbers. If the word manipulation is understood in its extreme form, it can become a rather emotive indictment relying on affective force, rather than on the cognitive force of rational persuasion. On this latter and stronger force of manipulation, we need to make sure no fallacious persuasive definition is given, where an affective or non-cognitive sense is hidden in the *definiendum*. I do not discount reasoning with affective content, it's just that it is harder to figure out precisely what is being communicated.

The inductive sweep, therefore, tries to ascertain different senses of 'manipulation' used in anti-Molinist argumentation. The sweep also searches for data to back up my

intuitions about anti-Molinist arguments from manipulation. So here I look for evidence to support:

- The Main claims: (1) God under the Molinist Model manipulates. (2) 'Manipulation' in Molinism can be defined into different kinds or senses, X, Y and Z. (3) Molinism does not succeed as a foreknowledge solution.
- The How claim: God manipulates somehow, using a combination of his middle knowledge and will.
- The Effects claim: Molinist manipulation results in one or more of the following:
  - It results in creaturely freedom or moral responsibility that is somehow undermined or eliminated by his manipulation.
  - It results in exploiting or using the agents, even though they still act freely and are still morally responsible for their actions.
  - It arranges the future in such a way that it is metaphysically 'closed'. (Explanation of this: The insistence that we have libertarian free will, if it involves alternative possibilities, suggests that the future is open for us and for God).
  - It *morally* implicates God via this type of providential control, and does not exculpate him from the moral effects that might follow from such control.

I abbreviate the phrase 'Anti-Molinist Argument from Analogy' to (**AMAA**).[4]

6.2 **William Hasker**

Hasker states that a God who does not risk is a "*manipulator which no greater can be conceived*" (1990:124). The original context is important. Hasker does not directly attribute this to the God of the Molinist. The background to this claim is in response to Thomas Flint's review of his book, *God, Time and Knowledge.* In discussing the

---

[4] Although Hasker would define himself as an anti-Molinist, I do not claim this about Trakakis or Bayle, but their local arguments used here are anti-Molinist.

traditional view of divine providence and government versus a risk-taking God who lacks middle knowledge and foreknowledge, Flint remarks: "I would like to register my strong preference for the traditional picture over the Haskerian alternative in which God becomes the odds-maker extraordinaire, or as we might say, the bookie than which none greater can be conceived" (Flint 1990:114; see also Flint 1998:98).

6.2.1 Evaluation of Hasker (1990)

The significance of Hasker's philosophy (1990) lies in the assistance it offers for understanding the theistic models of extreme control or extreme risk, along with the spectrum of variation that occurs in between. Essentially, although Hasker's opponent in the context was the Molinist, Thomas Flint, there is nothing particularly relevant to the Molinist conception of God *in the analogy quote that I have taken from Hasker.* The target was more broadly a God who does not risk. The information from his text of 1990 is useful, but further work needs to be done to see how the Molinist conception of God manipulates in a unique way.

6.2.2 Hasker (1990): Bookie or Manipulator?

Hasker and Flint's comic rhetoric invites us to decide between a *divine manipulator* and a *divine bookie*, where both authors know, I am sure, that these extremes are falsely dichotomous and extreme, given the Anselmian allusion that there is '*none-greater*'. Still, the rhetoric of each is powerful and pinpoints the gravity of the issues at stake: how much control does God have, or how much control should God have, in providence?

Hasker writes that risk should properly be attributed to the divine being by analogy or comparison with human beings:

> What would we make of a parent who proclaimed her absolute unwillingness to take any risks at all in raising her children?
> …some of our parental risk-taking stems from our unavoidable, though partial, ignorance about circumstances and about our own children's character and development. And God is altogether free of such ignorance as that. But the other part of the risk, is simply that which is inevitable

> as we give our children their own lives to lead and then watch, hope, and pray as they lead them – and that risk even God cannot avoid, without becoming — shall we say, the "manipulator than which none greater can be conceived." (Hasker 1990:123-124)

With some interpretation on my part, I paraphrase Hasker thus:

- What would we make of a parent who willingly does not take risks in raising children?

  From this question, I infer there are two kinds of *risk*.

1. Some of our risk in human parent-child relationships is epistemic: we lack complete knowledge of the direction and moral development of our children, and the situations they are in, so that we have no knowledge and hence no *de facto* power over their lives.

   God does not have this type of ignorance, so he may not be able to take risks in this way.

2. There is another kind of risk which is the proper 'letting go' of our control so that our children develop their own moral autonomy. Unless we let go of this control, we manipulate our children; we do not permit them to grow up and become their own proper selves, as we have had the chance to do.[5] This kind of risk God can willingly avoid taking,[6] but if he doesn't, he will become a great manipulator of the lives of his children—the whole of humanity.

   The two types of human risk here are *involuntary* risk, since it is by our limited epistemic nature that we must exercise this kind of risk, versus *voluntary* risk, which is

---

[5] It is possible to distinguish further between stochastic risk, which is the point of Flint's accusation and the conception of risk here, (the taking of risk over unknown probabilities, perhaps even randomized events); *and* moral or existential risk, which is the chance of losing (or gaining) something worthwhile or significant in taking a stochastic risk. To act against the evidence of known probabilities is 'to dare'. This is to risk in this extreme moral/existential way of *should have known better*. For example, someone might try to leap a huge gap between buildings.This is like gambling or taking a risk over the likelihood of reaching the other side safely. The frame around this action gives it virtue or vice. It is virtue if it is the attempt to save someone else from a burning building, vice if it is just a dare imposed on oneself or by a peer. Apart from *dare-taking,* normal risk-taking, which might have moral or existentially significant consequences, is still a kind of risk that a human parent might want for their child.

[6] I would rephrase Hasker's "*…that risk even God cannot avoid, without becoming*" (the great manipulator)*,* to the positive *God can avoid that kind of risk and consequently avoid becoming the great manipulator.*

the appropriate action we might take to enable our children to develop proper autonomy and maturity, even in situations where we might foresee the outcome. It is not hard to imagine the kind of controlling parents, and perhaps we know of such people or their children, who manipulate every detail of their children's lives such that the child never matures, because they never take their *own risks*—voluntarily—and learn from their experiences, good or bad.

What I find missing or understated in Hasker's argument, is the purpose or teleology behind a human parent adopting voluntary risk. This purpose is the child *becoming* what the parents themselves have become—mature, developed, autonomous grown-ups. Without this purpose or goal for their child's development, there does not appear to be any great culpability on the part of the parent. If we could imagine a state of affairs where an adult takes parental care of an offspring, but neither of them ages physically or develops psychologically, then there is no misgiving or moral culpability in manipulating a young child's milieu in order to care for them or protect them from harm. In fact, it is likely that there are times when all parents have manipulated circumstances for positive reasons at the appropriate times, situations, and ages of their children. Indeed, when the parents themselves reach a certain age where they lose physical or psychological autonomy, a grown-up child may have the responsibility of looking after their parent in this way.

Now this is one place where Hasker's analogy might come apart, although I note not every analogy is perfect, and only negatively relevant dis-analogies are pertinent in undermining the inference. This, I do not think, is such a negatively relevant dis-analogy: God, under theism, does not long to see us become divine, as he is. Nevertheless, he does want us to develop into mature adults and learn autonomy, which we can only do through our own risk taking. Given *this* purpose, I concede that Hasker has a very good point in this analogy, which I elaborate by stating that here *risk is given.* By limiting one's control, which is itself a risk, we let another agent take risks themselves to promote their development into virtuous, moral and psychologically healthy beings. On this analogy, God gives us this risk, which is his expression of free will. One can neither give risk nor take risk without exercising some form of indeterministic free will.

6-8

Hasker also states that God is free of the kind of ignorance that humans have. If so, he could avoid manipulating human creatures if he limits his knowledge. Here there is an inverse relationship between knowledge and risk. By self-limitation, he won't know with certainty what would or will happen in some future contingent situations, but he would allow for more risk for humans to be more self-determining. Parents *can* choose to take risks with their children or they *can* manipulate. But they take the course of risk-taking on the grounds that it gives "*our children their own lives*" (Hasker 1990).   God may kenotically choose to limit his omniscience for a purpose in some manner, as parents also do.[7]

6.2.3 Hasker (2011)

In 2011, Hasker presents a more developed position. He compares the God of theological determinism with that of open theism and concludes both have the same amount of power. Theological determinism, he thinks, does not give God any more power than open theism. Where the difference lies is in control:

> the determinist God has an overwhelming desire for total control; it is totally unacceptable to such a deity that any other being   should in any way have any role in determining the course of events in the world. (Hasker 2011: 20)

At this point an analogy is introduced. If we were to arrive at a model of God with a "divine character of that of a great and excellent human being," we would avoid the controlling notion of a deity of theological determinism (20). This comparison is indicative of Hasker's valuation of what a model of God should be like: he should be similar to, or even better than, the best human person we can conceive of. He elaborates the nature of this ideal person by pointing to the contrary situation, where we normally would not want to work for an employer with the same controlling attitude of a

---

[7] A case could be made that if God can divest himself of his power through *kenosis*, then he also, (as well or instead of) can limit his omniscience. For as there is a difference between fighting with one hand *tied* or *held* behind your back (Forrest: 2007:28), there is a difference between fighting *blind* and fighting with one eye *closed*. God may have foreknowledge of future contingents, but choose to look the other way, if that were possible for him, bearing in mind the metaphoric construction.

determinist God who demands total control, and who does not relinquish any power to his or her subordinates. We also would not wish to be the children of such a parent, or to be such a parent to our children. In my words, whether it is our manager or our parents, total control and power with no *regard for the other person* is fundamentally a type of bullying. Hasker turns the tables and addresses the determinist, exclaiming that,

> It is *your* God – the God so obsessed with total control that he is unable or unwilling to allow any other being any role in determining what happens in the world – it is *this* God who is too small. (20, original emphasis)

What I am particularly interested in is what Hasker writes in his footnote at this juncture. He states that Molinism is *equivocal* on this topic of freedom and divine control. The implication of the context of a discussion of divine determinism is that Molinism is more like determinism. In the Molinist position,

> Persons are said to enjoy libertarian freedom, but God, in virtue of knowing the 'counterfactuals of freedom,' knows exactly what they would do under any possible set of circumstances. Thus the decisions actually made are precisely those God has planned for them to make; indeed, God himself has brought about (weakly actualized) those decisions by placing those persons in precisely those situations. This eliminates all risk on God's part, but it also greatly minimizes the genuine and spontaneous contribution of created persons to the course of events. (2011:20-21 and fn. 8)

From this point in the text, in parentheses and without introduction, Hasker continues the theme with an analogy that implies comparison with the God of the Molinist. Here I remove the brackets for visual clarity:

> 'Mommy, mommy: look at the picture I have made!' 'Of course, dear, I planned and set things up on purpose so you would make a picture exactly just like I planned for you to make.' (20-21)

This is an interesting analogy, and its abruptness in the text might be minimized if we prefaced it with a phrase of Hasker's (1990), discussed above—*What would we make of a parent who acted like this mother*? We would deem her over-controlling as a kind of

manipulator, but more importantly, it seems as if the mother should take the credit for the picture that her child produces.

For the purposes of my subsequent discussion in this chapter and the rest of the dissertation, (wherein I collect these claims in order to evaluate their truth, acceptability or falsity), I summarise the salient points from this portion of Hasker (2011) and fill in the relevant Molinist claims to make a complete picture. Again, I add my interpretation and elaboration to these points, but do not think I stray too far from Hasker's original intentions.

1. Molinism teaches that humans have libertarian freedom.
2. God *knows exactly*, via knowledge of CCFs, what (any possible) person would do in any possible circumstance.
3. Therefore, the 'decisions' the person makes are fore-planned by God.
4. *My elaboration*: Our 'decisions' are what God has decided for us, so they are not really *our* decisions, (i.e., possibly, no UR or sourcehood condition).
5. God makes these decisions *for us* by weakly actualizing the appropriate circumstances.
6. This eliminates all risk on God's part.
7. It also minimizes the human contribution where our actions are 'genuine and spontaneous.' In the mother-daughter analogy, the mother would take credit for what the daughter does. The former is creatively responsible, the latter was somehow determined to create this particular work.
8. *Interpretation*: Hence, it minimizes a sense of freedom of ultimate origination or source-hood, (it may or may not satisfy some sense of freedom of alternative possibilities).
9. *Synthesis*: On one side, God in theological determinist models is over-controlling and takes no risk. The comparison here is to the human bully who commands or orders her staff—*viz.*, she *wills* them to do what she wants by coercion. On the other side of the comparison, God under the Molinist model is over-controlling

and takes no risk by *knowing exactly what we would do in any situation, then creates that situation in order to get us to do what he wants.*

10. This is a powerful comparison: do we want to work for a bully who orders us around, or a sly manipulator, who gets us to do what the bully can get us to do not by *coercion*, but through *manipulation*? We usually know when we are coerced, but we don't always know that we are *being* manipulated. The awareness of being manipulated is usually *ex post facto*, if at all.[8]

11. Both kinds of managers, or parents—the bully and the manipulator—do not take risks, but they overly control in very different ways. By analogy, 'God' viewed under the determinist model or of Molinism does not take risks, but controls in very different ways.

12. *Interpretation:* TD models control by will alone, whereas Molinism controls primarily by intellect, with God knowing what we would do, and ensuring one of these states of affairs obtains.[9]

6.2.4 Synthesis and Summary of Hasker 1990 and 2011

In both of these sources of Hasker's, one of his main themes is the concept of God as risk-taker versus the God who has too much control.[10] This is a position I will not pay

---

[8] This raises an interesting question. It seems inconsistent for a person to wilfully submit to another who is known to be a manipulator. If a person knows they are being manipulated, can they also believe that their own choices and actions are free and *up to them*? If manipulated, their own behaviours and choices would in some sense be up to *somebody else* and they would know that. Moreover, it is difficult to trust or have faith in a manipulator. By *this* analogy, it may be difficult to live as a Molinist and believe God is a manipulator. There is some irony in subscribing to Molinism, for those such as myself who think that God_M manipulates in a way that is inappropriate for any agent to do.

[9] Here is the genesis of my sub-thesis that *Molinism is worse than Calvinism* because God_M controls through stealth.

[10] Hasker does state, and I agree, that determinist models do not portray God as having *more* power. Rather, it is the *demand* for power which distinguishes them. Some may view this representation of God as anthropomorphic. Perhaps ontologically, God really does have that much power, understood in classical theistic conceptions as Omni-God. I speculate that Molinism appears to limit God's willing-power so that it does not present itself as strong theological determinism, but instead, as I indicate in point (12), the Molinist God becomes just as powerful through the interaction of his will and intellect: what he does with his middle knowledge.

too much attention to, since the indictment that 'God takes no risks' by itself does not distinguish Molinism from, say, Calvinism. It does not show *how* God under these respective models avoids risk. I shall therefore avoid talking about divine risk *per se*, although I do not dismiss it as unimportant. There is an intuitive correspondence between the level of risk that one agent takes so that another agent can also exercise risk and thereby exhibit their freedom by taking this risk. More important in the larger framework of this research inquiry is the opposite view, that God has too much control, and *how* he has this: by *will* or by *intellect and will?*

Now I will present the core summary of what I see Hasker to be saying in these two sources and add my contribution by way of extending his important themes further:

- A person can exercise too much control by not taking risks with themselves or others.
- The risk-control continuum can be viewed from the perspective of a primary agent's will or knowledge over a secondary agent.
- God in determinist models does not take risks in respect of his choices or decisions over the secondary agent. *He wills too much.*
- God in the Molinist model does not take risks, but has too much control because he effectively *knows too much,* or knows with *too much 'certainty'* what the secondary agent could, would, or will do.
- By analogy with humans who have superordinate *de jure* control (mothers, fathers, parents, managers, bosses) over secondary agents (children, employees, role-subordinates), then
  a. A bully *uses* his or her will to coerce, to *make* somebody to *A*.
  b. A manipulator *uses* his or her knowledge to *get* or *let* somebody to *A*.
- On account (a), we *know* we are not free.
- On account (b), we only *think* we are free.
- Manipulation is worse than bullying.

- Virtuous or proper control between the superordinate and the subordinate agent is to reduce the exercise of our *will*, or our certain knowledge about or over the subordinate, so that we transfer risk to the subordinate, thereby making them *de facto* in control of their own lives. This effectively sees the divine and human agents working as co-ordinates *with* each other.

I have strayed far from Hasker's original claims, but think that it is important to do so. I attribute the following abbreviated thesis statement to Hasker:

- Hasker Thesis: God_M does not risk because he has middle knowledge, which gives him the ability to be *certain* of creaturely outcomes that he has control over. He chooses to use this knowledge, although perhaps could choose not to in order to show less control and transfer risk to the human agent. (Supressed premise: some risk is good).

6.3 **Nick Trakakis (2006)**

Nick Trakakis (2006) reviews three general models of providence in relation to theodicy: hard determinism, open theism and Molinism. He concludes after comparing open theism and Molinism, that neither of these two libertarian accounts offers any real benefit over hard determinism. My use of Trakakis concerns what he says about Molinism, and so I will not give a review of his paper but focus solely on one aspect of it. Trakakis' views about the manipulative nature of God in the Molinist model are among the strongest and most defined. I quote the relevant section from his 2006 article:

> A neglected but deep flaw in the Molinist account concerns its ability to deliver the goods of free will that have been squandered by the divine determinist. The problem, specifically, is that God's strategy of actualizing a world on the basis of information obtained from various counterfactuals of creaturely freedom – that is to say, the counterfactuals that spell out what would result from all possible combinations of creatures if they are created with libertarian freedom – turns God into a manipulator of his

creatures' behavior and hence removes, or at least diminishes, their free will. [Paragraph 52][11]

Trakakis then tells the story of a father who chooses between two schools where he could send his son. One school is good and the other bad. The father knows infallibly (yes, *knows infallibly*, in Trakakis' story), that if he sends his son to the good school, he will end up as a "*well-educated and responsible adult,*" while sending the son to the bad school will inevitably turn him into a criminal. The father has "*carefully engineered his son's moral development.*" Now Trakakis grants that most parents make these choices in the *hope* or expectation that their children will benefit from their decisions. However, in this scenario, the father does not hope, rather, he *knows* what the outcome will be of choosing either school. By relying on this knowledge, the father

> …is manipulating or setting up his son's environment in such a way that it becomes inevitable that his son will develop in a particular direction. Even if the son does develop freely in the environment he finds himself in, his moral and psychological growth has a contrived quality given that his father has guaranteed, in advance, that this development process will not be derailed, but can progress in only one direction. [Paragraph 53]

> What the father in the above story does, our Molinist father is said to do to every one of us, so that the choices we think we make freely are in reality built into the very structure of the world, thus becoming as unalterable as the laws of nature. [Paragraph 54][12]

---

[11] Trakakis notes in a footnote at this point that his views were inspired by Langtry (1996:317-318).

[12] The full text is as follows:

> [53] To see this, consider a parallel situation in which a father is deciding whether to send his son to school A or school B. The father, let's assume, knows (with certainty or infallibly) that if he were to send his son to school A then the boy would begin associating with the 'wrong crowd' and would therefore take up a life of crime, whereas if his son were to attend school B he would grow into a well-educated and responsible adult. The father, in this situation, does what he thinks best and sends his son to school B, and the outcome many years later is just as expected. I'm not suggesting that the father is in any way open to rebuke. But notice that he has carefully engineered his son's moral development in a way that is crucially different from the kind of protection generally afforded by parents. Most parents make decisions

At this point in his text, Trakakis notes the following in a footnote. After first referring to Hasker's characterization of the Molinist God as *"the manipulator than which none greater can be conceived"* (Hasker 1990:124), he makes the stronger claim, which should not be relegated to a footnote, and that is the assertion that it is,

> [not] the Molinist God's knowledge of counterfactuals of freedom that rob us of free will; *rather it is his use of such knowledge when actualizing the world that undermines our free will.* (Note 68, my emphasis)

This is a powerful claim in relation to my thesis, for it identifies that the alleged trouble within Molinism in respect to creaturely freedom is not God's middle knowledge *per se,* but what he does with it. Here I take *doing,* or *using* middle knowledge to be a function of the divine will. If there is a divine intellect-will distinction, it moves the attention from middle knowledge to the divine will, suggesting that not only might there be a problem of the internal coherence of middle knowledge or its compatibility with libertarian freedom, but also a possible problem with the compatibility of the divine will with libertarian freedom. This makes more sense of the manipulation charge, as

on behalf of their children – such as which school their children shall attend, what foods they shall eat, what time they shall go to bed – in the hope or confident expectation that their children will benefit as a result. But the father, in the envisaged scenario, has no such hope, for he knows what the outcome of each of his options (school A or school B) will be. Insofar as he relies on this knowledge when making his decisions, he is manipulating or setting up his son's environment in such a way that it becomes inevitable that his son will develop in a particular direction. Even if the son does develop freely in the environment he finds himself in, his moral psychological growth has a contrived quality given that his father has guaranteed, in advance, that this developmental process will not be derailed, but can progress in only one direction.

[54] Similarly in the case of the Molinist God's reliance on counterfactuals of creaturely freedom. What the father in the above story does, our Molinist Father is said to do to every one of us, so that the choices we think we make freely are in reality built into the very structure of the world, thus becoming as unalterable as the laws of nature.

manipulation is more a product of will and control than comprehension, *but* one also needs knowledge to manipulate if we aim to get a person to do what we want of them.

If Molinism isn't just a theory of middle knowledge, but of the divine will as well, it might force the Molinist to consider whether it draws closer to Calvinism where issues arise, such as—how is creaturely freedom possible in the light of God's determinism and strong providence? The puzzle now is not how middle knowledge is internally coherent, or compatible with creaturely freedom, but how the divine will—the third logical moment as the primary act of control—*and* middle knowledge, the source of information that supplies the will of CCFs, 'combine' so that the resultant complex is consistent with creaturely freedom.

Though Trakakis does not mention that it is God's *will* as the third logical moment that performs this manipulative action, it is clear from the analogy of the boy's father who 'decides' which school to send the son to and sends him. Will is needed for this choosing or decision-making aspect, where the schools are analogues for Molinist circumstances. In relation to free will, Trakakis posits that the kind of manipulation inherent in Molinism may 'remove', which is a strong claim, or 'diminish' our free will—the weaker claim. I shall generalize these to the assertion that *manipulation undermines our free will*. Hence I state:

- The Trakakis-thesis: God's willing-use of CCFs manipulates and thereby undermines creaturely free will.

Now it may be that Molinism does make God out to be a manipulator, but it does not follow that our free will is undermined. Intuitively, yes, manipulation undermines or changes freedom in a significant way, although I do not wish to assume that here without testing it. The intricacies of Molinism may avoid the undermining of freedom despite manipulation. On this reduction, there are two claims I wish to test:

- God$_M$'s *use* of his middle knowledge—

1. Makes him out to be a manipulator

2. Undermines our free will at actualization

These assertions are important for one very special reason: if they are correct, then they present God$_M$ as a *unique* kind of manipulator over other kinds of alleged theistic manipulation, for the simple reason that all versions within generic Molinism share the common property that God—through his will—utilizes what he knows at middle knowledge in order to control.[13]

6.4 **Arguments from Analogy**

Analogical arguments are inductive; the premises lend support to the conclusion to some degree. The strength of these arguments varies by strength of comparison with the analogue.

Standard treatments for assessing analogical arguments follow the following components.[14] I include what I think corresponds to these analogical argument features from the Trakakian analogy.

- The Primary Subject [PS] is the subject of the conclusion of the argument. It is here where we gain new information about something.

  Primary Subject = God$_M$

- The Analogue [A] is what the primary subject is being compared with.

  Analogue = human father (or parent)

- The similarities [S] are the properties by which the primary subject and analogue can be compared.

  Similarities = parent-child relationship

---

[13] I am excluding theories that there are 'might-counterfactuals' from generic Molinism.

[14] Here I am following Jill LeBlanc's treatment in *Thinking Clearly: A Guide to Critical Thinking* (1998:206 – 209).

- The target property [TP] is what is affirmed of the primary subject in the conclusion of the argument, which is likewise also affirmed of the analogue in the premise/s.

    Target Property = <u>Manipulation:</u> (knowing and willing in such a way manipulates)

A typical argument from analogy has the following structure:[15]

      1.1 PS and A share S

    1. PS and A are similar.

    2. A has TP

    ∴ PS has TP

On this model of an analogical argument, Trakakis' argument *looks* like it should be formulated in this manner:

    1.1 God and human fathers share parent-child relationships…

1. ∴ God and human fathers are similar.

2. Human fathers who behave in particular ways manipulate their children.

∴ God$_M$ behaves in such a way he manipulates his children (or human creatures).

Trakakis does not think that there is any real correspondence with a real human father with fallible knowledge, who merely *hopes* for the best. This rendering removes premise (3), as there is no analogy between an infallible human father's epistemology and that of the divine. The above formulation is not what Trakakis has in mind. This is closer to his intentions:

1.1 Both the divine father and human fathers instantiate parent-child relationships…

---

[15] Adapted from Leblanc (1998:208).

1. ∴ The divine father and human fathers are similar.

2. Human fathers who behave in particular way 'X' manipulate their children.

∴ So also, when the divine father acts in particular way 'X' he manipulates his children (human beings).

Essentially, Trakakis and Hasker have asked us to do similar things. We are not to compare the Molinist God with a normal and fallible human father (or in Hasker's case, a mother who sets up her child's artistic production), who has neither foreknowledge nor middle knowledge. We are asked to compare the Molinist God with a human father or mother, *who has the same knowledge* as the Molinist God. In other words, we are asked to perform a 'what if' or thought-experiment, where the result is possibly the hidden conclusion where we infer that there is something about such a person: *they manipulate*, and so, *how would you feel,* if that were your mother or father? And, *would you still be free, or feel free, if your parent did that to you?* The answers to these rhetorical questions, (which are mine, but the sentiment is clear in Hasker), are that there is some response-dependence to the manipulation charge. There is some component in being manipulated that includes a reaction, or reactive-attitude, where the reaction is one that the manipulation is in some way objectionable and unwanted.

These analogical arguments are not complex. First, there must be some link or similarity between certain important factors of *agency* or *personhood*. Two I have in mind are *value/moral* (or moral responsibility) and *relational* factors. God and parents can only be compared if there is the similarity of a familial relationship, say between father or mother and child. The familial relationship analogue then bears the moral property similarity. Both the divine father and the human father are moral agents with responsibilities and have causal powers. It is not exactly clear though, in which direction the analogy travels, which is to ask is it God's or the human's morality and relational properties that are the analogue, and which is the primary subject. On this point, I do not think it matters so much, what is compared to what.

The main factor distinguishing Hasker and Trakakis' arguments is the strengthening of the epistemic powers of the father or mother by attributing a sort of

middle knowledge to humans. They are in effect reversing the analogy *in the premise¸* not the whole analogical argument, or better, premise (2) is no longer analogical. We are meant to conceive of a human with middle knowledge to the same degree that God has it— that is, a univocal predication. In effect, these authors want us to commit a *theomorphism*: attribute divine-like qualities, i.e. infallible middle or foreknowledge to the father or mother. The argument now runs like this:

    1.1 Both the divine father and human fathers instantiate parent-child relationships.

    1.2 These relations imply moral duties and responsibilities to the other.

1. ∴ The divine father and human fathers are similar.

2. Suppose that, *per humanly impossible*, human fathers have middle knowledge (*theomorphism*).

3. Human fathers with middle knowledge can use it to manipulate their children.

∴ So also, the divine father with middle knowledge can use it to manipulate his children, (human beings).

Why do we have to conceive of a human with divine-like middle knowledge? Couldn't we just imagine God as having it and make inferences from this? Maybe there are some situations where a parent or manager has highly reliable counterfactual beliefs about what another person would do in these situations. It is not that hard to think of such scenarios. Why then this theomorphism in premise (2)? Is it just to make the effect of the analogy rhetorically stronger by bringing it down to earth more and thus turning it into something we can relate to?

My understanding, and my answer to these questions, is to make the case more homely—something we are more likely to understand and feel. Hence, I see the main inference to be something like this:

- (Trakakis): Imagine if our parents were like the Molinist God. All of our actions would be manipulated and we wouldn't really be free.

6.4.1 The Analogy of Values and Anthropomorphism

It is clear that the above anti-Molinist arguments from analogy rely on divine-parental comparisons as a diagnostic tool to locate what is perceived to be the pathology within Molinism. A body with a pathology or disorder presupposes proper functioning. Defenders of AMAAs must correspondingly believe that there are good or favourable divine-parent analogies. What are the constituents of favourable divine-parent analogies? I mentioned above the sharing of a moral basis, as well as relational reciprocity. Mark Wynn (1999) sees *trust* as an important element—"the relationship between the human and God may be understood by analogy with the trust relationships which hold between human beings" (1999:131). This is especially true, he writes, of the relationship of trust between a small child and parent. Christians, (and I generalize this to include other theists), see their relationship to God in terms of the same kind of trust relationship as that of a young child and its parents (131). Christian faith does not just involve *mere "fides* but also *fiducia,* a commitment of the person to God in trust" (131). Wynn cites John Hick's religious application of *fiducia* as "trust or confidence in another person" (1978:3). It is more likely though that this position of trust as *fiducia* applies to close relationships that we find in families and not to humanity in a wider sense (131). Wynn's (1999) work mentions these divine-parent analogies as various places in the context of *goodness*—his book's theme. The goodness in the world mirrors the goodness of God. The goodness in families and in human relationships can be taken as the diagnostic criterion to judge models of theism, and this is what I understand the anti-Molinist arguments assume. 'The good' needs to be articulated further and defined to provide a sharper analysis of the alleged failure of Molinism according to these anti-Molinist analogies. It is likely that we who find these analogical arguments appealing do so because they are enthymemes that contain the unarticulated base premise that any model of theism needs to show that God is good. Molinism does not or cannot describe God as good on grounds that manipulating and *being* good are inconsistent. If analogies do hide anything, as is often stated of metaphors, then these AMAAs disguise this presumption by presupposing the goodness-premise as pre-theoretic. If Molinism fails as a model of providence because of manipulation, for some this failure is faith-related: it is very hard

to put one's *belief in* a manipulator and especially to trust them. To summarise my use of Wynn, there is something important in divine-parent analogies and this is not *just* because of their explanatory powers. We judge a model of providence by questioning its portrayal of *values*. If they are not good, human values, then we do not recognise that this person is God in that model, and consequently the model lacks worth. AAMAs are covert axiological arguments, but I say that the important value is presupposed in the giving of the argument. Despite this, we are still left with the sense that something is wrong with God$_M$. Given that there is merit in divine-human parent analogies, *where* can they go wrong?

Andrew Gleeson (2012)

Andrew Gleeson mentions the potential for an analogy between God and humans being *"taken too anthropomorphically"* (Gleeson 2012:36).[16] Gleeson discusses the fact that, despite the chance of suffering, human parents still bring children into the world. Gleeson entertains a contrast between morality and love,

> Sometimes what an impersonal morality, or a morality of compassion, will condemn, love will sanction and even demand… But morality may thus show itself to be sometimes an insular thing. The parents know something greater: the insatiable love which drives them to create. Just like human parents, God may create the world, a work he knows must contain terrible evil, in an act of reckless love. (2012:35-36)

This is a parental analogy, of course, and it succeeds if not taken too anthropomorphically. For if God were taken to some extreme of being "a very big version of an immaterial agent," God's love will eventually violate a moral boundary. Under this analogy, "…God seems to have trespassed over that limit" (36). Gleeson thinks we can still keep the analogy as long as we understand that,

---

[16] Gleeson is critiquing theodicy, "Atheologists attack God in the name of morality. Theodicts choose to fight on the atheologists' own battlefield: the tribunal of morality. I have argued that they lose" (2012: 35). My position above does not critique Gleeson's views about theodicy. I am likely to find support from a fuller reading of Gleeson's philosophy in relation to divine love. My use of Gleeson is to reject the connection between divine-human analogies and anthropomorphisms.

God is not a person or agent in the anthropomorphic sense
of a being who performs loving acts. Rather God *is* love
itself.

In other words, says Gleeson, God is not an agent like you or me. Any good in the world is a "manifestation of him" and is "attributed to him", but evil cannot be attributed to him because God is not a causal moral agent of any sort (37).

Can Gleeson's position be applied to the Molinist's case to undercut the opposing AMAA? Probably yes. If God is not a moral agent like us in some sense, then the possible indictment where human manipulation oversteps a moral limit cannot be applied to God. However, while Gleeson's configuration would undercut the analogy from manipulation, it does so by transforming the whole picture of God's providence to such an extent that I think there would be little room or need for Molinism, at least in its 'application' of a theodicy or defence of moral evil and God's omniscience and omnipotence.

Sallie McFague (1982) argues for a different model of God as *friend*, which subverts the alleged gendering of God as father or mother. Her basis is that no single model of God can capture everything. She writes,

The root-metaphor of Christianity is not *any one* model but
a relationship that occurs between God and human beings.
Many models are needed to intimate what that relationship
is like; none can capture it. 'Friendship' is but one
suggestion. (190, her emphasis).[17]

If we translate Hasker, Bayle and Trakakis' arguments into the friendship model, thus avoiding the question of gendered religious language, we would still infer a manipulation charge. These arguments ask us to imagine what it would be like if we were

---

[17] McFague titles her fifth chapter as "God the Father: Model or Idol?" where the name is suggestive that we might err if we invest too much in one particular conception of God and neglect others. If she is right, and there are many instances in the Christian tradition where God and descriptions of God are best understood as pointing to his or her different roles, then not only may it be idolatrous to view God in some non-figurative way as a divine father, but we lose out on a richer understanding of God. Here I am referring to a notion of God *as* father, or *as* law-giver, judge, or shepherd. One might say that these descriptions are themselves indicative of a father's role and thereby we should conclude that Scripture and theological traditions are correct in some real sense that *God is father* and is not 'merely' presented or revealed *as a father*. Alternatively, they may be gendered attributions, for all we know.

manipulated by another human person with whom we have some kind of positive relationship, as in a child of a parent or an employee of a supervisor.The effect of being manipulated by such a person in a relationship amounts to *inconsistency*. If friendship is based on a relationship, manipulation intrudes to break the relationship and consequently to break the friendship. A manipulee may respond, "you are not my friend."

Whether it be God, a father, mother, partner, or friend, to be manipulated by such a person is incompatible with a relationship based on trust, honesty and reciprocal freedom. It is incompatible with *giving another person* the freedom to exercise their own responses and of disclosing our full intentions when our actions affect them. This is how the manipulation arguments work and produce their effect: we cannot love, respect, guide and grant full autonomy to another person or peer and manipulate them at the same time. For a model of theism to entail manipulation that is inconsistent with a loving relationship is to break the relationship where the manipulee virtually declares, "you are not God."

6.4.2 Moral Considerations of Divine and Human Agency

My discussion of Wynn and Gleeson prompts me to discuss some implications of using analogies in relation to values and morality.[18] For, a manipulation charge against God$_M$ involves a value and moral critique, depending on the severity and sense of 'manipulation'.

As I stated in my introductory chapters, one of my presuppositions in this research is that *God is an agent* in some similar way as us, especially with regard to his actions (although not especially with regard to his nature). Any moral predicates we ascribe to God or humans I take to be more likely univocal than equivocal, or even analogous. This is a presupposition that I accept myself, but space does not permit me to argue this position. If I were to do so, it would largely be an elaboration that *God is a person* and we are persons, and moreover, the revelation of God in most traditions presents God *as* a

---

[18] I refer to Wynn's (1999) work and my brief discussion of it concerning *goodness* being reflected in the world from divine goodness, as well as *trust* in human and divine relationships; and Gleeson's (2012) very insightful comments on God's love and the relation to moral issues concerning responsibility and theodicy.

person.[19] Hence I claim if God is a person, then God is an agent in some significant sense as we are. Despite this presumption, which largely depends on the related claim that God is a person and we are persons—which some might say is a very large presumption—the Molinist needs to accept this necessary condition as well. And so I justify maintaining the following claim on the grounds that without it, I and my imaginary Molinist opponent would be *arguing from different premises*. If we were to agree on one thing before debating, it would be:

The Shared Foundational Moral Assumption:

- **God is a moral agent and humans are moral agents.**

The predicate 'moral agent' is not equivocal, for if it were, Molinism would lose explanatory power on the basis that much of its justification is for *moral* reasons as well as metaphysical ones. That is, not only does the Molinist theory seek to resolve DF|FW, but also DF|MR. God's foreknowledge and providence must be compatible with human moral responsibility (MR). Now, I just spoke of human moral responsibility. But Molinism is not just concerned about *that*. When Molinists quip with statements such as,

> It is up to God whether I find myself in a world in which I am predestined; but it is up to me whether I am predestined in the world which I find myself (Craig, 2011:161, quoting the French Molinist Théodore Regnon,1850:48, who, according to Craig, "*captures the paradox nicely.*")

…then this invokes the possibility at least that both agents have moral responsibilities, even if it depends on the assertion that God, having some kind of minimal or 'efficient' causal responsibility for creating this particular world, might have some moral responsibility as well.

If one were to assert such a 'paradoxical' truth claim (in Craig's words), which involves reciprocity (if not circularity), between the human moral agent and the circumstance in which she finds herself, and God—who has control over this

---

[19] This is an appeal to the *God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, not the *God of the philosophers,* to use Pascal's distinction.

circumstance—then God's agency *prima facie* also involves questions of moral responsibility. Putting this another way, some versions of divine and human activity, for example, the theological determinist's distinction between primary and secondary causes portray God's activity and human activity working together, (synergistically). I disagree with the coherence of primary and secondary causes in relation to upholding human freedom under God's sovereignty. Despite that, the primary/secondary cause distinction, if it is a case of synergism, is also a case of shared agency, thereby also a case of shared responsibility. If that is the case, then Molinism, which is a position much like the primary and secondary cause theory of divine to human action, requires a singular account of moral responsibility as agents of the same kind. The Shared Foundational Moral Assumption itself implies two more propositions we can grant as assumptions.

- The predicate '…is a moral agent,' should be understood univocally regardless whether we are discussing a human or divine subject.

The predicate '…is a manipulator,' is likewise understood univocally. If it is immoral or objectionable for *A* to manipulate in manner *X*¸ it is immoral or objectionable for *B* to manipulate in manner *X*.

6.5 **The Loss of Freedom by Molinist Manipulation**

From the conclusion that the Molinist God manipulates his children, Trakakis suggests the bigger issue is a loss of freedom *in some sense.* What other senses of freedom are lost or undermined by Molinism? Previously in his paper (2006), he lists three "valuable goods secured by free will" (2006, paragraph 48). These are (a) *autonomy,* (b) *moral responsibility and moral desert* and (c) *interpersonal relationships* (paragraphs 49-51). These three are taken from Robert Kane's list of "ten desirable goods that would be lost if there were no libertarian free-will" (Trakakis 2006, note 63, citing Kane 1996:80). Kane's topic of conversation is the consideration that "underived origination or sole authorship is necessary for a number of other things that humans generally desire and are worth wanting."[20]

---

[20] Kane first lists four conditions: (i) the source or ground of an action is the agent and not outside the agent, (ii) tracing the causal or chain from the action 'back' must terminate within the agent's

It is now pertinent to inquire how freedom is actually lost according to Trakakis'

argument. On the divine-human comparison, the two schools are analogues for two

Molinist circumstances capable of expression within the antecedent of a conditional of

freedom. The human father with imputed middle knowledge knows the outcome, and so:

> What the father in the above story does, our Molinist Father
> is said to do to every one of us, *so that the choices we think*
> *we make freely are in reality built into the very structure of*
> *the world,* thus becoming as unalterable as the laws of
> nature. (2006 [54], my *emphasis*)

Now, the term *choices* in this context is crucial for understanding Trakakis' theme.

What are the types of choices he has in mind, relevant to the Molinist theory, where each

of the two schools are tokens of the analogues? It appears that Trakakis means that the

son has no capacity to make choices between the two schools, for he has previously said

that within the school, the son can

> develop freely in the environment he finds himself in [but]
> his moral and psychological growth has a contrived quality
> given that his father has guaranteed, in advance, that this
> development process will not be derailed, but can progress
> in only one direction. [53]

According to Molinism, we don't make the choice of *which* circumstances we find

ourselves in, we are only able to make choices *within* the circumstances we find

ourselves. Hence, Trakakis must mean that we do not choose which circumstances God's

actualization places us in. The Molinist would not argue with that, but would question

whether this undermines freedom. Trakakis also intimates we have lost freedom because

we only *think* we made our choices freely, when we did not really do so. There is here

some equivocation over 'choice' that needs to be addressed. Again, the boy did not have

---

voluntary action or 'self-forming action' (SFA), (iii) the agent would be the sole author and therefore
ultimately responsible for these SFAs and for any subsequent action stemming from this, (iv) these SFAs
would not be determined by anything in or outside of the self. SFAs are Kane's particular contribution to
the free-will debate and though Trakakis' application of these senses of free will may readily describe one's
misgivings about Molinist freedom, it is a greater matter to sustain Ultimate Responsibility and Self
Forming Action theories over, and in addition to free will construed as the ability to do otherwise. The
more general context of Kane (1996) is here inspired by Thomas Nagel (1986:114-115), William Barret
(1958:46), and W.S. Anglin (1990:14).

the choice of which school to go to, and by analogy, humans under the Molinist scheme do not have choices about which circumstances to be actualized in. Thus it is not clear how the *'choices we think we make,'* but do not actually make, when *we know we have not made them,* can render a difficulty for Molinism. This equivocation is serious, and I do not think Trakakis equivocates. A better reading would be that we really do not have choices over alternative possibilities within these circumstances (if viewed at least at the moment of God's natural knowledge), because God knows what we *would* do via his middle knowledge. And it is because of this certainty that God has, that the 'choices' we think we make are built into the fabric of the world. If my reading of Trakakis is close enough to his intentions, we can posit two *types* of choice where each type differs according to the respective agent's causal powers with respect to that choice:

- 'Inter-circumstantial' choices are made by God$_M$.
- 'Intra-circumstantial' choices are made by human creatures.

