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## ‘Yes!’ And ‘Thou’ in Dag Hammarskjöld’s *Markings*: A Theological Investigation

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### ABSTRACT

Hammarskjöld’s *Markings* combines the spiritual, theological and ethical. This article engages with the journal in four stages. First, it briefly introduces the text (context, translation and overall purpose). Second, I explore Hammarskjöld’s faith guided by two words: ‘Yes’- to explore key ideas on union, discipleship, the ‘beyond,’ religious language, his use of the medieval mystics and the influence of the apophatic and kataphatic traditions on his consciousness. Third, under ‘Thou,’ follows an examination of this word’s role in Hammarskjöld’s religious awareness and, also, of the journal’s convergences with other authors, such as Bernard Haring and Andrew Tallon’s analysis of Martin Buber’s ‘I-Thou and the sapiential ethics of Thomas Aquinas. Finally, I briefly assess *Markings* and Hammarskjöld’s religious consciousness as Trinitarian and as indicative of the transforming process of *theosis*.

Key Words: Buber, Morality, Mysticism, Spirituality, Faith

**R**oger Lipsey suggests, that ‘absent from the conversations of our time’ could well apply to *Markings* and its author, Dag Hammarskjöld, the second Secretary-General of the United Nations who died tragically in a plane crash in September 1961. Occasionally, one finds quoted the same few passages but could wonder who has read all of *Markings*? Lipsey’s recent studies are an act of ‘memory and homage’ motivated by a dominant concern: ‘As we search or long for a twenty-first-century politics

and civil society that recognize the life and demands of the spirit, we need this text and its grave, fiercely intelligent author.’<sup>1</sup>

Lipsey’s work led me to appreciate the scope of Hammarskjöld’s public addresses, lectures and correspondence and engage with the journal.<sup>2</sup> Building on earlier studies of *Markings* as a compressed blend of the spiritual, theological and ethical,<sup>3</sup> I offer a specific focus in four stages: after some introductory thoughts, to examine Hammarskjöld’s faith as encapsulated in the words ‘Yes’ and ‘Thou’ while exploring some convergences with other authors both past and present; finally, to assess evidence of Hammarskjöld’s religious consciousness as Trinitarian and as an instance of the transforming process of *theosis*.

## **Introduction**

Hammarskjöld’s personal journal for 1925-1961 was discovered after his death. Translated by W.H. Auden, it was published in 1964 under the title ‘Markings.’ Opinion is divided about this word. It connotes ‘road marks,’ ‘guide posts,’ ‘waymarks’ or ‘cairns’ used by mountaineers as reference points on an uncharted mountain. With the diary was an undated letter to friend and fellow diplomat, Leif Belfrage, in which Hammarskjöld gave his permission to publish the entries if Leif thought they were ‘worth publishing.’ He describes the diary ‘as a sort of “White Book” concerning my negotiations with myself—and with

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<sup>1</sup> Roger Lipsey, ‘Dag Hammarskjöld and *Markings*: A Reconsideration,’ *Spiritus* 11 (2011), 84-103, at 85; and *Hammarskjöld: A Life* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> Dag Hammarskjöld, *Markings*, translated by W.H. Auden and Leif Sjöberg (London: Faber & Faber, 1964).

<sup>3</sup> Representative are: Henry Pitney Van Dusen, *Dag Hammarskjöld: The Statesman and His Faith* (New York: Harper, 1967); Gustaf Aulén, *Dag Hammarskjöld’s White Book: The Meaning of Markings* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), still an authoritative theological study. Henceforth, *White Book*.

God.’<sup>4</sup> ‘Negotiations’ – suggesting dialogue, facing obstacles, compromise, insight – perhaps better captures the complexity and struggles of the author’s spiritual life that characterize the journal.