The Molinist would agree to all of this so far. There is no essential controversy yet. What I think Trakakis is suggesting, is that because God knows what choice we *would* make in the intra-circumstantial sense, then his power of choice in the inter-circumstantial sense effectively overpowers any resemblance to free choice, for he can manipulate any outcome if feasible. On this basis, the alleged cleverness of the Craig-Regnon statement,

> It is up to God whether I find myself in a world in which I am predestined; but it is up to me whether I am predestined in the world which I find myself… (Craig 2011:161)

…loses its explanatory significance. If Trakakis has a powerful point, which I think he has, then to say that it is up to God whether I find myself in a circumstance in which I am foreknown, *but it is up to me* whether I am foreknown in the circumstance in which I find myself, is a sophistical anthropic illusion. According to Molinism, God controls the circumstance, so there are merely possible circumstances where my actions would have been up to me if these circumstances were actualized. But I don't find myself in *those* circumstances, because God has effectively decided otherwise.

Trakakis' 'analogy' shows that God having choices out of a range of circumstances has a more dramatic effect than a person's choice of what they *would* do in any particular circumstance. This is an argument comparing the greater to the lesser. The greater is that God can manipulate a person's freedom, via his middle knowledge and will, through the tweaking of inter-circumstantial freedom. Given this, I am left with the rather insignificant intra-circumstantial freedom of doing what I would do within a circumstance that has already been chosen by God. To stress, as many Molinists do, that middle knowledge makes God's foreknowledge compatible with libertarian free will, is to point at the interesting ants crawling up a tree, without noticing that the forest is on fire.

6.6 **Pierre Bayle**

Writing in the modern period in the history of philosophy, Pierre Bayle reported some criticisms of Molinism in his famous *Historical and Critical Dictionary*.[21] The themes he discusses in his dictionary entry *The Paulicians* involve predestination and foreknowledge—sometimes not distinguishing between them. He uses *argument by analogy* in a similar way to Trakakis' story of the father choosing the school to which he should send his son. These kinds of stories pertain to what parents could reasonably be expected to do when they have knowledge about certain situational outcomes with regard to their children, outcomes where they have some measure of control over the antecedent situations. Bayle discusses the origin of evil and of predestination within the context of discussing Manicheism. He mentions Molinists, Jansenists and Socinians. He finds no theory satisfying, but is sympathetic to the Socinians. He argues that God's alleged permissive will cannot be the basis for foreknowledge:

> It is this fact that has led most theologians to suppose that God has made a decree that declares that the creature will sin. This, according to them, is the foundation of foreknowledge. Others claim that the decree declares that the creature will be placed in the circumstances in which God has foreseen that it would sin. Thus some contend that

---

[21] I shall be referring to the translation by Popkin (1991).

> God foresaw the sin by reason of his decree, and others
> contend that he made the decree because he had foreseen
> the sin. (1991:181)

Bayle's conclusion is emphatic, *'No matter how it is explained, it obviously follows that God wished that man sin...'* (181). It is this claim that I wish to address in this section—the assertion that whether you put foreordination before foreknowledge, or *vice versa,* neither option has any explanatory superiority. Either way, it is still what God wishes. These two alternatives, that will precedes intellect, or that intellect precedes will, share a common view of God's intent. Because of this, might both models be disqualified as explanations of the creature's freedom and God's moral responsibility?

Bayle suggests to the reader that Manicheism is more reasonable than traditional theism. The following excerpts are taken from Bayle's dictionary[22] entry on the 'Paulicians', a dualist sect originating from Manicheism.[23] Bayle writes of the two principles of the Manichees over the one principle of orthodox Christianity. He writes favourably about the Manicheist answer to the origin of evil, but sees the inconsistency inherent in merging these two opposing principles (or gods) into one, in order to maintain monotheistic orthodoxy.[24]

---

[22] Bayle's Dictionary is characterised by short and fairly uncontroversial dictionary entries, but lengthy and contentious footnotes that he calls 'remarks' where he elaborates on various disputes. These footnotes can run for many pages at a time. The significant bulk of the Dictionary is found in these footnotes and remarks. The remarks in the Paulician entry in Popkin's *Selections* edition are as follows: Remark 'E' "It has been difficult to answer the Manichaean objections about the origin of evil"; remark 'F' "If there had been as many disputes then about predestination as there are today"; remark 'H' "The orthodox seem to admit two first principles"; remark 'M' "However, the more one reflects...the more one finds that the natural light...supplies arguments that...entangle this Gordian knot still more," [ellipses in the Popkin edition]. It is in this final remark that Bayle summarises his fideist attitude in attempting to answer the question of the origin of evil in the world, "The doctrine that the Manichaeans oppose ought to be considered by the orthodox as a truth of fact, clearly revealed; and since it must be finally admitted that the causes and the reason for it cannot be understood, it would be better to say this from the outset and stop there, and allow the objections of the philosophers to be considered as vain quibbling, and to oppose nothing to them but silence along with the shield of faith" (Popkin 1991:193).

[23] See *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11583b.htm (accessed February 2013).

[24] This revives a dilemma I spoke of much earlier, discussed by James Anderson in his work on Christian Paradox— between being a consistent heretic or an inconsistent, but orthodox believer. Bayle concludes with a sceptical theist/fideist response:

Having provided some background to Bayle and his entry on the Paulicians, I now turn to the few references he makes about difficulties in holding a consistent view of predestination.[25] Bayle argues by analogy via the parent-child relationship.[26] My use of Bayle might appear anachronistic and irrelevant, especially where he finds these theological controversies undecidable. However, Bayle has an astute mind and he raises very difficult questions for the adherents of each particular camp in a theological controversy, despite the fact that he himself does not provide solutions to his own penetrating questions. It is his insight and questioning which I am taking up in my discussion of Bayle and Molinism.

> I found this out by experience in rereading this article when I had to get it ready for the second edition. Some new thoughts occurred to me that convince me all over again, and more strongly than ever, that the best answer that can be naturally made to the question, "Why did God permit man to sin," is to say, "I do not know; I only believe that he had some reasons for it that are really worthy of his infinite wisdom, but which are incomprehensible to me."

[25] There is a problem interpreting Bayle's view, (not so much what he says but his actual position). See Lennon and Hickson (2012), see also Lennon (1999) where he discusses 'the Bayle Enigma': "To take just the twentieth-century literature, the suggestions are that Bayle was fundamentally a positivist, an atheist, a deist, a sceptic, a fideist, a Socinian, a liberal Calvinist, a conservative Calvinist, a libertine, a Judaizing Christian, a Judaeo-Christian, or even a secret Jew, a Manichean, an existentialist… to the point that it is tempting to conclude that these commentators cannot have been talking about the same author, or at least that they have not used the same texts" (Lennon 1999:15). With regard to grace and predestination, Lennon writes that, "Bayle accepts the Calvinist position that grace is non-universal, necessary and sufficient. But he is not much moved by the details of this fascinating, if desiccated, issue. On the contrary, both early and late he showed distaste for the debates over grace and, if anything, regarded them as undecidable*" (1999:169).

[26] Bayle has several more arguments from a parent-child analogy. One is the argument, "to compare God either to a father who allows his children to break their legs so that he can show everyone his great skill in mending their broken bones, or to a king who allows seditions and disorders to develop through his kingdom so that he can gain glory by overcoming them" (Popkin 1991:176). The point of this comparison, for Bayle, is to show that it is implausible to allude to God's permission to sin to manifest his *wisdom*. The other comparison undermines the attempt of attributing God's permission to the 'gift' of free will. Essentially, this story is a repudiation of the free will defence:
"There is no good mother who, having given her daughters permission to go to a dance, would not revoke that permission if she were assured that they would succumb to temptations and lose their virginity there. And any mother who, knowing for sure that this would come to pass… bring upon herself the just charge that she loved neither her daughters nor chastity. It would be vain for her to try to justify herself by saying that she had not wished to restrain the freedom of her daughters or to indicate that she distrusted them" (Popkin 1991: 177-178).
Although this second example is close to the other 'Mother' (Molinist) analogy quoted above, it is clearly different and designed to reject a different thesis—that of the moral plausibility of 'divine permissive will'. Even so, contemporary Molinists see the doctrine as allowing for this kind of divine permission of creaturely action.

First, some relevant background to Bayle—Lariviere and Lennon (2000) discuss Bayle in comparison to Descartes and Leibniz. Descartes' main conception of God is in terms of kingly power and so his main model for understanding God's relation to the world is political. By contrast, Leibniz's main interest is divine wisdom where "the world is rational and in principle knowable a priori" (2000:101). But the most important divine attribute for Bayle is divine *goodness*. Bayle rejects the Cartesian position of divine power with goodness, for it makes God out to be a law-giver who is unjust, cruel and malicious—a Being who is no longer worthy of worship. The authors write, "A condition even for adorability of God is a moral relation to him. And it is in primarily moral terms that Bayle understands the world" (Lariviere and Lennon 2000:102).

Lariviere and Lennon appeal to Elizabeth Labrousse[27] who makes two important claims in her work on Bayle and the problem of evil. The first is that Bayle's concept of good is univocal. There can be no analogical account of God for Bayle, for this would mean that "dialogue with …[the transcendent God] would become impossible."[28] The second point is that Bayle rejects "the neo-Plotinian account of evil in terms of plenitude and the best of all possible worlds." The failure of this account is "…it does not recognize the moral perspective of individual people" (2000:102). This rejection also anticipates Bayle's denial of a Leibnizian theodicy. Lariviere and Lennon explain Labrousse's interpretation of Bayle in this way: it is one thing to comprehend the machinery of the universe from an idealized perspective and admire the laws governing matter since,

> inert matter is indifferent to the perspective chosen to describe it. In the case of a conscious being, on the other hand, his own point of view remains privileged since it constitutes for him an ultimate and irreducible experience. This is why, since moral values are the same for man and God, man, to the extent that he is not resigned to the most paralysing fideism, has the right to struggle with God and

---

[27] They say of her that she is "…the doyenne of Bayle scholarship" (2000:102).

[28] Lariviere and Lennon (2000): The authors cite Labrousse's work *Pierre Bayle* (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1974, vol. 1, 348-349). Here the quote from Bayle that Labrousse uses comes from *Oeuvres diverses.*

to demand of Him an account of the misery [Malheur] of existence. (Lariviere and Lennon, citing Labrousse 1974: 357)

Lariviere and Lennon understand the 'struggle and demand' in relation to Bayle's presumption of univocity. If the term 'good' applies in the same way to humans and to God, and if God could have created other worlds than this one, then we are allowed to dispute with God just as the prophets did (2000: 103).[29]

This background to Bayle's thought provides a useful context to better understand his analogies of the various doctrinal disputes over divine providence. The fundamental issue at stake is God's goodness: if God is not good, his worship-worthiness is destroyed. Moreover, we are justified in comparing by analogy the goodness of human beings with that of God portrayed in various theological models. This connects univocity of language to arguments from analogy. If we can find a story or narrative that shows the inconsistent nature or behaviour of a mother and her daughter and the love between them, then we can apply that to God also. This is a given for Bayle, and one which I believe is also assumed in any contemporary analogical argument between divine and human nature or action, especially parent-child types of analogies. They rely upon or assume univocity.

6.6.1 Bayle on Molinism

Bayle's Paulician entry is as follows,

> The disputes [about predestination] that have arisen in the West among Christians since the Reformation have so clearly shown that a man does not know what course to take if he wants to resolve the difficulties about the origin of evil, that a Manichean would be much more formidable than previously held: for he would refute each side by the others. "You have used up," he would tell us, "all your mental ability. You have invented something called scientia media as a deus ex machina to get you out of your chaos.

---

[29] The authors report Bayle's 'deep-seated fear', and the reason why the problem of evil must be resolved or discussed, "is that God might not be good, and that the horrible lament of Christ reported by Matthew 26:24… may not be true just of Judas but of everyone: better for him never to have been born. This is no abstract issue for Bayle; it is his experience of not just his own life but life in general" (2000:103).

This invention is chimerical. It cannot be understood how God could see the future other than in his decrees or in the necessity of causes. It is no less incomprehensible in metaphysics than in ethics that he who is goodness and holiness itself should be the author of sin. I refer you back to the Jansenists. See how they attack your 'middle science' both by direct proofs and by throwing your arguments back at you; for nor does it prevent one from comparing God it does not prevent all the sins and miseries of man from proceeding from the free choice of God;–Absit verbo blasphemia [I mean this without blasphemy], … to a mother, who, knowing with certainty that her daughter would give up her virginity if, at such a time and in such a place, she were asked by a certain person, should then arrange that interview, lead her daughter there, and leave her to conduct herself as she sees fit. The Socinians, overwhelmed by this objection, try to get out from under it by denying foreknowledge." (Popkin 1991:183-184, original emphasis)

Bayle sees no merit in Molinism since God is still the author of the 'sins and miseries of man.' The mother-daughter analogy is clearly intended to be comparable to Molinism, with the language of a mother knowing that her daughter will give up her virginity if she arranges the state of affairs for her daughter be present in such and such a time and place, where she will act 'freely' and undetermined, i.e., a Molinist circumstance. The story points to only one outcome, that the daughter will falter in this way. The question then is, does the mother intend it will happen thus in taking her daughter to this disreputable establishment? If it is objected that the daughter's fall is the mother's intention by a kind of 'permissive will,' this is also rejected by Bayle elsewhere.

Bayle views Molinism as *ad hoc*—a kind of *deus ex machina*—something invoked 'at the last minute,' we might say, to try and resolve these predestination and foreknowledge conundra, while being unable to avoid attributing moral responsibility to God. God has instrumental control over placing persons into circumstances.[30] The

---

[30] *Bayle's footnote 53 addresses this as well: "According to the Molinists, God decreed that men be placed in the circumstances in which he knew with complete certainty that they would sin, and that he could have either placed them in more favorable circumstances, or not placed them in those particular ones" (1991:185).*

daughter allegedly acts freely within the circumstance, but the daughter does not choose the circumstance. It is chosen for her. I understand these types of analogies, given by Bayle and by recent anti-Molinists, as enthymemes with a suppressed or implied conclusion or implication. There is the hidden inference that, because the circumstances are chosen by God, we lose the ability to act in *different ways* in *other circumstances* that will never be actualized for us. This might mean a loss of freedom in one sense, although within the actualized circumstance, we do act freely within that particular circumstance token. In addition, and this is Bayle's major point, God under the Molinist model is morally responsible by virtue of selecting some circumstances and rejecting others.

Hence, I conclude that we can plausibly interpret Bayle's anti-Molinist analogy as the following claim:

- The Bayle-Thesis: God's use of the 'setting up'[31] of situations involving CCFs of creaturely freedom does not absolve God of moral responsibility.

To revive this thesis in modern analytic parlance: God's strong actualization of circumstances where an agent's 'free' action is weakly actualized, does not absolve God from moral responsibility. This is a claim I would like to assess, although I am not necessarily asserting it. Even if it appears to be too strong, assertorically, the notion that there are two kinds of choosing—God's choice in selecting one particular token circumstance over another, and the creature's choice of what to do within that circumstance that has been chosen by God—is suggestive of shared moral responsibility.

6.6.2 Summary of Trakakis and Bayle

Trakakis aims to show that creaturely freedom is diminished,[32] while Bayle's writing purports to show that God's foreknowledge or control of circumstances leaves

---

[31] I use the 'setting up of situations' to write more neutrally, rather than using the term 'manipulation' since Bayle does not use it. They amount to the same thing on a neutral but impersonal understanding of manipulation.

[32] Trakakis writes that he is not suggesting that the boy's father with infallible knowledge of outcomes is 'open to rebuke' for engineering the son's set-up (2006, paragraph 53). This is puzzling, given that the larger theme of Trakakis' paper is whether Molinism or opennist views are better at presenting a theodicy than hard determinism, given the alleged difficulties incurred in the face of evil.

6-36

God morally responsible. These two arguments therefore propound different effects of manipulation and it's likely that these effects do not just co-vary, but are causally related: the more *Y's* free will is undermined by another agent *X,* the more *X* is responsible for undermining *Y's* free will. Of course, this does not follow necessarily, especially since I have joined together two philosophers' arguments from different contexts and separated by several hundred years. However, I do take this as an extremely plausible connection via the relation of reciprocity between an active agent's moral responsibility, and a passive agent's free will and consequent moral responsibility. In other words, their respective analogies state the same picture of the pathology of free will and moral responsibility, but focus on different halves of the painting.

6.7 **Dean Zimmerman (2009)**

Dean Zimmerman has written extensively on manipulation in the form of what he calls *'transworld manipulability'* as a consequence of Molinism. Zimmerman's work is important, yet I have not presented an analysis of his position in 2009 for the main reason that I consider it peerless. I do want to touch on one element of his work which is related to one of my motivations. He writes,

> Something has gone terribly wrong if one is forced to admit the possibility of divine voodoo worlds; …the supposition, dubious to begin with, that free creatures can be infallibly manipulated while remaining free — that they can be deliberately put in circumstances where they freely do something, even though the one who put them in those circumstances has, in advance, infallible knowledge of what they will do. It is the hypothesis of the availability of CFs [counterfactuals of freedom] at the first stage in God's foreknowledge, together with the contingency of CFs, that has generated the voodoo worlds in which we are too easy to control to be free. (2009:84)

Zimmerman relates his concept of 'voodoo worlds' to 'transworld manipulability' as follows. A creature is transworld manipulable just in case there is a possible world

---

For consistency's sake, I believe Trakakis needs to go further and declare that Molinism does not present a theodicy, as well as that it undermines creaturely freedom.

where God can remotely control "every possible choice of every possible creature." God's control is by means of "fiddling with irrelevant details of the creation far removed from those creatures in space and time" (67).

Zimmerman believes Molinism implies the possibility of transworld manipulability, which is 'bad' for Molinism, and he compares transworld manipulability to Plantinga's notion of transworld depravity (or sanctity); if the latter is true so is transworld manipulability. In these worlds, it is not just that God *could* control us, he *would be* controlling us. A 'voodoo world' relates Zimmerman's analogue of 'a set of voodoo dolls' to Adam and Eve where they can be controlled remotely by "manipulating insignificant details of the creation far away from the creatures themselves" (73). Zimmerman presents a dilemma for the Molinist and concludes that it is not coherent to be both free and transworld manipulable, for "…if the conditionals describing what certain creatures would do in various indeterministic circumstances of choice implied transworld manipulability, then perhaps God could create them, but, if he did so, they would not be free" (Zimmerman 2011a:142).

Dean Zimmerman's paper, *Yet Another Anti-Molinist Argument*, is long and complex. William Lane Craig responds to him by claiming that it is just another failed attempt to defeat Molinism (Perszyk 2011:144-162). Zimmerman replies in (2011b). My position, though a different argument, is similar to Zimmerman's. In Chapter 9 I offer an argument that purports to show how God can manipulate via alteration of factors within circumstances in much the way transworld manipulability is meant to work.[33] Below I offer a critique of a particular part of Craig's argument in his reply of 2011.

---

[33] Zimmerman (2003) has also written about Gale's versions of anti-Molinist arguments against Plantinga's free-will defence (Gale 1990, 1991). Wes Morriston (2003) also has a critique of Gale. Morriston's title is "Does Plantinga's God Have Freedom Cancelling Control Over His Creatures?" This and the cluster of articles from Zimmerman and Gale are very close to the theme of my research. I have decided to look more closely at other factors involved in Molinism, such as the role of will and the various meanings of manipulation. Given all that, I am likely to agree more with Gale (1991) and with some parts of Zimmerman (2003).

6.8 A Pro-Molinist Argument from Analogy: Craig's "FBI Sting Operation"

For balance, it would be good to consider a possible defeater of these anti-Molinist arguments. William Lane Craig has put forward what essentially constitutes a Pro-Molinist Argument from Analogy in his *FBI Sting Operation* (2011:160-161).[34] Craig puts the analogy forward to show that because Sting Operations aren't always cases of illegal entrapment, then "the control of free choices happens all the time in ordinary human intercourse"; control by knowledge of what someone would do in indeterministic situations does not make them unfree (160).[35] I infer from this that if, hypothetically, all Sting Operations (SOs) were judged as illegal cases of entrapment by the FBI—where the defendant wins the case—then it follows that referring to Sting Operations would not provide an example of the control of another person's 'free choice' because their choice would not be free, for they are snared in the trap. Therefore Craig's analogy fails whenever entrapment charges against the FBI are sustained by the judicial system. If this situation transpires, Craig's counter to Zimmerman's thesis—that manipulation over ostensibly free creatures makes them unfree—fails, or at least the analogy does, which is what I am interested in this context.

I will not comment on Zimmerman's analysis of Craig's FBI Sting Operation, suffice to say, Zimmerman deems the story 'absurd' with reference to Craig's reasoning that, as long as the FBI made sure that the circumstances were indeterministic, and the

---

[34] Craig's (2011) paper is a response to Dean Zimmerman's long article in (2009). Zimmerman has a short version titled, "A *Precis* of Yet Another Anti-Molinist Argument" plus a reply to Craig in the recent volume edited by Ken Perszyk (2011).

[35] These statements should be seen within the full context of the debate between Craig and Zimmerman. From Craig's perspective,

> When Zimmerman concludes that freedom requires not only indeterminism, but also the choice's not being completely under the control of another person ([Zimmerman] 2—9:80), he either means that the choice must also be 'up to me' to make, a condition fulfilled on Molinism, or else he simply begs the question in favor of his strange view of libertarian freedom. On Zimmerman's view, even one choice so controlled, that is, controlled by knowledge of what someone would do in certain indeterministic circumstances, is *ipso facto* not free. (Craig 2011:160)

legal defense for the FBI can prove this against possible charges of entrapment, then the Sting Operation is justified. In this I agree with Zimmerman; there is something strange about "making circumstances indeterministic" for hardened drug criminals (2011:178).

"Making circumstances indeterministic" is a red herring; it sounds as if to avoid entrapment charges we need them to be metaphysically indeterministic, and as libertarians, neither Craig nor Zimmerman would disagree. The point at issue though, is whether these metaphysically non-determining situations *influence* agents with particular dispositions or vulnerabilities. And so, a legally and morally *just* position, (Craig's analogy makes it an issue of jurisprudence), would be to consider not just the circumstantial modality, but a combination of the circumstantial and agent-modalities, including their capacities, abilities, vulnerabilities and desires. Consider putting someone with a strong alcohol addiction in the two different circumstances of a wine-bar and an unlicensed family fast-food outlet. From a purely circumstantial modal aspect these are both non-determining: nothing metaphysical or physical, external to the addict, is an antecedent sufficient condition that *makes* the addict drink, but if the agent-modality of the addict is factored in, it will be difficult to argue that the circumstance of the wine-bar is still indeterministic. For all we know, the addict might have strong genetic predispositions along with the required background conditioning to make it very difficult for him to refuse an offer of an alcoholic beverage. So, it depends what we mean by 'indeterministic', and it also depends on where we draw the line between the dynamic or circumstantial modality of the universe *and* the agent modality; indeed, drawing a line is falsely dichotomous. This is to question what we understand by 'circumstances'. Do circumstances include or exclude the agent?

What this shows is that purely indeterministic circumstances are idealized situations. To think up a properly indeterministic situation is, on the one hand, to put the agent in a context where, for example, they are *tempted* to do *A*, where there is some relation between the background conditions of the circumstance and their own capacities and dispositions. On the other hand, there cannot be too much pressure that causally influences them, otherwise the situation would not be ideally indeterministic.

For an FBI Sting Operation to succeed without also being a case of unlawful entrapment it needs to satisfy at least two conditions: (1) It is 'indeterministic', and (2) the nature or composition of the circumstance has some *a priori* properties that are relevant to the agent in order to enable predictability, but not too much to force or coerce via determinining-circumstances. This speaks to one of my underlying claims, that there is prior or *future-directed intention* before middle knowledge, and that this future-directed intention, whether of human FBI agents or a divine agent, is potentially freedom undermining.[36]

To fulfil the two conditions of indetermining and predictably enabling circumstances, and for the FBI authorities to do their job properly in making these circumstances indeterministic, (Craig 2011:160), it is hard to see exactly what this might mean in reality. For it seems that if the FBI has to achieve both of these conditions for non-determining circumstances, they would have to put these hardened drug criminals in a middle-class suburban shopping center (to satisfy a 'balancing' indeterministic condition), but one which is also known by the FBI and the drug lords for its undercover criminal activities and the selling of illegal drugs (so as to satisfy the predictive condition). Conceivably, this is not unrealistic. But at this shopping centre, the naive general manager asks the drug lords to sing Christmas carols, dress up as Santa Claus, his merry helpers, and Rudolph the reindeer, and to walk around collecting money for a children's charity. Here also, alongside potential drug-traffickers, are the criminals' social workers disguised as shoppers, who are observing the traffickers' pro-social behaviour for their yearly parole report (and in this case do quite well for a chance at a shortened parole). Some hardened criminals have a soft side, I assume, and have a capacity to care for economically disadvantaged children in inner-city areas. Whoever gets to them first, the undercover FBI agents disguised as drug-sellers or the shop

---

[36] In § 9.2 I discuss the metaphor of circumstances as *containers* which need to be both indeterminist but epistemically *determinate* so that God knows what a person would freely do in the circumstance. The irony I trace in the metaphor is that the container is empty of content, but has a label on the outside pointing to its contents, so that the manipulator of the empty container can manipulate a person by placing them inside it.

manager looking for an actor to play Santa Claus for Christmas Eve, might influence their multiple predispositions, and whether they act with virtue or vice that night.

<u>A Disanalogy.</u>

This highlights an important disanalogy between Molinism and a Sting Operation. There are no analogous counterfactual *types* of circumstances between Molinism and police entrapment. For a counterfactual situation for a person under the Molinist doctrine is to be placed in *another* situation, while the counterfactual situation for defendants, alleged criminals, or innocent bystanders in the human realm, is *not* to be placed or set up at all in any other situation, but to be left to their own devices, i.e., free to be themselves. Even if it is possible to be 'controlled and free' under a legitimate Sting Operation, the counterfactual of the SO is not to be placed in any situation by the police, i.e., to be free and *not-controlled* by them. Yet, we are always controlled by God_M in that we are always *in a situation* that he both knows about and actualizes. If we weren't always instantiated, or 'circumstantiated', he would neither have providential control over free creatures, nor foreknow our free actions.

Not all disanalogies are relevant, so we need to ascertain the impact of this difference and do this by changing the above story of the ex-crime lords in the shopping centre to look more like Molinism. The ex-criminal, Ralph, always goes to the shopping centre on Thursday nights: this is him being 'left to his own devices'. However, one of the undercover FBI agents, Fred, is married to one of the undercover social workers. This FBI agent knows Ralph from his previous convictions and has developed a deep *empathy* for his predicament. Fred knows all about the hardships Ralph had to endure growing up homeless in the city. Moreover, Fred has developed a fairly strong socially determinist stance in that he considers a person's background conditions mitigate against blame for the crimes they commit. Fred is alone in his views, as the other four FBI agents are accusatory against Ralph. They feel he deserves more blame and punishement. So Fred asks his social worker wife, Sarah, to set up a situation where the store manager asks Ralph to dress up for Santa Clause for underpriviliged children visiting the Christmas pageant that night.

The two possible situations (let us say for the sake of argument, the only two possible situations) that Ralph can be placed in that night are contact with the undercover FBI agents posing as drug-sellers, or contact by the store manager asking him to be Santa Claus. Either situation—D (drug bust) or S (Santa Claus costume)—is a counterfactual situation of the other. Whoever gets to Ralph first is a matter of luck on this occasion, and here is where my story stops. The point that I wish to make is that this complex story is more analogous with Molinism than Craig's simple Sting Operation, because for each circumstance C, there is a proper counterfactual circumstance C'. Now that it is more like Molinism, what morals can we draw? There are a few. First, we can agree with the Molinist (but I don't wish to insist), and say that in circumstance D and its counterfactual S, the agent who is placed or set-up in it acts freely in some sense of 'free'.

Now that the more complex analogy is articulated, let's talk about the real thing, Molinism, *not the analogy of Ralph in the shopping centre.* Pretend that God knows by middle knowledge that Ralph would buy drugs in D, and that Ralph would dress up as Santa Claus in S. These two circumstances are *alternative possible* circumstances that form parts of the broader circumstance of Ralph's *being in the shopping centre that night.*[37] Again, for the sake of argument, God decides to place Ralph in the situation D. The consequences are that he is caught by the undercover FBI agents and then tried. But God could have actualized S, where Ralph would have been Santa Claus that night, in full view of his undercover social workers, who now will argue for his shorter parole. We can make this story 'theological', where God can decide to give grace or temptation to Ralph, resulting in salvation or condemnation. Moreover, it looks like God can control Ralph to do what God wants and Ralph remains free. Thus I might be agreeing with the Molinist here, that my more complex analogy serves the pro-Molinist position after all.

---

[37] I consider circumstances in the Molinist sense to be mereological with parthood relations. They are composed of parts, and wider circumstances with temporal duration can be composed of smaller circumstances. Here, the larger circumstance Z (*being in the shopping centre*), has named parts or meronyms D and S. These are non-actual circumstances, for the sake of this story; so *possibly D* and *possibly S*, but not *possibly* (D & S). Though I feel I have violated an article of faith in having alternative possible circumstances in a Molinist story, I do not see why this is not possible; really, I do not see how the metaphysics of Molinism do not entail such an ontology, especially on the grounds that circumstances are providentially useful. Hence, this speaks towards my claim that God has inter-circumstantial control which is one of his powers of manipulation.

Nevertheless, my point in all this is that to argue that 'God can control a person and they can remain free' is a red herring. I am not as doubtful that they might be free to do otherwise in D or S, the fact is that God can control them with such dramatically different consequences.

These dramatic differences do little to grant any merit to the predestinarian views of the French Molinist that Bill Craig quotes, just after his discussion about the Sting Operation,

> It is up to God whether I find myself in a word in which I
> am predestined; but it is up to me whether I am predestined
> in the world in which I find myself. (Theodore Regnon,
> quoted by Craig in 2011:161)

This irks for two reasons. First is the dramatic difference in control between God's Molinist predestination versus the regulative control we have in the circumstance we are predestined for. The second reason is that it is not up to us at all, whether we are predestined in the world we find ourselves. If God_M has inter-circumstantial control, (also here known as counter-circumstantial, or even counterfactual control) then we find ourselves always in circumstances that are beyond our control.

Herein are two different senses of control. There is Control-To which is demonstrated by Craig's Sting Operation where the FBI gets, or attempts to get Ralph to do *A*. But there is Control-Over,[38] which is a form of control quantified *over* all possible situations for a particular person. Only Control-To is portrayed by Craig's simple Sting Analogy. What I think is either forgotten or overlooked is that speaking about single cases of CCFs is just Control-To, and so we cannot make any reasonable inferences as to whether a person is properly free in *one* situation, when they could have been actualized in another. Control-Over is overlooked because the Molinist debate has concentrated on the foreknowledge problem—which Control-To allegedly answers. However, there cannot be any meaningful sense of Control-To without Control-Over in Molinism, though

---

[38] The 'Over' here is intentionally ambiguous between having great control over a person by quantifying-over all possible circumstances that person could be placed in where they perform a different action, and selecting one or more circumstances to instantiate them in (which is Control-To).

of course, as we have seen, simple Sting Operations portray merely Control-To but fail to be properly analogous to Molinism. Finally, if control in either of these two senses is objectionable or illegal, or unethical, these two senses of control transform into Manipulation-To and Manipulation-Over.

6.8.1   Summary of Sting Analogy

The claims of 'truly indeterministic circumstances' and 'being controlled but remaining free' are cases of *ignoratio elenchi*. They do not address the point of whether or not freedom or autonomy is undermined. To be controlled to do almost anything and still insist that we are free is disingenuous. The significant point, I believe, is not about God's knowledge, so this statement is a red herring: "There is no reason to think that the authorities' knowing what someone would do in certain circumstances and then arranging for him to be in those circumstances renders his actions unfree" (Craig 2011:160-161). The matter is about *control.* True, God might not have such control unless he already has middle knowledge. What this shows is that its not the possession of knowledge *per se*, but what God does with it.

Moreover, a properly analogous FBI Sting Operation must have other circumstances that are counterfactual to the case in point, otherwise the analogy presents a Foreknowledge Solution story, but not a Molinist Providence analogy. A complex Molinist Sting Operation consists of at least two circumstances where God can actualize either.

The proper-complex analogy shows the true picture of Molinism as God possessing Control-To and Control-Over. Furthermore, if these forms of control are in any sense unethical, then we arrive at two senses of manipulation. At this point I conjecture that though an agent *might have* regulative control in the form of alternative possibilities in the chosen circumstance, they are more likely to lack a sense of freedom known as Sourcehood because the circumstances and states of affairs they then find themselves in are not up to them. At least this is what the complex analogy presents.

6.9 **My Defences of Anti-Molinist *Analogical* Argumentation**

In this section I follow on from the previous discussion on analogy, but now focus attention on divine-human analogies and comparisons in relation to the fatherhood of God. There are of course feminist critiques of God *as* father. Interestingly, Bayle's analogue is a mother-daughter relationship. From this, we could abstract away from the gendering of the analogy, to the analogue of God as a loving and wise, but powerful *parent*. My discussion is not so much concerned with gender-neutral language, or even the scriptural or theological reasons for describing God as either father or mother.

6.9.1 A Possible Objection to AMAA

My thoughts here are counters to possible objections to AMAAs in order to strengthen the anti-Molinist position.

- I ask whether divine-human analogies have to result in making anthropomorphisms: do they imply that we make God out to be human? A possible critique of the anti-Molinist arguments from analogy are that they do exactly this. Perhaps God is not like us, and so Hasker, Trakakis and Bayle's analogies cannot be drawn.

To restate how analogical arguments work, two things, A and B, are known to have some properties in common: these are the Similarities (S). So, what is true of B in some other respect or property which we do not hitherto know is true of A, may also be true of A. This claim about a new property of A is the conclusion of the analogical argument and is inferred by a kind of induction to the next property, as if we are making an induction from past cases to the next case.

If we are comparing the similarities between God and humans to test whether our analogy is strong, does it follow that we are attributing human properties to God? First, it depends which direction the analogy travels, that is, to identify the analogue (A) versus the primary subject (PS). We could infer something new about God from his similarities with humans, or we could infer something new about humans from their similarities with

God. The first way *might* be an anthropomorphism, and the second way *might* be a theomorphism. It is not always clear, I think, in which direction ostensible anti-Molinist arguments from analogy 'travel'. Sometimes the analogue and primary subject are swapped midstream. This is not to argue the contrary view by finding dis-analogies; it is simply questioning whether we can infer something new about God from premises incorporating human properties, or something new about humans from premises involving divine properties.

Nevertheless, once we have identified that an analogy is in the 'right direction' as I call it, anthropomorphisms might follow from some actual analogical arguments, but the indictment doesn't follow necessarily from the fact that we have made an analogical argument. An anthropomorphism could follow if we have tried to infer a new property from too few grounds or too few similarities. This might be analogous to making a fallacious 'hasty generalization' from too few samples, or it might be attempting to attribute a new human property to God that—in no possible way—can be predicated of God in some significant literal or univocal sense. We have arms and legs, but in classical theistic theologies, God does not have a body.

This is to anticipate an objection to AMAAs by looking at a possible counter-consideration that they are anthropomorphic or *too* anthropomorphic.[39] If they are, then the charge that AMAAs are anthropomorphic is a contingent matter that has to be proven in each case. Furthermore, just because I can construct a thought experiment that utilises anthropomorphism, it does not follow that its main conclusion is anthropomorphic. Here is an analogy: if wolves could reason inductively, they might notice that human animals take care of and love their offspring just as they do. Some clever wolf has identified this similarity between humans and wolves. This wolf might then infer that, since humans also look after and care for their offspring, humans also tend to mate for life as wolves

---

[39] Here, I don't have evidence by way of references or sources from the philosophical literature of critiques that anti-Molinist arguments from analogy are anthropomorphic. Suffice to say, open theists have been blamed for thinking of God too anthropomorphically. And some anti-Molinists are open theists, hence I attempt to undermine any anticipated claim that these anti-Molinist *critiques* from open theists suffer because they are anthropomorphic, or too anthropomorphic. By anticipating this, I defend my thesis statement by virtue of defending the anti-Molinist analogical arguments from manipulation from Hasker and Zimmerman.

do. The wolf has made an inductive inference by way of analogy that *humans mate for life*. Yet it does not follow that the wolf has imposed 'wolfness' onto human animals. The wolf has not committed a *lycamorphism*[40] in this case. Furthermore, my conclusion that wolves have not committed an inappropriate lycamorphism also does not involve an anthropomorphism in supposing that they reason inductively as humans do.

Peter Forrest (2007) talks about "improper anthropomorphisms." The example given is "to think about God as a very able mathematician working out detailed solutions of differential equations so as to plan the future history of our universe." The fault of the improper anthropomorphism is when we compare details of "our natures that depend on our physical constitution" and project them on to God (2007:39). Molinism, I say, is steeped with comparisons that may be deemed improper. One comparison is that of a logician who *uses modus ponens*. Later I discuss the frequent mention of *modus ponens* in Molinist literature where it is the Molinist who sees MP in a favourable light, and not a criticism of God. Indeed, both Molinist and anti-Molinist refer to God as using, or 'as if' he uses, *modus ponens*. The 'as if' qualification might diminish the charge of impropriety, yet the presentation of the Molinist God is so steeped in this logical inference, as well as the logical distinctions in moments of knowledge and will, that it becomes difficult to distinguish between whether it is we humans who are making the analogy in the attempt to understand what God is like, or a true description of God_M's very ontology.

6.10 **Findings**

This chapter was an exercise in data-gathering to discover what has been said about the Molinist conception of God in the various arguments that charge him with manipulating. [41] Most of these arguments were analogical. To these I have added some of

---

[40] This is not the same as a *lycanthropomorph*. Werewolves can definitely make analogical arguments.

[41] Subsequently in this dissertation, my aim is to confirm these claims apart from using arguments from analogy and comparisons between divine and human parent-child relationships. I do believe that the above arguments from analogy or comparison are good, but wish to show something more than plausible inductive arguments can be given to defend my thesis position that the Molinist God is a manipulator and undermines creaturely free will.

my own speculations, for I think that some of these claims about God$_M$ have not fully articulated what is wrong with manipulation in this context. I suppose this silence is partly due to the emotional connotations that the word possesses. I summarise the main conclusions with respect to the philosophers mentioned as follows:

- The Hasker Thesis: In two parts, God$_M$'s manipulation shows that he takes little risk. Also, as with Trakakis, God's middle knowledge gives him too much control. (God$_M$ does not risk because he has middle knowledge which gives him the ability to be *certain* of creaturely outcomes that he has control over.)

- The Trakakis Thesis: God's willing-use of CCFs manipulates and thereby undermines creaturely free will or gives to their lives a contrived quality to their "freedom". The Trakakis position is directly related to the next, (which I have decided to keep separate).

- The Freedom-Altering Thesis: Langtry's statement is apt in summing up this position: "There are many ways to be deprived of one's freedom" (1996:318). And it looks like Molinist doctrine has the potential of depriving human persons of their freedom in a number of ways, if it were true. Consequently, it is likely that there is a one-to-one correspondence between the type of freedom affected and the kind of control or manipulation that God has over the human agent.

- Bayle-Thesis: God's 'setting up'[42] of situations involving CCFs does not absolve God of moral responsibility. This thesis can also be proposed as the Affected Theistic Nature and Status Problem.

  God$_M$'s middle knowledge and will do not exculpate him of putting free agents in situations where they are normally held responsible for their moral actions. Therefore, God is not good. For Bayle, there does not seem to be any major

---

[42] I use 'the setting up of situations' in order to write more neutrally than using the term 'manipulation', since Bayle does not use it.

difference between the theodical problems of a Calvinist model of God, and one who has middle knowledge. As such, God$_M$ is a manipulator and therefore not good, not personal, or not praiseworthy in a way that is consistent with a wide understanding of 'theism'. Furthermore, he may be morally responsible for evils that he allows or 'permits', even through weak actualization. [43] This is a similar complaint leveled against theological determinist models that require a stronger theodicy to exculpate God.

- The Closed-Future thesis: The future is metaphysically closed, (as well as epistemically closed). This might seem inconsistent with Molinism's insistence of creaturely libertarian free will, if understood as alternative metaphysical possibilities. Hence, can we have the free-will of AP in a metaphysically locked or closed future? Here, Langtry (1996) inspires Trakakis (2006): our freedom is built into the world's structure as if they become laws of nature. For Trakakis, this gives our free actions a kind of contrived quality.[44]

- Three Possible Kinds of Molinist Manipulation

Manipulation is polysemous mainly on account of the various literal and metaphorical uses of the term. It is difficult to give one precise definition of the way

---

[43] It is difficult to give an account for willing permission through Molinist doctrine if permission here means that God 'lets' something happen but does not will it. On a permission/decree dichotomy, there is no substantive way God can strongly actualize in order to allow for the difference between willingly permitting *A* or intentionally-decreeing *A*. One possibility for willing-permission is that God allows something to happen, but does not directly will it, by two counterfactuals of freedom chained in a Sorites schema. In this way the antecedent of the second counterfactual is weakly actualized. However, if the anti-Molinist has good arguments about God's moral responsibility in relation to one counterfactual, chaining them together—even it if gives the appearance of willing-permission—would still not exculpate God's moral responsibility even if it is considered as permission. In short, it rather looks as if for Molinism either everything is decreed by God's intentions or everything is allowed through willing-permission. Both the Molinist and the majority of present day Calvinists require some sort of divine permissive-will.

[44] On this point of metaphysical and epistemic closure, it's important to add that AMAAs are based on cases of local human-to-human manipulation where it is inferred that the Molinist God manipulates globally. I do not think this is a set-back for the success of the analogies.

manipulation is used in Molinist contexts. On one account, manipulation may remove alternative possibilities where we set up the environment to prevent someone from responding otherwise. Alternatively, manipulation may have a target, not so much as undermining libertarian free will, but freedom construed as source-hood. We have constructed the environment so that a person's choices are not really *up to* them, but owned by the manipulator, though perhaps they were able to do otherwise.

These broad brush-strokes from the anti-Molinist arguments all suggest that to some degree, God of the Molinist conception manipulates in such a way that we do not *remain* free; freedom is *cancelled* or *undermined*.

There are thus three broad positions that correspond to fully functioning partial or absent accounts of libertarian freedom under Molinist teaching. These are the positions where libertarian freedom is completely A. *removed*, B. *reduced*, or C. *preserved* but with other undesirable consequences.

(A). MNP-1: Molinist manipulation is incompatible with freedom. (MNP|LFW)

∴ Free will is removed.

Thus if MNP-1 is true, the following results:

- CF Incompatibility Problem: Molinist Manipulation and Libertarian Free Will are incompatible. (MNP|LFW)[45] If this is so, then it's doubtful that Foreknowledge Compatibilism (CF) can be sustained at all.

Molinism is put forward as a position of foreknowledge compatibilism (CF) but incompatibilism with causal determinism, (theological or natural), hence, (CF & INCD).[46] Now, if MNP|LFW is true, and Molinism entails manipulation MNP, then

---

[45] It is not likely that compatibilist free will and manipulation are incompatible, but rather that compatibilism requires manipulation or control of some kind.

[46] In Chapter 2, I distinguished between
(CF) *Compatibilism about Foreknowledge* = Human freedom is compatible with divine foreknowledge.
(**CD**) *Compatibilism about Determinism* = Human freedom is compatible with determinism.
(Linville 1993:165-186)

Molinism cannot ground a solution where God knows libertarianly free acts, (LFW). Therefore, Molinism is not a foreknowledge solution, and fails at explaining both the source and reconciliation questions. If MNP-1 is true, Foreknowledge Compatibilism fails.

(B) MNP-2: Molinist manipulation reduces or changes the quality of freedom, or gives us the illusion of indeterministic control.

∴ Qualitatively, free will is diminished

This sense of manipulation reflects Langtry's expression that there are various ways to lose our freedom. Thus, to view libertarian free will as either one or more of *indeterminism*, the power to perform *alternative possibilities*, *ultimate responsibility* or source-hood, then a successful anti-Molinist argument may remove or diminish one of these, leaving a partial form of freedom.

Where Hasker, Bayle and Trakakis imply that freedom is undermined, they are more concerned with the Ultimate Responsibility, source-hood or 'guidance control' condition of free will. Hence, it might be that 'on paper' Molinism satisfies some criterion for resolving DF|FK: we might still have the kind of free will of alternative possibilities or 'regulative control'. But on a larger and more difficult conception of human freedom—ultimate responsibility (UR)—the doctrine of Molinism undermines UR. This might render the fact that if Molinism can sustain Foreknowledge Compatibilism then the success of the compatibility is otiose and insignificant if it only means foreknowledge of an agent's regulative control.

(**INCF**) *Incompatibilism about Foreknowledge* = Human freedom is <u>not</u> compatible with divine foreknowledge.
(**INCD**) *Incompatibilism about Determinism* = Human freedom is <u>not</u> compatible with determinism.

(C) MNP-3: Molinist manipulation preserves freedom but the agent is exploited or used. In this sense, manipulation is *compatible with libertarian free will.*[47]

∴ Quantitatively, free will is preserved but with strong undesirable consequences.

This third alternative views MNP as compatible with LFW and maps closely my generation of the term *herethelic*—where a contolling chooser decides what another person wills to do. God manipulates *s* in such a way that *s* performs an indeterministic act *A*. The Molinist would not find it objectionable that divine *control* is compatible with LFW. This after all is what the theory of Molinism sets out to assert. But it is the substitution of 'manipulation' in a pejorative sense in place of control that is the stain upon the Molinist canvas. Moreover, this sense of manipulation is closer to the usage of the term in common parlance, where one person manipulates another for a particular end. This sense of manipulation is metaphorical, though a literal kind of manipulation is not ruled out as the mechanism of control for *this* sense of metaphorical manipulation. Indeed, there is a *prima facie* appeal regarding the antecedent/consequent distinction in a Molinist counterfactual of freedom as the means by which God literally manipulates a person via deterministic control, (or something close to it), in order to metaphorically manipulate the person.[48] Here, God manipulates by controlling what circumstances are actualized, and who is placed in them, for the purposes of obtaining a particular result *A*, while the agent's freedom remains intact.

There are further phenomenological or existential effects of manipulation *qua* exploitation. The person manipulated feels used, exploited or resentful. Trust and

---

[47] This position might sound strange—that manipulation is compatible with indeterminist freedom. Roger Clarke (2012) gives a variant of a Frankfurt case where the manipulator reboots another person's brain circuitry to the point where they forget that they have bought good eggs, so that ultimately, over many reboots, they libertarianly-freely buy bad factory-produced eggs. This assumes that there is no strong metaphysical reason why the egg buyer must always buy good eggs. If the buyer's actions were indeterministically free, there is, according to Clarke, a nonzero objective probability that the buyer will eventually choose the bad factory eggs. If so, then the manipulator has succeeded in manipulating another person's actions in an incompatibilist fashion.

[48] An alternative way of expressing this is not so much that God intends to metaphorically manipulate *s* to do *A*, but that the manipulation of *s* in this third metaphorical sense of manipulation is a necessary by-product of getting *s* to do *A*.

commitment relationships are destroyed between the two agents. This is a powerful indictment against human manipulation. Normally, if a person is coerced to do *A* they are not blameworthy because of the coercion. But if a person has been manipulated to do *A* freely, it is mostly considered that they still feel responsible for their action though 'tricked' into doing it. This is often admitted even by the manipulated person. This reactive attitude, to follow Peter Strawson's language, is a strong argument that manipulation *qua* exploitation is a real and genuine phenomenon in human social interactions.

These three senses of manipulation do not so much increase in severity of damage to Molinism but demonstrate, if any of these theses are correct, different possible objections to Molinism.

- The removal of LFW in MNP-1 shows that Molinism cannot answer the foreknowledge problem.

- The reduction of LFW in MNP-2 shows that the Molinist solution to the foreknowledge problem comes at a cost to the quality of freedom, or to the phenomenology of the libertarian's belief in alternative possibilities and the metaphysically open future.

- The preservation of LFW in MNP-3 comes at a greater cost. Though perhaps the foreknowledge problem is solved, this is only achieved by manipulating the agent in such a way that they remain free, but exploited or used. It is also an open question whether the agent's metaphysical freedom implies moral responsibility. Though this is anecdotal, humans who are manipulated by others feel upset and used by the manipulator, although still see themselves as morally responsible for the action that they were manipulated into doing.[49]

---

[49] Rudinow (1988) in his study of manipulation mentions that a person can be manipulated but still remain free and morally responsible. I do not think it is easy to argue with high confidence whether the person is or is not morally responsible for what they do when manipulated, especially in abstraction without looking at real cases. Evidence for this undeterminism of responsibility comes mainly, I think, from the moral confoundment in arguing for or against moral blameworthiness of the exploited person.

Whether this can be demonstrated of the Molinist God or not, the larger picture here is where the foci of moral responsibility, blame, and moral standing lie. In other words, this third sense of manipulation invokes serious theodical issues over fairness and justice.

6.11 **Deductive Anti-Molinist Arguments from Manipulation and Conclusion**

A weakness of anti-Molinist arguments that are analogical is the fundamental comparability of the analogue and target property—that is, whether human manipulation and divine control in Molinism are sufficiently comparable so that the latter can also be deemed objectionable manipulation. A fundamental issue at stake is whether we can even compare the human and divine with respect to factors such as agency and moral responsibility in the first place. Still, these analogical arguments have shown what is wrong—it is the job of deduction to *tell* what is wrong, and where and how Molinism is manipulation.

6.11.1 General Deductive Anti-Molinist Argument

[Proposed Generic Anti-Molinist Deductive Argument]

The following is a proposed general deductive argument against Molinism. As a positive, it is general enough to cover all major topics in this research, yet it is too general and is just in schematized argument form. The hard work is to justify that the premises are true. Now that a deductive, though general argument is proposed, the subsequent chapters shall attempt to justify the truth of the premises, especially (1).

(1) Molinism is manipulation. (Comment: *full expression*—Molinism is a providential model that relies on manipulation.)

(2) A manipulated agent is not free. (Comment: That is, manipulated by Molinism-style manipulation.)

 (3) ∴ Molinism is incompatible with libertarian freedom. (Comment: assumes freedom is libertarian freedom.)

(4) ∴ Molinism cannot resolve the divine foreknowledge problem;

∴ Molinism is not Compatibilism about Foreknowledge, (CF).

If (3) is true then I infer further propositions from it. By doing so, I link the two main themes of this research—manipulation and the divine foreknowledge problem—by virtue of their relation with the theme of libertarian freedom.

Libertarian Theme Linkage: If Molinism is incompatible with libertarian freedom because of manipulation then Molinism cannot answer the foreknowledge problem or offer itself as the best model of providence.

(4)   ∴ Molinism   cannot   resolve   the   divine   foreknowledge   problem;

∴ Molinism is not Compatibilism about Foreknowledge, (CF).

And,

(5) ∴ Molinism is not the best model of divine providence.

As I said, this general argument is not a 'convincer' argument. It won't persuade the Molinist who has no grounds at all to accept the first premise. The argument is more of a schema to show what needs to be demonstrated. The hard work to justify (1) 'Molinism is Manipulation' starts in the next chapter.

Concerning (2). I anticipate that this premise may be difficult to justify, where 'manipulation' is the type of manipulation implied by the Molinist theory. The premise may need softening or reworking by inferring, for example, that if manipulation in Molinism is objectionable, then we have grounds to wonder whether the kind of free will that it offers is worth the price, or is 'worth wanting'. I discuss this below in the Conclusion.

6.11.2 Conclusion

The main findings of this chapter can be summarised as:

1. It is God's *use* of middle knowledge (not just his possession of it), which is problematic for Molinism. This 'MK-Use argument' needs more elaboration and unpacking which I will do in the next chapter. So far the middle-knowledge-as-use claim does not say how it is used.

2. There are three main senses of manipulation that allegedly may be damaging to Molinism. These three senses are now working hypotheses that shall be tested against Molinist theory in subsequent chapters.

3. Value judgment: Manipulation in these latter two senses is negative or quite simply 'bad' and a reason to object to it if woven into a theory of divine providence.

4. We can distinguish two types of control in relation to circumstances:

    a. 'Inter-circumstantial' choices are made by God$_M$.
    b. 'Intra-circumstantial' choices are made by human creatures.

Although it is taught in Molinism that human agents have counterfactual control in the circumstances they find themselves in, God does not specifically have counterfactual control over what agents do within a circumstance. Yet he has 'counterfactual' control—more broadly construed—over which counterfactuals to place people in. Hence, God has counterfactual control over circumstances in this first 'inter-circumstantial' kind of control. While creatures supposedly have counterfactual control via their free *will* in the circumstances they find themselves in, God has counterfactual control over which circumstances to actualize via his free *will*. The divine and human will each have a kind of counterfactual control—from a particular aspect—in relation to circumstances.

We can therefore equate the concept of 'Inter-circumstantial' choices made by God$_M$ as 'Counterfactual-Control' of circumstances. This is an important admission for it points to how God manipulates in the Molinist theory: God manipulates persons by manipulating circumstances.

5. The reciprocal kind of LFW in relation to each of these two kinds of control amount to:

    c. 'Inter-circumstantial' choices that are made by God_M undermine the sourcehood/ultimate responsibility condition of free will.

    d. 'Intra-circumstantial' choices that are made by human creatures might pertain to alternative possibilities enacted by the agent in the circumstance. However, there are strong anti-Molinist arguments against freedom *qua* alternative possibilities.

Given this distinction between (c) and (d), it is (c) which provides a novel case against Molinism:

<div align="center">[CLM]: Manipulation ruins Sourcehood</div>

- Claim: manipulation undermines or cancels out the source-hood condition of LFW. The mechanism for this cancellation is the complete set of actualized circumstances already fore-ordained, circumstances we have no control over, only control in. Moreover, where we *think we are free*, it is an illusion with respect to freedom as source-hood, because our decisions are built into the impersonal structure and fabric of a closed metaphysical system of circumstances that we have no direct control over, while personally, God_M had fore-ordained this closed structure to obtain.

Chapter 7: **Proving *That*—Molinism is Manipulation**

It is now time to demonstrate that Molinism is a form of providence on a par with manipulation in some objectionable sense. To get to this point, I have collected various data from the arguments of non-Molinists, and to these have added my own initial qualms about Molinism.

The purpose of this chapter is to be more emphatic about showing *that* Molinism is manipulation, *ex hypothesi*. The next chapter will be more speculative in showing *how* God$_M$ manipulates, with a view to pinpointing what the 'mechanism' of manipulation is. Showing *that* and showing *how* will provide a much more robust determination for testing the main thesis claim of this research.

7.1 **The 'Middle Knowledge as Use' Argument**

The major finding from the chapter on the Anti-Molinist arguments from analogy was that the problem with Molinism is the way God *uses* his middle knowledge. The following list restates in summary form the views of the five philosophers who have inspired this work. Without stating the matter explicitly, each of these summaries tacitly reveals a problem with the use of middle knowledge, and not just the possession of middle knowledge. (The complete textual references are footnoted.)

- Dean Zimmerman (2009:89). Divine manipulation, via infallible knowledge of counterfactuals, is inconsistent with creaturely freedom. God deliberately puts people into circumstances where he knows what they will do.[1]

---

[1] Zimmerman (2009:89)

> Something has gone terribly wrong if one is forced to admit the possibility of divine voodoo worlds; … the supposition, dubious to begin with, that free creatures can be infallibly manipulated while remaining free—that they can be deliberately put in circumstances where they freely do something, even though the one who put them in those circumstances has, in advance, infallible knowledge of what they will do. It is the hypothesis of the availability of CFs [counterfactuals

- Nick Trakakis (2006:[52]). Divine manipulation under the Molinist conception removes or diminishes the manipulee's free will.[2]

- William Hasker (1990:20). God decides which CCFs to actualize, thereby meticulously planning and setting up what we end up doing, so that effectively God decides what we will decide. (2011: 20-21 and note 8)

- Bruce Langtry (1996:316 -318). There are many ways we can be deprived of freedom. One way is where God sets up initial conditions and laws to weakly actualize our actions so that, because of the structure of creation which we have no control over, we are never able to act otherwise or perform a certain token of action.[3]

---

of freedom] at the first stage in God's foreknowledge, together with the contingency of CFs, that has generated the voodoo worlds in which we are too easy to control to be free.

[2] Nick Trakakis (2006:[52])

A neglected but deep flaw in the Molinist account concerns its ability to deliver the goods of free will that have been squandered by the divine determinist. The problem, specifically, is that God's strategy of actualizing a world on the basis of information obtained from various counterfactuals of creaturely freedom – that is to say, the counterfactuals that spell out what would result from all possible combinations of creatures if they are created with libertarian freedom – turns God into a manipulator of his creatures' behavior and hence removes, or at least diminishes, their free will.

[3] Bruce Langtry (1996:316 -318). [God has the power], "by actualizing the specified circumstances, to weakly actualize it being true that free creatures always choose and act rightly." Hence,

…even if God does not cause and determine any creaturely actions, he systematically arranges laws and initial conditions with the overriding intention that no person performs a morally wrong action. If so, then no one is free to act wrongly, for the non-occurrence of morally wrong choices and actions is built in to the structure of the creation just as much as if it were a law of nature. (317)

There are many very different ways in which you can be deprived of your freedom. From a libertarian viewpoint, one of these ways is by having it built in to the nature of the system, unalterable by you, that you will never perform a certain type of act. (318)

- Pierre Bayle. God's 'setting up' of situations involving CCFs of creaturely freedom does not absolve God of moral responsibility.

    In the literature on Molinism, there has not been a detailed explanation of *how* God uses middle knowledge. How exactly, then, does God use middle knowledge, or more specifically, counterfactuals of creaturely freedom, where the result then becomes objectionable manipulation? Moreover, even for Molinism to be the best version of providence, it must be construed that God manipulates circumstances or states of affairs in a neutral sense. If the integration of the divine will with intellect is important for both foreknowledge problems and a model of providence, then 'manipulation' in some benign sense is necessary for both a foreknowledge solution and a theory of providence. Hence we will need to distinguish between different forms of manipulation, and what constitutes permissible and objectionable manipulation.

    If we suppose that the following Use-Premise is true, we can posit the following diverse viewpoints, (A) and (B) below:

- Use Premise: It is not God's middle knowledge *per se¸* but how God *uses* his middle knowledge that is important…

    A.   …for the Molinist to show that Molinism succeeds as a foreknowledge solution and the best model of providence;
    (Label: Middle Knowledge Use **Success** claim-**MKUseSucc**),

    and

    B.   …for the anti-Molinist to argue the case that the theory of Molinism entails objectionable manipulation.
    (Label: Middle Knowledge Use **Criticism** claim- **MKUseCrit**)

    The same premise—the use of God's middle knowledge by his will—is seen by some to be the key for success, but by others the means for the failure of Molinism. This

might be because of attitudinal differences where the friend and foe of Molinism view the same premise through different lenses, and/or that supplementary premises can be added by either side to infer their conclusions, either of MKUseSucc or MKUseCrit. Alternatively, the Molinist and anti-Molinist may have such totally different pictures of Molinism that they argue from different premises, other than the Use-Premise, in which case they might never agree on the fundamentals.

Ironically, both Molinist and non/anti-Molinist need to demonstrate that their shared premise can be true or supplemented with other premises, in order for either **MKUseSucc** or **MKUseCrit** to surpass the other. The 'Use-Premise' is bedrock for both. One way to escape the arbitrary interpretation that it is just a matter of personal response or intuition is to distinguish between *what* is used and *how* it is used.[4] My position, to anticipate, is that the anti-Molinists have come to their negative conclusions about Molinism because they have investigated further *how* God uses his middle knowledge and *why*.

The neutral sense of **MKUseSucc** merely points to what is used, i.e., counterfactuals of creaturely freedom in conjunction with the divine will selecting those that will obtain. More specifically, the main component that is non-metaphorically manipulated is the circumstances, which involve a person, in the antecedent of a Molinist conditional.[5] So this neutral sense of manipulation equates to God's providential control in selecting which circumstances to actualize while also allegedly solving the foreknowledge problem.

---

[4] In §1.8 "Research Method and Strategy", I commented on the theory/application dichotomy often referred to in Molinist debates. Perszyk remarks that the *application* issues of Molinism are more difficult to arbitrate upon than the *theoretical* aspects of middle knowledge, for they seem to be dependent on intuitions, presumptions and our various theological stances. Here I reject that position by attempting to show that there is a robust way to argue for or against topics (without summing up the results in a 'checklist'), in the providential applications of Molinism as they are just as much theory-based and capable of analysis, as for example, the counterfactual semantics of middle knowledge. Essentially, there is no theory/application distinction. Everything in Molinism is capable of fine-grained deductive analysis, and every bit of theory is itself an application to resolve a problem.

[5] Selecting the circumstance for the possible person, in order to elicit a required behaviour is objectionable manipulation. Selecting a possible person for a general or particular circumstance is manipulation, but is closer to the standard literal kind of control, such as when a physician manipulates limbs, or a mathematician manipulates numbers by placing them into formula.

The **MKUseCrit** position does all the above as well. However, it fills in the details to explain *how* CCFs are used. Counterfactuals of creaturely freedom are used as *information* about particular possible persons and what they would do. Manipulation in the objectionable sense is best characterized as the position that God$_M$'s way of using middle knowledge is using it *as information* about *what* people would do, in order to get them to do it, with the subsequent explanation of *why* the information is used being that it is to get them to do a particular action. This last proposition appears to override the Kantian rule not to treat people merely as means to ends. I wish to emphasise the two important conditions of objectionable manipulation posited so far in this thesis. Firstly, the manipulee is not aware that another person *qua* manipulator has information about them (ie., covertly acquired) and secondly, had the manipulee known about the intentions of the manipulator, they would not have consented to the manipulator's control.

At the risk of over-simplifying, the reason why the information gleaned from CCFs is used, is ultimately to control another agent's behavior in accord with the intentions of God. The Molinist would want to say that the information is used to control a *free* agent; the non-Molinist would say that controlling a person by using information about them is freedom-undermining and/or exploitative; after all, is it is in some sense, *their* information.[6] The result of this: God under the Molinist conception of God potentially *uses people* as means to ends—in order to satisfy his intentions and desires. There is hence a double understanding of 'use' in the **MKUseCrit** position: God uses CCFs as information in order to use people as actors to fulfill his intentions. Along with middle knowledge as a second moment, and the divine will as the third, there must be some account of God's intentional activity somewhere in the stream of logical moments, either subsumed under a pre-existing logical moment (perhaps even will or intellect) or created as a new moment. Whatever the case, God's intentional activity or decision must be very early in the divine nature.

---

[6] An existentialist critique may equate the taking of information about a person—in order to manipulate them—with a kind of 'robbing' of their free will or autonomy (Trakakis 2007).

7.2 'Scientia Complexa': The Entanglement of Will and Intellect

It has become a cliché to say *knowledge is power*. I am not attributing this cliché to the Molinist position. A combination of middle knowledge as information, intentionality and will, *used in particular ways*, results in a position of *knowledge as power*, or better, knowledge as *a* power.[7] Ultimately the Molinist wants to say that this power results in foreknowledge compatibilism and the best available theory of providence.

The *Scientia Complexa* (SC) is my label for how the traditional distinctions of Molinism—that is, middle knowledge, will and free knowledge—can be understood differently as combining to form a power, and I posit this new label to start a fresh page, so to speak, so as not to be biased by the traditional and contemporary logical-moment talk of generic Molinism.[8] In Chapter 4, "Divine Will and Intellect," it became evident that to insist on the logical priority of middle knowledge before will results in a host of difficulties: questions of real versus nominal distinctions; difficulties in making Molinism consistent with Divine Simplicity (if the Molinist wants to be classical); in particular the recurring temptation to posit further layers of will over intellect, or of extra moments of will, ("fifth-momentism"), or extra layers of middle knowledge *ad infinitum*—in order to explain how Molinism could be explanatorily complete. If that chapter was confusing, I

---

[7] We could further discuss the sense of knowledge 'as' power, between, for example the hermeneutic *as* of understanding and the apophantic *as* of assertion. Heidegger understands the apophantic 'as' of assertion "which lets something be seen as something [else]" (Haynes 2000:48-49 quoting Haynes 1990:561). Or, the 'as' of interpretation which takes something and relates it to our interest. Here Haynes quotes Brian Birchall's analogy of "theme" that does not exist "out there", rather we interpret "the what as the how" (Haynes 2000: 49 quoting Birchall 1991:161-164). A third position is Scruton's "seeing as" as "a strange mixture of the sensory and the intellectual" (Haynes 2000:40 quoting Scruton 1982:112). These three positions relate the involvement of middle knowledge in the *scientia complexa* as either:

1. MK+W has a *phenomenology* which lets us see it as a power.
2. MK+W is *interpreted* by us as a power.
3. MK+W is *seen* by us as a power.

I prefer the phenomenological approach: MK+W itself is a power that inheres in the God of the Molinist model.

[8] '*Scientia Complexa*' is Latin for Complex Knowledge. My resources in Latin and medieval theology are limited but to my knowledge there aren't any particular theological doctrines called *scientia complexa*, though I'm willing to be corrected.

respectfully suggest that it was because the presuppositions of generic Molinism result in confusion, and cannot result in consistent assertions.

For the moment, the SC is defined as middle knowledge combined in some way with the divine will (free knowledge is the outcome of the power so is left unstated), so SC = MK + W. This is too coarse for understanding either the success or the critical claim where a power is a necessary condition in both of these camps. Below I unpack the *scientia complexa* further, as a way of understanding God$_M$ without the will and intellect distinction or logical moments. All that is required is that a divine being has knowledge of counterfactuals *mostly* before (temporally or ontologically) he decides what to do.

I contrast the *scientia complexa* with some recent notions of God's self-limitation with regard to omnipotence and omniscience. Richard Swinburne posits a double limitation on God: first upon himself; if he is to be free, he won't "know in advance what he will do," and second, his own choice "to give others freedom" means he limits his knowledge of what they will do (Swinburne 1993:181). Elsewhere Swinburne attempts to "knock theism into a coherent shape" in a similar way to his definition of divine knowledge, by discussing God's self-limitation of omnipotence so that it is compatible with being perfectly free (165). Plantinga, on the other hand, contends that it is logically impossible to determine or strongly actualize free beings into performing an action. Logical possibility and coherence drive attempts to understand the nature of God in contemporary philosophy of religion. On this dual account of logical possibility and coherence, God cannot know future contingents because there are none to know (Geach, Swinburne), nor can God do the impossible by directly willing us to act freely by means of secondary causes, in the way that Aquinas supposed.

God's self-limiting can be applied to either or both his knowledge or power at least. Here, for the sake of argument, I am associating the divine will with omnipotence, where power is an exercise of volition. If this assimilation is allowed, just as power is something that can be attenuated—as in the situation where an omnipotent being chooses not to exercise great power—the divine will can be 'weakened' as well. For the Molinist and the libertarian, God's power, or will, also does not extend to controlling another indeterministically free agent.

7-7

But divine self-limitation is different from the ability to perform or know the logically possible: a being limits the exercise of one of its properties if it is already able to exercise this property. Now, it might look as if God_M limits his power or will in terms of deterministic models such as Calvinism, a model in which God appears to be 'all powerful' or 'more powerful' than in other models of providence. However, since the Molinist as libertarian cannot consistently claim that God can directly control or will indeterministic creatures to will to act freely, God_M does not, in this respect, limit his power, for he is not able to do the logically impossible. God could make us perform actions, but they would not be free from the libertarian vantage point.

What does Molinism teach concerning divine self-limitation? Here I think we might be surprised by the contrast. Bac writes that,

> Molinism confesses that God freely willed to limit himself
> in order to make place for creaturely freedom, because he is
> *not* able to determine our actions without distorting our
> freedom. (Bac 2010:435 note 50, original emphasis)

However, I am unsure this is a real teaching of Molina: that God freely willed to limit himself. Bac implies that deferring to middle knowledge is God's act of self-limitation. Molina argues that God has middle knowledge by nature. Granted, he could choose to strongly actualize determined actions or weakly actualize free actions via middle knowledge, but I do not interpret classical Molinism as explicitly teaching that God limits his power by deferring to middle knowledge. If Bac is correct in his interpretation of Molinism, then God_M *could have been a* God_C—an exemplar of the God of a Calvinist model—but he chose not to be a Calvinist, so to speak, in order to give his creatures real freedom.

We can say then, that either God of the Molinist model self-limits his power and will, or he is not able to control free agents in the first place. Contra Bac, who sees God's deferring to middle knowledge as an act of self-limitation, middle knowledge gives God the power to do what his will cannot do—control or contribute to the control of libertarian free creatures. Furthermore, the Molinist God's power in relation to middle knowledge gives him two forms of powers of the divine will: to weakly actualize

metaphysically contingent states of affairs with certainty of their outcome, and to know all counterfactuals of freedom so he can choose from them that which is consistent with his providential desires. Regarding the first power, middle knowledge bridges the contingency gap of the counterfactual operator, *effectively* giving God the power *qua* will to control libertarian free creatures. This is power over undetermined human actions. The strong and weak actualization dichotomy, or the direct and indirect will distinction, is bound within an epistemic operation of strong modal necessity, ensuring certainty over contingent states of affairs. So whatever God chooses to actualize, he is certain of the results.

I do not see any hint of self-limitation in the Molinist model of God, but instead see the contrary. New powers are born in the God of the Molinist conception, potentially making God *too* powerful, depending what he does with this power. There is an appearance and reality gap in Molinism from the perspective of the human inquirer. Molinists write that the precedence of God's intellect over will gives Molinism the superior position over Calvinism. Rather, the *scientia complexa* gives God more power than Calvinism does, just as long as it is crucial to one's theology that libertarian freedom is necessary for actions to be truly free. So far, I have only shown how middle knowledge is *used* as a power in conjunction with the will.

7.2.1 Digression: The Manipulation Argument against Compatibilism

I digress in order to discuss an area in the philosophy of free will that I think can inform our present discussion. The family of arguments for incompatibilism—known as the Manipulation Argument against Compatibilism—purports to show that if compatibilism is true then determined agents are not free. These manipulation arguments do not infer that compatibilist accounts of free will involve manipulation, rather manipulation is used in the premises to assert that manipulated agents are not free. This represents an obvious difference from my present motive, which is to infer that Molinism is manipulative in its providence, rather than being already present in the premises. Further, Molinism is ostensibly an incompatibilist-libertarian account. These differences might suggest that the Manipulation Argument against Compatibilism is completely

upside-down or back-to-front in its relevance or comparability to these 'Molinism as manipulation' discussions. Nevertheless, there is much to learn from these arguments and any area that is currently a hot topic in the philosophy of free will is worth investigating.

Analysis

As already mentioned, these arguments assume manipulation in one of the premises. For example, Sripada (2012:6).

Premise 1: A manipulated agent is not free.

Premise 2: There is no relevant difference between a manipulated agent

        and an agent in a deterministic world.

Conclusion: An agent in a deterministic world is not free.[9]

Most manipulation arguments rely on another premise that shows there is 'no relevant difference' between a manipulated agent and an agent in a determinist world. This premise functions to connect manipulation with determinism by the association of shared relevant properties, to the conclusion that an agent in a determined world is also not free, hence compatibilism is false and incompatibilism is true.

Interest in The Manipulation Argument (TMA) has overtaken that in Consequence Arguments for Incompatibilism.[10] Levy and McKenna (2009), provide a useful summary

---

[9] Chandra Sekhar Sripada here is translating "very roughly" (2011:6) Kadri Vihvelin's "Designer" and "Tool" argument where Designer designs Tool to ensure an action, or to have the right psychology to ensure or make probable a certain action. Vihvelin's argument from (2011§3.2) is as follows:

1. Tool doesn't act freely and, for that reason, is not morally responsible for what he does.
2. If determinism is true, there is no relevant difference between Tool and *any* normal case of apparently free and morally responsible action.
3. Therefore, if determinism is true no one ever acts freely or is morally responsible for what he does.

[10] Regarding the recent popularity of manipulation arguments for incompatibilism, Michael McKenna stated that,

> Manipulation arguments for incompatibilism have become all the rage
> as of late in debates about free will and moral responsibility. This is for
> good reason… the dispute between compatibilist and incompatibilists

where they discuss recent work on The Manipulation Argument[11] stating that it is "a powerful resource for the incompatibilists of both the leeway and source variety" (107). TMA "relies upon our intuitive reactions to what is supposed to be *objectionable* manipulation of an otherwise normally functioning agent" (107). The authors see the qualifier 'objectionable' as important, since there are other cases of manipulation—"advertising, coaxing from friends, and simple deceptions"—which one normally would not consider as constituting a removal of freedom or moral responsibility. Objectionable manipulation undermines "the proper operation of our capacities as morally responsible agents" (107).

TMA is a problem for compatibilists since in cases of "global manipulation", the agent manipulated "differs in no relevant respect from a normally functioning agent brought into the same state through a normal history of causal determination." However, if being manipulated in such a manner is "freedom and responsibility undermining" and there is no relevant difference between manipulation and determinism, then causal determinism also is freedom and responsibility undermining (107). Here "global manipulation" is distinguished from "local manipulation" where the former is "a matter of massively revising an agent's psychological constitution." They give the example of Patty Hearst's brainwashing.

Philosophers well-known for their compatibilism find TMA very problematic. For example, John Martin Fischer (2000:390):[12]

---

looks as if it reduces to the controversy over manipulation arguments (2012).

For the Consequence Argument, see for example Peter van Inwagen (1975). Simplified, he states that if determinism were true, it makes every truth unavoidable. By *reductio* many of us would want to deny that consequent because it would eliminate our intuitions about moral responsibility. Tomis Kapitan in Kane (2001:128) likens consequence arguments to Diodorus Cronos' "Master Argument".

[11] There are several different types of manipulation arguments (McKenna 2012:145), but I treat them in the singular here using Levy and McKenna's acronym, TMA.

[12] Michael McKenna (2012) writes to the same effect:

(From Abstract): Manipulation arguments for incompatibilism all build upon some example or other in which an agent is covertly manipulated into acquiring a psychic structure on the basis of which she performs an

> I think that manipulation cases are compatibilism's dirty little secret. Compatibilists don't like to admit that this is a problem. It is to Bob Kane's and other incompatibilists' credit that they have pushed us to confront cases of covert non-constraining control. There can be thorough-going global kinds of manipulation. We compatibilists have to deal with this. In my view, honestly, Harry Frankfurt really has not addressed that problem.

Of interest here is Fischer's position that the style of manipulation required for TMA is covert and non-constraining. Covert control also transforms manipulation from a neutral kind of control to one that is morally questionable. As Derk Pereboom writes, "Many compatibilists would agree that when an action comes about as a result of covert manipulation (of the right sort), the agent will not be morally responsible" (Pereboom 2001:112). Though Frankfurt cases involve manipulation, the type of manipulation is usually constraining, at least over the agent's mental states by way of a mechanism or switch. These thought experiments may be unrealistic, but are conceivable and if they were possible, portray an invasive kind of manipulation as control. TMA relies on manipulation of a very different kind.

To make it clear, the difference in meaning between constraining and non-constraining needs to be explained. Kane defines,

- constraining control$_{def}$: the controlled agent's will is frustrated by certain conditions called "constraints" imposed by the controller so the agent is

---

action. The featured agent, it is alleged, is manipulated into satisfying conditions compatibilists would take to be sufficient for acting freely. Such an example used in the context of an argument for incompatibilism is meant to elicit the intuition that, due to the pervasiveness of the manipulation, the agent does not act freely and is not morally responsible for what she does. It is then claimed that any agent's coming to be in the same psychic state through a deterministic process is no different in any relevant respect from the pertinent manner of manipulation. Hence, it is concluded that compatibilists' proposed sufficient conditions for free will and moral responsibility are inadequate, and that free will and moral responsibility are incompatible with determinism.

prevented in achieving certain wants, desires or intention in choice or action (Kane 1985:33-34).

- non-constraining control$_{def}$: the controlled agent's will is not frustrated. There are no conditions or constraints that prevent the agent from achieving certain wants, desires or intention in choice or action. *But* the agent is controlled by others who have manipulated past circumstance so that the controlled agent wants, desires, and intends what the controller has planned (Kane 1985:34).[13]

7.2.2 The 'Manipulation Argument against Compatibilism' and Molinism

There are several difficulties in relating Molinism, as able through its theory, to instantiate the activity needed for TMA. I repeat the two main differences as follows.

(A) First Difference: TMA arguments contain manipulation as a premise, while our focus has been to demonstrate that Molinism *is* manipulation (here understood as Molinism-style providence is a form of divine manipulation.)

(B) Second Difference: Standard TMA arguments try to show that compatibilism about free will is false (CFW is false), while Molinism presents itself as libertarian.

Comment on (B): Perhaps Molinism, properly understood, is really a version of compatibilism; this would be a powerful application of TMA. Alternatively, libertarianism in Molinism might be preserved, but the TMA suggests that if there is a way to manipulate libertarianly free agents, then the effects of this are just as damaging to Molinism.The first difference is the most important. I discuss this now:

TMA arguments can be inverted to offer different conclusions and premises, (though they will change their motivation as 'manipulation arguments against compatibilism' to an argument for something else.)

---

[13] Kane gives the example of the behaviourist B.F. Skinner's novel *Walden Two* as containing clear examples of non-constraining control by way of human engineering. Kane writes, "In his community… persons have and do whatever they want or choose, but they have been conditioned since childhood to want or choose only what they have and do" (Kane 1985:34).

Sripada's (2012:6), simple version manipulation argument—noted at the beginning of this section—can be re-modelled by swapping Premise 1 with the Conclusion, maintaining deductive validity, thereby moving the manipulation claim to the conclusion. Thus,

> Premise 1': An agent in a deterministic world is not free.
>
> Premise 2': There is no relevant difference between a manipulated agent and an agent in a deterministic world.
>
> Conclusion': A manipulated agent is not free.

Though still valid, are the premises true?[14] It depends at least on 'The No Relevant Difference Premise', as Levy and McKenna (2009) express it. Premise 1 is much more controversial and because of the exchange with the manipulation assertion, which is now the conclusion, it violates a pragmatic desideratum of arguments that premises should be *more acceptable* than the conclusion. But *more acceptable to whom*? The Molinist, as a libertarian, at least accepts as true the new first premise, 'An agent in a deterministic world is not free.'[15] So inverting the argument makes one premise more friendly for the Molinist.

However, the Molinist would not accept without a very powerful argument the substitution from 2' to 2'',

---

[14] Some caution is needed before deeming the argument valid too hastily. The structure is deductive-like, but the logical form of the argument depends on premise 2''s 'No Difference Principle.' To say there is no relevant difference between X and Y is to assert, through lack of evidence to the contrary, that it is epistemically possible that X is substitutable *salva veritate* for Y in this context. To make the argument valid as a matter of logical consequence would need a strong syntactic reading of a logical operation of identity, (X =Y). However, the epistemic reading hinges on the semantics of the premise and so the argument cannot strictly be a candidate for deductive validity, as it is not well-formed because of this premise. Nevertheless, if premise 2' is justified, the argument can be paraphrased for simulated validity, something like the following,

P1. If any agent is determined, then they are not free.

P2. If any agent is determined, then they they are manipulated.

∴ If any agent is manipulated, then they are not free.

[15] This move of mine is an *ad hominem* against the Molinist position, but it is not intended to be a nasty *ad hominem,* but an appeal to consistency.

Premise 2': There is no relevant difference between *a manipulated agent* and an agent in a deterministic world.

to

Premise 2'': There is no relevant difference between *an agent manipulated by God$_M$* and an agent in a deterministic world.

If it could be warranted, this challenges the core tenet of Molinism and changes everything. But how can it be justified? Premises 2' and 2'' speak of agents in a 'deterministic world'. What is that, given that 'determinism' is a term of art capable of various renderings? Properly understood, the core concept of determinism in this free-will debate (TMA) speaks, using the example of a *physicalist* account of determinism *that is controllable,* so that along with the laws of nature, antecent or concurrent states of affairs are counterfactually-causally relevant in bringing about counterfactually relevant effects and consequences.[16] And manipulation here, interpreted as neutral causal control, could be either a *triggering condition* or an *enabling condition*.[17] The TMA arguments assume manipulability (in a neutral sense), to argue the case that determinism provides counterfactual control. This of course might be question-begging, for it just assumes that there is no relevant difference. I propose though that the meaning of 'No Relevant Difference' now changes its referent on account of the augmented TMA being inverted to form the Anti-Molinist Manipulation argument.

---

[16] By saying at this point that 'determinism is physicalist', I mean that the control is physical, which may or not be consistent with physicalism. Thought experiments offered in manipulation arguments, or in arguments about free will that rely on manipulation as control, appeal to our physicalist intuitions. I do not rule out that determinism is metaphysical and wider in scope if physicalism is false, and so these thought experiments that rely on natural accounts of causation can be abstracted to show that determinism could have parallel metaphysical determining 'mechanisms', i.e., God's providence.

[17] I discuss enabling versus triggering conditions below. This is the reason why I have not discussed Frankfurt cases against alternative possibilities, as they quintessentially rely on triggering conditions to be the mechanism of the counterfactual intervener. This application of a triggering condition might apply to an agent's abilities to do otherwise within a circumstance, which would also be to return to the debate on whether an agent is truly free (to do otherwise) if God knows that they would do-*A*. I consider the research on the 'theory' of Molinism has passed *that* stage and so I avoid Frankfurt cases and triggers. Even if there is libertarian freedom at middle knowledge, it does not follow that it will survive intact with no trauma at free knowledge. The stage we are up to now is to understand how God$_M$ controls circumstances and states of affairs. The terminology of 'enabling conditions' is much more appropriate to the kind of control in Molinism—or mechanism of manipulation—than 'triggering conditions'.

The use of the term 'manipulation' in various arguments in the free-will debate sometimes refers to the type of internal or local control that the evil neurologists, say, have over their patients in Frankfurt-Style thought experiments against alternative possibilities. Being thought experiments, or intuition-pumps, these counterfactual intervening devices are not actual, merely conceivable, in order to follow the argument where it might lead. So I distinguish two senses of manipulation that my inversion of Sripada's simple TMA has disguised: the objectionable sense of manipulation which is a moral indictment against manipulation, and the use of morally neutral manipulation which acts as the counterfactual controlling device that determines or controls the effects. That is, the neutral sense of manipulation as control is the 'mechanism' of neutral manipulation. Even so, a neutral sense of manipulation as control *where free and autonomous agents* are being manipulated transforms into objectionable manipulation.

If it can be accepted by the Molinist that God can neutrally manipulate us, then we can offer a rephrased version of Premise 2″ where we omit the contentious term 'manipulates':

> Premise 2‴: There is no relevant difference between *an agent who is manipulated by causal enabling by God$_M$* and an agent in a deterministic world (who is manipulated by causal enabling).

Here, it may be questioned whether there really is 'no relevant difference' as asserted in 2‴. Of course, *there are metaphysical differences* between causal enabling and causal determinism which may affect the argument as to whether the theory of Molinism teaches indeterministic or compatibilist freedom. My aim here it to propose that, for all intents and purposes, there is no relevant difference between causal enabling and causal determinism in relation to an individual's freedom and autonomy. In the next section I elaborate upon the notion of causal enabling.

7.2.3 The Mechanism of Manipulation: Causal Enabling

I note that there is a third significant difference between TMA and Molinism. The thought experiments generally given in manipulation arguments for incompatibilism

portray direct causal control, not the alleged 'indirect' control via the Molinist strong/weak actualization distinction, which attempts to preserve libertarian agency. We might need to undermine the strong/weak (direct/indirect) actualization distinction to put forward a successful manipulation argument. In contrast, I argue that we do not need to reject the Molinist strong/weak actualization distinction. Indeed, given God's epistemic certainty (and his governance of providence as a *scientia complexa*), the strong/weak actualization distinction *just is* the mechanism whereby Premise 2''' can be upheld. God's will and intellect provides in theory a way God can control agents through causal enabling. This is a course-grained account of the mechanism of manipulation in Molinism.