*Markings*, a testimony to Hammarskjöld’s cultivated practice of conscious self-scrutiny, is marked by honesty, acute perception and a sense of immediate experience. His writing, with its affective texture, his mastery of rhythm and images, reflects a man of a poetic sensibility.<sup>5</sup> A significant matter is Auden’s translation. This issue is addressed by Gustav Aulén and Lipsey in relation to the Swedish original *Vägmärken*. They note and correct errors or make clarifications in the English translation.<sup>6</sup> Lipsey draws on a more recent translation and critical edition of the text by Bernhard Erling.<sup>7</sup>

From a Lutheran background and a family tradition of participating in public life, Hammarskjöld describes his spiritual quest as movement ‘in a circle,’ of a young adult’s initial rejection followed by a gradual rediscovery of principles and ideals from his parents and Christian heritage.<sup>8</sup> In this, he was particularly influenced by Albert Schweitzer’s ethics and medieval spiritual authors. The movement ‘in a circle’ is simultaneously a search. Hammarskjöld’s quest for resolution and harmony is reflected in the journal’s first entry (1925-30) with its geographic and acoustic imagery:

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<sup>4</sup> *Markings*, 7.

<sup>5</sup> W.H. Auden, a friend of Hammarskjöld, notes the ‘extraordinary extent of Hammarskjöld’s knowledge and understanding of poetry.’ *Markings*, 14.

<sup>6</sup> These are most often due to ‘imprecise use’ of ‘technical religious or theological terminology or by unfamiliar idioms of the Swedish religious tradition’ (Aulén, *White Book*, viii).

<sup>7</sup> Bernhard Erling, *A Reader’s Guide to Dag Hammarskjöld’s Waymarks* (St. Peter, Minnesota, 1987) available at [http://www.daghammarskjold.se/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/rg\\_to\\_waymarks.pdf](http://www.daghammarskjold.se/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/rg_to_waymarks.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> See Aulén, *White Book*, 139.

I am being driven forward  
Into an unknown land.  
The pass grows steeper,  
The air cooler and sharper,  
A wind from my unknown goal  
Stirs the strings  
Of expectation.

Still the question:  
Shall I ever get there?  
There where life resounds,  
A clear pure note  
In the silence.<sup>9</sup>

The journal traces the realisation of these expectations. Given its ‘aphoristic’ nature and the timing of the entries (at the end of long days, especially when Hammarskjöld was Secretary General between 1953 and 1961), one would expect *Markings* to be fragmentary and disconnected. The opposite is the case. The journal and the personal faith disclosed there are remarkable for their continuity, consistency and comprehensiveness.<sup>10</sup> This investigation is guided by two words ‘Yes’ and ‘Thou’ which capture the dialogical structure of Hammarskjöld’s ‘negotiations’ and their outcome in a life of faith.

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<sup>9</sup> *Markings*, 31

<sup>10</sup> Aulén, *White Book*, 144-46.

## The ‘Yes’ of Hammarskjöld’s Faith

Aulén says that Hammarskjöld’s ‘first important *yes* appears in full brightness,’ underlined as the first entry of 1953. ‘For all that has been- Thanks! To all that shall be – Yes!’<sup>11</sup> Repeated many times, it was ‘to become fixed as a yes to God, to himself and to destiny.’<sup>12</sup> His response to God brings meaning to his life.

You dare your Yes –and experience a meaning.

You repeat your Yes –and all things acquire a meaning.

When everything has a meaning, how can you live anything but a *Yes*.<sup>13</sup>

### *Union, Discipleship and Implications*

As Aulén notes, Hammarskjöld’s faith, his ‘Yes’ to God of 1953 indicated that ‘something new had come; it meant union with God, living in the hands of God, receiving rest and strength from him – and thus it also meant new integrity for the ‘I,’ (‘the wonder: that *I* exist’<sup>14</sup>) integrity instead of chaos, freedom instead of the bondage of self-centeredness.’ But it was a constant struggle, as entries indicate up to the last prayer of his final year: ‘a faith at battle with the risks of returning chaos and ever threatening self-centredness.’<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> *Markings*, 87.

<sup>12</sup> Aulén, *White Book*, 9.

<sup>13</sup> *Markings*, 110.

<sup>14</sup> *Markings*, 102.

<sup>15</sup> Aulén, *White Book*, 145.