The philosophical literature distinguishes between different senses of causation.[18] Carolina Sartorio discusses in the context of actions and omissions—'enabling conditions' (*enablers*) and 'triggering conditions' (*triggers*), (citing Lombard 1990). Sartorio describes an enabler as,

> roughly…something that 'facilitates' the occurrence of an effect, or merely makes it possible, without setting off the causal chain leading to it. Enablers are sometimes regarded as 'background conditions': facts or states of affairs that need to be in place for an outcome to happen (Sartorio 2009:582)

Talk of causal-enablers is not without its difficulties,[19] nevertheless it is the closest to a version of control or manipulation by the Molinist concept of God that we can get. I posit

---

[18] For example, Peter Godfrey-Smith (2009) discusses *causal* pluralism; whether there are two main concepts of cause; whether the concept of cause is an essentially contested concept (ECC). We get an indication of the complexity of discussing what a cause is by the following.

> The usual target for philosophical analysis is what it is for one thing to *be a cause* of another. But there might be a family of causal concept, including triggering, enabling, hastening, delaying, being linked in a causal chain… Once we have worked out whether *C* hastened *E*, perhaps it is pointless to work out whether this is also enough for *C* to *be a cause of E*. Hastening is just what it is, and it is one genuine causal relation. (Godfrey-Smith 2009:328)

[19] Sartoria cites other works that declare that "enablers are not genuine causes" (582 citing Lombard 1990; Thomson 2003). Sartoria thinks we can argue that enablers are causes though their contribution is different from that of triggers, such as the requirement for background conditions (592-583). The

then that God's control is by his actualizing of circumstances *ahead* of the agent. This complements The Closed-Future Thesis[20] which was a finding from the AMAA. Talk of being manipulated by or through the 'fabric' or 'structure' of the universe is consistent with causal enabling. Or putting this another way, Travis Campbell refers to it as *environmental determinism* "which destroys every plausible account of human freedom and responsibility (compatibilist or libertarian)" (Campbell 2006:19-20). What do I mean by God controls in actualizing circumstances ahead of the agent?

7.2.4 Conclusion of Digression on The Manipulation Argument Against Compatibilism

An analysis of TMA has been informative for the Molinism as manipulation claims. TMA arguments can be turned on their heads, where *mutatis mutandis*, an argument for the conclusion that Molinism is a version of manipulation. The argument schema is,

[Comparative Manipulation Argument]

(Modelled on 'The Manipulation Arguments Against Compatibilism')

(1) An agent in a deterministic world is not free.

(2) There is no relevant difference between *an agent who is controlled by causal enabling—by God_M* and an agent in a deterministic world.

(3) ∴ A manipulated agent is not free.

(4) (from (2)). An agent who is controlled by Molinist-style causal enabling is effectively manipulated.

---

previous reference to Godfrey-Smith's 'causal pluralism' may alleviate our doubt that enablers are genuine causes in their own particular way.

[20] The future is metaphysically closed (as well as epistemically closed). To repeat from Chapter 6, Langtry (1996) inspires Trakakis (2006): *our freedom is built into the world's structure as if they become laws of nature.* For Trakakis, this gives our free actions a kind of 'contrived quality'.

(5) ∴ <u>Molinism is a theory of divine manipulation</u>

I define the manipulation mechanism that God in the Molinist model uses as 'causal-enabling', produced by a causal power resulting from the *scientia complexa*. Anectdotally, as we travel, God$_M$ lays down the stepping-stone (circumstance) upon which we freely put our foot. He can guide us in the direction where he wants us to go by laying down the path in front of us. It is more difficult to say why we are not free. On the Leeway and Sourcehood distinction, we may be free to do otherwise (even though we *wouldn't*). If there are counterfactuals of freedom, we might have regulative-control. However, if the 'Comparative Manipulation Argument' is correct, then the best explanation for a lack of freedom is that our future is plotted well in advance, undermining true guidance-control and 'robbing' from us the origination of our actions.

7.3 **Information and Manipulability**

I return to the main theme of Information. The contrast between the use of *knowledge* or *power* in relation to God's self-limitation is instructive. The covert nature of manipulation is a condition for its objectionableness. The type of manipulation understood in the Manipulation Argument against compatibilism (TMA) needs to be covert, but more importantly, it has to function analogously with a type of causal control, on the basis that there is 'no real difference' between manipulation and causal determinism. How then could we argue that Molinism presents a model of divine action with covert manipulation, where the theory explicitly teaches that free agents are contra-causally free?

This is where the concept of information has great explanatory power for the anti-Molinist objection by manipulation. Trakakis makes the important point that it is not God's knowledge of counterfactuals, but the use of the knowledge gained by them that robs us of free will, and elsewhere he describes this knowledge as information.[21] To say

---

[21] Here I connect knowledge learnt from counterfactuals even more strongly as information. Trakakis mentions 'information' in the body of his text of (2006 [52]), "…God's strategy of actualizing a world on the basis of information obtained from various counterfactuals of creaturely freedom...turns

that knowledge is useful is not quite the same as saying that information is useful. If then, middle knowledge is used as information, this information is in turn used for a purpose. The *middle knowledge use-as information/information use-for a purpose* relation creates the link between middle knowledge, will, providence and the source and reconciliation answers to the foreknowledge problem. God uses the information of particular individuals in situations, or the information of the true creaturely world-type as data for his plans, and whatever he brings about, he foreknows. If he brings about via manipulation, what he foreknows, he knows by manipulation.

   To the information technologist, it is true that information is manipulable, but that is not the assertion that is relevant here. Although ultimately the Molinist God does manipulate information in some way when he actualizes the world, that is not the importance of the relationship between information and manipulation. The importance of the reduction of middle knowledge to information is twofold in other ways:

 (A) The ownership of information:

    Information is about people *in* situations. While knowledge or belief 'belongs' to the agent from the position as knower, information about agents as performers of actions belongs to agents themselves. This subtle distinction in aspect between the knower and the known is important in properly constructing the anti-Molinist arguments by using the term 'information'. In saying that information about individuals is somehow owned by them, I am including merely possible information of merely possible individuals, and information about actual individuals who might have been in merely possible situations that are counterfactually true, but will never obtain. If I would have done such and such in a situation that I never will encounter, and I would do it out of my free choice, that still is information about me. The relation of 'belongs to' is

---

God into a manipulator of his creatures' behaviour." While in his footnote 68 he writes that it is not "the Molinist God's knowledge of counterfactuals of freedom that rob us of free will; rather it is his use of such knowledge when actualizing the world that undermines our free will."

ambiguous and I affirm the strong relation that information about people is owned by them and cannot ordinarily be used or taken away by others.

(B) The obtaining of information through covert means:

It is this information—about a person, that belongs to them—that has the property of 'covert' required for Manipulation Arguments. (But remember, I turned them on their head.) Information gleaned by God_M has been obtained through a kind of 'data-mining' before any of these people have been created, thus something has been taken from them without their awareness or permission. Moreover, potentially it will be used for or against their own interests.

This second point about the covert acquiring of information requires more defence. Essentially what is needed is to conceptually distinguish two types of covert activity that mirror possible divine actions of knowing or willing. Though a conceptual distinction is needed to understand their respective properties, it is not essential that real instances of covert manipulation must be via either knowledge *or* control; they can be a mixture of both and other forms of covert action as well.

My explanation of the two aspects of the obtaining of *knowledge as covert* and *control as covert* is again analogous to human interactions. 'Covert' covers the general meaning of concealment, disguise, or clandestine or hidden activity. 'Covert Operations' in the interests of the national security of a country would involve many different types of covert actions that include the masking of identity and the hiding of control. These two translate as covert epistemic practices and covert control. Patricia Greenspan writes that the manipulee lacks awareness of the prior plotting of the manipulator and is thus ignorant and misled into thinking he or she is the agent of his or her own actions.[22] This, I say, applies to both the information gathering and control. We are familiar with the kind

---

[22] Patricia Greenspan's important paper on manipulation and autonomy (2003) makes the point that the manipulee lacks awareness of the prior plotting of the manipulator so that that the manipulee's agency is to some degree 'masked' so that they are misled or deluded [in the cases she brings up in her paper], about the extent to which they are the agents of their own actions, since they lack complete knowledge and information about what is happening (158).

of covert operations in *FBI Sting Operations* which may result in entrapment charges against the authorities who set up these situations and who utilize these two forms of covert activity.

There are, however, other instances of covert activity, apart from indirect control by means of surveillance by undercover-agents, or different uses of technology-video and audio recording devices. These 'clandestine' methods of gathering information are epistemic and evidentialist. Their purpose is not the direct intention to entrap, but to gather information about others without their knowledge. Practical examples are the use of hidden cameras and microphones in clandestine television news-gathering operations. Some broadcasting organizations have policies about the use of hidden cameras where the policy protects the people surveyed unawares, because the *information* gathered about them belongs to them—it is *their* information—and the use of the information has potential consequences if not used properly, or if broadcast indiscriminately.[23]

On the assumption that surveillance technology, which captures perceptual data—visual, auditory, etc.—is epistemic in that it delivers knowledge to the end user via information about the candidates under surveillance, what is it that makes this *covert* information gathering? Here it is useful to consider 'covert' from the two different perspectives of the agent who initiated the operation, and of the passive subject being videoed. The identity of the agent who initiates the operation is hidden or disguised, while the person being filmed is ignorant of both the activity of surveillance and the agency behind the surveillance. This is an epistemic condition requirement for an act of surveillance to be covert.

Still, the covert nature of surveillance is morally neutral until the product is used. People are videoed in streets, carparks, elevators, and banks all the time. There are some who find this objectionable on the grounds of the right to privacy. My qualm in the present context is not the right to privacy. However, if video footage taken without their

---

[23] For example, the United Kingdom's *Press Complaints Commission* has the following list under its editorial policies. (http://www.pcc.org.uk/cop/practice.html , accessed 20 November 2012): "**Clandestine devices and subterfuge**: The press must not seek to obtain or publish material acquired by using hidden cameras or clandestine listening devices." The *Australian Broadcasting Corporation* also has editorial policies about the use of hidden cameras and recording devices. The need to protect is relevant for the people videoed by hidden camera, and the personal safety of the camera personnel.

knowledge is used in another context to present a distorted moral image of their true character, many more people would consider *this* objectionable.

In saying this, it is not what the picture of Molinism depicts. To find an analogy, we would need to discover a real situation where a person's actions in a determinate situation were videoed, and where the information from this was used a second time, in order to set up the exact same determinate situation to get them to perform the same action.[24] Here the ultimate purpose would be to catch them performing an action that was morally or religiously worthy of praise or blame, or of the giving or removing of graces.

It would be difficult to find a real situation like this (at least one that I can think of), especially when we consider the main requirements are that the capture of the information is clandestine, and that the actor is ignorant of surveillance, but that the information is used to set up exactly the same situation later on, in order to get the person

---

[24] The assumption here is that the capture of information in the first situation constitutes 'knowledge' and that they would perform the same action a second time in the same situation. This invokes questions about the grounding requirement of CCFs and how God knows what he knows at middle knowledge. Opinions differ as to whether a person will always perform the same action in exactly the same circumstance, or whether they have something like Kane's dual rational control. In my example, recording the person doing the same thing 1000 times or more may make it highly probable that they would do so next time. Re-iterating the same circumstance may raise the probability that the agent performs *A,* so that it approaches virtually justified true belief for the observer.

This might look like inductive reasoning to the next case, but theoretically, each case is non-determined libertarian action. Consequently, should we deem the inference an instance of the Gambler's Fallacy? If the person's actions in the situation were truly contra-causal, then there is no way to infer on the basis of prior instances what they would indeterminately do in the next case. How could we proceed to arbitrate if our inference is appropriately inductive or fallacious? We would have to know if the circumstances were causally contributory to the agent's actions. If they were, even partly, we could opt for the inductive inference. If we knew for sure they did not influence or causally contribute to the agent's actions then we could opt for deeming any inference about the value of the next case as committing the Gambler's Fallacy. However, in doing so, the difficulty is explaining why the evidence is overwhelming that the person would do the same thing in the next case.

Herein, I think, lies the dilemma and the question that if answered, answers everything about Molinism: are the circumstances determining? Furthermore, if the original theoretical content of a complex position like Molinism is already incoherent, it is likely that two different alternative deductions could be made that are themselves incoherent, i.e., inductions about random or undetermined states of affairs, or committing the Gambler's Fallacy, when the phenomenological evidence is in the favour of the gambler. Either way puts the focus on the dynamic modality of the circumstance (induction from the *C*), or the agent-modality of the performer (the Gambler's Fallacy about what a non-determined agent would do). There is no need for the non-Molinist to make either of these positions consistent if the theory that they are derived from is already inconsistent.

previously surveyed to perform the same action in order to ultimately 'catch them' and give them praise or blame.

Even if there are real situations like this, or we could imagine a comparable simulation of one with the correct details and theoretical presumptions, would the second instance of setting up the situation be considered 'covert control' on the basis that the prior information recorded was covertly taken? This would mean that if information INF is gained in covert circumstances, and INF is re-used to get another person to perform A, then the latter instance of control is also covert. Is this link too tenuous? Not if we unpack the 'getting another person to perform A.' In the Molinist model, and in the story I am fabricating about covert human-to-human control, the action of the person who gets s to do A is the covert control. For they are not directly controlling or making s do A. They are using information about s to set up a situation where there are non-constraining circumstances where s performs A.

Here there is an intimate relation between non-constraining control and covert control as individually necessary and jointly sufficient to constitute objectionable manipulation. If the manipulee's will is thwarted by the will of another, then the action is not free. But *overt* control, where they are aware of another agent attempting to control them, is more likely to result in constraining control or rebellion against the attempt to control. Therefore, the epistemic condition of the required ignorance for non-constraining control—so that the controlled agent performs an action 'freely'—is obtained by virtue of the controller's covert actions. In theory, Molinism then requires both non-constraining control, so that the controlled agent's action is libertarianly free, and covert control, so that the controlled agent's action is an instance of non-constraining control. The covert is logically prior to the non-constraining, and it looks like the action of strong and weak actualization, or direct and indirect willing enables these dual conditions to obtain. By middle knowledge, or 'middle information' (which is covert knowledge on the analogy of data-mining), God has the information what we would do, and our actions in C are not determined by the circumstances, or supposedly by God, but are free, and hence non-constrained, at least according to the theory. Yet if this is all true about Molinism, and my explanation of information and covert and non-constraining

control is applicable, then Molinism is an instance of objectionable manipulation, if it is objectionable to be controlled by another agent.

Discussion and Conclusion

While knowledge might be power, *information is powerful* and is power over others. What I call the *scientia complexa* is control by knowledge; not by volitionally controlling a person now, but by controlling their future by getting the person:

1. **To do what they are able to do 'freely'** (The controller wills the person to will to do *A*. The controller's will at this stage is *will as power*)

2. **as *foreseen*** (by 'middle knowledge')

3. **and *chosen* by the controller's knowledge** (by the 'divine free will'. The act of choice is the controller's *decision* which is itself a complex of will and intellect.)

Parts (1), (2), and (3) form the *complex*. Part (1) may include free action known at middle knowledge, but it would be question-begging to think that the inclusion of part (3) does not affect the controlled person's freedom or responsibility, as these are normally sensitive to alteration. We should add too that part of the whole point of contemporary Molinism is to be able to answer the foreknowledge set of problems, so:

4. God foreknows what a person will do.

However, this just repeats in a disguised form the purpose of the *scientia complexa* that

5. God foreknows what a person will do by controlling their future.

In more detail, the *scientia* is an integration of information with covert but non-constraining control. It also includes God's desires and intentions. The *scientia complexa* does not supplant the will/intellect distinction, but is a way to explain how Molinism works without the difficulties inherent in positing real logical moments, and without the

battle of will and intellect vying for first place to make a consistent Molinist-like theory of providence. The *scientia complexa* allows for weak actualization to be both covert and non-constraining. It remains to be seen whether the person controlled is still free, morally responsible, exploited, or whether the controller has the moral or theological standing to pass judgment on the person controlled by them.

7.3.1   Argument: Molinism is Objectionable Manipulation

The MKUseCrit argument can be unpacked into a deductive argument leading to the conclusion that Molinism is a case of objectionable manipulation. The first four propositions form the main deductive argument. The subsequent premises and inferences elaborate, albeit with more uncertainty.

[Molinism is Objectionable Manipulation]

(1) Objectionable manipulation requires covert and non-constraining control.

(2) Middle knowledge as *information* provides the covert condition.

(3) Weak actualization, or the indirect willing of the information in the consequent of a CCF provides the non-constraining condition.

(4) ∴ <u>Molinism is intrinsically a case of objectionable manipulation</u>.

<u>Conclusion</u>

Both the Molinist and Anti-Molinist would agree that manipulation is involved in Molinist providence. Therefore there needs to be an argument or explanation to distinguish objectionable manipulation from neutral manipulation. The anti-Molinist argument does not so much add extra premises or claims to generic Molinist theory. Instead, by unpacking and analyzing what so-called neutral manipulation amounts to, it can be demonstrated that God_M manipulates in the same way a human manipulates

another. I avoid the complexities of the will/intellect distinction by referring to the Molinist *scientia complexa* (my neologism) which we have seen is both an epistemic power and a causal power. I have used the notion of information that is manipulable by virtue of the following three distinctions.

1. <u>What is used</u>: Middle knowledge generally, or particular CCFs are used.

2. <u>How used</u>: Middle knowledge is used as information about,

    (a) What each person would do if instantiated in *C*. This further divides into,

        i) Information about the person, *s.*

        ii) Information about the circumstance, *C.*

    (b) What world is bouletically possible to instantiate, i.e., given God's desires to actualize *w* given the data available to him of the creaturely world type.

3. <u>Why</u>: Information is used to get a person *s* to perform *A* with the final purpose of integrating their action *A* with the providential plan *P*. Put more abruptly, people are 'used' merely as means to an end.

4. So, middle knowledge is *used* as information, information is *used* for getting people to act, and people are *used* to fulfill, or contribute to *P*.

5. If free knowledge is an essential structure of providence, and if foreknowledge is a species of free knowledge, then because God manipulates what his free knowledge will be, he likewise manipulates what his foreknowledge will be.

6. Because of (5), Compatibilism about Foreknowledge, (CF) is won by objectionable manipulation.

*   The reasons manipulation is objectionable in Molinism are two-fold: the use of covert control/knowledge and using this to get a person to perform an action.

Ergo, using a person as merely a means to an end. It might be objected that a Calvinist analogy would show that God does not do this. My response is that the Calvinist God does not do so with any sense of deceit, but is open about what he coerces, or bullies. Using an analysis of causative-verbs,

- o God$_C$ makes s do A.

- o God$_M$ gets s to do A, by making C.

- There are layers of manipulation in Molinism:

  - o 'Manipulation-To': This is implied by the causative analysis of getting s to do A.

  - o 'Manipulation-Over': This is so named as a form of counterfactual control over all possible circumstances and creatures. The sense of over is first epistemic here; God's knowledge quantifies over all CCFs and possible persons, and secondly, volitional; God selects what he wants to actualize. This is related to 'Manipulation–To' in this way:

    Presumably, God did not have to get s to do A. He may have the choice of getting s to do B; getting another person s' to do A or B; or not actualizing s ever. Manipulation-Over is the power to actualize counterfactuals other than getting s to do A.

  Manipulation-To is power in actualizing a particular person to do A.

  Manipulation-Over is power in knowing what any person would do and deciding what will be actual.

- To reject the findings of the above deductive anti-Molinist argument by manipulation, the original source—the analogical arguments and hence the analogy between human manipulation and divine providence—has to be re-scrutinized. If we do not think that a God, whose exercising of providence is by the *scientia complexa* (or is Molinistic) is objectionable, then we should not find it objectionable if we are manipulated by other humans in the same way. But we do.

Chapter 8: **Showing *How*—Molinism is Manipulation**

8.1 **Introduction**

In relation to showing that Molinism is manipulation, the dichotomy between *proving that* and *showing how* is not clear cut, so this chapter continues the general critique by demonstrating ways a Molinist God can manipulate.

I offer several arguments to show that Molinism is manipulation; and I critique one Molinist argument which seeks to justify the direct and indirect distinction. This critique, if successful, would show that God$_M$ manipulates in an alternate way than has been presented. My first '*showing-how* Molinism is manipulation' argument is a caricature.

8.2 **Manipulation Argument for Deus Economicus**

Mechanism: *modus ponens*

Manipulation: neutral/control

Effects: Giving God$_M$ power or ability.

This argument remains faithful to the Molinist portrait, but shows a version of a manipulator as a rational calculator reliant on the literal use of *modus ponens* rather than just being a way of speaking about God$_M$. The aim is to demonstrate how a God who does not risk is the greatest manipulator that can be conceived, as William Hasker puts it. Here, manipulation is allegedly neutral, but the argument speaks against the personality of God$_M$. This argument also emphasizes what I call the 'container' metaphor of the circumstance where God puts or places people in situations, just as we put things into containers. We could further question whether God's middle knowledge <u>just is</u> *de dicto* knowledge of freedom conditionals. This would speak against the personhood of God as Deus Economicus has no empathy with the agents it manipulates. As a *modus ponens* calculator, God$_M$ uses agents as utilities.

Here, in terms of this argument, manipulation is effected by means of selecting a particular possible person *s* from the set of all possible persons and matching them to a

particular circumstance C from the set of all co-possible circumstances C. This is a kind of dual literal manipulation of pairs where one item of a pair is held constant in a register (either a C or a s) and the other of the pair is shifted through (this is a 'shift-register'). The objective is to find the wanted 'match' which obtains in a particular behaviour which is then outputted as a pair $\{s', C'\} \rightarrow As$, which ultimately takes its place in the providential plan and becomes actual. This kind of manipulation is computational.

On the surface, the theory of Molinism appears consistent with such a computational model, in which case God_M is better understood as *deus economicus*. In fact a deistic conception of 'God'[1]—who has limited power and knowledge—could use this computational strategy to present a form of virtual 'middle knowledge' as a greater-making property to enhance the minimalism of its divine attributes. In other words, a divine being could use such a method to become more powerful than it really is.[2] This method of generating middle knowledge and providential blueprints gives God *more power* over creation under the generic Molinist model, despite the reduction of power whereby God must weakly actualize in order to control creatures who are libertarianly free. One of my conclusions from this research is that middle knowledge gives God a form of 'knowledge as a power'. In many respects this power is greater than the power of God in determinist models of theism. Middle knowledge plus the strong/weak actualization distinction gives God the power to control agents with LFW without moral blameworthiness, or so it is alleged.

---

[1] Kathryn Rogers writes that Molinism, "reintroduces a sort of theistic platonism, where God is the Demiurge who looks to an independent World of Forms in order to create" (2008:150). She denies that Molinism can be consistently affirmed as a form of traditional, classical theism because it threatens God's independence if there were facts already true outside the scope of his omnipotence. There is some overlap between Rogers' view and the position I have described above.

[2] The following is speculative. It is a generally accepted doctrine in traditional Christology that Christ emptied himself of some divine attributes (*kenosis*). Whatever *harpazo* translates as, in Philippians 2:7, Christ's equality with God was not something to be grasped at or kept. The incarnation as a form of condescension (*synkatabasis*) to our humanity shows something about the nature of God that he would likely *not* demand or seize more power than he really has, nor demand that his creation attribute him power and majesty in the form that many Calvinists speak of. Hasker's indictment about determinist models that have a demand for power is that they are are 'antisynkatabatic' or examples of reverse kenosis.

Manipulation: to Gather Information (Middle Knowledge) or to Control (Non-Risky Providence).

There are several ways God_M could manipulate in terms of this model. He could fix a determinate *C* in his memory and cycle possible persons through it, or *vice versa*. For example, if he was seeking someone who would betray Christ, he could cycle all possible persons through the determinate situation he has in mind to discover who would, in effect, literally *volunteer* first. A second decision has to be made if he finds more than one volunteer. If no volunteer is found, the situation is deemed infeasible. This model of God uses *modus ponens* as an information builder to ascertain what CCFs there are, not to infer what is foreknown. In this model, he knows CCFs prevolitionally, but he doesn't already know CCFs naturally without figuring them out.[3]

---

[3] Call this process a version of pseudo predestination: 'Volunteerism', the fixing of a determinate circumstance *C* that conditionally obtains in a desired state of affairs, then cycling all possible persons through this *C* until a person is found who would perform the action. There might be a justice issue concerning who *volunteers first*, if that just means that the calculus finds someone first, but there are others who would do the same action in the same circumstance. Of course, this is a temporal caricature of Molinism, because we are talking of cycles.

What is the *vice versa* account of this process? It appears to be a strong *theological* version of predestination—since first a particular possible person must be chosen, along with their future heavenly state, and then circumstances must be cycled to find a situation where this state of affairs obtains. Reprobation would have the opposite objective.

On predestination, I need to defer to Alfred Freddoso's expertise. In an article called "Molinism" published on his university home page,* Freddoso discusses the difference of opinion over predestination between Molina and the other 'Molinists' Robert Bellarmine and Suárez—who agree with the Bañezians, "that God antecedently elects certain people to eternal glory and only then consults his middle knowledge to discover which graces will guarantee their salvation." Freddoso writes that God would have chosen different graces in the case of Peter's denial, if "those he actually chose had been foreknown to be merely sufficient and not efficacious for Peter's salvation." Molina himself and other Molinists rejected,

> any such antecedent absolute election of Peter to salvation. They insist
> instead that God simply chooses to create a world in which he infallibly
> foresees Peter's good use of the supernatural graces afforded him, and
> only then does he accept Peter among the elect in light of his free
> consent to those graces.

* Available online at http://www3.nd.edu/~afreddos/papers/molinism.htm (accessed November 2, 2013).

If the Bañezians saw God's will as the important factor in predestination, Molina would see God's middle knowledge to be the main factor, which compares well with the concept of Volunteerism explained above. If this is so, then Molinism does present a doctrine of predestination that selects individuals by waiting for these individuals to 'volunteer'. However, if this is true, how can we talk of God middle-knowing the unique creaturely essence of Peter?

He performs a simulation of what he could create from the available raw material by cycling all possible persons and comparing them to each related circumstance within a world-type. He does not create any world willy-nilly, and presumably would create a world that was the best or as close to the best that he could.[4] From these true conditionals of freedom, a simulation would be like an 'off-line' computer simulation. The activities of this off-line simulation involve sorting, comparing, matching and deciding. These activities combine to refer to God's 'choice' about which CCFs to actualize after first building middle knowledge from the comparison of possible people and circumstances. A second round use of *modus ponens* might entail using what CCFs he has learnt from the first stage, then incorporating a Decision-Making module such as the following:

- There is an ideal world type, *G* for goal, or purpose which is his providential plan.

- This G is comprised of a total and comprehensive set of states of affairs, SOA, within a yet to be actual world history. G is a mereological sum, temporally ordered, of all SOAs.

- Something like a 'Do-While' or 'For-Next' loop is generated which shifts each CCF within a matrix or shift-register. ('Do-While'/Shift Register Module)

- Comparison is made between each CCF and the ideal SOA that is conducive to achieving G. (Via the Comparator Module)

- A match between the available CCF and the particular SOA that is close to or equivalent to the ideal world type means this token CCF is selected. (Selector Module)

- By default the selected match between CCF and SOA is now 'decided' in this offline simulation.

'Do-While' loops in computer science cycle *if-then* statements. This mechanism can be used as part of the first round of *modus ponens* where God_M selects CCFs by matching them to the kinds of states of affairs that he desires for the future actual world.[5]

---

[4] I am aware that the concept of a 'best world' may be incoherent, but I am not concerned by that right now.

[5] The second round of *modus ponens* would be God_M using MP to know what will be actual.

Is this model of God$_M$ consistent with generic Molinist theory? And is there any objectionable kind of manipulation apart from neutral manipulation of cold utilitarian calculation? It depends if *Deus Economicus* is already a *person*. I did say this model was a caricature, and caricatures are portraits of persons with over-simplified or exaggerated features. The distorted features in the *Deus Economicus* model are the following (with a message to remind us what went wrong in creating this model). Firstly, although Molinism represents a traditional form of theism, rarely if ever are the moral properties of God$_M$ presented in the equations. This might be because of the emphasis on providing a solution to the foreknowledge problem, rather than an oversight of any Molinist. It would be interesting to factor in a 'logical moment' of divine love, and where it comes in the order in relation to knowledge and will. Without benevolence, a god like *Deus Economicus* would be deistic—much as without empathy, a psychopath who is naturally already clever and cunning, becomes a manipulator. The message from this caricature is that it is only ever said that the main use of CCFs is teleological. In this way, it is too easy to criticize God$_M$ as a utilitarian, using people as means. There is no reason to think that God$_M$ does not factor in treating people as ends as well as means.

The third distorted feature, I believe, is the so-called use of *modus ponens* to explain Molinist doctrine. I aim to avoid it in my more critical argument *that* Molinism is manipulative. The use of MP might be useful as an explanatory device by the Molinist apologist, but it does depend on a neat division between the will and intellect. More seriously, it does portray God as impersonal and discursively reasoned. From this perspective we can admit that the application of *modus ponens* is the Molinist and non-Molinist applying it to God$_M$ and we do not have to pretend that he performs this operation himself. It is just an *as if* description.

This brings me to my last point about the caricature. Much talk of God's knowledge of counterfactuals is *de dicto*—knowledge of the proposition—yet there are persons, albeit possible, that the propositions refer to. The characterization of CCFs as objects of God's propositional attitudes, so that 'God knows *that* (A$\square$→C)', portrays a poor relational aspect of God$_M$ to the possible person, or more significantly to the actual person referred to by the CCF once it becomes real. Here again it looks as if the

personhood and relational aspects of the Molinist model of God fail. It would be far better to figure that God knows each possible person intimately *de re*. Indeed, that is what super-comprehension is meant to be like, *de re* knowledge of the person.[6]

The *de dicto* reading fits neatly into a computational off-line model where *modus ponens* is executed like a program. Not only is God's will 'indirect' in relation to the consequent, but God's knowledge is indirect or detached from the agent. God_M appears care-less and the agent is used instrumentally to achieve another end. Are these differences crucial and should the Molinist formulate God's middle knowledge along *de re* knowledge? I'm aware that these representations are not mutually exclusive (latitudinarianism, for example, denies the distinction). Neither are they an essential determination of how God_M has middle knowledge, given much of this terminology is a way of speaking and understanding God and providence. There is something quite inconsistent, indeed a clash, in the Molinist teaching that God knows possible persons so well that he would know what they would do in any situation, yet at the same time has to posit his *use* of *modus ponens* to figure out what he would do himself, in order to plan his creation or to figure out what he foreknows.

 A *de dicto* knowledge reading presents the creaturely essence as just a variable in order to achieve the end, which is that a particular action *A* is performed freely. If a *de re* reading of God's middle knowledge of possible persons or creaturely essences is preferred, in order to enhance a more personal and relational God, this positive attempt is dashed to the ground as soon as a person's name or place-holder is inserted into the conditional premise of *modus ponens*. For, I say, if one person knows another person intimately, they would decide on the best action for this person, and not decide on the

---

[6] The term 'supercomprehension' is not Molina's (Freddoso 1988:51). While God comprehends what metaphysically possible actions Adam is able to perform via natural knowledge, this 'comprehension' is not enough to know conditional future contingents, and so the term *super-*comprehension has entered the Molinist discourse. The justification for this is that God must have cognitive powers that, "'surpass in perfection by an *infinite distance'* the entity in question" (Freddoso 5, quoting Molina, Disputation 52, sec. 13, my emphasis).

best person for the action, which is what I take a *de dicto* reading of middle knowledge to be. It may look obvious where I am heading here: the use of *modus ponens*, coupled with a *de dicto* understanding of God's knowledge is much more conducive to *manipulation* than knowing a person *de re* and using deliberative reasoning from what you know *of* the person.

What is more difficult though, is to insist on a strong *de re* knowledge of each of us before we have been created. It might be that a God who has middle knowledge can only know about 'creaturely essences' as Thomas Flint calls them. He prefers to make reference not to creatures but to *individual essences* of these creatures. The essence of such a creature is "simply the set of properties essential to it." A creaturely essence could exist "whether or not any being which instantiates the essence exists" (1988:47).[7] I question whether a mere set of properties, no matter how unique, is enough to individuate a creaturely essence or its haecceity, if that is what Flint has in mind. There might be two individuals with exactly the same set of properties. More importantly, can God know creaturely essence intimately? If not, then the *de dicto* knowledge reading of CCFs is the more accurate, which leads down the slippery slope of using *modus ponens* and being a manipulator God.

8.2.1 Conclusion of *Deus Economicus*

This model of God was presented as a caricature to investigate the main areas of exaggeration and deficit through which Molinist doctrine portrays the divine being. The use of manipulation in this model amounts to a form of power, used to usurp a greater power. It is risk-free, and this divine being is lacking in personality and relational traits such as love. Though contemporary findings about psychopathy often portray human manipulators as lacking empathy as an explanation for how they can use other people without remorse or guilt, *Deus Economicus* seems to have *no* other characteristics pertaining to persons.[8] Therefore, 'it' more accurately describes a deistic conception of

---

[7] Here Flint also cites Plantinga's discussion of the *necessity of natures* in Plantinga (1974:70-77).

[8] On this question of lacking empathy, I refer to my footnote in § 2.5.2 where I mention the work of Patricia Greenspan. There is a sense in which psychopaths lack empathy, or have it, but use it for ill effect. Citing the work of J.Prinz, Greenspan writes,

God. If this form of Molinism were true, it would threaten most of our understandings and intuitions of who or what God should be like, even across a very broad spectrum of theisms ranging from classical to progressive. Of course, the fundamental difficulty in sustaining this model would be the usual puzzle over how this God knows anything at all in the first place—especially possible persons or creaturely essences— in order to sort and compare them in relation to what they would do in different situations. It might suit a model where God has already created and then used people for its own ends, which is even more anthropomorphic.

8.3 **The Dilemma of Preserving or Destroying the Strong/Weak Actualization Distinction**

One of the major ostensible strengths of Molinism is the strong/weak actualization distinction whereby God can indirectly control the results obtained in the consequent by directly controlling the circumstances. The strong/weak actualization distinction attempts to posit a further difference between direct and indirect control. Both these pairs of distinctions purport to grant a metaphorical distance between each of the members of each pair—a distance or gap that immunises God from strong or direct causal responsibility for the state of affairs referred to in the consequent, thereby insulating God from moral responsibility. The counterfactual operator acts as a 'fire-wall' (to use a computer metaphor) that blocks transference of the agent's responsibility for action to God, even though God's indirect and weak control passes through the fire-wall.

There is a sense in which psychopaths are indeed able to empathize with others, and in fact are particularly good at it: in terms from current cognitive science, they can run "offline" simulations of others' mental states—at any rate, their states of desire and belief, if not their emotions—for the purpose of anticipating likely responses to what they do. (Greenspan 2002:419) Greenspan here refers to a hitherto unpublished work by J.Prinz, *Emotional Perception*, New York, OUP.

Deus Economicus as a rational calculator might be able to sort through circumstance and possible persons by 'empathizing' with their beliefs or desires—but not emotions—so that he knows what they would do. This is not likely to succeed as it assumes humans are only 'reasons-responsive'; the moral sentiments are just as likely to play a part in our moral motivations as beliefs and reasons.

If it can be shown that there is no strong/weak actualization distinction in the application of the divine will to a Molinist counterfactual, a modal force that is strong, not weak, will result. By implication, this will cancel the alleged blocking effect of the subjunctive nature of the Molinist conditional. This is not to argue that the manipulation charge against Molinism fails, but that the form of manipulation is much stronger—one that approaches a determinist model of divine control. As a case in point, in the next section I argue against Eef Dekker's model of the strong/weak actualization distinction. His model is based on the distinction between direct and indirect willing. On the other hand, if my argument against Dekker's approach fails, then Molinism might suffer from indirect manipulation of the agent; given that if the integrity of the strong/weak, direct/indirect distinction is preserved, then there is a corresponding distinction between strong and weak manipulation of the agent. This might preserve libertarian freedom in some minimal and exploitative way.

What transpires from this is that there is a potential dilemma for the Molinist. If the modal and logical integrity of the S/W-Distinction is preserved, then Molinism succeeds in presenting an objectionable form of manipulation which is indirect and exploitative of the human agent. The other horn of the dilemma is that if the Distinction is destroyed, then having *no distinction* results in strong manipulation or direct control. This makes Molinism look more like Calvinism. If the latter strategy succeeds then Molinism ceases to be a libertarian theory. Compatibilism about Foreknowledge is won by compatibilism purchased through causal determinism, and the treasured nature of the *scientia media* loses its inherent value.

My first argument attempts to show an interpretation of Molinism that reveals this latter horn of the dilemma where Molinism is really a strong form of divine determinism.

8.3.1 An Argument for Manipulation as Compatibilism: The Incoherence of the Strong/Weak Actualization Distinction

An Analysis of Eef Dekker's 'Indirect Willing' Argument

The following presents a challenge to the view that a real effective distinction can be made despite appearances—one fundamental distinction with alternate names of

strong/weak actualization and *direct/indirect willing*. Dekker's direct/indirect willing distinction is a clear instance, written and expressed another way, of the need for the Molinist to maintain a strong/weak actualization distinction. Challenging this direct/indirect distinction is a way of also challenging the much needed strong/weak actualization distinction. The challenge is made by examining an interesting argument put forward by Eef Dekker in his very informative volume of 2000. My purpose is also to dismiss the claim that if a theology of God's providence can be given where he is not acting directly or causally (in a sufficient sense), then he is not morally responsible for praise or blame over actions he performs that involve other moral agents. Instead, I provide evidence that a model of God where she acts indirectly through weak actualization at least means she shares moral responsibility with the agents she controls.

Dekker's Direct-Indirect Will Distinction.

Eef Dekker states that God wills states of affairs *via* circumstances, and so, "**we should say** that He wills that state of affairs *indirectly*" (2000:101, bold emphasis added).[9]

Is this true? Consider the alternatives: (I follow Dekker's logic and labeling system. *S = state of affairs, C = circumstance*)

(A) God directly wills *S* and thereby indirectly wills *C*, or
(B) God directly wills *C* and thereby indirectly wills *S*

If (A) were true then God determines states of affairs. If this is true it is too strong; theological determinism results and Molinism cannot account for libertarian free will. Dekker's argument to support Molinism must view (B) as the correct option. God directly wills the circumstances where the states of affairs obtain, and if these states of affairs contain free agents, then their actions will also be free.

---

[9] Dekker's argument comes in the context of considering whether God$_M$'s will *could* be ineffective. Dekker concludes that it could, but because God knows counterfactuals of freedom, he would not make the mistake of willing a counterfactual where s does not will q (101-102).

With reference to the counterfactual $C \mathrel{\square\!\!\rightarrow} S$, the contingency in $\square\!\!\rightarrow$ is of most importance to the Molinist. Dekker himself states that, "Since, as we know, the counterfactual connection between antecedent and consequent must[10] be taken to be contingent…" (2000:101).

An Interpretational Category: 'Volitional Distance'

Dekker's directly willing/indirectly willing distinction attempts to demonstrate a sense of metaphorical 'distance' where it is *volitional* distance in relation to God's will. That is, God directly wills something closer to him—the circumstance in the antecedent, thereby managing to indirectly will an object that is more distant—the state of affairs that obtains in the consequent. The metaphor of distance tries to present a weak modal reading dependent on the metaphysical contingency or dynamic modality represented by $\square\!\!\rightarrow$. Dekker wishes to grant two different 'divine volitional distances'; first between God and the antecedent, second, between God and the consequent. Now, if it can be shown that there is no volitional distance (or a parity of distance) between the three place-holders in a Molinist counterfactual: the circumstance C, the agent s, and the action of the agent, A, then this would undermine Dekker's direct/indirect will distinction.

Returning to the analysis of Dekker's 'correct interpretation' of B:

(B). God directly wills C and thereby indirectly wills S

Dekker puts this into the formula: [11]

$$gW_i sWq =_{\text{def.}} \quad (i) \quad gWp$$
$$(ii) \quad p > sWq$$

---

[10] 'Must' here is not absolutely clear. Is Dekker using it as a modal-inference indicator to presage a conclusion? If so, what are the reasons that support this inference? It is likely that, again, Dekker is assuming the truth that counterfactuals are to be read as counterfactuals of freedom and so we *must*, by virtue of the obligation of internal consistency, interpret them as contingent. 'Must' is not a conclusion indicator here, for there is no argument for the contingency reading of $\square\!\!\rightarrow$.

[11] Dekker (2000:101, note 118). I have followed his notation.

In words, the *definiendum*: 'God indirectly wills that free creature (s) has the will to q'. The *definiens*: 'if p (circumstance) were to obtain then person (s) wills to q'.

With regard to,

$$gW_i sWq \; = \; \text{'God indirectly wills that free creature (s) has the will to q'},$$

let's call **sWq** the state of affairs – *S* which is the situation where a person (supposedly, freely) wills to do q. Examples of states of affairs are *Peter denying Christ three times*, *Judas betraying Christ*, *Adam falling* (or succumbing to temptation). The state of affairs is providentially significant in that its obtaining is what God *wants.*

Right and Wrong Interpretations:

However, we are reminded by Dekker (101) where he states "we should say"—that we should choose our words carefully. We should not say that God *directly wills* states of affairs (S) where the states of affairs concern free human action.
So,

   $gW_i S$ is correct according to Molinist theory,
   (*God indirectly wills a SOAs* (S) *that involves creaturely freedom*).

   $gW_d S$ is 'wrong' according to Molinist theory,
    (*God directly wills a SOAs* (S) *that involve creaturely freedom*).