For Hammarskjöld, one side of faith is the ‘union of God to the soul’ (St John of the Cross).<sup>16</sup> Union with, and life in, God were centred on *Imitatio*, a key idea arising from the Gospels and Hammarskjöld’s acquaintance with the medieval mystics. *Imitatio* is the invitation to fellowship and discipleship with Jesus the ‘Brother.’ It is fulfilled paradigmatically in Jesus in sacrifice as self-surrender to God and to others ‘within the framework of one’s own vocation.’<sup>17</sup> Authentic self-realisation is only found in self-transcendence, in self-surrender.

Understood thus, drawing on Aulén’s succinct summary, sacrifice is ‘the truly creative power in existence.’ Its power as love is revealed in Christ, who not only calls, even demands, *imitatio*, but who ‘also mediates the forgiveness of God’s love.’ For Hammarskjöld, forgiveness is always a ‘sacrifice,’ an expression of self-surrender. In that sense, while Hammarskjöld initially viewed the Jesus of the Gospels more as our human ‘Brother,’ he later came to appreciate Him as the ‘Son’ in the Trinity, namely, the visible and embodied revelation of divine self-giving. Self-surrender, as a sharing in the divine life in Christ, is inseparable from responsibility for others within the framework of one’s vocation. For him, it was a call to serve the world and mankind which he saw as a ‘service to God.’ The love of God, revealed in Jesus, the cross, sacrifice and forgiveness, is ‘ultimate reality.’<sup>18</sup>

While, at times, Hammarskjöld speaks of being immersed, even absorbed in, God, overall, he sees union with God as leading to a new level of self-differentiation. ‘To say Yes

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<sup>16</sup> *Markings*, 91. Aulén, notes that the translation of the Swedish word as ‘marriage’ gives quite the wrong impression. It suggests that Hammarskjöld might have understood the union as a form of the Bride Mysticism that, in fact, he never refers to (Aulén, *White Book*, 42).

<sup>17</sup> Aulén, *White Book*. 148.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 148, 151.



to life is at one and the same time to say Yes to oneself.’<sup>19</sup> ‘God desires our independence – which we attain when, ceasing to strive for it ourselves, we ‘fall’ back into God.’ More strikingly: ‘The Lover desires the perfection of the Beloved—which requires, among other things, the liberation of the Beloved from the Lover.’<sup>20</sup>

Concerning the Church, Hammarskjöld’s sense of the Church’s life is reflected in many entries written on or around the great Christian festivals. He speaks with conviction of his connection with the ‘invisible’ Church of the Communion of Saints.<sup>21</sup> W.H Auden suggests that by attendance at Church Services, Hammarskjöld could risk being labelled a ‘westerner.’ Hammarskjöld’s brother attests that, as Secretary General, Hammarskjöld, when able to, attended a range of Church services but that ‘he was not a regular attendant at services of worship.’<sup>22</sup> Hammarskjöld considered the Church must have a universal perspective and contribute in the public domain about truth and justice. Perhaps, for Hammarskjöld and his vocation, God’s visible ‘kingdom’ was predominantly embodied in the moral claims of the political and international domains.

### ***Faith, the ‘Beyond’ and the Frontier of the ‘Unheard- of’***

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<sup>19</sup> *Markings*, 89. Union with God is conveyed through expressions indicating alternatively ‘self-chosen effacement of the personality in the One’ and ‘submergence in divine wholeness.’ See *Markings*, 136-7 and Aulén, *White Book*, 118.

<sup>20</sup> *Markings*, 105.

<sup>21</sup> In 1952, Hammarskjöld says that ‘through me there flashes this vision of a magnetic field in the soul, created in a timeless present by unknown multitudes, living in holy obedience, whose words and actions are a timeless prayer. ‘The Communion of Saints’ –and – within it –an eternal life’ (*Markings*, 84).

<sup>22</sup> Aulén, *White Book*. 142.