Why is **$gW_d S$** wrong, as I understand Dekker to be saying? Simply, it is theological compatibilism (CFW) and inconsistent with libertarian free will (LFW). Because standard Molinism, as taught by Molina, Freddoso, Flint, Craig and Dekker, proclaims strong libertarian free will as an essential component, **$gW_d S$** would severely undermine Molinism's *raison d'être*. Molinism as a solution to foreknowledge problems and as the

best model of providence would collapse because of inconsistency. We *must* accept the correct interpretation of $gW_i S$.[12]

To say that Molinism would be rendered inconsistent if it transpired that it entailed divine determinism is just the beginning of its woes. The very point of the *scientia media* would also be rendered useless, for why claim that God possesses pre-volitional counterfactual knowledge except for the very purposes of providing an account of how he knows counterfactuals of *libertarian* creaturely freedom? So, $gW_d S$ is not just 'wrong' in that it renders the Molinist account self-inconsistent, but it also demonstrates that its most fundamental building block, middle knowledge, is useless. I take it that these are the sentiments why Dekker reasons, 'we should say that' God wills states of affairs indirectly: the *should* becomes a *must.*

Essentially, Dekker has presupposed the unity of Molinism and then inferred the consistent version of 'indirectly willing' states of affairs to maintain strong libertarian free will. This is reminiscent of John Martin Fischer's position that Molinism is not a solution to the foreknowledge problem, it presupposes foreknowledge compatibilism. Dekker's position could be strengthened if we had good reason to think that middle knowledge itself was true. Since middle knowledge is itself controversial, I conclude that Dekker's choice of $gW_i S$ (indirectly willing) over $gW_d S$ (directly willing) is arbitrary.

8.3.2 The Volitional Simultaneity Argument   [ARG: Volitional Simultaneity]

I now present an argument leading to the conclusion that God directly and strongly determines, *even if we follow Dekker's insistence that the correct interpretation:* $gW_i S$ (indirectly willing)' is true. First, there are a few reasons to cast doubt on the buffering effect of the counterfactual. The consequents in counterfactual conditionals, whether those of creaturely freedom or more standard counterfactuals, have no inherent consequence or implication relation despite the choice of the name 'consequent'. What I mean is that rarely, if ever, do we insert 'then' between the antecedent and consequent in

---

[12] Perszyk (2000) has considered compatibilist accounts of Molinism, as have some Calvinists who accept middle knowledge. I do not rule these out as viable accounts, but Compatibilist Molinism is very different from generic Molinism. Moreover, the sense of manipulation in compatibilism itself changes in significance.

counterfactual conditionals. Arguably, 'then' can be dropped from English forms of the material and strict conditional with no loss of meaning or truth-functionality, while inserting it between antecedent and consequent of a counterfactual implies sequentiality. This is a temporal term, however, and is more clearly understood in factual and predictive conditionals. But I think we can understand the point by comparison with alleged modal or metaphysical sequencing which I argue is false.

In favour of the rejection of sequential or implicative stages between antecedent and consequent, I again consider some work from linguists.[13] Barbara Dancygier writes, (citing Wilson 1990) that,

> temporal relations between the clauses do not have to be sequential, as there are also cases of simultaneity or even non-temporal interpretations…similar cases can be found among conditionals… predictive, non-predictive, and generic. (1998:77)

She gives the following examples:

1) *If the baby is asleep, Mary is typing.*

2) *If you live in a dorm, you don't have enough privacy.*

3) *If public transport is on strike tomorrow, getting to work will be a nightmare.*

4) *If people drove more carefully, roads would be safer.*

Dancygier considers various arguments for the *simultaneity* of events or states of affairs contained within the apodosis and protasis in these examples to which I shall discuss briefly.[14]

---

[13] It might be better to adopt the linguist's terminology of *protasis* and *apodosis* for antecedent and consequent respectively to minimise the false suggestion that there are two parts or stages to a counterfactual.

[14] Again I note that her analysis considers conditionals mainly from temporal aspects. Even so, this is not problematic, for the modal and temporal readings of counterfactual conditionals are not mutually exclusive categories. This idea can be witnessed in the possible tense-modal ambiguity of subjunctives and other 'modal auxiliaries', where, for example, 'would' can function as a temporal marker in predictive clauses or a modal marker in volitional clauses. It is often unclear which interpretation we should take and some theorists in linguistics do consider that the modal and temporal aspects are substantially related.

Dancygier writes,

- Simultaneity is not unusual in non-predictive constructions as in (1) as there is no indication of temporal restriction.

- Generic sentences like (2) express "simultaneity of some kind" as "they scan over unrestricted periods of time".

Predictive sentences like (3) and (4) cover parallel periods of time in the *protases* and *apodoses* (1998:78). Dancygier rejects the view by other authors that sequentiality is related to causality because they are seen as inseparable which, she thinks, is an inheritance from a Humean approach of classical causality—*post hoc ergo propter hoc*.[15] Instead she argues that sequentiality is not inferred from causality, which means we must give another interpretation of these sentences ((1) to (4) above) that can understand the events or states of affairs as causal *and* simultaneous, (not sequential), (78). Her understanding is this,

> …all the clauses [in sentences (1) –(4)] *describe continuing states of affairs, rather than events,* and that the inception of the state of affairs interpreted as a cause precedes the inception of the state interpreted as a result. (1998:78, emphasis added)

Dancygier also points out that there are other examples of "full simultaneity" found only in non-predictive constructions. These are cases where two clauses "describe two inseparable aspects of a phenomenon—as two faces of the same coin" (78). The clauses should therefore be understood not as two descriptions of two different states of affairs but "two assumptions that logically entail each other."[16]

---

[15] Authors she rejects in this position that sequentially implies causality are Dancygier and Mioduszewska (1983), Comre (1986), Wilson (1990).

[16] Examples for these are called 'and' or 'full-stop' constructions. One example she gives: *The king is bald* and *The King has no hair* (78). To conditionalise this, we have something like, *If the king were to have no hair, he would be bald*, or *If anyone has no hair they are bald*.

8-15

Application to the Directly Willing/Indirectly Willing Distinction

Apart from (4) uttering a contrary-to-fact condition, "*If people drove more carefully, roads would be safer,*" none of the other examples are of counterfactual conditionals; none are counterfactuals of creaturely freedom. It would not be too hard to ascertain general laws or causal relations between the state of affairs in the antecedent and consequent. Is it plausible, then, to apply Dancygier's theory of simultaneity over undetermined action, that is, CCFs? My defence first is simply this, how do we know, more importantly, how does God know, that they are counterfactuals of creaturely *freedom?* We think they are because they are counterfactuals and assume they are *of freedom* but there are counterfactuals of determined actions just as long as there are appropriate laws as background conditions. It would be question-begging to label Molinist conditionals as pertaining to freedom on the basis of the subjunctive operator, when the contingency of the operation is exactly the point of dispute.

There is nevertheless a major difference between factive or indicative conditionals and counterfactual conditionals *simpliciter*. The antecedent of counterfactuals is false, or more colloquially, the state of affairs suggested hasn't happened yet. Any talk of sequentiality or simultaneity might sound incoherent because the antecedent is not true, nor is there a corresponding state of affairs as yet, but I argue by a parallelism of the temporal and factive versus the modal and counterfactual. Supposing that Dancygier's first example in (1) expresses a true proposition—an actual state of affairs. Suppose also that Mary types freely. On the basis that this conditional is contingently true, and actual: *If the baby is asleep, Mary is typing*, then according to Molinism, there was a moment in God's intellect where,

- he middle-knowledge knows that,

    If Mary were in the situation where her baby is asleep, she would be typing.

Now, if God wanted to actualize the corresponding state of affairs, then on the basis of the simultaneity of events, if God were to will that *Mary were in this situation where her baby was asleep*, then he would simultaneously will that *Mary would be typing*.[17] If God actualized this circumstance then Mary's typing is the same state of affairs as her being in the situation that her baby is asleep, or, there is a *C* where (*Mary is typing & Her baby is asleep*).

It is difficult to see how there could be a distinction that God directly wills *Mary is in the situation where her baby is asleep* in order to indirectly will that *she would be typing*. Alternatively, if God were to will that the same token state of affairs, *she is typing*, he would simultaneously will that she would be *typing in the situation where her baby is asleep*. This is to reverse the information expressed in the antecedent and consequent; which isn't to claim that because the information is reversed that the counterfactual implies its own bi-conditional. It is one coin viewed from two different aspects or descriptions, from P, or from Q; it is not willing P to indirectly will Q. Given the three arguments, or place-holders of a Molinist counterfactual as an unordered set { *s, A, C*}, if the simultaneity argument is correct, God wills all three directly, including what action (*A*) the person performs.

Summary of my Application of Dancygier to Dekker

Here is a summary of my speculations:

1) In Molinist counterfactuals, there is no separate event-to-event sequence relation which could form ontologically distinct states of affairs where God wills P in order to indirectly will Q.

2) Rather it is one state of affairs described from a modally simultaneous aspect, with different informational or descriptive content.

3) Hence, there is no 'distance' or separation between two different events or states of affairs as there is only one state of affairs.

---

[17] I have added the indexical 'this' underlined, to make sure the same situation is referred to.

4) Any distance or separation between the information contained in the antecedent and the information in the consequent is purely epistemic from a human perspective. A human person comes to know another fact by knowing if person *s* were in *C*. In contrast, God$_M$ already knows what would happen without deliberative experimentation. Therefore, like the application of *modus ponens* as a way of speaking, there is some evidence that even talk of God knowing counterfactuals of freedom is also just a way of speaking. This is especially true if there is also no *volitional* distance between antecedent and consequent. If there is no significant epistemic or volitional difference between each half of a counterfactual in relation to a divine being, this amounts to there being no useful counterfactual relationship at all for this divine being.

5) Because the difference between the antecedent and consequent is epistemic on an anthropocentric account, the projection that God knows counterfactuals of freedom fails, for God does not come to know new information by knowing the antecedent. By comparison, between the epistemic and volitional there is likewise no hook or handle that God can use to directly will one 'part' of a state of affairs without also directly willing another 'part'. Any modal or metaphysical distance between antecedent and consequent is (misattributed as) epistemic, not volitionally distant from God's perspective.

6) Therefore, there can be no directly-willing/indirectly willing distinction in a Molinist conditional. Moreover, this distinction is arbitrarily ordered in favour of being consistent with the Molinist model of providence and foreknowledge solution in opposition to theological determinist models.

7) Finally, any insertion of the adverb 'freely' to the action verb in the consequent is wholly reliant on the presumption of the strong-weak or direct-indirect distinction. Since the grounds for these distinctions have, I think, been shown to be either question-beginning (Hasker, Fischer), or false, then the insertion of 'freely' is also ungrounded and question-begging.

8) Therefore, Molinist counterfactuals of creaturely freedom are ungrounded through other means.[18]

Divine Intending: A Better Interpretation of God's Knowledge and Power over a Molinist Conditional

This statement should be generally acceptable to the Molinist and others who think that God has some form of middle knowledge:

- God knows what a person would do and he wills it to be the case if that is what he wants to obtain.

An anthropomorphic account of 'indirectly willing' differs significantly from the divine account above in that a human person does not necessarily know that if P, then Q follows, because they might be unaware that P entails Q. Hence, if we will P, and Q follows, we usually are not always held morally responsible for Q, since indirectly-willing Q was not part of our *intentions*. Here I am not discussing whether willing is closed under entailment and wish to avoid that topic as uninstructive. A better alternative is to discuss intending, though this is itself fraught with difficulties.

This concern about the willing of consequents, given the willing of antecedents, gives rise to issues of moral responsibility. Indeed, whether or not a person is acquainted with the doctrine of double-effect, most of us have qualms about arranging circumstances with a primary intention that Q obtains indirectly, by the direct willing of the lesser intended P, *if the whole outcome puts us in a more favourable position at another's expense.*[19] This is likely to be a contributing reason why, existentially, we feel used, exploited or feel our trust has been violated if we are on the receiving end of manipulation.

There is therefore strong tension in the claim that a person of good moral standing is able to *knowingly* produce Q by indirectly *willing* it, where Q is the main intention or

---

[18] Ungrounded, that is, because of the view put forward in this section of the semantics of the metaphysical simultaneity of counterfactuals. Whether this supports the general Grounding objection because of the lack of truth-makers is another matter.

[19] Here we are not talking about primarily intending Q by indirectly willing P for the sake of improving another person's life. Parent/child relationships see this as commonplace.

goal, and where Q results in either a benefit to the intender, or a loss to the affected. How can we say that the willing of Q is indirect if it is known and if it is the main intention? Many of us (as philosophers at least), would react strongly if someone replied that it was '*just* a matter of semantics' between 'willing' and 'intending'. Pretending that it is just a matter of meaning, the following shows that it cannot be, if each token of 'willing' is univocal, and the same for each token of 'intending', where also it is assumed with very good reason that they are not completely synonymous terms. I pose that,

- This triplet is consistent:

  1. Directly Willing P, &

  2. Knowing that P, &

  3. *Primarily Intending that P*

- This triplet is inconsistent:

  1. Indirectly Willing Q, &

  2. Knowing that Q, &

  3. *Primarily Intending that P*

If the first triad is semantically consistent, and the second isn't, then it's not *just* a matter of semantics in the colloquial sense. It is a real matter of semantics as true meaning and the associations we have of these two different terms, and the moral consequences of intending a state of affairs.[20]

It is more natural to assert that God wills states of affairs *via* indirectly willing circumstances. This merely swaps what God-*wills* with what God-*wants*. God in his providential activity wants the state of affairs to obtain where the circumstance in the antecedent of a CCF is instrumental in producing the state of affairs, consistent with

---

[20] 'Intending' and 'intentions' are themselves notoriously difficult concepts in the philosophy of action, ethics and law. Yet I see these terms as less contentious than 'willing' which has such a broad range of conceptions due to theological connotations. Where I use the term 'intending', I use it as the strong *intending a present action*, (or better, *intending in action*), not *having an intention to act in the future.* My discussion of *God's intending* might be criticized that it is anthropomorphic, so I defend its use by stating that speaking of *God's willing* is just as anthropomorphic, but also much more confounding because of the many theological variants of the divine will. Fundamentally, we can only think about God as humans are able to think about anything.

God's providential desires. In a comparison to law, the willing of the circumstance (of the antecedent) is an oblique intention in order to fulfill the main intention.

Since I reject the Dekker direct/indirect-willing distinction, I should propose a better alternative. A better way to understand how God's will differs in respect to the antecedent and consequent of a counterfactual (of creaturely freedom) is to distinguish will, not by bifurcating it into *direct* and *indirect*, but between *power* (to bring about) and *intention.* So, the state of affairs which corresponds to the consequent is *will-as-intention.* The control over the circumstance and the placing of the agent in the circumstance ('in' the antecedent, when actualized) is *will-as-power.*

Furthermore, if God *wants* a state of affairs *S* to obtain, it is incoherent to generate a finer distinction of *indirectly wanting*. God and humans may have second order 'wants' and desires, but I do not think it makes sense to speak of indirectly wanting in this context. Finally, any version of theism or providence that includes a model whereby God wants-by-willing S to obtain, (which is the better-version interpretation of Dekker's Molinism that I have been presenting here), where S involves cases of ostensible creaturely freedom, should be judged by the same standards as theological compatibilism, or even hard determinism.

8.3.3 Conclusion of Dekker and Dancygier

The thrust of these arguments show God$_M$ as a manipulator via will or control, and not so much by use of his knowledge. Nevertheless, the main topic area discussed is counterfactuals of freedom, middle knowledge. In this way, it is related to my objective in showing how God uses his middle knowledge. Unfortunately, the Molinist understanding of how God uses CCFs does not stand up to scrutiny and instead, his 'use' of them results in divine determinism. This undercuts the MKUseSuccess argument with the consequences that any freedom is not libertarian and the foreknowledge dilemma is not resolved since freedom is compatibilist.

Dekker

Dekker's '*we should say*' rendering that God wills states of affairs (in the consequent) *indirectly* by directly willing or actualizing the circumstance is arbitrary and

is accepted only because it is the only interpretation that appears consistent with Molinism. The alternative interpretation implies causal determinism. However, the so called 'correct' Molinist choice does not defend the strong/weak actualization distinction, or the direct/indirect distinction. Rather, analysis, even this interpretation, presents God_M as determining states of affairs over 'free' agents much more than Molinist theory would allow. On this interpretation, although there is still a surface distinction between two consecutive stages, there is no underlying weak or indirect account of willing the resultant state of affairs. Therefore, it is a matter of damned if you do maintain one direction of interpretation, and damned if you maintain the other direction. Either way, the counterfactual operator does not offer a firewall of causal and moral responsibility between God and the agent. There is no implicature of contingency via $\Box\!\to$.

Dancygier

Keeping in mind potential differences between conditionals in English constructions and logical semantics, I have utilized some work from the cognitive linguist Barbara Dancygier. I offer a challenge, but not a knock down argument, to the view that counterfactual conditionals, and even those of creaturely freedom, refer to states of affairs with no event-to-event or modal ordering between descriptions in the antecedent and those of the consequent. Rather, a divine being, if he were to know *and to will* states of affairs in the antecedent, *simultaneously* wills the states of affair in the consequent. It may be difficult to state exactly what *modal* simultaneity is, if there were such a concept relevant to the present context, but I suggest that either volitionally or bouletically, God wills/desires all three argument places (*s,C,A*), with the same degree of modal force. He does not *will/ desire 's in C' to indirectly will A.* Analogous with temporal simultaneity, I conclude that the application of Dancygier's theory re-affirms my evaluation of Dekker. There is no Molinistically useful strong/weak or direct/indirect distinction. (This is not to say that there isn't a distinction, but it's not relevant, ergo, not useful for the Molinist).

<u>My Proposal</u>

A better way to distinguish between two senses of the divine will would be: between *willing as a power* and *willing as intention* or *want*. This division, if there needs to be one, better explains the relation of God's attitude to antecedent and consequent respectively. Dekker's indirectly-willing distinction is incoherent on various grounds. However, even my suggestion itself does not completely divorce will from intellect, since a normal understanding of God's 'will' itself contains features of God's intellect, as it does in the human situation.

8.4 **The Substitution of 'Intending' into Molinist Discourse**

In the previous section I made several references to a divine or human person's intention as the important contributing factor to their agency, self-control and control over others, especially with regard to their responsibility. My position is to view the right-hand clause of a CCF not as weak or indirect, which would subordinate it to the antecedent clause, but to reverse the imputation of strength or directness so that the state of affairs in the consequent is the primary intention, while the circumstance in the antecedent clause is secondary or oblique. Actually, a clearer explanation is just to treat the state of affairs in the consequent as *the intention* of the agent who makes the state of affairs obtain; there is no real need to 'call' the antecedent clause anything like indirect, weak or oblique.[21] This is because, once a CCF is made actual, the state of affairs obtains, and though the CCF is still true it is no longer useful. It is inconsistent to maintain a distinction between antecedent and consequent yet talk about willing the

---

[21] Construing *intention* of a divine agent as the major category significant for providence does not sit well with theological distinctions in the divine will such as *divine permission* versus *divine decree*. It would be hard to find an account of *intending* consistent with *permitting*, unless this is construed as *intending to permit* which shakes off all responsibility. On this topic of *permission* versus *decreeing*, I see no way Molinism can portray God$_M$ as having both capacities in relation to creaturely freedom. We could distinguish between *intending,* and *permission* as '*allowing*-but-not *intending*' but the use of middle knowledge is too granular to resolve this distinction. Moreover, if Molinism could account for an *intending/allowing* distinction, the creatures' responsibility should be minimised if their action was intended, versus if their action was allowed.

My view is that, if Molinism is true, whatever obtains because of God's will is either permission *or* decree. If God$_M$ just permits everything, then it is difficult to see how he has any control that is not global manipulation; if God$_M$ decrees everything this would be too strong for the Molinist.

single state of affairs that each simple CCF contains. It is like talking about something that is just about to arrive as a hypothetical when it is already here.

Suppose a work colleague, *Chris*, complains that yesterday he was late getting to work because he missed the second connecting train at Central Station. The scheduled difference between the arrival of the first and the departing of the second train leaves only one minute to find and change platforms. You could help by offering him a counterfactual conditional where you explain that *if you were to get on the first carriage on the first train at your home town, you would have made the second train in time* because of the shorter distance traversed. At the moment of explaining it there do appear to be two stages: "if you were to do this, 'then' this would happen" *because* it is unactualized. However, if tomorrow you travel with Chris—thereby showing him what to do—you are actualizing the counterfactual and making the single state of affairs that *the first carriage connects more quickly to the second platform* obtain. Here there are not two stages. Nor does framing the subjunctive as an indicative conditional imply two stages of consequentiality. If you were to utter, *If you get on the first train on the first carriage, then you will make it to the second train in time*, your colleague will give you a blank look as what you said is now trivially true. [22] What the so-called two-stages of willing a counterfactual of freedom really attempts to convey is that Chris's *performing of the action of taking the first carriage* is contingent where it could have failed to obtain. It could be that he didn't take your advice. As I have suggested before, some of us have been tricked by the logical form of a counterfactual and think that $\Box\rightarrow$ separates two distinct actions of God, strong and weak, or direct and indirect, because it is a binary (two-place) operator. When the state of affairs referred to in a CCF of freedom is actualized, any sense of contingency is bound *outside* the agent and the action she

---

[22] Another way to explain this action of intending one state of affairs is to follow my application of Dancygier's simultaneity argument, where each argument's place in a counterfactual: the person, the circumstance and their action, are all willed or intended in the same unified manner. My present position is another way of stating the previous position.

performs, as in the second conjunct using (*As* & ◊~*As*), or *Chris took the first carriage but it was possible that he didn't*.[23]

Of course, for the Molinist and libertarian, what matters is that there is no element of causation as sufficient causality between God and the human agent. The contingency of the counterfactual operation is meant to sever causation as a sufficient condition and therefore eliminate the moral responsibility of the manipulator in getting another person to perform an action. Nevertheless, do we exculpate God or a manipulator just by demonstrating that the divine action is not causally sufficient to cause another person's behavior? There is no easy or fast way to tell.[24]

My argument above about Dekker's distinction, simultaneity, the misunderstanding of the 'two-aspects' of willing a counterfactual, provides evidence that we should be talking about the Molinist God's intentions instead of willing or actualizing. The meaning here is intending a present action or *intention-in-action*. The strong/weak and the direct/indirect distinctions have become euphemistic and hide the truth about the divine action. The term and concept *divine intention* is more readily accessible to our understanding than *divine will* (maybe because it is more anthropomorphic). Though we are used to using the phrase *divine will* as a noun phrase, pointing to a traditional attribute

---

[23] I have omitted in this example the thorny problem of knowing a would-counterfactual with the certainty God has in middle knowledge. We would then have to explain how it is certain that Chris catches the first carriage when it is possible that he does not. That is, how can there be alternative possibilities at the moment of middle knowledge? My omission in discussing that problem can be excused because this chapter is focused on the *Willing Premise* of *modus ponens* and my example was a subjunctive conditional of human deliberative reasoning.

[24] Essentially, this whole research project concerns this question from the libertarian's point of view of divine control. I offer a pessimistic observation. To insist (rightly I believe), that it is logically impossible for God to determine a free creature's action, then it might appear, by inference, that if we can show a model where God controls but does *not* determine a creature's action, then that creature is free. That is an illicit inference. It needs to be demonstrated that the new theory shows how the creature is (still) free. I fear much time has been spent on not recognizing the illegitimacy in reasoning that *if control is deterministic then the result is unfreedom* ergo, *if control is undeterministic then the result is freedom.* This is why I do not consider that we need to explain or define precise and robust libertarian views at the start of this thesis. Doing so might just win by stipulative fiat: *If theory M is libertarian then it is also a non-deterministic view of providence.*

of God, the phrase *divine intention* substitutes better in particular cases of *God intending to X* rather than using it to refer to a theological attribute. [25]

8.4.1 The Anti-Molinist Argument from Divine Intention.

The substitution of 'intending' is far too strong for the Molinist to accept.[26] If strongly actualizing a libertarianly free creature's action is logically impossible, so too is intending another free creature's action. Remember, I have not distinguished a weak or strong form, or a direct or indirect form—just that God *intends* to bring about the state of affairs referred to in a CCF. It might be, and is likely to be that God has further intentions for doing so, but there are no distinctions or grades of intention in respect to the two clauses of a counterfactual of freedom. I am not offering a substitution of a term via semantic synonymy, *intends* for *wills* or *actualizes*. I am offering a true explanation of what Molinism as a theory really entails. The *intending* substitution is a metaphysical thesis, not a lexical one. Moreover, it is not a substitution *salva veritate,* rather it shows there is another appearance-reality difference in Molinism. It looks like God$_M$ can control libertarian free agents, but the reality is, that if it is impossible for God to intend *s* to *A* freely, then either *A's* performing the action is not free, or Molinism cannot be proposed as a model of providence and a solution to the divine foreknowledge problem. Hence I posit the simple argument:

Anti-Molinist Argument (Foreknowledge) from Divine Intention:
[AMA From Intention]

(1) Molinism, properly understood, presents divine activity as *intention-in-action*.

---

[25] 'Divine Intention' might point to an attribute or a particular token of *God intending P*. There is no precedent of *intention* as an attribute or property of God in classical theism as far as I can tell. Neither the English nor Latin cognates of *intention, intending* appear in either of Richard Muller's works *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms* (1985), or his (2003, 2006).   Hence, the use of the term in contemporary discussions is progressive. An anthropomorphism charge might be levelled against it, but with little damage.

[26] Though obviously not a Molinist, Gale presents this case. In relation to the Free Will Defender's strategy against the atheist objections that God could prevent evil, Gale writes, "The objection to the first strategy is that it is logically inconsistent for God to both create free persons and have the intention of preventing them from choosing or performing the morally wrong alternative that their freedom makes available to them" (Gale 1991:151).

(2) It is impossible for a being to *intend-in-action another libertarian free agent to A*.

(3) ∴ Molinism is incompatible with libertarian free-will.

(4) ∴ Molinism is true or libertarian free will is false.

(5) ∴ If Molinism is a true representation of God, then God does not know future contingents *qua* libertarian actions.

(6) ∴ <u>Molinism cannot solve the divine foreknowledge problem, nor can Molinism offer a model of providential control over free creatures.</u>

8.5 **Richard Gale and Forensic Responsibility**

In Chapter 1, I mentioned that Richard Gale's works (1990,1991) are important in this research for understanding Plantinga's free-will defence as an exemplification of Molinism. These works are lengthy and detailed, so I only discuss the following in relation to his notion of *forensic responsibility.*

- **Richard Gale:** God has **'**Freedom-Cancelling Control' over created persons. (1990:397-423 and 1991:131-178)

If the FWD is true, Gale argues that God would have 'freedom-cancelling' control over created individuals. Gale does not mention the term manipulation, and instead uses the neutral term 'control', but its equivalence to manipulation is clear from his anthropomorphic arguments (as he calls them). Gale distinguishes between two types of control: *causal responsibility as sufficient*—the kind physicists are interested in—and *forensic responsibility,* which is a legal and moral form of responsibility. Gale thinks that Plantinga's (Molinist-style) free-will defence does not absolve God from forensic responsibility even though the FWD is designed to provide a defence (or theodicy) absolving God of blame. God, under the Molinist model, is not causally responsible as

'causal sufficiency', rather, actualizing CCFs entails the weaker "subjunctively-conditional sufficiency" (154) for the instantiated person's freely doing *A*.

Forensic responsibility obtains even when actualising CCFs, writes Gale. He asks us to consider the example that God has middle knowledge and knew the outcome of a purely stochastic process. Gale's example is the pressing of a button with full knowledge that a bomb will explode and kill innocent people. Responsibility here is forensic, not causal. Gale posits the distinction as it might be objected that this later concept of causation is 'confused', at least by the person on the street, who might think that the only kind of responsibility is causal, and therefore responsibility is grounded only in more direct and physical processes (155).

Forensic responsibility pertains to "moral and legal responsibility and blame, which is the very concept that figures in the FWD, since it is concerned with the assignment of responsibility and blame to God and man" (156). Though it seems that the difference between the causal responsibility of the physicist and forensic responsibility is what God "knows and intends," i.e., his *psychological* state, there are good grounds for the linking of intention as a sufficient condition so that God_M "sufficiently causes the free choices and actions" of humans. Gale thinks that sufficiently causing another person to perform *A* may still be an innocent form of freedom-cancelling control, but he argues by giving three analogies that are other instances of Anti-Molinist Arguments.

Summary of Gale and Forensic Responsibility

If the intention-substitution argument works (or even if it fails), God_M is not *causally* responsible for what he brings about; however, he is responsible as 'causally-enabling' a state of affairs and is hence morally responsible. (I discussed this as the mechanism of Molinist manipulation in §7.2.3.) On the basis that 'forensics' pertain to seeking evidence and justifying evidence concerning guilt and blame, 'forensic

responsibility' is a real relation in divine and human agency.[27] Hence I agree with Gale and reassert his claim that,

- God$_M$ is forensically responsible for what he actualizes via CCFs.

I present a Gale-inspired argument as follows:

[Galeian Argument: The Culpability of Intending with Knowing]

(1) Pushing a button (B) results in the indeterministic state of affairs where it is possible that a bomb explodes (E) and threatens lives.

(2) Person N does not know that $\Diamond(B \supset E)$.

(3) Person N pushes button and the bomb explodes.

(4) Normally, we would not hold N morally or forensically responsible for E because N was not aware of the possibility that E.

(5) Person M knows that (1).

(6) Person M further knows that $(B \,\square\!\!\rightarrow E)$

(7) Person M unintentionally pushes button and the bomb explodes.

(8) We might hold M responsible for their carelessness but normally would not hold M fully responsible as…

(9) Person M′ intentionally pushes button and the bomb explodes.

(10) Person M′ says she is not to blame for E as she did not cause E (being indeterministic), though she had infallible foreknowledge that E.

---

[27] Elsewhere Richard Gale critiques divine timelessness on the basis that a timeless being cannot exhibit traits of a person (1991:92). He gives a conceptual analysis of a person and writes that within "forensic and moral contexts, [a person] must be an agent that performs intentional actions so as to bring about some goal or intent."

(11) Many of us would hold M′ responsible because she knew what would happen if she pressed B.

(12) By analogy, we would hold God$_M$ responsible though God$_M$ does not strongly actualize or determine states of affairs.

(13) ∴ <u>God$_M$ is forensically responsible for weakly actualizing E.</u>

(14) God$_C$ is said to be causally and morally responsible for willing/decreeing/strongly-actualizing E.

(15) But God$_C$ (any theological determinist model) also knows what state of affairs he determines by his will. (If you will E, you know that you will E.)

(16) Causal and moral responsibility depends either on a combination of *willing and knowing E*, for it is not possible for an agent[28]:

   a. to will E—without knowing that he wills E,

      or

   b. to know that he wills E—without actually willing E.

(17) But it is possible to directly cause or determine E without knowing that one directly causes or determines E.

(18) We would not normally hold such a person responsible for not knowing that she directly causes E. (Parity with premise 4 above.)

(19) ∴ Causal responsibility for E's obtaining is not sufficient for moral responsibility for E's being caused.

---

[28] It might sound too strong to say that these things are not possible, and if they aren't I take correction. To put my point another way, *willing* involves an epistemic condition, as does *intending*. As I have stated elsewhere, there can be no sharp dichotomy on the will/intellect distinction. It's blurry, which is why I offered the concept of *scientia complexa*.

(20) ∴ Moral responsibility largely depends on an epistemic condition of knowing that E will obtain through one's actions, regardless of whether E is weakly actualized or strongly actualized.

(21) Both God$_M$ and God$_C$ are morally responsible (to the same degree) for E, whether E obtains through strong or weak actualization.

(Speaking of God$_M$ being 'causally responsible' for E might be misleading), therefore we should speak of God$_M$'s forensic responsibility for E where forensic responsibility involves moral responsibility to the same degree as God$_C$ being causally responsible for E.

8.6 Conclusion: The Dilemma and Forensic Responsibility

8.6.1 The Dilemma of Preserving or Destroying the Distinction

The dilemma of preserving or destroying the strong/weak actualization distinction (or the direct/indirect distinction) can be recapitulated as follows. Preserving the dilemma is more consistent with the herethelic account of controlling another person's freedom, but the unwanted implication follows that herethelic control is exploitative manipulation. The other horn of the dilemma, if we were to destroy the distinction, suggests that Molinism loses out on libertarian freedom and becomes compatibilistic. Despite this, either way, the will/intellect distinction in Molinsim is better interpreted simply as divine intention, which involves both epistemic and volitional aspects. Moreover, the divine intention account is consistent with either horn of the dilemma: herethelic manipulation or compatibilism.

8.6.2 Either Way Divine Intentions entails Forensic Reponsibility

From the argument labelled, 'The Culpability of Intending with Knowing' (above), I conclude that,

- God$_M$ is forensically responsible for what he actualizes via CCFs.

Richard Gale offers a powerful discussion of the nature of intention in relation to forensic responsibility. The above argument trades on some of his theory and his example (of button pushing), and I have attempted to show that God$_M$ would have the same moral responsibility, if any at all, that he would have in a determinist model.[29]

---

[29] I disagree slightly with Gale over his conclusion about one of his manipulation cases. He gives three versions of human cases of control, or as he states it, 'man to man' control (M_2 controls M_1). Gale does not use the term manipulation, but his use of 'control' implies it. It is the third case that interests me in this research:

> Case 3: "M_2 has a freedom-cancelling control over M_1 if M_2 causes most of M_1's behaviour and also has the counterfactual power to cause M_1 to act differently from the way in which M_1 in fact acts." (1991:163)

Gale does not think that the Molinist God has counterfactual power to cause M_1 to act differently *from the way in which M_1 in fact acts*. However, the Molinist God does have the counterfactual power to cause M_1 to act differently by actualizing different circumstances. This is God's inter-circumstantial control or 'Manipulation-Over'.

Chapter 9: **The Main Argument: It All Depends on the Circumstances**

9.1 **The Importance of Circumstances for Molinism**

General counter-factual conditionals contain in their antecedent an alternate world condition or contrary-to-fact condition. Counterfactuals of creaturely freedom—being of course *counterfactual conditionals*—need these circumstances as well. Circumstances are needed for 'would-conditionals', not for mere assertions of possibility, but for 'other world' situations. 'Would-conditionals' are useful for Molinism for these reasons: the divine control of creaturely freedom; the preservation of libertarian freedom; providential control; and for the foreknowledge solution.

For Molinism, so much depends on circumstances, their nature and use. The pertinent question in understanding classical Molinism is not which semantics should we use, but rather, what are circumstances? Why are they *counterfactually relevant* and not just relevant to the theory of Molinism? 'Where' are they in the stream of logical moments; and how are they are used in Molinist theory, and by God_M?

9.1.1 Counterfactually Relevant

Fundamentally, circumstances are important because they are counterfactually relevant to different states of affairs (Timpe 2005). By comparison with counterfactuals from a human cognitive aspect, *had things been different in the past, other things would be different now.* For counterfactuals of freedom, this translates as a multitude of possible and different states of affairs—there is much there for a divine craftsman to use in his creation.

Kevin Timpe (2005), refers to the different 'parts' of a circumstance that are counterfactually-relevant to perform a free action as R, while parts that are not counter-factually relevant are T. Timpe gives the example of Allison praying for the safety of her father in another state, after hearing the news about a tornado near where he lives. Relevant parts of the circumstance here contain members of R, such as "her belief that God listens and responds to prayer, her love of her father, etc." Members of R are items where, "it is reasonable to think that the activity wouldn't have been exactly the same had

they not been present" (Timpe 2005:315, citing Flint 1998:245).[1] This is a clear and simple analysis of what makes a circumstance important for Molinism. There is something about circumstances that is *counterfactually relevant*, such that, if they were different, the agent might have acted differently. 'Relevance' is here, first, a two-place relation between the human agent and the part/s of the circumstance. This is from the standpoint of dynamic modality, where I define it as including a combination of agent and circumstantial modality. This first order, agent/circumstance relation provides a second order relation of relevance *to* God's knowledge. This can be understood as an epistemic modal.   Primarily, the circumstance is counterfactually relevant with respect to the agent, thereby serving to individuate *this* circumstance for God's counterfactual knowledge.

9.1.2 What are circumstances and situations?

My discussion below concerns the ontology of circumstances in counterfactuals of freedom. What is the relationship between the circumstance and the counterfactual? [2]

---

[1] Members of T might include the fact that she is wearing a green striped shirt, or that her dog is asleep on her bed (315). R and T result in a conjunction of a complete circumstance. Timpe continues:
> [Allison is in R) and T] $\Box\to$ Allison prays for the safety of her father.

Since the members that form T make no difference to her decision to pray, then this is also true:
> [Allison is in R) and ~T] $\Box\to$ Allison prays for the safety of her father.

These two conditionals entail just,
> (Allison is in R) $\Box\to$ Allison prays for the safety of her father.

And this is something that the Molinist God knows. (315)

[2] In relation to *circumstances*, it is not always clear what 'counterfactual' means. There are at least three main senses or uses.

1. 'A counterfactual' is an abbreviated utterance of 'a counterfactual *conditional*' or further, 'a counterfactual *conditional* of creaturely freedom.'

2. A 'counterfactual' is the counterfactual *condition*, contrary-to-fact abstract state of affairs referred to in the antecedent of a counterfactual conditional of (1). This sense of counterfactual is what makes the antecedent false. This sense in (2) in closely related to (3).

3. A 'counterfactual' *is the circumstance* referred to in the antecedent of a counterfactual conditional, (of creaturely freedom). That is, the circumstance is a counterfactual state of affairs in relation to the actual world. This is why Hasker has symbolised counterfactuals as 'C > Z' The antecedent is the circumstance.

It looks like (2) and (3) blend or work together to describe the 'circumstance' as being a *counterfactual* circumstance in relation to an actual circumstance. This does not work too well for Molinism as there were no pre-volitional actualities present in the universe, so there are no actual circumstances where others could be counterfactual circumstances. On the usual counterfactual understanding of circumstances, referenced to the actual world, there needs to be *ceteris paribus*

As far as the individuation of situations go, Keith Devlin, writing from the perspective of Situation Theory and Semantics,[3] says that humans do not need to individuate situations, although they have the cognitive ability to sometimes do so, and can certainly individuate objects and relations (Devlin 1991:25). We can speak about being in a situation, without necessarily knowing what it is that makes it this or that situation. Devlin speaks of humans *discriminating situations by their behaviour*, not always by awareness through cognition. The human does not have to know which particular situation they are in, but their behaviour tends to react accordingly, although this is not to say that they do not have control over their actions. On the other hand, God, by this concept, *can* cognitively individuate our situations. Using Devlin's further terms 'agent scheme' and 'theorist's scheme' (27), the agent and the theorist, (here supposing it is God with middle knowledge), do not have to have the same representations or the same way of carving up the world. A human agent does not individuate situations *as an individual,* but generally "individuates a situation *as a situation*, that is to say, as a structured part of Reality that that it (the agent) somehow manages to pick out" (31). *Picking out a situation* does not mean that the human agent should be "able to provide an *exact* description of everything that is and is not going on in that situation" (Devlin 1991:25, original emphasis 31).

---

conditions—some things stay the same, but also there must be *mutatis mutandis* conditions of the circumstance—some things are different, so that they can be 'counter' to a fact. Not to forget the important individual in Molinist circumstances, perhaps we should state that at the moment just before the divine will, it is the *creaturely* essence or *possible* person which stays the same, while the circumstance fulfils the criteria for difference. Finally, we can inquire whether the circumstance actualized with the agent in it, is the same circumstance known pre-volitionally and counterfactually (of the same token conditional). For all intents and purposes, it is understood they are the exact same circumstance on the understanding that the person is not *actually* in the circumstance, but if they *were*, then something else would follow.

Finally, Kevin Timpe's discussion in (2005) that I refer to above may add a fourth sense or use of 'counterfactual' where *counterfactually relevant parts of circumstances* are those that are relevant to the agent's behaviour, as distinct from those that are not relevant to what they do.

[3] I am here treating 'situations' as a technical term used in Situation Theory and Semantics, and 'circumstances' as sufficiently similar, if not identical for our purposes, hence also synonymous.

Effectively, any person from the position of philosophical inquiry about Molinist circumstances can put themselves in the observational position from the *agent schema*.[4] Yet we do not know what it is from this third person perspective that individuates a situation as unique for the agent *s* in a Molinist conditional. In other words, neither the Molinist nor the non-Molinist knows how or why *individual tokens* of particular circumstances are important when abstracted into theory. [5]

9.2 **Circumstances as Containers**

We find ourselves *in* situations and we place others *in* situations. Sometimes they are sticky situations we find ourselves in or place others *in*. God$_M$ also *puts us in situations*. For the Molinist God, there is a *C* such that, for each person *s*, if he places *s* in *C*, then *s* will do *A* freely.[6] The action, whether human or divine, is the action of *putting* or *placing* someone else into a situation, or waiting to see what they will do in that situation. The *placing in a circumstance* suggests the metaphor of 'container'.

According to the *Container Metaphor*, the circumstance is like a container that does not causally determine what action the person performs: there is an 'air gap' between the agent and the walls of the container, so there is no restriction of movement. There is enough 'leeway' to move around and to do otherwise—to invoke Derk Pereboom's term regarding alternative possibilities. Yet the container has two important functions for God. First, it contributes information to God's epistemology of what a person would do if placed therein. Second, by having this knowledge, God uses the *C* by

---

[4] Interestingly, the author-perspectives of the anti-Molinist arguments from analogy is that of putting themselves in the situation of a person who is manipulated in the same manner that God$_M$ executes providence and knows future contingents. This is no different from thinking, *if Molinism were true¸ what would it be like to be human and manipulated?*

[5] Of course, even when humans are in agent-schema positions of observing other agents, we do not know what it is that is situationally relevant for that person to behave, especially to act freely, nor do we always know how to cognitively individuate our own situations of freedom. But we might be able to say that they are in some situation. If the *fundamental attribution error* is correct, (where we misattribute *situations* comprehended from the first person perspective to *dispositional traits* from the third person perspective), we think we can sufficiently individuate situations. For example, being able to explain that John tripped in *C* because he is clumsy, while my tripping in the same *C* is because of the broken footpath, is to be able to individuate situations as individuals.

[6] To paraphrase Hasker's quip, God$_M$ is the *placer in circumstances* that which none greater can be conceived.

his will—by grasping or handling it—that is, by manipulating the container to control what free creatures will do. These two stages articulate the usefulness of circumstances as 'containers' in God's middle knowledge and free knowledge. They are based on the application of the intellect-will distinction as a function over the 'container'.