A 1954 entry further illuminates the first entry of 1953 just discussed ('Thanks'/'Yes'). Hammarskjöld uses the image of a wall blocking access to the sphere of mystery, namely, 'the frontier of the unheard-of' and he realised that it does not, in fact, exist. 'Then I saw that the wall had never been there, that the "unheard-of" is here and this, and not something or somewhere else.'<sup>23</sup>

We will return to this later. His subsequent Whitsunday 1961 entry suggests that his decisive yes had happened some time prior to 1953, at which point he openly revealed it.<sup>24</sup> Taken collectively, these and other passages confirm Aulén's view that Hammarskjöld's 'conversion' was a gradual process rather than a single moment or event. Again, it was not so much one of Hammarskjöld finding God but of God finding him. A parallel instance is with a contemporary author, C.S. Lewis. Alister McGrath writes that Lewis reached a point where he found himself confronted by an 'assertive, active and *questing* God, not simply a mental construct or a philosophical game.' He continues:

God was pounding on the door of Lewis's mind and life. Reality was imposing itself upon him, vigorously and aggressively demanding a response. 'Amiable agnostics will talk cheerfully about "man's search for God." To me, as I then was, they might as well have talked about the mouse's search for the cat.'<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> *Markings*, 90.

<sup>24</sup> 'I don't even remember answering. But at some moment I did answer *yes* so someone – or something' (169). Also Aulén, *White Book*, 10.

<sup>25</sup> Alister McGrath, *Eccentric Genius. Reluctant Prophet. C.S. Lewis: A Life* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2013), 138 citing C.S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*, 265.

In hindsight, Hammarskjöld, too, acknowledges his free 'yes' was, in fact, a divine gift. 'By being silent and letting God work and speak' he found himself 'grasped' by God at the level of his person and his whole being, in which he is given purpose, direction and strength. 'Long ago, you gripped me Slinger. *Now* into Thy storm. *Now* towards Thy target.'<sup>26</sup>

Again, when Hammarskjöld speaks of his 'mystical experience' (suggesting hesitation?) and of faith as union with God, he says 'Not I but God in me.'<sup>27</sup> His life and actions are experienced as an instrument of God. 'God in me' involves 'hearing the inescapable demands of God and, further the receiving of strength from God.'<sup>28</sup> All this is done, 'to the Glory of God alone.'<sup>29</sup>

Faith's first aspect is union with God. But, as hearing and response, faith also meant, for Hammarskjöld, being 'under' God, or 'under the hands' of God. He was convinced that faith in God was not principally assent to doctrines and it 'would lose its meaning if it were not, primarily, a personal existential relation to Him.'<sup>30</sup> Nor was it a question of 'feelings.' It was a relationship embracing the whole person, shaping one's consciousness, an encounter both uplifting and confronting. Faith asserts a contact with reality, namely, with the ultimate reality, but one made in darkness, like Jesus in Gethsemane, where '*God is silent*, as the

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<sup>26</sup> *Markings*, 134. Aulén corrects 'the' to 'Thy' target (Aulén, *White Book*, 64). Lipsey agrees and also offers helpful background (concerning 'Slinger') both scriptural (David and Goliath) and literary (T.S. Eliot's translation of a poem of Saint-John Perse). See Lipsey, *Hammarskjöld: A Life*, 654.

<sup>27</sup> *Markings*, 127.

<sup>28</sup> Aulén, *White Book*, 12.

<sup>29</sup> *Markings*, 88. This phrase is attributed to Thomas Aquinas in Auden's translation. There is solid evidence that this and another reference to Aquinas (91) are incorrect and refer to Thomas a Kempis. See Erling, *A Reader's Guide*, 99 and 125.

<sup>30</sup> Aulén, *White Book*, 23.

union is consummated.’ Authentic faith is unconditional and not dependent on being confirmed by the divine presence. ‘Faith *is*: it cannot, therefore, be comprehended, far less identified with, the formulae in which we paraphrase what is.’<sup>31</sup> For all that, Hammarskjöld’s journal is a testimony to his continuing search for the intelligibility of his faith and how it brought meaning to his life. Nevertheless, he was aware of the limits of this quest.