Metaphors are said to reveal and to conceal. I wish to spend some time analysing the concept of *placing in* a circumstance, and of circumstances as *containers.*[7] If we were to open the container, we might find something missing: what is hidden or concealed in container-speak is a lack of full predication of the subject or agent in the antecedent of a CCF. Usually, the general form of a counterfactual conditional, Molinist and ordinary, omits the relevant ('active-voiced') predicates in the antecedent. The prepositional *in C* replaces the predicate or infinitival constructions. For important reasons there is something predicated of the agent in the consequent of Molinist conditionals: the action *A* the agent performs or refrains from doing. This is the whole point of the use of counterfactuals of freedom. By contrast, 'at' the antecedent the state of affairs hasn't happened yet; it is counterfactual, so nothing *is true* or even *would be* true at this counterfactual moment. In non-container or prepositional examples of Molinist conditionals, if the verb 'were' in the antecedent portrays anything, it is a passive construction, *if the agent were F'd*, (mirroring *if the agent were C'd*), not *if the agent G's*.

Given that properly understood, counterfactual conditionals predicate no property or action of the agent in the antecedent clause—since clauses are not statements or assertions—what, if anything, does the antecedent clause say about the agent? Nothing, it seems—the only descriptive or informative content is about the circumstance, if that. As such, Molinist conditionals expressed with or without the container metaphor appear to be anti-causative or inchoative verbal constructions on par with examples like 'the window broke,' or, 'the electron passed through the right hand slit.' This is not a criticism; if Molinist conditionals of freedom describe libertarian actions, then the action

---

[7] It does not matter if the action of 'putting into a container *C* ' is a metaphor, but I take it to be one for its explanatory effectiveness concerning Molinist providence. To be precise, the grammatical concept of a circumstance or situation, understood literally, is locative. 'Put' is an action/process verb; 'in' is a preposition. The phrase *putting/placing in* can be understood via 'situational semantics' which I discuss shortly.

originates from the agent's volition and capacities as a function of *the agent and circumstantial modalities*. Assuming indeterminate states in this second example of the electron, the Molinist would have to account for how God knows that if he were to place this electron in this particular situation, it would pass through the right hand slit. The container metaphor makes it appear that the action was generated from an empty container, devoid of content or description in the antecedent, and that God 'just knows' what any free agent or un-determined electron would do for each circumstance/ container. Is this too arbitrary or *ad hoc*? Does there have to be something about the circumstance in order for God to individuate it from others—to have knowledge of the outcome and will the outcome?

9.3 **Situation Theory and Semantics**

The metaphor of the Molinist circumstance can be removed, leaving bare its contents, by applying a simple version of *situation semantics* (SS) developed by Barwise and Perry (1983), discussed by Angelika Kratzer (1989, 1990, 2008), and applied more fully by Keith Devlin (1991).[8] Keith Devlin has also researched situations as *information* where a situation consists of *infons*. Infons and information are abstract entities like mathematical entities and my interest in them relates to my previous claims that middle knowledge supplies God with information—information that is troublesome if used in particular ways.

---

[8] Kratzer explains as follows,

> Situation semantics was developed as an alternative to possible worlds semantics. In situation semantics, linguistic expressions are evaluated with respect to partial, rather than complete, worlds. There is no consensus about what situations are, just as there is no consensus about what possible worlds or events are. According to some, situations are structured entities consisting of relations and individuals standing in those relations. According to others, situations are particulars...Other areas where a situation semantics perspective has led to progress include attitude ascriptions, questions, tense, aspect, nominalizations, implicit arguments, point of view, counterfactual conditionals, and discourse relations. (Kratzer, *SEP* 2008)

A situation semantic for a Molinist circumstance can be represented as a relation of a set of indices, where $S = <w, l, t, e ...>$ (world, location, time, social environment, etc.) [9]

Hence, the antecedent *'s in C'*, $= <s, w, l, t, e...>$. *C* increases in precisification the more indices are identified and added to the membership of the set of indices. This can represent the part-to-whole relationship of a circumstance from incomplete to complete, from a coarse-grained to a finer-grained specification. A part of $C = <s, w>$, while fuller specification would be $C = <s, w, l, t, e...>$

As I said, there appears to be nothing significantly described or predicated about the circumstance; so what I propose is a predication that is more holistic, not just about the circumstance, or the person, but the *person in the circumstance*.

If we look at our common examples of *Adam falling from grace*, *Peter denying Christ three times*, or *Judas betraying Christ in the garden*, are these verbal forms the needed gerund to make the set complete or sufficient? Not exactly—these actions are the results of *being in* the circumstance. In a Molinist conditional, they would appear in the consequent. Translating a counterfactual into a rough Situation Semantics model, we would get something like the following:[10]

- <Adam, Garden, Eden, Eve, apple> $\Rightarrow$ <Adam, *falling,* Garden, Eden, Eve, apple>
- <Peter, Jesus, *Place, Time>* $\Rightarrow$ <Peter, *denying x3,* Jesus, Relationship Questioned>

---

[9] I shall not argue explicitly for particular individual objects or their ontologies that make up a situation or *infon* in a counterfactual of freedom. My motive is more instrumental in explaining another point, rather than finding an alternative semantics to possible worlds for the Molinist.

[10] The Devlin account of situation semantics expresses conditionals, including counterfactuals, as relations of *constraints* between *information,* so usually the conditional operator is replaced by the symbol for a constraint '$\Rightarrow$'. A constraint links information to other information or situations. "*Constraints* may be natural laws, conventions, analytic rules, linguistic rules, empirical, law-like correspondences or whatever" (1991:12). Devlin gives the example, "smoke means fire", $S \Rightarrow S'$, the term 'means' gives a natural expression of the relation of constraint. The agent can pick up information about the class of all situations where there is fire S', from the class of all situations where there is smoke, S. The agent is *attuned* to the constraint $S \Rightarrow S'$ so that they can, by knowing there is smoke, know there is fire (40). Devlin does discuss the counterfactual conditional in (1991:277-278) but I do not pursue this for lack of space.

- <Judas, Jesus, Roman soldiers, thirty pieces of silver> ⇒ <Judas, *betraying, Jesus, Roman soldiers, thirty pieces of silver*>

Earlier I mentioned that the container metaphor, when used in the antecedent, conceals the action that is predicated of the agent. It now might look as if we have found a way to articulate the predicate as shown in the consequent in the above three examples, namely 'falling', 'denying', 'betraying', predicated of Adam, Peter and Judas respectively. These predicates are in the active voice, (except for Adam's falling), but I think we can take it for granted that in most Molinist conditionals the action of the agent is in the active voice. The active voice, and especially transitive verbal forms, indicates the agent in the antecedent as the bearer of the action that is done to another, (*denies* or *betrays*). Yet this is not the predication we are looking for. The container metaphor does not conceal this, for it is usually specified in the consequent.

In Molinist discourse, do these actions—strong predicates consistent with acting freely—spring out of nowhere from the circumstance *qua* container in the antecedent? Here they are not disguised, for they are not at all present. As I have argued elsewhere, the primary purpose of Molinist conditionals is epistemic, so that *if* so-and-so were in such-and-such, they would *A*. They are contrary to fact, therefore there is no true or actual state of affairs in the antecedent and no active voiced predicate about the agent. The agent is not yet in that situation, so how can something be true of them by way of a predicate verbal construction in the *active voice* (*active* because it is their intentional action), because of that situation?[11]

By correspondence, I am looking for a predicative form in the antecedent, but in the passive voice. The structure of a Molinist counterfactual expressed through more specified situations has this structure:

- <agent + passive gerund, *w, l, t, e...* > ⇒ <agent + *active gerund*, w, l, t, e … >

---

[11] Despite this, we could understand a virtual statement that a person performs an action in the antecedent ,which is just the same action as in the consequent if the antecedent is conceived as true.

And while the *active gerund* in the consequent is the state of affairs expressed as an action where the agent would do *A,* there must be, I argue, a corresponding *passive gerund* that is 'applied' to the agent which *would* result in the action *A* specified in the consequent. The three situational counterfactuals become closer to completion as follows:

- <Adam, *tempted,* Garden, Eden, Eve, apple> ⇒ <Adam, *falling,* Garden, Eden, Eve, apple>
- <Peter, *questioned about relationship,* Jesus, *Place, Time*> ⇒ <Peter, *denying x3,* Jesus>
- <Judas, *tempted/bribed,* Jesus, Roman soldiers, thirty pieces of silver> ⇒ <Judas, *betraying,* Jesus, Roman soldiers, thirty pieces of silver>

To summarise my argument so far, in a *Molinist* conditional the relation of the circumstance to the agent's action appears to be, grammatically, an anti-causal or inchoative construction. This is true for counterfactual conditionals of freedom. But here the fact that God has middle knowledge makes the appearance of emptiness deceptive. The relation of *C* to *s* performing *A* is indeterminate, but still effective in some role of contributing to what the agent does, because, as I will soon show, God cannot help knowing what he knows, thereby informing his will, and this makes a difference to the nature of the circumstance.

In these three famous examples at least, there is a duality of action *expressed* by the human agent in the consequent, and an action *applied* to this agent in the antecedent. Talk about Molinist circumstances—especially via container-metaphor speak—hides the passively-voiced predication of the agent in the antecedent. Here there is prior action that is 'applied' to the agent. Just as a match is a passive instrument in the hands of the striker, so Adam, Peter, and Judas are by analogy passive agents in the hands of something or somebody else.

Further background conditions need to be specified. For example, it is generally understood that Judas had a love or strong desire for money, so thirty pieces of silver were enough to bribe him. Peter may have had a concern about his relationship to Jesus

amongst certain peers, and felt shame for some reason in relation to Christ. As for Adam, that is a difficult question, and I realise I am using a character and story that is mythological.[12]

These background conditions pertain to the agent's psychological makeup. They are part of the modality of counterfactuals specified as an agent-centred modality that includes capacities, potentialities and abilities *vis-à-vis* circumstantial modals. Morally, these background character conditions might reveal the agent's potential for particular vices or virtues. If the Molinist God knows each creaturely essence, it would follow that God knows these psychological traits of the agent.

9.3.1 Temptation as 'Peirastic Modality'

It would not be hard to argue that these three agents had weaknesses or vulnerabilities that could be exploited by the application of some form of test. Assuming that temptation admits of degrees, God knows for each degree of temptation T, what Judas would do. Call the application of a 'test' or temptation 'peirastic' modality.[13] God chooses the level of T and applies this as test through strongly actualizing the antecedent. The consequences need not always be negative; people might pass these tests. For all we know everybody is continually receiving these tests. There may be a corresponding examination to test for a person's good moral character or virtue. The three examples I have used just so happen to be both prominent in the Molinist literature and pertain to these three biblical characters succumbing to some kind of temptation—at least in Adam and Judas' case. Why do I call this peirastic test a *modality*? It is simply because it is

---

[12] I am unsure what generic Molinism teaches about God's middle knowledge in relation to Adam in Eden. What is more difficult from a theodical perspective is the inference from the story of Adam, even understood as a fiction, that God willed him to be in a situation knowing he would fall, thereby having infallible foreknowledge that he would. Is this permission or decree? The fall of Lucifer from heaven is potentially another difficulty. Was there a world or situation were Lucifer did not have the vice of pride? It seems not, and that transworld arrogance was true of him. It would be interesting to give an account of theologically fictional narratives such as these two cases. If they are literally true, there should be a Molinist response, but even if they are figurative in meaning, there ought to be a way of accounting for them because of their dramatic significance in the history of Christian doctrine, namely theological anthropology, original sin and angelology.

[13] From *peirasis*: 'a trying': 'an attempt', or *peirasmos*: 'a tempting, a temptation'. *Liddell & Scott Greek-English Lexicon*, Oxford, 1986.

another kind of possibility with a particular 'modal flavour'. And it is a function of the individual creaturely essences supposedly, the tendencies, capacities and in this case, their vulnerabilities, that they can be exploited.

The important factor here is the notion of counterfactual relevance to behaviour. There are various degrees of strength or application of the 'test' with pass/fail results. It is most likely that Judas would not have betrayed Christ for a value of currency less than thirty pieces of silver; it *depends* how much. I relate this in correspondence with Alvin Plantinga's (1974:40-41) 'trivial example' of two friends on a hunting expedition in Australia. In this example, you and Paul hunt for cassowaries; but Paul captures an aardvark by mistake, thinking it is a cassowary.[14] Plantinga asks us to imagine offering Paul $500 for the aardvark upon returning to the United States. Paul turns it down. "But what would [Paul] have done if I had offered him $700?" (40). The significance of this example in Plantinga' context, as he states, is that we are asking Paul under what "specific set of conditions Paul would have sold it?" (40). Plantinga then discusses the application of the conditional excluded-middle, so that if a state of affairs S had obtained, there are possible worlds where S obtains in which Paul accepts the offer, and possible worlds where S obtains and Paul does not accept the offer.

My point in discussing Plantinga's example and the case of the bribe to Judas is to unite them by way of the *value* of the price; in each case, the price that elicits Paul or Judas' response. Prices as values range continuously from lower to higher values, just as there are degrees of temptation. Hence they are analogues (to describe them with an *information* specific term). Yet we are meant to understand by the use or utterance of counterfactuals of freedom discussed in the literature, that there is a determinate value V *that* Paul would sell the aardvark for, and that Judas would betray for. But we do not know, if we offer Paul a price and he accepts, where exactly the value we offered lies in the range of other possible values where he would also accept, unless of course we ask more questions, as Plantinga suggests, to find the "specific set of conditions Paul would have sold it."

---

[14] I note that aardvarks are very rare in Australia.

Now, it might look as if the first price offered to Paul by his friend is counterfactually relevant (Timpe), to what the person does when offered the money, and it is, but it is not epistemically counterfactually relevant *for us* as observers of this state of affairs. We do not know, *from the aspect of our theorist's scheme,* (the Molinist or non-Molinist), what other values below or above *V* begin or cease to be counterfactually relevant. Hence, we do not know for sure, from our third person perspective, what it is that makes a particular circumstance determinate or counterfactully relevant. We neither know what the situation the person is in (nor do they), nor do we have access to the volitions of the agent.

Plantinga's story of the aardvark is an illustration of how God's middle knowledge is meant to work so we should not become stuck on an artefact of the anthropomorphic story. Nevertheless, our freedom or what we would do is not always reasons-responsive. Putting this another way, following Devlin's explanation, we do not cognitively discriminate situations we are in unless they are direct and immediate, such as the offering of a price in Plantinga's aardvark example. Yet we still choose and act freely despite not knowing that we are in a situation, or which determinate situation we are in. So, from the first person *agent's scheme,* the agent does not always know what determinants of situations, or situations themselves, are counterfactually relevant to motivate them to act freely.

The above two positions from different perspectives suggest a kind of scepticism about circumstances from the human aspect of either the agent schema or the theorist schema. We know *what* a circumstance is in theory, supposedly. But we do not know that something is a circumstance in a counterfactually relevant way, or whether we can discriminate it from other similar circumstances that are counterfactually irrelevant. I am not saying that any defender of Molinism has states that we should know, I am merely stating our human ignorance of counterfactual-relevance.

However, from God's *theorist scheme*—his middle knowledge—he knows which values of *V* of analogue information, or vague predicates, begin and cease to be counterfactually relevant. Indeed, God knows, for *each* value *V,* whether it is counterfactually relevant or irrelevant in motivating the agent to accept or offer a price or

bribe. If this is true, God$_M$ cannot help knowing what a person would do at *any* price or value.

I suggest therefore, that talk of counterfactuals and circumstances has misled us into thinking that they are discoverable. If we were to ask, *what is a counterfactual?* there are two very different senses or ways in which the term is used.

(A) A 'counterfactual' *is the circumstance* as a container, referred to in the antecedent of a counterfactual conditional (of creaturely freedom). That is, the circumstance is a counterfactual state of affairs in relation to the actual or alternate possible world. This use of 'counterfactual' implies they are discoverable by God because they are ontological.

(B) A 'counterfactual' is the counterfactual *condition*, contrary-to-fact abstract state of affairs referred, specified or disguised in the antecedent of a counterfactual conditional which, if true, is counterfactually relevant to producing the state of affairs specified by the consequent clause. This use of 'counterfactual' might be discoverable by God, but not because they are ontological, i.e., they don't exist or subsist. There are purely intentional states of God given what he knows. In other words, they are epistemic and related to the semantics of (counterfactual) conditionals.

This second interpretation is correct. It is not that God knows what you would do *in a circumstance,* but that God knows, for all values V from *1* to *N*, what you would do when value V is offered to you.

My examples and argument about the specific price-value where a person accepts an offer or bribe is analogous and abstractable to other motivations for creaturely action. To return to the discussion of temptation, it is not a discrete predicate, but is vague rather, admitting different degrees of temptation T relevant to a person's character. Since the human agent in the antecedent has a test applied to them (the verbal or gerundive construction is generally in the passive voice), then there is something or somebody who actively applies the test. The something is the circumstance, or the situational indices, and it is God$_M$ who applies the circumstance. In addition, the

9-13

application of the Law of the Conditional Excluded Middle (LCEM) to a Molinist counterfactual is misguided. The LCEM itself is not the fault and the application would truly divide counterfactual states of affairs into two categories. But the *applicanda*, the Molinist circumstances, are constructed out of components (indices) which admit degrees of value, quantity and quality. To insist that we apply LCEM to course-grained descriptions of circumstances is analogous to applying the Law of the Excluded Middle to vague predicates, resulting in Sorites problems. It is arbitrary where we draw the line. If we raised the bar or lowered it, we would end up with different 'containers' with possibly different truth-values.

9.4 **Summary of the Container Metaphor**

The most significant concealment in Molinist conditionals, expressed in prepositional phrases such as being *in* a situation, or *at* a place geographically or *in* time, disguises the passive predicate which is needed for the antecedent to be properly specified. For example, Bac properly reveals this predicate 'is tempted' in his example *"if Adam is tempted, he necessarily will either stand or fall"* and gives the formalism $G^K \Box (Ta \rightarrow Sa \lor \sim Sa)$ where "T represents the predicate *being tempted* and S or ~S respectively *standing* or *falling*" (2010: 330, original symbolization preserved). Bac here is speaking of the situation at God's natural knowledge, and I disagree that God knows propositions like $\Box (Ta \rightarrow Sa \lor \sim Sa)$ through natural knowledge, primarily because temptation itself admits of degrees. God would have to create a circumstance with enough quantitative and qualitative precision through the addition of the correct relevant indices with the appropriate amount of strength. This, I say, is *creating* a circumstance, even if it is in one's imagination. However, if this circumstance can be discovered and not created, we can translate Bac's proposition into a counterfactual of freedom: $G^K \Box (Ta \ \Box\!\rightarrow \sim Sa)$ so that God knows it at middle knowledge. Molinist circumstances are highly plastic, but they are spoken about as if they are containers already existing on the shelf of a shop, where God_M walks down the aisle of feasible worlds and grabs them for his trolley.

If a Molinist circumstance is better articulated as a passive predicate, specified using situational semantics for instance, then it is not what the metaphor of containers is meant to convey—emptiness or absence of causal or affective contribution to action. This is not to treat the predicative understanding and the situational semantic understanding as mutually exclusive. These two different ways of expression are set at different 'ontological levels'. The predicate, *is tempted,* is a transcendental-fact, while the situation-semantic expression is an event-ontology. God knows information about Judas, so he knows what facts would need to obtain in order for Judas to respond.

In more down to earth terms, each possible circumstance that corresponds to each piece of silver has its own transcendental fact, 'Judas is/is not tempted by degree *n*' and God knows at what *n* Judas succumbs to temptation. A better interpretation is to view these transcendental 'facts' as created by God's imagination by manipulating variables which can then be instantiated as events, which is to say that there are no facts that are purely discovered by God. God might have middle knowledge, but it is so exhaustive and powerful that it effectively acts as a truth-maker that grounds CCFs. He can choose any situation he wants to get somebody to do something, just as long as it is within the agent's spectrum of capacities, potentials and abilities. God *uses* his knowledge of creaturely agent-modality to elicit what he wants by creating situations that are as malleable as plasticine.

9.4.1 Conclusion of Circumstances

I have attempted to show that there is a better way to understand what a Molinist circumstance is. Circumstances are too unspecified to be used as an explanatory tool and are useless for God's use in providence (at least in the three examples often discussed, about Adam, Judas and Peter), unless circumstances are reduced to predicates of an *application* of test.[15] In relation to divine control and manipulation, what this points to is that there are strong *prima facie* grounds for viewing God as not so much choosing which circumstances to actualize, but applying direct causal control over the make-up of each

---

[15] This 'test' concept is only illustrative and we should figure that there are other cases that are instrumental for God_M to get somebody to do something.

particular circumstance. 'Choice', I say, is properly ambiguous between the epistemic and volitional. The generic Molinist picture shows a semantic of divine choice as a factor of intellect quantified over many pre-existing circumstances. My picture reveals a sense of choice that is both epistemic and volitional, where God chooses the circumstance by formulating its specific content in order to elicit a particular outcome. More drastic conclusions follow about Molinist circumstances: a strong and risky conclusion, and a weak and more defensible conclusion. I conclude the following:

Circumstances don't really 'exist' independently of God's mind. They have become hypostatized as things or entities, or containers. To say that God knows what any possible person would do in any possible circumstance is misleading. It is more accurate to say that God knows what a particular person would do when he applies some action E to them; he knows what action A will result from the quality and quantity of E that he applies to the agent. This defines middle knowledge in a very deflationary, but more accurate way. Tentatively, there is no such thing as *middle* knowledge after all—understood as pre-volitional truths that God has no control over. God does have control over the amount of pressure he applies to another person. What that means, therefore, is that what Molinists take to be God's 'middle knowledge' is a really a free expression of his will and intentions. Middle knowledge, if it exists at all, comes after his will or is some component or logical moment of his volition. My claim therefore, is that circumstances are created, not discovered, and since they are created, are not objects solely of pre-volitional middle knowledge.

The container metaphor only applies from the aspect of metaphysical modality of the agents in the situation. From God's aspect there is no container; it is a handle to manipulate (as control). The idea I have in mind here is that of the haptic metaphor of the hand that grabs the container so hard that the hand conforms to the counterfactually-relevant 'parts' of the circumstance, then crushes it to push out the action A from s and C. This is a kind of pushing argument from causal determinism.

I re-introduce *modus ponens* on the supposition that either God_M uses it, or the Molinist apologist uses it to explain the Molinist God. Here is the schema again:

1. $gK(s/C \square\rightarrow As)$

2. $gW(s/C)$

3. $\therefore As$ (or more precisely As/C)

There is a difference of purpose, obviously, between the instances of *C* in each premise that relates to the will/intellect distinction. In the premise containing the CCF, the circumstance is part of the justifying conditions for God's middle knowledge. The *C* in the epistemic premise is *mentioned,* while in the volitional premise it is *used* as a kind of a 'handle' that God grasps. What then of the circumstance in the conditional premise, is it a container or a handle? On this presentation, God controls by constraining circumstances in order to elicit the response in the agent. If there are different types of freedom that correspond to different applications of constraints, then it is difficult to see how the circumstance as a handle allows for libertarian freedom. The result is a form of compatibilism, but not so strong that it is compatibilism as determinism by will directly or alone. Here it is a form of compatibilism where God's knowledge is the sufficient condition which causally enables what a person does. To invoke the *scientia complexa*, the SC makes manipulation by a handle possible, but results in compatibilism that for all intents and purposes is near enough to compatibilism as causal determinism. This is not good news for Molinism.

To ask again, *does God create or discover the circumstances in his middle knowledge?* This could be answered by deciding if they are better viewed as containers or handles. Is there a dilemma for the Molinist over the possible existence of circumstances; are they containers or handles? Either they are pre-volitional and discovered, or post volitional and the recipe for their natures is created by the combining of the items of God's natural knowledge. The former view is to see circumstances as containers, the latter view I call the handle function. However, as I argue, once containers are properly understood, they disappear. There are no containers, but handles. As such there is no *dilemma* for the Molinist, but a problem if a circumstance grabs the agent so hard that God manipulates them to do what he wants by his *scientia complexa.*

9.5 **Conclusion**

There is support for the claims that,

[The Main Argument: Molinism is really Compatibilism]

(1) Circumstances aren't things, (containers) that God discovers, thereby controlling what we freely do.

(2) A circumstance is just what is counterfactually-relevant to get a person to act accordingly.

(3) ∴ A circumstance is more of a handle where God can manipulate to get the person to act.

(4) Understood as handles, God's abilities in providence are even more powerful. He is not subject to 'discovering' fixed-determinate circumstances.

(5) God can therefore control what we do, but it is difficult to see how we can have the freedom of alternative possibilities, or of sourcehood.

The following claims are more controversial but I see good cause to justify their assertions. There is a dilemma for the Molinist. Circumstances are either like containters or handles. If they are containers, they do not alone provide enough information about what a person would do. If they are handles, they are not discovered but created by the divine will. But circumstances as containers do provide *God* with enough information about what a person would do, because God sees through the container, and just knows under what specific conditions a person would do such and such. To continue from (5),

(6) God controls a person (who lacks alternative possibilities and sourcehood conditions)

(7) Though an agent is 'indeterministically free' in that God did not causally determine s to A , the resultant form of freedom is virtually a form of

compatibilism or 'soft-compatibilism' because God$_M$ sufficiently-causally enables s to A via C.

more controversially…

(8) If God has middle knowledge of these counterfactually relevant situations, he does not discover them but creates them by his will.

(9) But he does create them by his will, therefore, God's knowledge of counterfactually relevant situations is not 'middle knowledge'.

(10) ∴God$_M$ controls through his will but does not have *pre-volitional* middle knowledge.

(11) God (still) has counterfactual knowledge, but controls by the *scientia complexa.* [16]

---

[16] I have realised, rather late, that the views expressed here resemble 'Maverick Molinism'. About this, Thomas Flint writes,

> …the Molinist can, and probably should, concede that some counterfactuals are such that, though true, they wouldn't have been true had God acted in a certain way. But this is not to endorse Maverick Molinism. Maverick Molinism holds that the counterfactuals which are thus counterfactually related to what God does are not prevolitionally true, and hence are under God's control, (Flint 1988:70).

It looks like my position is consistent with Maverick Molinism, in which case the manipulation charge is related to the nature of this 'maverick' kind of Molinism. The truth is though, that Generic Molinism, properly analysed and understood, just is Maverick Molinism.

Here is an analogy. Consider a great artist who produces wonderfully complex and beautiful pieces of art, painting or sculpture. Do we consider that their art is just a combination of individual objects as parts so that the aesthetics and value of the painting already 'exist' pre-volitionally to the artist's intentions or creativity? And so, are we likely to avoid praising the artist because essentially they are not creative, for they just found the particular piece of art using their imagination by searching over all possible combinations of individuals? No.The raw material already exists pre-volitionally, (the clay, the paint, the colours, the canvas, the type of brush strokes), but the recombination of these is an artefact of the creator's intentions and skill. Likewise I say, circumstances are created by God. For more on Maverick Molinism see Kvanvig (2002), Flint (2003).

Chapter 10: **Evaluation and Conclusion**

10.1 **Introduction**

Within the purview of classical and contemporary Molinism, this research has considered the relationship between the three Molinist conceptions of,

The Triad:

(1) Divine Providence

(2) Divine Foreknowledge

(3) Human Libertarian Free Will

The Will-Intellect Distinction

The motivation was to examine these three conceptions to assess whether Molinism can consistently and plausibly offer positions and solutions concerning their relationships. I have shown that there is a complex interrelationship between the terms of the triad because of the Molinist God's use of will and intellect (the WID). Fundamentally, Molinism's foreknowledge solution invokes the divine will to answer both the source and reconciliation questions (Freddoso's terms). The mechanism by which Molinism works is God's will choosing which counterfactuals of freedom to actualize. This allows God to foreknow free acts where the pre-volitional middle knowledge is also providentially useful. My chapter on the will-intellect distinction showed that it is difficult to give a consistent and coherent account of Molinism as logical moments, thus I did away with 'Logical Momentism' and re-interpreted the powers of a Molinist God as the *scientia complexa*.

The Use of Middle Knowledge as Information

Taking note of Trakakis' claim that it is not middle knowledge *per se* that irks the anti-Molinist, but how God uses it, I elaborated the point that God controls creation through the information he obtains via his middle knowledge. The *scientia complexa* involves God having information about possible creatures, and using this information to control (or manipulate) them. The *scientia complexa* also distinguishes between God's power of decision and God's power to actualize.

(A) The power to choose and decide *which* CCFs to make actual I call 'Control Over'

(B) The power to actualize these chosen CCFs I call 'Control To'

When 'Control-To' is further elaborated, it is seen that it hides this form of control:

- God uses *C* to get (or let) *s* to do *A* in order to T.

This resembles a form of manipulation (in politics) for which Riker invented the term 'heresthetic'. On the basis that God_M allegedly can *control a free person's actions*, the better term 'herethelic' was coined, implying that there is a Chooser who chooses what a Willer wills to do.

Regarding 'Control-Over', *over* is double-pronged and implies that God has epistemic powers quantified over all possible and feasible CCFs, but ultimately has power to choose which will obtain. In this regard, 'Control-Over' is better understood as a form of 'proheretics': a theory of divine preference, that is, the state and content of the divine mind *before* he chooses. However, the informational content belongs to other agents who are unable to give their preference for the form of life that will be theirs.

Regarding the *use of middle knowledge* as a product of God's will, and not his intellect *per se*, consider a thought experiment inspired by Pierre Bayle who thought that Manicheism presented a better solution to the problem of evil than monotheism. Pretend there are two gods, or one god with two heads where there are no neural networks between these two minds. One of these minds is called Intellect, the other is Will.

10-2

Intellect knows all true counterfactuals of creaturely freedom, but cannot do anything about it. It keeps this knowledge to itself. On the other hand Will knows nothing, but can do lots of things. One thing Will can do is steal information, which it does from Intellect. Will hacks some information. Now, whether Will randomly chooses CCFs to release to the world, or carefully selects some to be released and actualized, Intellect does not cause what has been made known.

If Will randomly actualizes some, then it is generally responsible for making things 'obtain'. But if it selects and decides which CCFs to make real, then it is responsible in both the previous general sense and also for the specific CCFs it has actualized.[1] This analogy is too abstract to argue that Will is morally responsible without further data about the content of the CCFs. What is clearer though, is that Intellect is not responsible for what Will has *made known.* Now to bind these findings into the single mind of a monotheistic model of a divine being does nothing to change the attribution of responsibility to the divine will. This attribute of God, and hence God himself if he is in control of this attribute, is responsible for what he makes known. Therefore, it is not middle knowledge *per se* but God's use of it which damns Molinism as a theological model.

The *Scientia Complexa* is Manipulation

If Molinist providence can be consistently and faithfully re-interpreted, without reconfiguring it, into the *scientia complexa* (SC), and if the SC is a form of manipulation, then so is Molinist providence. I argued this on the basis of the Middle-Knowledge Use thesis. Though both Molinist and Anti-Molinist require a version of control for their positions to succeed, I claim that neither argue from different 'use' premises, it's just that when the Use-Premise is analysed, it is revealed that God manipulates in an objectionable

---

[1] In Chapter 5, "The Gordian Knot of Molinist Foreknowledge", I argued from the analogy of memory with middle knowledge, that there are two forms of responsibility held by the agent who stands in the logical moment of the divine will. He or she is responsible both for choosing *which* memories to make real again, (responsible in relation to those she does not choose to make real), and for making them real. By analogy God$_M$ is potentially responsible for *what* he chooses to actualize, and *that* he actualizes it.

way. Here I presented Molinism via an inverted Manipulation Argument Against Compatibilism, where the conclusion is that Molinism is a form of divine manipulation, and further, that a manipulated agent is not free.

Returning to the Control-To theme, it can be shown that any agent who gets another agent to perform an action in this manner:

- God uses C to get (or let) s to do A in order to T

... uses covert and non-constraining control. This violates the controlled person's autonomy, for if s had known what M had intended for s, it is likely that s would not have chosen to do A. Already then, we have justification to deem 'Control-To' as 'Manipulate-To'. Furthermore, the providential usefulness of counterfactuals of freedom pertains to the utility of using the content of CCFs as means to ends and other purposes. Therefore, if s is used to do A in order to T, this violates the Kantian imperative of autonomy, not to use people as only means to ends, but also as ends in themselves. This adds a second layer of objectionable manipulation to Molinist providence.

The objects quantified over, in the theme of God's 'Control-Over', provide information about what possible persons would do in situations. This gives God_M a tremendous amount of power over the individual. But really, the information that God has control over is *their* information, the individuals' information. Yet figuratively, it has been obtained through a form of stealth, comparable to surveillance photography. This satisfies the covert condition of manipulation. The information about us is used, and in this sense, our freedom or autonomy is 'robbed' (Trakakis). We do not have a say in what circumstances become actual, and so, the paradox of the French Molinist's quote about predestination, referred to by William Craig, loses significance if the worlds that God can choose to actualize us in are already *ours,* but we have no control over them. Therefore, this power of control, primarily an epistemic power (because it relates to middle knowledge), is also another kind of manipulation. So, 'Control-Over' equates to 'Manipulate Over', where God_M has the proheretic faculties to choose from over a number of our potential life experiences and circumstances. In other words, God_M has power over us, by using our information without our informed consent. Perhaps a divine

being should have this power, but it reduces the Molinist claim that we are still free in a circumstance to something most otiose.

The *scientia complexa* properly reinterprets the so-called strong/weak actualization distinction, or the direct/indirect distinction as misguided (Dekker). There is no meaningful distinction that acts as a buffer to allow for the control of contingent states of affairs, without the transfer of moral responsibility back to the manipulator. Properly understood, the strong/weak distinction evaporates when the will and intellect division is replaced by divine *intending*. The primary intention, when God actualizes a CCF, is the state of affairs of the consequent: what the agent does 'freely', (or worse, the primary intention is the purpose for which the creature's action is intended). The counterfactual content in the antecedent clause is just the means to these ends and not 'strong' or 'direct'. This portrays the sense of responsibility primarily as forensic, rather than causal (Gale).

10.1.1 The Ethics of Manipulation: Moral Standing

A further matter for discussion is the question of moral standing.[2] It might be that Molinism is more plausible than the way I have presented it. Judas might be blameworthy from *some* moral perspective, but it doesn't follow that the divine agent who put Judas in that situation has a legitimate moral standing from which to blame or bring charges against Judas' misdemeanour. If the manipulation arguments against the Molinist God are more plausible than not, then God$_M$ would not have the right to cast blame, even though the manipulated agent might be blameworthy.

---

[2] The philosopher of law, Antony Duff, has emphasized the importance of moral standing in relation to the right to blame. As an example for his views, below is the abstract of his article, "Blame, Moral Standing and the Legitimacy of the Criminal Trial" (*Ratio,* 2010, 23:123-140).

> I begin by discussing the ways in which a would-be blamer's own prior conduct towards the person he seeks to blame can undermine his standing to blame her (to call her to account for her wrongdoing). This provides the basis for an examination of a particular kind of 'bar to trial' in the criminal law – of ways in which a state or a polity's right to put a defendant on trial can be undermined by the prior misconduct of the state or its officials. The examination of this often neglected legal phenomenon illuminates some central features of the criminal law and the criminal process, and some of the preconditions for the legitimacy of the criminal law in a liberal republic.

Even if William Lane Craig's *FBI Sting Analogy* (Perszyk 2011:144-162), is a successful Pro-Molinist argument, it has possible undesirable side-effects for the Molinist position. Supposing that the defendants lose their entrapment charge against the FBI, then the analogy succeeds in showing that a person can be controlled and remain free. Yet it doesn't follow that even though the defendants are blameworthy because of the FBI's legal operation, *that the FBI has the moral standing to lay charges against them.* The charges have to come from some other entity.

Of course, in our real world of law, the state can bring charges against the drug-lords even if the FBI who 'controlled' the free actions of the drug-lords cannot bring charges. Yet by analogy with Molinism, it is the same agent, God$_M$, who both controls the set-up of the circumstances and is thought to be the moral judge of the agent's actions. The moral standing argument is not a foregone conclusion, but there is a case to be answered by the Molinist by comparison with human manipulation. If *HM* (human manipulator), manipulates the action of *s* where *s* breaks a law, does *HM* have the moral standing to blame *s*, seeing that had the manipulative action not transpired, *s* would not have broken the law? If not, is it plausible to consider that *s* is morally responsible for *A* where no other agent has the status to cast blame?[3]

10.2 **Manipulation: Herethelic or Compatibilist?**

In the last chapter, I used situation semantics as a way to get underneath the ontology of circumstances. By this means I distinguished two metaphors: containers and handles. I now relate herethelic manipulation to 'containers', where a person acts with libertarian freedom; while compatibilist manipulation pertains to 'handles' where a person is determined with compatibilist freedom. To distinguish this type of compatibilism from standard divine determinism, I call it 'soft-compatibilism' as the

---

[3] I thank Dr Allan McCay for this information about moral standing and the work of Antony Duff. I have discovered afterwards that Patrick Todd addresses this very issue in his new article, "Manipulation and Moral Standing: An Argument for Incompatibilism" (2012). Todd's paper is a powerful argument that brings together many threads that I have only touched upon in this research. He brings together the standard incompatibilist argument from manipulation in the free-will debate and unites it with the theological problem of determmism and God's moral responsibility and standing.

divine will does not *make* us perform an action, but lets or gets us to do it via the instrumental situation as a kind of go-between.

My definition of herethelic manipulation now is that God can choose what we do freely, but it amounts to manipulation. And God uses the information (*Inf*) about us, so:

- God uses *Inf* in order to create *C* to get (or let) *s* to do *A* in order to T.

If God knows information about us, he knows our total set of agent-modalities *vis-a-vis* circumstantial modalities. Hence, if he wanted to, he could get us to perform an action by placing us in situations where we are weak or vulnerable. If God_M controls free people this way, he exploits them. I made reference to *temptation* where temptation, like many things, admits of degrees. It is likely that if God has middle knowledge, or information about us, he knows what counterfactually relevant value of temptation *T* to use to get us to perform an action.

It is hoped my discussion of circumstances, whether they are (metaphorically) *containers* or *handles*, revealed that circumstance-speak in Molinism hides the divine epistemic and volitional mechanisms for God to foreknow and execute providence. When this is properly understood, 'containers' disguise the mechanism of 'handle' where God controls what a person does, by knowing counterfactually relevant properties of the person in the situation. It is not that there are circumstances that are counterfactuals, but that there are counterfactually relevant and precise conditions which we call 'circumstances'. This completes a circuit whereby God can 'cause' a person to do something by creating *causally enabling circumstances*. In the case of Judas, he can get Judas to betray Christ by placing him in the right environment, consistent with his vulnerability to temptation.

Environmental Control [4]

     A 'Causally Enabling Circumstance' is analogous to the mechanism required for manipulation. While Frankfurt cases have an internal and local mechanism such as a counterfactual intervening switch, Molinism places the manipulating mechanism 'outside' of the agent; here it is global, not local manipulation. This is one reason why I have not spent time discussing Frankfurt cases and alternative possibilities. Frankfurt-style manipulation is internal and pertains to preventing a person from doing otherwise in a circumstance. Moreover, Frankfurt cases are used dialectically as thought-experiments or intuition pumps to discredit the principle of alternative possibilities, not as a theory of the metaphysics of freedom. Molinist providence, by contrast, is not so much concerned with the ability to do otherwise within a circumstance, but with whether God has the counterfactual power to place us in alternative circumstances. The picture is much bigger. I do not wish to assume that Molinism requires alternative possibilities. However, the kind of libertarianism it maintains is 'strong' according to Freddoso. I interpret this as agent-causation. Nevertheless, much of the discourse on middle knowledge assumes the condition of alternative possibilities or some kind of regulative control within a circumstance. Yet the kind of environmental manipulation that Molinism implies does not impact on our ability to do otherwise within a circumstance, instead it destroys any idea of sourcehood origination. For remember, we do not choose our circumstances, we only choose what we do in them. Contrawise, God *has* alternative possibilities over what appears to be our 'guidance control'. As such, it is difficult to see how the sourcehood condition succeeds, if required for a theory of libertarianism. More is needed to justify this, but the external mechanism whereby God$_M$ manipulates is like a garden of forking paths where the stepping stone appears wherever we put out foot down. Are there 'forking paths' in this illustration? Really, the paths *unfold* before us, and we have no idea whether or not there really are alternative possibilities.

---

[4] As quoted in Chapter 1, Travis Campbell calls Molinism 'environmental determinism'. This is such a good motif for Molinism's external kind of manipulation mechanism; I cannot think of a better one.

Compatibilist Manipulation

On the other hand, I have suggested that Molinist manipulation might be a form of Compatibilism, which is to view the kind of control that God has over circumstances as a handle that grasps the agent to conform their action to the restraints of the circumstance. If this kind of manipulation were true, it would affirm the Langtry thesis that there are many ways to lose our freedom. Combining this with Peter van Inwagen's statement that there are many forms of constraint, just as there are of freedom, this version of manipulation looks as if God controls people via constraining their freedom to 'push out' their behaviour from the circumstance.

If Molinism is a form of manipulation, which model is true? I suggested there is a dilemma for the Molinist over the nature of circumstances: if they are containers, God does not know enough about what a free creature would do; if they are handles, God creates the circumstance and does not discover thereby that there is no purely pre-volitional middle knowledge.

I propose that there are no circumstances as containers, and so God creates the circumstance in order to get a person to perform an action. If this is true, CCFs aren't so much used along with *modus ponens* to help God foreknow the future; rather counterfactuals of agent and circumstantial modals are used to control the future. If there are counterfactual truths of possible persons, their usefulness is more for the divine will than the intellect. Here my position is close to free will situationism.[5] Some literature has presented empirical evidence that a person's behavior is sensitive to minor changes in the environment. If so, then fine tuning minor indices of circumstances could make large differences in creaturely behaviour.

---

[5] Here I refer to the Princeton Seminary 'Good Samaritan' Experiments, and the Dime in the phone booth experiments. My position on Molinism is like Situationism as a theory and I offer no opinion here over the truth of the conclusions inferred from the empirical data gathered in these types of experiments. To be more precise, Molinism is a combination of situationism *and dispositionalism* since God is meant to have supercomprehension of what we would do, (our agent modality) within certain parameters confined to situations, (circumstantial modality). See Manuel Vargas 'Situationism and Moral Responsibility', (forthcoming). Luke Russell (2009) writes that situationism is not all that bad for moral theory. I grant that situationism (plus dispositionalism) produces a sceptical conclusion about free will, nevertheless I think this proves the point that Molinism is not able to offer libertarians anything.

I conclude that Molinist manipulation is of the Soft-Compatibilist kind. God$_M$ still uses his knowledge of a person's agent modalities: their abilities, capacities, potentials and vulnerabilities; nevertheless, the agent is not free to do otherwise.

10.3 **Thesis Statement and Confirmation**

My thesis statement from Chapter 1 is:

Thesis: 'Molinism cannot satisfactorily solve the foreknowledge dilemma if it is also a model of providence that is inappropriately manipulative.'

The three relevant concepts, i.e., the triad, assumed in the thesis statement are: *libertarian free will, divine providence,* and *divine foreknowledge.* Providence has the central place over the foreknowledge solution and creaturely freedom. To state this as one proposition, we arrive at the claim,

- God$_M$ knows future contingent, libertarianly free acts through his providence.

Articulating this as a premise, we get:

Premise 1: Molinism presents God$_M$ knowing future contingents, libertarianly free acts via a special form of providence that includes will and intellect.

However, I have given good grounds that 'Molinist providence' in its combination of will and intellect expressed through the *scientia complexa* or Logical Momentism, is a form of objectionable manipulation. Hence, the thesis statement above can be confirmed by substituting 'manipulation' for 'providence' in Premise 1:

Premise 1: Molinism presents God$_M$ knowing future contingents, libertarianly free acts through *objectionable manipulation.*

And in conjunction with:

Premise 2: But no being, divine or human *can*—understood both metaphysically and morally—foreknow future contingents and libertarianly free acts through manipulation.

We arrive at the conclusion:

Conclusion: ∴ Molinism cannot satisfactorily solve the foreknowledge dilemma.

The sense of 'can' in Premise 2 divides into:

- Metaphysical—Molinism cannot *literally* manipulate by causal, direct or intending— control of libertarian actions. Molinism can only control 'free creatures' compatibilistically.
- Moral—Molinism cannot metaphorically manipulate libertarianly free agents while maintaining a *just* balance between moral responsibility and blame between manipulator and manipulee.[6]

So, expanding on the conclusion to include a summary of the premises, we get

- **Conclusion:** ∴ Molinism cannot satisfactorily solve the foreknowledge dilemma because it is a model of providence that is inappropriately manipulative.

This is the thesis statement, Q.E.D.

---

[6]Here, both senses of 'can', via the negation of *cannot,* portray respectively (1) the soft-compatibilism interpretation of Molinism which I express to be the underlying reality of Molinism, and (2) the herethelic interpretation which I express to be the way Molinism *appears* to the anti-Molinist.

10.4 **The Foreknowledge Problem**

Premise 1 can be further unpacked into the 'Foreknowledge Manipulation Argument':

[Foreknowledge by Manipulation]

(1) The Foreknowledge Solution is true if and only if Molinist Providence is true.

(2) (But) Molinist Providence is true if and only if Objectionable Manipulation is true. (My Argument)

(3) (Moreover) Molinist Providence just is Objectionable Manipulation (MKUSE-Thesis)

(4) Molinist Providence is necessary and sufficient for the truth of the Foreknowledge Solution.

(5) ∴ Objectionable Manipulation is necessary and sufficient for the truth of the Foreknowledge Solution.   (from (3) & (4))

(6). ∴ The set of foreknowledge problems: Incompatibilism, Dilemma, Conundrum, Paradox are all 'resolved' by the use of Objectionable Divine Manipulation

'Foreknowledge' in Molinism is specially trademarked as a unique conception that is hidden under the guise of the general lexical definition of 'foreknowledge' as a noun of the infinitive *to foreknow*. Hidden under the general concept is the conception or doctrine of 'Molinist Foreknowledge' which only obtains if Molinist Providence is the correct view. There are other conceptions of divine foreknowledge that have particular theological overtones, but Molinism is unique because it results from a combination of will and intellect: neither just intellect (Origen's understanding and Simple

Foreknowledge), nor just will (Thomism and Calvinism where God foreknows because he wills).

In Chapter 3, I referred to Freddoso's two questions—the Source Question (SQ) and Reconciliation Question (RQ). The SQ is an *epistemic-how* question, so it asks "how does God foreknow future contingents?" The RQ is asked because a metaphysical problem of the incompatibility of divine foreknowledge and creaturely free will (DF|LFW) is important enough for theists to resolve, since they generally value both foreknowledge and free will. I was careful to avoid exaggerating Freddoso's position, but I interpret him to be clearly stating that the source question has a logical priority over the reconciliation question.[7] My portrait of Molinism is consistent with Freddoso's thesis of the explanatory priority of SQ over RQ. Now, if Molinism can provide a Source Answer (SA), then most of the hard work has also been done to give a Reconciliation Answer (RA). Substituting SA and RA for the relevant terms in this Molinist portrait, we get something like 'the RA results from the SA' (RA *because* SA), where the source answer is offered by Molinism's theory of providence; for the way God knows future contingents is the way God executes providence, at least in Molinism. If the required substitution is successful, then there is direct parallelism between 'RA *because* SA' and 'Foreknowledge Solution *because* Molinist Providence', that is, the Foreknowledge Solution obtains because of the way Molinist providence works.

Compounding this further, because foreknowledge compatibilism (CF) is the result of the solution, then also (CF *because* Molinist Providence). Here 'because' is an explanatory inference, not a logical deduction, yet I do maintain that the Molinist foreknowledge solution follows by logical consequence from the theory of Molinism.

---

[7] This is what Freddoso states and my response,

> Freddoso adds that, contrary to our intuitions, "the problem posed by the reconciliation-question cannot be fully comprehended until we grasp clearly the criteria for an adequate answer to the source-question" (1988:2). He is *not* saying that SQ must be answered before RQ. This would be an exaggeration of his position, but he is claiming that the source question has a logical priority over the reconciliation question: we need to understand the *criteria* that an answer to the source-question satisfies, and not necessarily *answer* the source question first.

Molinism tries to resolve the Gordian knot of divine foreknowledge by taking sides with a position closer to Origen, which is the view that God knows a future contingent because it obtains. However, upon analysis, I have shown that Molina's position is closer to Aquinas' view, with whom he disagrees. In some fashion a future contingent obtains because God 'free knows' it, where free knowledge is a disguised way of stating that the divine will effectively makes two choices. It selects the particular CCF to be a candidate for actualization, then it is made actual. The evidence here is defeasible, but with respect to its method of stating how future contingents are known, the placement of Molinism is closer to a Thomist/Calvinist position where God causes his own foreknowledge.

To summarise the foreknowledge problems: Compatibilism about Foreknowlege (CF) with (INCD) Incompatibilism about Determinism, is unsuccessful in Molinism, because Molinism is really *compatibilism about determinism* (CD). This finding affirms Hasker's (1989:139,143) and Alston's (1985) claims that if there are reasons to be a compatibilist about foreknowledge, then these would be reasons why compatibilism about determinism is also true. (See §2.6 'Two Kinds of Incompatibilism'.) Molinism does not resolve the fundamental metaphysical problem of the incompatibility of foreknowledge (DF|FW), hence neither does it solve the *simpliciter* version of the dilemma, nor the theological version, nor the Gordian knot. Instead Molinist Foreknowledge is a complex of will and intellect that still does not allow for libertarian freewill. Moreover, its tight reciprocal relationship with predestination makes it a *foreknowledge difficiliter* solution, if it can be considered a solution at all.[8] It is still a knot that is difficult to untie.

The conjecture was made in the chapter on the AMAA, that as middle knowledge is related to regulative control and leeway conditions; then free knowledge is related to guidance control and sourcehood conditions. If Molinism is understood under either a herethelic or soft-compatibilist interpretation, then what is lost is the ability for the creature to be fully autonomous to guide their own lives, especially when we remember that there is likely to be plenty of middle-information about us that we have no control

---

[8] I thank Alexander Westenberg for the Latin. The Lewis & Short Lexicon give 'difficiliter' as an adverb from 'difficilis'—in particular, of character: *hard to manage… or inaccessible.*

over. If the Molinist libertarian requires sourcehood, then even if the arguments for middle knowledge of creaturely freedom succeed, sourcehood conditions fail.

10.5 The Personhood of God in the Molinist conception

I have hypothesized how a Molinist God might act or behave, for example, as a cold-rational calculator, as a *Deus economicus* with little regard for the creatures he has created in his image. If St John's famous exclamation 'God is love' is to have any contact point with humanity, there must be a shared and unequivocal understanding of what this love is. The proposition that the Christian message is a new kind of love—*agape*—forces a deeper look into any model of providence, in order to ensure that the model personifies this attribute. And St John's statement is not just the predication of an attribute of the divine person, but an identity function of an extreme kind, *God is love*. Whether God is love, or God possesses this property, it speaks of his necessary personhood. No theistic perspective can easily get around this 'problem' of love, and it is a problem, I claim, for Molinism.

William Hasker (1992), discussed a related issue in terms of divine-human dialogue and once again states the God of the Molinist, specifically his "way of dealing with human beings…comes perilously close to manipulation" (100). He elaborates on the nature of a manipulator,

> What after all is a manipulator, if not a person who knows
> exactly how to 'push the right buttons' so as to elicit from
> us the reactions he wants? The manipulator never engages
> in genuine dialogue, for he never listens in openness to hear
> and respond to what the dialogue partner will say. But this
> is Molinism's picture of God. (100)

In this paper, Hasker cites William Alston who writes of the "Divine-Human Dialogue and the Nature of God" (Alston 1985). It should be noted that Alston is not discussing Molinism, which Hasker notes in his footnote. Hasker cites Alston thus,

> Given that God knows in advance exactly how I will react
> at each point, can He be said to enter into genuine
> interpersonal communication with me? Doesn't that require

each party to be responding to the other as the dialogue develops, so that each party is actively involved at each stage, confronted at each stage with the task of deciding how to respond to what is proffered by the other at that point. (Alston 1985:150 cited in Hasker 1985:100)

Hasker qualifies this and says that it is not the fact that a person knows what the other speaker says "*before* it is actually given." Instead, what is foreknown "is the *basis for the communication*; one speaks not in a 'partnership' with the other, but rather controlling and manipulating the other's response by one's own carefully calculated moves. Not foreknowledge as such, but rather knowledge of the counterfactuals of freedom, is what corrupts genuine dialogue" (Hasker 1985:100, original emphasis).

Hasker acknowledges that Alston was discussing foreknowledge, not middle knowledge, and that Alston perceives divine timelessness as less problematic than a model of a God who has temporal knowledge which might imply *foreknowing*. Hasker shows deference to Alston and to the reader if they disagree on the point that the "real villain here is middle knowledge" (100, note 27).

Previous evidence that has accumulated so far, and which I have adduced, points to a real problem if God were to possess middle knowledge. My conclusion to this section is to point to two types of deficiency. One is a personality deficiency; the other is a relationship deficiency. If the Molinist God is both cold and calculating, then he is not able enter into proper divine-human relationships normally conceived in theistic belief, (using the work of Hasker 1985 and Alston 1985). A relationship could suffer between two people if both were normally properly functioning human beings, where one might lapse into the vice of treating the other in a less than favourable way. But the evidence put forth in this section portrays rather a kind of inherent personality disorder or sociopathy. God_M cannot fail to use humans as means to his ends. If it is difficult to see how the Molinist God can love his creation and each individual in it, this is probably because sociopaths, as manipulators, lack *empathy* with the people that they manipulate.

We can find an interesting twist over empathy, analogy and other people's situations, if we invoke some of the work by Allison Barnes and Paul Thagard. They make the case that empathy requires simulation, or putting yourself into another person's

10-16

situation. But that is not enough, according to the authors, who see analogical mapping between the empathizer and the other as the method for placing oneself in the other person's situation (Barnes and Thagard 1997). It is difficult to see how God_M, if he has supercomprehension of creaturely essenses, and 'knows them so well', could <u>not</u> have an empathic awareness of the person's affect and feelings. His middle knowledge must be a result of something other than putting himself in their situation. If he knows what we would do by putting himself into our situations, but has no empathic response, he is not like us.

I conclude that the way that God_M manipulates indicates that he is not benevolent, unless it can be shown that Molinist providence is consistent with loving, or showing respect and empathy with each person. What the sociopath lacks—empathy—the Molinist God lacks by correspondence: love and compassion.[9]

---

[9] The Molinist and anti-Molinist would disagree over this point of love and compassion, nevertheless I think the ball is in the court of the Molinist to show how a Molinist God can be loving, forgiving and compassionate; and whether and where a logical moment of omnibenevolence could be placed in the series. The emphasis in recent Molinist argument has been placed on the foreknowledge solution along with various 'applications' of its providence. There might be a non-rational reason why the anti-Molinist finds God_M unattractive. The Japanese roboticist, Masahiro Mori invented the idea of the 'uncanny valley' with regard to robots (and now extended generally to animation). The phenomenon is that our attraction to a robot, cartoon character or dummy rises as the likeness between the artificial kind and the human is increased. Yet there is a point just before almost total identity where we are revolted by it. It seems then, that we prefer either a model of human likeness that is either a caricature or absolute identity, but we cannot abide something that closely resembles true human features with flaws. This is the uncanny valley, where the graph drops into a recession of disapproval.

Mori's 'Uncanny Valley' theory could be applied to models of theism in relation to degrees of either Godlikeness that we imagine it to be, or degrees of anthropomorphism. I suggest that anti-Molinists might find God_M fairly close to a good model, but there is a feature that is found irksome which throws it into the uncanny valley. Catrin Misselhorn (2009) discusses the uncanny valley in relation to empathy with inanimate objects. She uses empirical findings in the study of vision, perception, and scans of eye-movements and fixation points. She writes that the science shows that "visual information leads to the generation of a hypothesis in the brain which in turn directs the eye-movements" (357). There is a "constant alteration between two hypotheses of the kind 'a is a human being' and 'a is not a human being'." This, she claims, would take place if there were incoherent eye movements, and it would also be likely to result in confusion of the perceiver. However, for Misselhorn, this does not "explain the feeling of eeriness towards the entities falling into the uncanny valley" where something once "soulful… now appears cold and dead."

This is a reaction some of us might feel towards zombies. "This gets us to the true core of the intuition that the uncanny valley has something to do with the terrors of death" (357). I speculate that some of my non-rational feelings about a Molinist God is that this God is cold and lifeless, which might translate into the perceiver's fear of the death of God, or the fear of a god who is like a zombie.

10.6 **Predestination: Is Molinism Nearly As Bad as Calvinism?**

This section pertains to **The Bayle Thesis:** 'God$_M$ is not good.'

I have intentionally avoided discussing the doctrine of predestination in Molinism, wishing to wait until the final chapter in order to bring some loose ends together and to assess Jerry Walls' question about Molinism's 'badness'. I speculated in chapter 1 that it is as bad, if not worse than Calvinism. To these topics I now turn.

Molinism, as indicated in the full title of *The Concordia*, is presented as a solution to the tensions between human free will and divine *grace, providence, predestination, and reprobation* as well as *foreknowledge*. For one theory to do all this, the solution resolving the tension between free will and each of these individual theological topics must be a unified one. This is why I emphasize the logical structure of Molinism, and posit that the logical relationship between foreknowledge and predestination in Molinism is this:

- as foreknowledge is to middle knowledge, predestination is to free knowledge.

Is this relationship of symmetry correct? For one thing, it is far too simplistic and distorts the theory of Molinism, for we know that the foreknowledge problem is only answered in conjunction with the divine will (see Chapters 3 and 4). And again, by correspondence, predestination is itself answered in conjunction with the theme of middle knowledge. This 'logical relation', I argue, is just the re-articulation of the Gordian knot of Molinism.

However, I have argued that Molinism is often portrayed as de-emphasizing the divine will with respect to the contemporary debates of the post-Pike era over foreknowledge incompatibilism. Should we then expect that in discussions of Molinism's teaching of predestination, the corresponding de-emphasis is on God's (middle) knowledge? This does not seem to be the case. I point to the very good work by Matthew Levering on predestination as just as one example. He writes,

> Molina thus gives the central place in the doctrine of predestination not to God's causality but to God's knowledge of how created agents freely act in particular causal orderings

and,

> Regarding predestination, this threefold division of the divine knowledge of creatures makes possible the simultaneous affirmation of God's absolute ordering of all things from eternity—God's transcendent causality—and God's ordering of all things not merely on the basis of his will, but on the basis of his knowing what free created agents will do.

Even in respect of predestination, the perception exists that the *key* factor in its explanation is God's knowledge, not the divine will. However, "in one sense, of course, God's knowledge has absolutely no role in determining who is predestined." The "scope of predestination" depends on his will.[10] Matthew Levering is not a Molinist and I use his recent publication for its insightful and precise explanation of various accounts of predestination. The predestination account of Molinism depends on God's middle knowledge, but neither middle knowledge nor free knowledge determines *who* is predestined.

In § 8.2 I discussed the caricature of Molinism I called *Deus Economicus,* where there are two exaggerated alternative positions (*exaggeration* is often the case with caricatures), where God either first selects the circumstances to see who will volunteer to act in the required way, or God selects the possible person to see what they will do. I

---

[10] Levering's accurate exegesis of Molinism shows that, "God's determination of the scope of predestination depends [at least] upon his will" (114).

> This is so because God's 'free' knowledge 'is *in no way* a cause of things. For that knowledge comes *after* the free determination of God's will, a determination by which the *whole* notion of a cause and principle of immediate operation is satisfied on God's part.

> (Levering here cites Molina, Part IV of *The Concordia*, Disputation. 52, Section 19, in Freddoso 1998:179.)

called the first method Volunteerism, as an example of pseudo-predestination in Molinism versus the Thomist position of Bañez, where God antecedently selects who is elected. In this contrast, Molinism's 'election' is selection via 'volunteering' and this interpretation, though bizarre, fits well with the notion that Molinism works predominantly by the operations of the divine intellect, (middle knowledge and free knowledge), or the *scientia complexa*. For *to wait* for a volunteer is epistemic. The individual puts their hand up and God waits to see who it is.

If this is so, does it make sense to compare Molinism with Calvinism in respect of predestination, and especially to measure Jerry Walls' judgment that Molinism is almost as bad as Calvinism?

10.6.1 Jerry Walls: *Is Molinism as Bad as Calvinism?*

A leitmotif lurking in the background of this research is the question inspired by Jerry L.Walls' article, "Is Molinism as Bad as Calvinism?" (1990).[11] This question is associated with Pierre Bayle's criticism of Molinism that God is blameworthy, and thus not good, if he sets up situations which allow a person to freely act, fully knowing the consequences. Walls' main criteria in comparing Molinism with Calvinism is whether the Molinist conception of God provides an account of God's goodness and justice— specifically in terms of "His desire to save all persons" (1990:87). It is on account of its particular doctrine of predestination, one that is inconsistent with divine goodness and justice, that Walls declares Calvinism bad. For if God can withhold grace from particular persons, he effectively decides that they are eternally damned, which makes "nonsense of both of these divine attributes" (87). Walls does not discuss double-predestination,

---

[11] There is a need to distinguish the rhetoric of the use of 'bad' in Walls' question in his article title, from the sense that any God who is *not good* or *not just*, *is bad*. By arguing that God in the Calvinist model is morally bad because he is not good, then any other model of providence, viz. Molinism, that encroaches on the goodness of God, also presents a morally bad God, especially if there is little discernible difference in the operations of providence via inequitable predestination. Jerry Walls' question is a paraphrase of the longer question, which I present as follows: *Does Molinism present a (model of) God who is not morally good approaching that of the God in Calvinism*? Of course, the second order evaluation is that any *model* that portrays a God who is not good, is a bad model.

however he considers that the withholding of grace is predestination to damnation for some, while others are predestined to eternal life.[12]

Walls' thesis expressing his own and others' qualms about Molinism is as follows,

> Molinism is just as bad as Calvinism because according to it, God puts people, or allows them to be put, in circumstances in which He knows they will choose evil and be damned. If this is so, the Calvinist may urge, the seeming moral superiority of Molinism is really an illusion. (90)

Of course, the Molinist defender would argue that the person ends up performing the action freely as countenanced by God's middle knowledge. My arguments about manipulation have hopefully shown that even if, for the sake of argument, there is such a thing as libertarian freedom at middle knowledge, the act of God instantiating a CCF *changes everything*. It is not just that God instantiates *that* particular token CCF, but his role and responsibility in choosing that CCF and not others for actualization, adds another sense of control to the Molinist equation, one that amplifies the indictment of manipulation.

Walls' conclusion is that Molinism has a slight advantage over Calvinism—it's "not as bad as Calvinism, [but] it is not as good as it could be" (94).[13] By agglomerating different senses of control or manipulation that are implicitly realized in Molinist theory,

---

[12] Jerry Walls rejects the justification made by some Calvinists that God's passing over, or predestining of some to hell, is a *mystery*. Walls interprets this mystery-apologetic as Calvinists struggling with moral qualms about their own doctrine. Walls writes,"Calvinists often revel in mystery to the point of making it a virtue. They see it as an expression of true piety to quell all moral doubts and objections in the face of God's impenetrable decrees" (87). This explanation, I believe, is uncannily accurate. The defense through mystery changes also to a positive self-attributed *ad hominem* where these particular Calvinists' faith is *more pious,* because they can believe a horrendous doctrine. But this is now self-defensive apologetic.

The appeal to mystery is also reminiscent of the *appeal to God's glory*. Alan Rhoda, in his analysis of 'Chess Master' analogies (2009), describes the meticulous and risk-free providence of Calvinism. Rhoda considers what reply we would get if we were to ask the theological determinist *why would God play a game of solitaire with a stacked deck*? The typical reply from the Calvinist, he writes, is the appeal to God's glory. Rhoda is unconvinced, "Didn't God already have all the glory…" (Rhoda 2009:174). I concur with this remark as well as Walls' critique of the mystery-defense from believer's piety, but I digress.

[13] Walls (in 1990), also proposes a modified Molinism where God provides equal graces to individuals so as to uphold a consistent sense of divine goodness and justice. He deems his modified version as "morally preferable to generic Molinism, which is slightly preferable to Molinism" (97).

my suggestion is that Molinism *is worse* than Calvinism. This is obviously evaluative and I need proof for this claim. Here is my warrant for the claim that Molinism is worse than Calvinism. The following presents more of a schema than an explicit argument, nevertheless it is inferential in structure to give warrant to the conclusion.

10.6.2 Molinism is Worse than Calvinism

Both (1) and (2) are explications of Walls' thesis:

(1.1) Calvinism teaches that God either predestines people for damnation, or effectively does the same thing by withholding grace.

(1.2) Any God who does this is not morally good.

(1) Calvinism is a bad model because it presents God_C who is not good.

(2.1) Molinism teaches that God puts people or allows them to be put in circumstances in which he knows they will choose evil and be damned (Walls' premise).

(2.2) Any God who does this is not morally good.

(2) ∴ Molinism is also a bad model, close to Calvinism, because it presents God_M who is not good.

My proposal is to add the following:

(3) Molinism presents a 'soft-compatibilist' form of control whereby God controls a person by getting them to do *A* by instrumentally using *C*.

(Explanation: The language of *getting a person to do-A*, *making a person do-A* is the use of a causative-verb analysis to explain divine action in Molinism and Calvinism respectively. Molinism can be also explained via a 'stit' analysis: α *stit:Q* or *seeing to it*

that Q where 'Q' involves another agent's action— the manipulee's, nested within α's control— the manipulator.)[14]

(4) This 'getting a person to do- *A'* is manipulation; here called 'Manipulation-To'.

    (4.1) 'Manipulation-To' is intending another agent to perform *A* by using *information* known about them. (Middle Knowledge-Use thesis)

    (4.2) 'Intending another person to perform *A'* and bringing about circumstances that actualize *A* implicates God into the moral domain of the manipulee.

(5) 'Manipulation-To' or *getting a person to do-A* violates the Kantian prescription not to use people only as means to ends. (Violation of autonomy)

(6) Therefore, 'Manipulation-To' is morally-objectionable manipulation.

(7) God$_M$ also manipulates by 'Manipulating-Over'

    (7.1) Epistemically, 'Manipulating-Over' is quantification over choices, or circumstances God$_M$ knows via middle knowledge, then choosing that CCF.

    (7.1.1) God logically chooses 'first' by the selection criteria of either:
        (S1): a unique possible person and selects *C* to elicit *A*. (Molinist Predestination by Election).
        (S2): a unique *C* and then selects a possible person to elicit *A*. (Molinist Predestination by Volunteerism).
        (S3): a unique *A* and then selects *any* possible person and circumstance that elicits this *A*. But there is no significant difference between (S2) and (S3) in relation to the importance of human agents in divine-human relationships, ∴(S2).

---

[14] The causative-verb analysis or the stit application (Belnap), are not premises or arguments, but schemas that I think portray a powerful explanation of providence if either Molinism or Calvinism is true.

(7.1.2) This is inter-circumstantial control, 'counterfactual control' or 'counter-circumstantial control' over another agent's action, even if the agent's action is libertarianly free within that circumstance.

(7.2) Epistemically and Volitionally, 'Manipulating-Over' is deciding which circumstance to place an agent in, thereby potentially *choosing* and *making* the moral quality of their action that God got them to do, through 'Manipulation-To'.

(8) ∴ (From P.7) There is a provisional charge that God$_M$ does not have the moral standing to praise or blame the manipulee, or theologically, to reward or punish the manipulee if he dispenses grace which effectively gets an agent to do- A.[15]

(9) The form of divine choosing (between possible person and C) in (7.1.1) is likely to be (S2):

(9.1) Because of disjunctive syllogism: (S1) is false on generic Molinism as it amounts to strong divine election. ∴(S2)

(10) ∴ God$_M$ does not 'care' who volunteers to perform the action A.

(11) This is also morally objectionable, not only are people used as means to ends, but *anyone* could have been used as means to an end.[16] Anyone would do.

(12) ∴ Molinism is worse than Calvinism…

… by the addition of extra charges against the Molinist God to Walls' position. Given the length of this research, I cannot be emphatic where we can draw the line after his premise (3) and admit that each of my subsequent steps to (12) requires more justification.[17]

---

[15] This claim requires more justification and research. I pose it provisionally as more acceptable given the evidence than not.

[16] I admit this claim is courageous. However, it does seem that we can make a case from the intuition, (at least that I have), that a manipulator who does not care who does his dirty work, is worse than one who selects a particular person.

To summarise: **The Bayle Thesis:** 'God$_M$ is not good' is confirmed.

Further, God$_M$ is worse than God$_C$ because a God who gets somebody to do something in a Molinist fashion thereby,

Manipulates via:

- Manipulation-To[18]

- Manipulation-Over

- Manipulation as violating a person's autonomy in the Kantian sense.

- Manipulates in order to avoid direct causal responsibility for the manipulee's actions, therefore also intending to avoid moral responsibility. The manipulee, allegedly, remains free, thinks that they performed the action freely and therefore is responsible. The manipulator 'lets' the manipulee take the blame.

---

[17] I add here that if the herethelic account is true, then Molinism is just like Calvinism, but God controls through causal-enabling via actualizing persons in specific situations. On the other hand, if this kind of causal-enabling is itself better understood as soft-compatibilism, then Molinism is worse than Calvinism for the above reasons. To the anti-Calvinist, it looks like God$_C$ *ex hypothesi*, could send all to heaven if he wanted to, but he doesn't, hence resulting in theodical problems. For God$_M$ to be worse than this, it would need to be the case at least that he could also send all to heaven if he wanted to, but doesn't. Now, we do not know whether or not there is a situation for each person *s* where they would perform *A*, and another similar situation where they would refrain from performing *A*. Molinist theory cannot inform us which is true. Nevertheless, if there never was a situation where Judas would not have betrayed Christ, God could have chosen not to actualize his creaturely essence at all, saving him from damnation. But it seems he needed someone to do it, so he asked for a volunteer, in some strange account of providence. Futhermore, he needed someone to betray Christ because the world is fallen. But is it fallen because of transworld depravity (Plantinga), or transworld manipulability, (Zimmerman)? Admittedly, my view that Molinism is worse than Calvinism requires more research and justification; here my conclusion that Molinism is *worse* than Calvinism is provisional. However, I argue with better grounds that Molinism is just as bad.

[18] 'Manipulation-To' can also be represented by the covert and non-constraining control conditions which are deemed to be necessary conditions for Manipulation arguments against compatibilism. By modification, to represent Molinism's use of *knowledge*, covert control is by means of information obtained as if by covert means: middle knowledge; while non-constraining control is consistent with the so-called strong/weak actualization distinction via the contingency of the counterfactual operator. See §7.3.

- Manipulates without Caring-Who.

- (Provisionally: Manipulates without having the moral standing to judge)

By analogy with human bullying as coercion, and manipulation as heresthetic, both of these kinds of controllers are towards the far end—where God takes little risk. On this basis, Molinism is not equidistant between Calvinism and open theism. Molinism is much closer to Calvinism. If Molinism is closer to Calvinism than we had thought, there is little chance that Molinism's version of libertarianism is worth considering as a solution to incompatibilism and the set of foreknowledge problems.

10.7 **THE CONCLUSION**

Divine providence understood as the Molinist account is inherently a form of manipulation which we would find objectionable on numerous grounds, (covert, creatures are uses as means to ends, undermines autonomy, et cetera). A schema to present this kind of manipulation is the causative construction:

God uses *Inf* to create *C* to get *s* to do *A* in order to *T*.

Even though my use of these causatives is instructional, not argumentative, the use of the causal *get*-construction is remarkably similar to the herethelic account of control, but looks more like an account of manipulation because of the direct and indirect distinction between *C* and *s*. If this were true, there might be some contrived sense of libertarian freedom in Molinism.

However, I conclude that because of the true nature of 'circumstances', Compatibilist-Manipulation is true of Molinism. Therefore, if there is free will at all in Molinism, it is of the compatibilist version, not libertarian.

On an account of divine intentions, there can be no difference between decreeing and permitting under Molinism. The theory is too granular to discriminate any differences between them. Either everything is intended or nothing is intended, only permitted. Therefore, there is no useful distinction between 'letting' and 'getting'.

Intending is a very strong form of willing, and whether or not an agent is causally responsible for *making* another person do *A*, to manipulate them to get them to do *A* implies the manipulator is forensically responsible for this kind of control.
I reconstruct an earlier manipulation schema and apply it the Molinist God:

[God$_M$ is Morally Responsible for Manipulating]

(1) The Manipulator *M* intends *s* to do *A* by arranging *C*.

(2) *M* is counterfactually-causally responsible in getting *s* to do *A* via *C*.

(3) *s* intends to do *A* given their limited cognitive awareness of the situation *C*.

(4) ∴ *s* performs *A unfreely*

(5) ∴ *s* is *not* morally responsible for doing *A*.

(6) ∴ *M cannot* intend *s* to do *A* in such a way through *C* that *s* is morally responsible for *A*.

(7): ∴ *M* is morally responsible for manipulating.

The anti-Molinist arguments I have discussed, and my own versions of them, stand or fall on the shared foundational assumption that the divine being is a moral agent and so are human beings. This connection permits us to judge models of theism and providence. If this assumption is false, then my criticisms do not succeed, because God is not like us in respect of morals. But if this were true, there would be very few contact points, if any, for knowing what God is like.

There is an *appearance* and *reality* gap in Molinism. To the Molinist it looks like a version of legitimate herethelic control: God controls what we do freely. To the anti-Molinist, this herethelic control turns into objectionable manipulation where the person's vulnerabilities are exploited for another agent's use. There is some diffidence about whether free will is lost, changed or rendered vacuous in the collective anti-Molinist

analogical arguments. This is because they have understood circumstances like the Molinist, as *containers* that give leeway to the agent. When the use of circumstances in Molinist discourse is properly analysed, the ant-Molinist findings are better understood as a judgement that Molinism is a version of theological determinism by objectionable manipulation.

τετελεσται.

REFERENCES

Alston, William P. 1985a. "Divine Foreknowledge and Alternative Conceptions of Human Freedom." *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion*, **18**: 19-32.

———. 1985b. "Divine-Human Dialogue and the Nature of God." *Faith and Philosophy*, **2**: 5-20.

Anderson, James. 2007. *Paradox in Christian Theology*. Milton Keynes: Paternoster Theological Monographs.

Bac, J.Martin. 2010. *Perfect Will Theology: Divine Agency in Reformed Scholasticism as against Suarez, Episcopius, Descartes, and Spinoza*. Leiden: Koninklijke Brill.

Baker, Deane-Peter. 2005. "Divine Foreknowledge - So What?" *Heythrop Journal*, **46**: 60-71.

Barnes, A., and P. R. Thagard. 1997. "Empathy and Analogy." *Dialogue,* **36**: 705.

Basinger, David. 1987. "Biblical Paradox: Does Revelation Challenge Logic?" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, **30**: 205-13.

———. 1993. "Simple Foreknowledge and Providential Control." *Faith and Philosophy*, **10**: 421-27.

Bayle, Pierre. 1991. *Historical Critical Dictionary: Selections.* Trans. Richard H. Popkin. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company.

Beilby, James K., and Paul R. Eddy. 2001. *Divine Foreknowledge: Four Views.* Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Boethius. 1969. *The Consolation of Philosophy.* Trans. V.E. Watts. Middlesex: Penguin Classics.

Brower, Jeffrey E. 2009. "Simplicity and Aseity." In Flint and Rea, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophical Theology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Buss, S. "Personal Autonomy." In Edward N. Zalta, ed.,*The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2013 Edition), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2013/entries/personal-autonomy/>.

Bybee, J.L., and S. Fleischman. 1995. *Modality in Grammar and Discourse*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Campbell, Joseph Keim. 2011. *Free Will*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Campbell, Travis James. 2006. "Middle Knowledge: A Reformed Critique." *Westminster Theological Journal*, **68**: 1-22.

Cheminant, W. L., and J. M. Parrish. *Manipulating Democracy: Democratic Theory, Political Psychology, and Mass Media*. New York: Taylor & Francis, 2010.

Christman, J. "Autonomy in Moral and Political Philosophy." In Edward N. Zalta, ed.,*The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2011 Edition), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/autonomy-moral/>.

Corrigan, Richard H. 2008. "Could God Know What I Would Freely Do? Molinism and the Grounding Objection." *Philosophical Frontiers*, **3**: 43-57.

Craig, William Lane. 1988. *The Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents from Aristotle to Suarez*. Leiden: E.K. Brill.

———. 2001. *Time and Eternity: Exploring God's Relationship to Time*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

———. 2011. "Yet Another Failed Anti-Molinist Argument." In K. Perszyk, ed., *Molinism: The Contemporary Debate*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Dancygier, B. 1998. *Conditionals and Prediction: Time, Knowledge and Causation in Conditional Constructions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dekker, Eef. 2000. *Middle Knowledge*. Leuven: Peeters.

Dennett, Daniel. 1984a. *Elbow Room - the Varieties of Free Will Worth Wanting*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

———. 1984b. "I Could Not Have Done Otherwise - So What?" *The Journal of Philosophy*, **81**: 553-65.

Duff, R. A. 2010. "Blame, Moral Standing and the Legitimacy of the Criminal Trial." *Ratio*, **23**: 123-40.

Fintel, K. V., and I. Heim. "Intentional Semantics: MIT Lecture Notes." (Spring 2011) Massachusetts Institute of Technology. May 2013.

Fischer, D.H. 1970. *Historians' Fallacies - Toward a Logic of Historical Thought*. New York: Harper Perennial.

Fischer, John Martin. 1989. *God, Foreknowledge, and Freedom*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

———. 2008. "Molinism." In Kvanvig, ed., *Oxford Studies in Philosophy of Religion Vol1*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 2009. "More on Molinism." In Timpe and Stump, eds. *Metaphysics and God: Essays in Honor of Eleonore Stump*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.

Flint, Thomas P. 1990. "Hasker's God, Time, and Knowledge." *Philosophical Studies*, **60**: 103-15.

———. 1998. *Divine Providence: The Molinist Account*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

———. 2003. "The Multiple Muddles of Maverick Molinism." *Faith and Philosophy*, **2003**: 91-100.

Forrest, Peter. 2007. *Developmental Theism: From Pure Will to Unbounded Love*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Frame, J.M. 2001. *No Other God: A Response to Open Theism*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Company.

Frawley, W.J., E. Eschenroeder, S. Mills, and T. Nguyen. 2006. *The Expression of Modality*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

Freddoso, Alfred J. 1988. *On Divine Foreknowledge (Part IV of The Concordia). Translation, Introduction and Notes*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

———. 1998. "Molinism." In E. Craig ed., *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. London: Routledge. http://www.rep.routledge.com.ipacez.nd.edu.au/article/C025.

Gabbay, D.M., and H. Wansing. 1999. *What Is Negation?* New York: Springer.

Gale, Richard M. 1990. "Freedom and the Free Will Defense." *Social Theory and Practice*, **16**: 397-423.

———. 1991. *On the Nature and Existence of God*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Garrigou-Lagrange, R. 1998. *Predestination*. Rockford IL: Tan Books and Publishers.

Gleeson, Andrew. 2012. *A Frightening Love: Recasting the Problem of Evil*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Godfrey-Smith, P. 2009. "Causal Pluralism." In H. Beebee, H. P. Menzies and C. Hitchcock eds., The *Oxford Handbook of Causation*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Greenspan, P. S. 2003. "Responsible Psychopaths." *Philosophical Psychology,* **16**: 417

Grim, Patrick. 2004. "What Is a Contradiction?" In Priest, Beall and Armour-Garb, eds., *The Law of Non-Contradiction*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hasker, William. 1989. *God, Time, and Knowledge*. (1998 Cornell Paperback Edition edition). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

———.1990. "Response to Thomas Flint." *Philosophical Studies*, **60**: 117-26.

———.1992. "Providence and Evil: Three Theories." *Religious Studies*, **28**: 91 - 105.

———.2001. "The Foreknowledge Conundrum." *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion*, **50**: 97-114.

———.2002. "The Antinomies of Divine Providence." *Philosophia Christi*, **4**: 361-75.

———.2008. "Providence, Evil and the Openness of God." *Faith and Philosophy*, **25**: 350- 356.

Hasker, William, David Basinger, and Eef Dekker. 2000. *Middle Knowledge: Theory and Applications (Contributions to Philosophical Theology, Vol. 4).* Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

Hasker, William, Thomas Jay Oord, and Dean Zimmerman. 2011. *God in an Open Universe: Science, Metaphysics, and Open Theism.* Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications.

Hofstadter, D., and E. Sander. 2012. *Surfaces and Essences*. New York: Basic Books.

Hunt, David P. 1993. "Divine Foreknowledge and Simple Foreknowledge." *Faith and Philosophy*, **10**: 394-414.

Hustwit, Jeremy R. 2007. "Can Models of God Compete?" *Philosophia*, **35**: 433-39.

Ingham, Mary Beth. 2001. "Letting Scotus Speak for Himself." *Medieval Philosophy and Theology*, **10**: 173-216.

Johnson, David Kyle. 2009. "God, Fatalism, and Temporal Ontology." *Religious Studies*, **45**: 435-54.

Kane, Robert. 1985. *Free Will and Values: Adaptive Mechanisms and Strategies of Prey and Predators*. New York: State University of New York Press.

———. 2011. *Oxford Handbook on Free Will*. New York: Oxford University Press.

———. 2005. *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*. New York: Oxford University Press.

———. 2011. *The Oxford Handbook of Free Will.* 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kaphagawani, D.N. 1999. *Leibniz on Freedom and Determinism in Relation to Aquinas and Molina*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Keathley, K. 2010. *Salvation and Sovereignty: A Molinist Approach*. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group.

Kenny, Anthony. 1979. *The God of the Philosophers*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Kratzer, A. 2012 *Modals and Conditionals*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kretzmann, Norman. 1983. "Goodness, Knowledge, and Indeterminacy in the Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas." *Journal of Philosophy*, **80**: 631-49.

Krupp, Anthony. 2009. *Reason's Children: Childhood in Early Modern Philosophy*. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press.

Kvanvig, J. L. 2011. *Destiny and Deliberation: Essays in Philosophical Theology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

———. 2002. "On Behalf of Maverick Molinism." *Faith and Philosophy*, **19**: 348-57.

Langtry, Bruce. 1996. "God and the Best." *Faith and Philosophy*, **13**: 311-28.

———. 2008. *God, the Best, and Evil*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lennon, Thomas M. 1999. *Reading Bayle*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Levering, M.. 2011. *Predestination: Biblical and Theological Paths*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Levy, Neil, and Michael McKenna. 2009. "Recent Work on Free Will and Moral Responsibility." *Philosophy Compass*, **4**: 96-133.

Lewis, C.S. 2001. *Mere Christianity*. London: HarperCollins.

Linville, Mark D. 1993. "Divine Foreknowledge and the Libertarian Conception of Human Freedom." *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion*, **33**: 165-86.

MacGregor, K.R. 2007. *A Molinist-Anabaptist Systematic Theology*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Mahboob, A., and N.K. Knight. 2010. *Appliable Linguistics*. New York: Bloomsbury.

Mann, William E. 2009. "The Metaphysics of Divine Love". In Timpe and Stump, eds., *Metaphysics and God: Essays in Honor of Eleanore Stump*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.

Mares, Edwin, and Ken Perszyk. 2011. "Molinist Conditionals." In K Perszyk, ed., *Molinism: The Contemporary Debate*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Martinich, A.P. 1978. "Identity and Trinity." *The Journal of Religion*, **58**: 169-81.

McKenna, Michael. 2012. "Moral Responsibility, Manipulation Arguments, and History: Assessing the Resilience of Nonhistorical Compatibilism." *Journal of Ethics*, **16**: 145-74.

McLean, Iain. 2002. "William H. Riker and the Invention of Heresthetic(s)," *British Journal of Political Science*, **32**: 535-58.

Misselhorn, Catrin. 2009. "Empathy with Inanimate Objects and the Uncanny Valley." *Minds and Machines*, **19**: 345-59.

Morriston, Wes. 2003. "Does Plantinga's God Have Freedom Canceling Control over His Creatures?" *Philo*, **6**: 67-77.

Murray, Michael, and Michael C.Rea. 2008. *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion (Cambridge Introductions to Philosophy)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Muller, R.A. 1985. *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms: Drawn Principally from Protestant Scholastic Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group.

———. 2003. *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Divine Essence and Attributes*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Oord, T. J. 2009. *Creation Made Free: Open Theology Engaging Science*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications.

Packer, J.I. 1961. *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Pereboom, D. 2001. *Living without Free Will*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Perszyk, Ken. 2000. "Molinism and Compatibilism". *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion,* **48**: 11-33.

Perszyk, Ken. 2011. *Molinism: The Contemporary Debate*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Peters, Pam. 2004. "The Cambridge Guide to English Usage." Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Peterson, Michael L. 1997. "The Problem of Evil." In Quinn and Taliaferro, eds., *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Pike, Nelson. 1965. "Divine Omniscience and Voluntary Action." *Philosophical Review*, **74**: 27-46.

———. 1984. "Fischer on Freedom and Foreknowledge." *The Philosophical Review*, **93**: 599-614.

Piper, J., J. Taylor, and P.K. Helseth. 2003. *Beyond the Bounds: Open Theism and the Undermining of Biblical Christianity*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Plantinga, Alvin. 1974. *God, Freedom, and Evil*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

———. 1980. *Does God Have a Nature?* Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press.

———. 1986. "On Ockham's Way Out." *Faith and Philosophy*, **3**: 235-69.

Priest, Graham. 2002. "Rational Dilemmas." *Analysis*, **62**: 11-16.

Prior, Arthur. 1962. "The Formalities of Omniscience." *Philosophy*, **32**: 114-29.

Rhoda, A. R. 2009. "Beyond the Chess Master Analogy: Game Theory and Divine Providence." In T J Oord, ed,. *Creation Made Free: Open Theology Engaging Science*. Eugene: OR: Pickwick Publications.

Riker, W.H. 1986. *The Art of Political Manipulation*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Rowe, William. 2001. *Philosophy of Religion: An Introduction*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.

Rudinow, Joel. 1978. "Manipulation." *Ethics*, **88**: 338-47.

Sabl, A. 2011."Exploiting the Clueless: Heresthetic, Overload, and Rational Ignorance." In W. L. Cheminant and J. M. Parrish, eds., *Manipulating Democracy:*

Democratic Theory, Political Psychology, and Mass Media. New York: Taylor & Francis.

Santorio, C. 2009. "Causation and Ethics." In H. Beebee, H.P. Menzies and C. Hitchcock eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Causation.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Sheck, T.P. 2010. *Origen: Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, Books 6-10,* Washington: Catholic University of America Press.

Sobel, Jordan Howard. 2004. *Logic and Theism: Arguments for and against Beliefs in God*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sripada, Chandra Sekhar. 2012. "What Makes a Manipulated Agent Unfree?" *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, **85**: 563-93.

Steinmetz, D.C. 1968. *Misericordia Dei: The Theology of Johannes Von Staupitz in Its Late Medieval Setting*. Leiden: E. J. Brill.

Strawson, Galen. 1998, 2004. "Free Will". In E.Craig, ed., *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. London and New York: Routledge.

Stump, Eleonore. 2003. *Aquinas*. London and New York: Routledge.

———. 1999. "Simplicity." In L.Quinn and Taliaferro, eds., *Companion to Philosophy of Religion*. Cambridge: Wiley-Blackwell

Sylwanowicz, M. 1996. *Contingent Causality and the Foundations of Duns Scotus' Metaphysics*. Leiden: Brill Academic.

Taliaferro, Charles. 1998. *Contemporary Philosophy of Religion*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Tiessen, Terrance. 2000. *Providence & Prayer: How Does God Work in the World?* Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Timpe, Kevin. 2005. "Prayers for the Past." *Religious Studies*, **41**: 305 - 22.

———. 2012. *Free Will: Sourcehood and Its Alternatives*. London: Continuum International.

Trakakis, Nick. 2006. "Does Hard Determinism Render the Problem of Evil Even Harder?" *Ars Disputandi*, **6**.

van Inwagen, Peter. 1998. "The Mystery of Metaphysical Freedom." In van Inwagen and Zimmerman, eds., *Metaphysics: The Big Questions*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Vihvelin, Kadri. 2011. "Arguments for Incompatibilism." In Edward N Zalta, ed., *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2011 Edition*) URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2005/entries/incompatibilism-arguments/>.

Walls, Jerry L. 1990. "Is Molinism as Bad as Calvinism?" *Faith and Philosophy*, **7**: 85-98.

Weisberger, A. M. 2007. "The Argument from Evil." In M Martin, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Atheism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wierenga, Edward. 2012. "Omniscience." in Edward N. Zalta, ed., *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2012 Edition*) URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2012/entries/omniscience/>.

Wynn, Mark. 1999. *God and Goodness: A Natural Theological Perspective*. London and New York: Routledge.

Zagzebski, Linda. 1985. "Divine Foreknowledge and Human Free Will." *Religious Studies*, **21**: 279 - 98.

———. 1999. "Foreknowledge and Human Knowledge". In Quinn and Taliaferro, eds., *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*. Oxford: Blackwell.

———. 2002. "Recent Work on Divine Foreknowledge and Free Will". In W Kane, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Free Will*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zimmerman, Dean. 2003. "Richard Gale and the Free Will Defense." *Philo*, **6**: 78-113.

———. 2009. "Yet Another Anti-Molinist Argument." In S Newlands, and L Jorgensen, eds., *Metaphysics and the Good: Themes from the Philosophy of Robert Merrihew Adams*. New York: Oxford University Press.

———. 2011a. "A *Precis* of 'Yet Another Failed Anti-Molinist Argument'." In K. Perszyk, ed., *Molinism: The Contemporary Debate.* New York: Oxford Univesity Press.

———. 2011b. "An Anti-Molinist Replies." In K. Perszyk, ed., *Molinism: The Contemporary Debate*. New York: Oxford University Press.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Abbreviations

Conditionals:

CCF (or CF) *Counterfactual conditional of creaturely freedom.*   Plural, i.e., *counterfactuals* of this type: **CCFs.** Some authors quoted use 'CF'.

Foreknowledge:

DF   Divine Foreknowledge

FP   The Foreknowledge Problem. Noun-phrase referring to unspecified foreknowledge problems, but usually to DF|FW or DFΔFW

FS   Foreknowledge Solution. (*any* successful foreknowledge solution)

DF|FW   The logical or metaphysical *incompatibility* of divine foreknowledge (DF) and indeterministic libertarian free-will, (FW).   '|' is here defined as an incompatibility operator similar to the Sheffer-stroke symbolizing NAND as 'Not both DF&FW'.

DFΔFW   The epistemic *dilemma* of divine foreknowledge and indeterministic libertarian free will. **DFΔFW** assumes **DF|FW.**

DF!FW   The paradox of divine foreknowledge and human free will.

DF $\rightarrow_?$ ~FW The Divine Foreknowledge Conundrum, that DF is a sufficient condition for creaturely unfreedom.

<u>Free Will</u>

FW   Human Free Will *simpliciter*/broadly defined.

LFW   Libertarian Free Will (Human)

CFW   Compatibilist Free Will

CF   Compatibilism about Divine Foreknowledge (DF&FW)

CD   Compatibilism about Determinism (FW&DET)

INCF   Incompatibilism about Foreknowledge = Human freedom is <u>not</u>
compatible with divine foreknowledge. (DF|FW)

INCD   Incompatibilism about Determinism = Human freedom is <u>not</u> compatible
with determinism. (DET|FW)

<u>Other</u>

WID   The divine will/intellect distinction.

MKUseSucc Middle Knowledge Use Success claim-
God$_M$'s *use* of middle knowledge contributes to a successful account
of providence and foreknowledge. (Pro-Molinism)

MKUseCrit Middle Knowledge Use Criticism claim-
God$_M$'s *use* of middle knowledge provides a case to argue that
Molinism equates to objectionable manipulation. (Anti-Molinism)

Appendix B: Summary of Arguments and Schemas

Generic Manipulation Schema § 2.5.2

(1) The Manipulator M intends s to do A by arranging C.

(2) M is counterfactually-causally responsible in getting s to do A via C.

(3) s intends to do A given their limited cognitive awareness of the situation C.

(4) ∴ s performs *A freely*

(5) ∴ s is morally responsible for doing A.

(6) ∴ M intends s to do A in such a way through C that s is morally responsible for A.

(7) ∴ M intends, and 'virtually' performs action A, but gets s to take the blame for $M's$ action. That is, the alleged dual-agent intention to A by both s and M ((3) and (6)) reduces to the state of affairs that s only *putatively* intended to A because if M had not first created the situation C, s would not have $A'd$.

Justice and Moral Problems with above schema:

(A) s now knows that they were controlled to do A despite agreeing that they performed A freely.

(B) s now knows that M intended s to perform A, but s also believes that *M's having an intention* for *s to do A* is not sufficient for moral blameworthiness.

(C) s seeks to find strong agential causally sufficient conditions where M *directly* causes s to A, so that s can argue that their intention can now be seen to be only putative, therefore vacuous, but there are none to be found; there are only indirect non-sufficient, counterfactual conditions, the circumstance. Despite being counterfactually relevant to

*s'*s performing of the action, the performing of the action in *C* is an inchoative action: nothing caused *s* to do it; the action was voluntary. Moreover, *M*'s defence is that *M* did not 'make' *s* do *A*. That is, the combination of the circumstantial-modality of that particular *C,* and the agent-modality of *s*, obtains in the state of affairs *A*.

(D) ∴ An idealized cognizant third-person perspective of the whole situation observes that *M* intends *A, M* uses *C* in order to get *s* to do *A,* thereby being counterfactually-causally responsible, but not morally responsible for *A*. Because *A* was performed voluntarily, *s* is responsible.

(E) *But* action *A* has 'telicity' for purpose *T.* Therefore, *C* was used to get *s to A in order for T.* So, *s* was used for *T.* However, the imbalances of power and covert control reveal a violation of justice.

(F) Claim: to interfere with a person's autonomy without consent violates justice since violating a person's autonomy or freedom may reduce their blameworthiness. Violating a person's autonomy can change the justice relations of the situation between *M* and *s*.

(G) If *M* acts unjustly in violating *s'*s autonomy, then *M is* (partly) responsible for *A* since actions that are not just are not right, *ergo* unjust actions are wrong.

(H) Therefore, though *s* may have performed *A* freely, *s* may not be morally responsible; *M* is morally responsible for *A*.

Proposed Generic Anti-Molinist Deductive Argument § 6.41.1

(1) Molinism is manipulation. (Comment: *full expression*—Molinism is a providential model that relies on manipulation.)

(2) A manipulated agent is not free. (Comment: That is, manipulated by Molinism-style manipulation.)

(3) ∴ Molinism is incompatible with libertarian freedom. (Comment: assumes freedom is libertarian freedom.)

(4) ∴ Molinism cannot resolve the divine foreknowledge problem;

　　　　∴ Molinism is not Compatibilism about Foreknowledge, (CF).

(5) ∴ <u>Molinism is not the best model of divine providence.</u>

Comparative Manipulation Argument §7.2.4

(Modelled on 'The Manipulation Arguments Against Compatibilism')

　　(1) An agent in a deterministic world is not free.

　　(2) There is no relevant difference between *an agent who is controlled by causal enabling—by God$_M$* and an agent in a deterministic world.

　　(3) ∴ A manipulated agent is not free.

　　(4) (from (2)). An agent who is controlled by Molinist-style causal enabling
　　　　is effectively manipulated.

　　(5) ∴ <u>Molinism is a theory of divine manipulation</u>.

Molinism is Objectionable Manipulation Argument § 7.3.1

　　(1) Objectionable manipulation requires covert and non-constraining control.

　　(2) Middle knowledge as *information* provides the covert condition.

　　(3) Weak actualization, or the indirect willing of the information in the consequent of
　　　　a CCF provides the non-constraining condition.

　　(4) ∴ <u>Molinism is intrinsically a case of objectionable manipulation</u>.

Anti-Molinist Argument From Intention § 8.5.1

1. Molinism, properly understood, presents divine activity as *intention-in-action*.

2. It is impossible for a being to *intend-in-action another libertarian free agent to A*.

3. ∴ Molinism is incompatible with libertarian free-will.

4. ∴Molinism is true or libertarian free will is false.

5. ∴If Molinism is a true representation of God, then God does not know future contingents *qua* libertarian actions.

6. ∴Molinism cannot solve the divine foreknowledge problem, nor can Molinism offer a model of providential control over free creatures.

Galeian Argument: The Culpability of Intending with Knowing § 8.6

(1) Pushing a button (B) results in the indeterministic state of affairs where it is possible that a bomb explodes (E) and threatens lives.

(2) Person N does not know that $\Diamond(B \supset E)$.

(3) Person N pushes button and the bomb explodes.

(4) Normally, we would not hold N morally or forensically responsible for E because N was not aware of the possibility that E.

(5) Person M knows that (1).

(6) Person M further knows that $(B \;\Box\!\!\rightarrow E)$

(7) Person M unintentionally pushes button and the bomb explodes.

(8) We might hold M responsible for their carelessness but normally would not hold M fully responsible as…

(9) Person M′ intentionally pushes button and the bomb explodes.

(10) Person M′ says she is not to blame for E as she did not cause E (being indeterministic), though she had infallible foreknowledge that E.

(11) Many of us would hold M′ responsible because she knew what would happen if she pressed B.

(12) By analogy, we would hold God_M responsible though God_M does not strongly actualize or determine states of affairs.

(13) ∴ <u>God_M is forensically responsible for weakly actualizing E.</u>

(14) God_C is said to be causally and morally responsible for willing/decreeing/strongly-actualizing E.

(15) But God_C (any theological determinist model) also knows what state of affairs he determines by his will. (If you will E, you know that you will E.)

(16) Causal and moral responsibility depends either on a combination of *willing and knowing E*, for it is not possible for an agent[1]:

    a. to will E—without knowing that he wills E,

    or

    b. to know that he wills E—without actually willing E.

(17) But it is possible to directly cause or determine E without knowing that one directly causes or determines E.

---

[1] It might sound too strong to say that these things are not possible, and if they aren't I take correction. To put my point another way, *willing* involves an epistemic condition, as does *intending*. As I have stated elsewhere, there can be no sharp dichotomy on the will/intellect distinction. It's blurry, which is why I offered the concept of *scientia complexa*.

(18)   We would not normally hold such a person responsible for not knowing that she directly causes E. (Parity with premise 4 above.)

(19)   ∴ Causal responsibility for E's obtaining is not sufficient for moral responsibility for E's being caused.

(20)   ∴ Moral responsibility largely depends on an epistemic condition of knowing that E will obtain through one's actions, regardless of whether E is weakly actualized or strongly actualized.

(21)   Both God$_M$ and God$_C$ are morally responsible (to the same degree) for E, whether E obtains through strong or weak actualization.

(22)   (Speaking of God$_M$ being 'causally responsible' for E might be misleading), therefore we should speak of God$_M$'s forensic responsibility for E where forensic responsibility involves moral responsibility to the same degree as God$_C$ being causally responsible for E.

The Main Argument: Molinism is really Soft-Compatibilism § 9.7

(1) Circumstances aren't things, (containers) that God discovers, thereby controlling what we freely do.

(2) A circumstance is just what is counterfactually-relevant to get a person to act accordingly.

(3) ∴ A circumstance is more of a handle where God can manipulate to get the person to act.

(4) Understood as handles, God's abilities in providence are even more powerful. He is not subject to 'discovering' fixed-determinate circumstances.

(5) God can therefore control what we do, but it is difficult to see how we can have the freedom of alternative possibilities, or of sourcehood.

(6) God controls a person (who lacks alternative possibilities and sourcehood conditions)

(7) Though an agent is 'indeterministically free' in that God did not causally determine *s* to *A*, the resultant form of freedom is virtually a form of compatibilism or 'soft-compatibilism' because God$_M$ are sufficiently causally enabling.

more controversially…

 (8) If God has middle knowledge of these counterfactually relevant situations, he does not discover them but creates them by his will.

(9) But he does create them by his will, therefore, God's knowledge of counterfactually relevant situations   is not 'middle knowledge'.

(10) ∴God$_M$ controls through his will but does not have *pre-volitional*   middle knowledge.

(11) God (still) has counterfactual knowledge, but controls by the *scientia complexa.*

Thesis Statement and Confirmation § 10.4

Thesis: 'Molinism cannot satisfactorily solve the foreknowledge dilemma if it is also a model of providence that is inappropriately manipulative.'

Premise 1: Molinism presents God$_M$ knowing future contingents, libertarianly free acts through objectionable manipulation.

Premise 2: But no being, divine or human *can*—understood both metaphysically and morally—foreknow future contingents and libertarianly free acts through manipulation.

Conclusion: ∴Molinism cannot satisfactorily solve the foreknowledge dilemma.

The sense of 'can' in Premise 2 divides into:

- God$_M$ cannot literally manipulate by causal, direct or intending— control of libertarian actions. Molinism can only control 'free creatures' compatibilistically.
- God$_M$ cannot metaphorically manipulate libertarianly free agents while maintaining a *just* balance between moral responsibility and blame between manipulator and manipulee.

Argument: Foreknowledge is by Manipulation § 10.5

(1) The Foreknowledge Solution is true if and only if Molinist Providence is true.

(2) (But) Molinist Providence is true if and only if Objectionable Manipulation is true. (My Argument)

(3) (Moreover) Molinist Providence just is Objectionable Manipulation (MKUSE-Thesis)

(4) Molinist Providence is necessary and sufficient for the truth of the Foreknowledge Solution.

(5) ∴ Objectionable Manipulation is necessary and sufficient for the truth of the Foreknowledge Solution.   (from (3) & (4))

(6). ∴ The set of foreknowledge problems: Incompatibilism, Dilemma, Conundrum, Paradox are all 'resolved' by the use of Objectionable Divine Manipulation

Molinism is Worse than Calvinism § 10.7.2

Both (1) and (2) are explications of Walls' thesis:

(1.1) Calvinism teaches that God either predestines people for damnation, or effectively does the same thing by withholding grace.

(1.2) Any God who does this is not morally good.

(1) Calvinism is a bad model because it presents God$_C$ who is not good.

(2.1) Molinism teaches that God puts people or allows them to be put in circumstances in which he knows they will choose evil and be damned (Walls' premise).

(2.2) Any God who does this is not morally good.

(2) ∴ Molinism is also a bad model, close to Calvinism, because it presents God$_M$ who is not good.

My proposal is to add the following:

(3) Molinism presents a 'soft-compatibilist' form of control whereby God controls a person by getting them to do *A* by instrumentally using *C*.

(4) <u>This 'getting a person to do- *A*' is manipulation; here called 'Manipulation-To'.</u>

(4.1) 'Manipulation-To' is intending another agent to perform *A* by using *information* known about them. (Middle Knowledge-Use thesis).

(4.2) 'Intending another person to perform *A*' and bringing about circumstances that actualize *A* implicates God into the moral domain of the manipulee.

(5) 'Manipulation-To' or *getting a person to do-A* violates the Kantian prescription not to use people only as means to ends. (Violation of autonomy.)

(6) <u>Therefore, 'Manipulation-To' is morally-objectionable manipulation.</u>

(7) <u>God$_M$ also manipulates by 'Manipulating-Over'</u>

  (7.1) Epistemically,'Manipulating-Over' is quantification over choices, or circumstances God$_M$ knows via middle knowledge, then choosing that CCF.

  (7.1.1) God logically chooses 'first' by the selection criteria of either:
  (S1): a unique possible person and selects C to elicit A. (Molinist Predestination by Election).
  (S2): a unique C and then selects a possible person to elicit A. (Molinist Predestination by Volunteerism).
  (S3): a unique A and then selects *any* possible person and circumstance that elicits this A. But there is no significant difference between (S2) and (S3) in relation to the importance of human agents in divine-human relationships, $\therefore$ (S2).

  (7.1.2) This is inter-circumstantial control, 'counterfactual control' or 'counter-circumstantial control' over another agent's action, even if the agent's action is libertarianly free within that circumstance.

  (7.2) Epistemically and Volitionally, 'Manipulating-Over' is deciding which circumstance to place an agent in, thereby potentially *choosing* and *making* the moral quality of their action that God got them to do, through 'Manipulation-To'.

(8) $\therefore$ (From (7)) There is a provisional charge that God$_M$ does not have the moral standing to praise or blame the manipulee, or theologically, to reward or punish the manipulee if he dispenses grace which effectively gets an agent to do- A.

(9) The form of divine choosing (between possible person and C) in (7.1.1) is likely to be (S2):

(9.1) Because of disjunctive syllogism: (S1) is false on generic Molinism as it amounts to strong divine election. ∴(S2)

(10) ∴GodₘM does not 'care' who volunteers to perform the action *A*.

(11) This is also morally objectionable, not only are people used as means to ends, but *anyone* could have been used as means to an end. Anyone would do.

(12) ∴. Molinism is worse than Calvinism.

Godₘ is Morally Responsible for Manipulating §10.8

(1) The Manipulator *M* intends *s* to do *A* by arranging *C*.

(2) *M* is counterfactually-causally responsible in getting *s* to do *A* via *C*.

(3) *s* intends to do *A* given their limited cognitive awareness of the situation *C*.

(4) ∴ *s* performs *A* *unfreely*

(5) ∴ *s* is *not* morally responsible for doing *A*.

(6) ∴ *M cannot* intend *s* to do *A* in such a way through *C* that *s* is morally responsible for *A*.

(7) ∴ <u>*M* is morally responsible for manipulating.</u>

Appendix C: *Deus ex Molina* or 'Dynamic Molinism' with Feeling

The following is an attempt to salvage Molinism from some of my criticisms.

Can Molinism be saved or modified from the plight concerning its version of God's character, shown so far? To do so is to place 'love' or 'empathy' as a logical moment somewhere within the doctrine of Four-Momentism, and convert a manipulating *deus economicus* into a more acceptable form of theism.

We could question whether God's middle knowledge just is *de dicto* knowledge of freedom conditionals. The characterization of CCFs as objects of God's propositional attitudes, so that 'God knows *that* (A$\square\rightarrow$C)', portrays a poor relational aspect of God$_M$ to the possible person, or more significantly to the actual possible person referred to by the CCF once it becomes real. It would be far better to figure that God knows each possible person intimately *de re*. Indeed, that is what super-comprehension is meant to be like, *de re* knowledge of the person.

- *de re* knowledge: $(\exists s)$gK *As* (There is an *s* such that God knows *s A's*)
- *de re* middle knowledge: $(\exists s)$(gK(s/C $\square\rightarrow$ *As*)), or $(\forall s)(\forall C)$(gK for each *s*, *s*/C $\square\rightarrow$ *As*)

versus,

- *de dicto* knowledge: gK$(\exists s)$*As* (God knows that some *s* is such that it performs *A*)
- *de dicto* middle knowledge: gK$(\exists s)$(*s*/C $\square\rightarrow$ *As*), (God knows that if some individual *s* were put in *C* then *s* would *A*).

The *de dicto* reading fits neatly into a computational off-line model where *modus ponens* is executed like a program. Not only is God's will indirect, but God's knowledge is indirect or detached from the agent. God is care-less and the agent is used instrumentally to achieve another end. Are these differences crucial and should the Molinist formulate God's middle knowledge along *de re* knowledge? I'm aware that these representations are not mutually exclusive, (e.g. if we accept latitudinarianism over this distinctions). Neither are they an essential determination of how God$_M$ has middle

knowledge, given much of this terminology is a way of speaking about and understanding God and providence. There is something quite inconsistent, indeed a clash, in the Molinist teaching that God knows possible persons so well that he would know what they would do in any situation, yet at the same time having to posit his *use* of *modus ponens* to figure out what he would do himself, in order to plan his creation or to figure out what he foreknows. A *de dicto* knowledge reading presents the creaturely essence just as a variable in order to achieve the end which is that a particular action *A* is performed freely. If a *de re* reading of God's middle knowledge of possible persons or creaturely essences is preferred, in order to enhance a more personal and relational God, this positive attempt is dashed to the ground as soon as a person is inserted into a formula of a premise in the first round of *modus ponens*. For, I say, if one person knows another person intimately, with love, and empathy, they would decide on the best action for this person, and not decide on the best person for the action—which is what I take a *de dicto* reading of middle knowledge to imply. It may look obvious where I am heading here, the use of *modus ponens*, coupled with a *de dicto* understanding of God's knowledge is much more conducive to *manipulation* that knowing a person *de re* and using deliberative reasoning from what you know *of* the person, not what you know about them.

To be the value of a variable in a Molinist conditional is to be used by God$_M$ for another purpose; and any strongly *affective* apologetic used by evangelical Molinists that God knows a possible person *so well*, is lost in the logical translation. Here I hint at the manipulability of persons via the manipulation of Molinist conditionals. If God$_M$ must use *modus ponens*, and it's not just a way of speaking, then in one sense of manipulation, he manipulates necessarily. This is a low grade sense of manipulation where a person is somehow used for another end or purpose. The Molinist defender needs to show that a possible person is used not *just* as a means to an end that may be good or bad. This is why I take it that a *de re* reading of God's knowledge of creaturely essences is preferable as a means to that person's good. What is more difficult though, is to insist on a strong *de re* knowledge of each of us before we have been created. This gets to the heart of the grounding requirement. There have been various attempts to portray exactly what the

ontological status of the 'person' known by God before they are actual is. I suggest therefore, that God might need to create us first, in a temporal environment to allow us to live, so that he gets to know us in *some* detail. Here perhaps, we do not feel pain, nor are we morally responsible, and our memories of the pre-existent state have been erased.

Origen may have something original to say here, or perhaps a Platonist or traducian account where our souls pre-exist in a minimal state before our births. This speculation obviously does not sit well with orthodoxy, yet for Molinism to sit well with orthodoxy is, I say, very difficult, if orthodoxy matters. This conjecture where God creates us in some real and actual sense also compares well with my reductionist explanation of Molinism to temporal, not logical moments. God creates us as souls in heaven and we have some form of life and agency where God puts us into situations to see what we would do. The real world, so to speak, is effectively God's memory, reminiscence or anamnesis of what we did in this habitat. At some moment t which is the analogue of the logical moment of the will, God looks back into his memory, (middle knowledge), selects what he wants to be actual and projects it into the fully realized world.

I call these two conditions of incorporating *de re* knowledge of created but minimal individuals, and of using his memory 'Dynamic Molinism'. It is a very brief attempt to rescue Molinism from its worst failing—manipulation. It also avoids the 'middle knowledge conundrum' by interpreting the so-called logical moments, not as modals, which does nothing to avoid knowledge-conundra, but temporally ordered moments. Anything that has already happened is for God accidentally necessary, so that he knows what will be with certainty, and yet it is metaphysically contingent.

It is dynamic because it shows a personal God who is real and intimate and is willing to take risks. Middle knowledge is here not certain but probabilistic; stronger than might-counterfactuals and weaker than epistemic would-counterfactuals. A weaker form of a would-counterfactual can be gleaned by God knowing us so well that he puts himself in our position, quite literally, where he hears us say what "I would do in circumstance *C.* " This is a deliberative subjunctive which passes off as a self-prediction of what we will defeasibly do, thereby informing God of our own free intentions.

Appendix D: Summary of Amendments

I thank the three examiners very much for their very useful comments and feedback. I have made amendments in response to each examiner. Where I reject the suggestion or criticism, I thank the examiner for raising the issue and inviting me to think a second time about these issues.

Responses to Examiner 1

General comments:

- *Candidate should explain his concept of objectionable manipulation used, making it clear* whether he wants to argue from *If Molinism is true then God is manipulating people to If Molinism is true, then God is exercising wrong and improper control over people*, or *instead wants to argue in the reverse direction'*

Response: I have given a clear working definition of 'objectionable manipulation' early in Chapter 1, (Page 1-3), citing Levy and McKenna's (2006:107), *Philosophical Compass* article 'Recent Work on Free Will and Moral Responsibility':

> Objectionable manipulation [which undermines] "the proper operation of our capacities as morally responsible agents'.

I concede (to E1) that my presentation of objectionable manipulation could be clearer.
-Candidate's suggestion that God under the Molinist model violates the Kantian principle of not using people merely as means, but there are counterexamples to candidate's explanation.
Response: The counterexample given by E1 is not a relevant counterexample. It does not imply, necessarily, that a person does not use another merely as a means. It depends on interpretation. My interpretation of manipulation relevant in thesis is to control another person to do wrong while they are blameworthy.
In the light of the above responses, though I reject E1's comments, I amend the text to be clearer.

Amendment: Page 7-5**.** Two conditions of 'objectionable manipulation' (developed in relation to alleged manipulation in Molinist model), added to text.

Examiner writes that there are too many acronyms used and some appear in the text without first defining them. Some acronyms do not appear in Appendix A.

Amendments:

(1). Page 2-21. Acronym 'DF' prefixed by its denoting phrase, *divine foreknowledge'*

(2). Page 4-5,6 Acronym 'ST' removed and replaced by its phrase, *separation thesis*

(3). Page 5-1 'GT' removed from text re Gordian Knot.

(4). Page xi (appendix)   Acronym WID added. (Will/Intellect Distinction)

(5). Page xi (appendix)   Acronyms listed and defined:

> **MKUseSucc**   Middle Knowledge Use Success claim-
> God$_M$'s *use* of middle knowledge contributes to a successful account
> of providence and foreknowledge. (Pro-Molinism)

> **MKUseCrit**   Middle Knowledge Use Criticism claim-
> God$_M$'s *use* of middle knowledge provides a case to argue that
> Molinism equates to objectionable manipulation

- The following are particular cases of Examiner's remarks.

Chapter 1:

E1: *Acronym 'CCF' as Counterfactual of freedom, not formally defined.*

Amendment: Page 1-2 note 3, 'CCF' defined

E1: Page 1-21 *Candidate makes an assertion that is false .*

Response: I agree and the sentence removed on Page 1-21. The sentence's presence serves no purpose.

Chapter 2

E1: *Conditions for 'Generic Manipulation Schema' are not all necessary, nor jointly sufficient for manipulation.*

Response: I have not argued or implied that all necessary conditions have been exhausted, nor is the list sufficient. Also, the term 'schema' in thesis implies a model or explanation and not a deductively valid argument.

Amendment: Page 2-13 note 21. Explanation of the different use of 'schema' and 'argument' assumed in thesis.

Chapter 3

E1: Pages 3-12,13 *A work from William Lane Craig is cited, implying that he believes that the doctrine of divine foreknowledge is equivalent to logical fatalism.*

Response: I agree that this is very poorly written and rewrite the text to present Craig more fairly as claiming that *theological fatalism* is reducible to logical fatalism.

Amendment: Text edited on pages 3-12,13 to reflect this.

E1*: Examiner writes that on Page 3:17 there is a problem with my use of transitivity and unclear expression.*

Response: I agree that Examiner's criticism about my use of transitivity is correct. The statement needs to be weakened slightly.

Amendment: The offending sentence on Page 3:17 rewritten to remove references to problematic transitivity.

E1: *Reduce use of acronyms.* **Amendment:** Page 3-13, 'RT' removed and replace by 'reducibility thesis'

<u>Chapter 7</u>

E1: Page 7-5 *The alleged 'fully defined' definition of objectionable manipulations is not a real definition.*

Response: Agree. (However, a good definition is already given at Page 1-3, citing standard definition from the literature).

Amendment: Page 7-5 Wording changed to characterize objectionable manipulation in the present context, rather than to define it formally here.

E1: Page 7-16 *Candidate is unclear about the 'No Relevant Difference' comparison between Molinism and general manipulation arguments. It is clear that there is one difference in that agents controlled by God in the way supposed by Molinists are not causally determined.* (in relation to Premise 2''')

Response: I agree that Premise 2''' by itself may not be clear, but it is a provisional assertion that is developed in the next section, 7.2.3 'The Mechanism of Manipulation: Causal Enabling'. However, I also argue in thesis that Molinism, if true, is really a version of a kind of compatibilism, and so E1's counterexample of a relevant difference, that the Molinist himself would not concede to causal determinism is not significant here.

Amendment: 7:16 A paragraph explaining the 'No Relevant' condition principle is inserted that better links Premise 2''' with section 7.2.3.

E1: Page 7-18. *Candidate does not present arguments for how we have been robbed of the origination of our actions or that we don't have true guidance control.* (In relation to the 'Comparative Manipulation Argument')

Response: My strategy in the thesis was not to subscribe to a particular version of libertarianism, but to suppose that, if Molinism is true, how would this impact on standard accounts of the *alternative possibilities* and *source-hood* conditions. Hence, I do not give *a priori* reasons for the truth of origination, but *a posteriori* arguments on the hypothesis that Molinism is true, for why origination of action is lost. Even so, I amend text to make this clearer.

Amendment: Page 7-19 Text amended to relate loss of source-hood condition more closely to the Comparative Manipulation Argument.

E1: *Candidate's argument on pages 7-26 to 7-30 is invalid, but if the first premise is rewritten to form a sufficient condition for manipulation, ie., 'covert and non-constraining control is sufficient for manipulation', then this premise is false.*

Response: I write that both covert and non-constraining control are necessary conditions, but do not suggest that they are exhaustive. Hence there is no need to rewrite the premise viewing these two conditions as jointly sufficient. Consequently, since there is no need to rewrite the premise as the much stronger sufficient condition, the premise is not false; and the argument is not invalid.

Chapter 8

E1: *Pages 8-10 to 8-23 discuss Eef Dekker's direct and indirect willing distinction. We are not told how Dekker puts this distinction to work. Candidate also argues that the semantics of conditionals by Dancygier yield trouble for Dekker's defense of Molinism but we are not told why.*

Response: I concede that my first use of Dekker is abrupt and I amend accordingly. I thank Examiner 1 for bringing this to my attention. Text is amended to relate the significance of Dekker's direct/indirect distinction as another case of the more general strong/weak actualization distinction that Molinism seems to require.

Amendment: Page 8-9 Paragraph rewritten to remove abrupt introduction to Dekker. Also, section 8.3.1 prefaced with an introductory sentence to explain the significance of using the direct/indirect willing distinction.

E1: Page 8-27 *Premise 2 is false because of the term 'intend'.* Examiner gives counterexample to premise 2.

Response: I concede Premise 2 is too strong and is rewritten to remove "logically impossible". However, the concept of *intending* I had in mind is immune to Examiner's counterexample. I rewrite the premise to clearly signify *intention-in-action* to avoid counterexamples from different forms of *intending* (such as *wanting* or *desiring*).

Amendment: Page 8-27 Premise (2) rewritten as,

> "(2). It is impossible for a being to intend-in-action another libertarian free agent to A."

And, references to *logical* impossibility removed.

Responses to Examiner 2

I thank this examiner very much for the encouragement and critical remarks. I understand that, mostly, Examiner 3 makes these suggestions without necessarily giving warrant that they are serious objections to a good thesis. However, I wish to respond accordingly as follows.

General Comments from Examiner 2

I summarise Examiner 2's comments into three related themes:

A. What is the *nature* of a 'circumstance' or 'situation', and how are these terms used in my thesis? Should they be understood as *thick, thin, broad, concrete, world histories up to a moment of decision*, etc. Examiner suggests that my understanding of a circumstance is *too thin.* (Especially in the light of using Situation Semantics)

B.   How are circumstances picked out or i*ndividuated*?

C.   There may be a structural issue in the thesis. The discussion in Chapter 9 is *too late* and should be earlier.

Response:

I thank Examiner 2 for these very useful comments. I respond by both defending my position and making changes and insertions to the text.

 In response to whether circumstances should be defined as *think, thin, broad, rich, world-histories,* etc.

Some background. I had researched and written a rough draft chapter titled "What is a Circumstance ?" (in Molinist contexts). However, I became dissatisfied as the review of the literature was purely descriptive. I rejected the inclusion of this chapter

in the thesis because it lacked any particular significance in relation to the overall thesis argument. I decided to take a common-denominator approach where hopefully, many Molinists and anti-Molinists would accept a thin characterisation as a way of speaking about Molinism, and for the sake of my argument, but I am not necessarily arguing *for* the truth of a thin perspective of circumstances.

Rather, I like and use Keith Devlin's distinction between *agent-schema* and *theorist-schema* where I appropriate the Molinist and anti-Molinist as looking at the world from a first and third person *agent-schema*. Here, to use Devlin's account, we do not individuate situations as an *individual*, but only as situations. That is, we are not particularly good at individuating situations cognitively but do so by our behaviour. (Devlin states that, humans *discriminate situations by their behaviour*). In contrast, I present God as viewing and acting from the *theorist-schema*, given omniscience, and middle knowledge, if need be. This is significant towards defending my position against the claim the individuation of circumstances in the thesis is not clear.

From here, I argue that whether a circumstance is thick, thin, or rich, etc, depends on what God sees, and what matters in the Molinist case is what properties or factors in circumstances are counterfactually-relevant (Timpe) to influencing an individual's behaviour, taking into account their agent modalities in relation to circumstantial modalities and properties. Though of course this is not a given, and is part of my main argument against Molinism, these portrayal of God is most precisely given by Situation Semantics using tuples, etc.

In relation to Examiner 2's claim that I left this information to late till Chapter 9, I understand how this may look, but I could not bring it forward *before* discussing will/intellect, doing a literature review of Anti-Molinist arguments from analogy; and after speculating upon the *scientia complexa* as a way to avoid finicky debates about counterfactual semantics. More importantly, the discussion of situations as 'thin' in the Situation Semantic sense had to just precede my main argument against Molinism, that God uses counter-factually relevant information as "handles" about possible persons in situations to causally enable their actions. I agree that *these views* might be contentious but the means of illustrating and expressing my arguments, through thin situations, are not.

Given this, I thank Examiner 2 very much for raising this lack of clarity and I amend the thesis by supplementing with an early explanatory text.

Amendment: In Chapter 2 (pages 2-9 and 10), I insert a brief introduction to circumstances and how the term is understood that should presage and look forward to my more developed argument in Chapter 9.

- The following are particular cases of suggested amendments from chapters.

Chapter 2

E2 writes that it is unclear, on Page 2-27 how DF and FW are formulated to be individually possible but jointly incompatible

Response: I find some of E2's remarks here unclear, but have realised that my formulation of incompatibility, using symbols is too strong. I note that here, I use these variables as labels to precisely refer to various positions, and not so much as truth-functional equations. (I am not deducing anything particular from these labels through entailment).

Amendment: Page 2-27 Label DF|FW ≡ (◊DF & ◊FW) & ~◊(DF & FW) changed by replacing first conjunction with a disjunction to weaken the claim that DF and FW are individually possible.

Chapter 3

Examiner 2 writes that this wasn't the first use of "DF". Examiner is correct.

Amendment: Incorrect footnote regarding bold-typed acronyms removed from page 3-2, footnote 4, and pasted to page 2-19 footnote 26.

Chapter 8

Examiner 2 writes that there is a lack of clarity between *de dicto* and *de re* readings of God willing what Mary would do in the situation of her baby being asleep, and Mary is typing, etc.
Response: I recognise that there is a way to *read* my examples differently between *de dicto* and *de re* but as my examples change events around in the situation- to argue for the simultaneity of God's intending, each item in a situation, then sure, the *de dicto/de re* reading changes accordingly. But this difference is not thereby, a lack of clarity in the examples given.

Examiner 2 writes that there is also an issue regarding the identity and uniqueness of circumstances. Here examiner lists different possible accounts of situations, "there are many such situations-all actual, some thinner, some thicker, some wider, some narrower, each involving Mary and the baby asleep…"

Response: I thank the examiner for this remark. If I may, I actually use this remark by turning the inference from it on its head and argue that, sure, there are many ways to characterize situations as listed, but we do not know the relevant factors that motivate a person to act freely. And so, are we to give an account, or thesis or argument for each way that situations can be characterized? No we cannot, or at least, it would not be profitable. Hence, I assume thin situations as explanatorily useful. I also refer back to the general defence I give at the beginning of this discussion on Examiner 2's comments.

Examiner 2 has also given a very interesting account of using pairs of nested conditionals, for example, $B \,\square\!\!\!\rightarrow (A \,\square\!\!\!\rightarrow C)$, and $\sim B \,\square\!\!\!\rightarrow (A \,\square\!\!\!\rightarrow \sim C)$. I believe this information is very useful and more research is needed in this idea, but think that the suggestion is beyond the domain of this thesis. I thank this examiner for this very interesting account and look forward to researching it further.

<u>Responses to Examiner 3</u>

Examiner 3 writes,

> "I am recommending only minor amendments, i.e. correcting the typos/errata. The critical points are raised only with the intention of being useful if Anderson decides to try to carve out some publications."

I thank Examiner 3 very much for the encouragement, and positive and negative comments in the report. Especially, I thank the examiner for listing several possible publication areas from the thesis.

Despite Examiner 3's recommending only corrections to Errata, I have made the following amendments as well from the feedback.

(1). Page 1-2 Brief explanation of *Simple Foreknowledge* and its potential failings, added. Also, content of a later footnote from Chapter 3 about Simple Foreknowledge moved here to Chapter 1 footnote 2.

(2). Page 1-3. Word 'Metaphorical' removed from second sense of manipulation.

(3). Page 1-3 Third sense of manipulation modified and explained as being *too skilled in manipulating* without offsetting this with risk.

(4). Page 1-18 Footnote 19 (21) removed. (It stated that the truth of CCFs is as if a sufficient condition for Molinism. Examiner suggests this is unfair to the Molinist position).

(5). Page 4-1 Footnote (1) rewritten to clarify that God selects which *antecedents* to make actual, not which CCFs to make actual

(6). Page 7-27 Change phrasing at two locations to "mere" means, not just means to ends.

(7). Page 8-13 The omitted reference to Perszyk (2000) added. And reference added to 'References' p. vii.

(8). Over twenty cases of typographical errors were found throughout the thesis by this examiner. They have all been corrected. I thank Examiner 3 profusely for finding these and bringing them to my attention!

* Final Changes: Index re-numbered to reflect changes.