Consider two transitional moments in Hammarskjöld’s spiritual development, the first from 1941-42:

On the bookshelf of life, God is a useful work of reference, always at hand but seldom consulted. In the whitewashed hour of birth, He is a jubilation and a refreshing wind, too immediate for memory to catch. But when we are compelled to look ourselves in the face – then He rises above us in terrifying reality, *beyond* all argument and ‘feeling,’ stronger than all self-defensive forgetfulness.<sup>32</sup>

Suggested, here, are Hammarskjöld’s hesitations about the capacities of reason and of religious language, both seen in another light in a 1950 entry often quoted:

God does not die on the day when we cease to believe in a personal deity, but we die on the day when our lives cease to be illumined by the steady radiance, renewed daily of a wonder, the source of which of beyond all reason.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> *Markings*, 91.

<sup>32</sup> *Markings*, 37. Italics added.

<sup>33</sup> *Markings*, 64.

In these texts, Hammarskjöld exhibits reservations about images, language and attributing ‘person’ when speaking of God. The Divine is presented as a ‘source’ from which a radiance of wonder emanates and which, if we are receptive, illuminates our lives. Without a sense of awe and wonder we are closed off to life, to creation and the horizon of mystery itself. In other words, we die. Others, such as Thomas Aquinas, considered that the quest for truth starts with the sense of wonder, and that, without wonder, we lose a sense of hope.<sup>34</sup>

Returning to the word ‘beyond’ highlighted above, Maas notes, it will mark a new aspect in Hammarskjöld’s spiritual growth, something repeated and further specified, especially after 1953. It is a call to faith that differs from ‘honoring a well-defined state of affairs’ where one has control but is rather an ‘adventure that summons us to a beyond.’ It is a step into an unsafe territory, called the ‘Night’ by John of the Cross, while being an ‘opportunity, a challenge to live.’<sup>35</sup> As Erling notes, “‘The unheard of’ is to be surrendered and thereby sacrificed here and now to God.’<sup>36</sup>

Each New Year’s entry from 1950-57 has the refrain ‘night is drawing nigh’ – an allusion to a hymn for Sundays after Easter read by his mother each New Years’ Eve. Faith as union is consummated with a silent God and only in darkness comes insight and maturity. The world of loneliness in which the Other, whose ‘great love’ ‘gives us nothing,’ leads ‘us up to summits with wide vistas –of insight.’<sup>37</sup> Maas suggests that this call to go beyond one’s limits revealed in Hammarskjöld is something recognised in the mystics. While not employing ‘the perspective of beyond,’ Hammarskjöld often uses the single word ‘beyond.’

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<sup>34</sup> See *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, 41.4, ad 5 and I-II. 20.3.Henceforth, STh.

<sup>35</sup> Frans Maas, *Spirituality as Insight: Mystical Texts and Theological Reflection* (Leuven: Peters, 2004), 65. Maas has a very fine discussion of insight in *Markings* and the various modulations associated with ‘beyond.’

<sup>36</sup> Erling, *A Reader’s Guide*, 107.

<sup>37</sup> *Markings*, 54.

In a key entry of 1951 he writes that from a source beyond the frontier of the ‘unheard-of,’ ‘something fills my being with possibilities. Here desire is purified into openness: each action a preparation, each choice a yes to the unknown.’<sup>38</sup> The depth of Hammarskjöld’s willingness and unconditional ‘Yes’ in 1953 is clearly foreshadowed here and should be captured in the translation.<sup>39</sup> Yet, as Lipsey suggests, nowhere in this passage is the word ‘God’ used. ‘Whatever stands waiting on the other side of the frontier is unknown.’ Out of a year of ‘personal torment’ in 1951, Hammarskjöld ‘experiences strictly on its own terms what can justly be called a moment of true mysticism or transcendent vision.’<sup>40</sup>

He has [DM1]realised earlier in 1950 that it is a call to live in the ‘now’ for ‘in this very moment...I can and must pay for all that I have received.’ By living in each moment, ‘is not beauty created at every encounter between a man and life..?’<sup>41</sup> This call to go beyond one’s limits will develop into a summons to self-transcendence in relation to ultimate truth and value, one that demands a response. Hammarskjöld’s definitive ‘Yes’ captures this, while implying ethical responsibility in life and for others.

### ***‘Yes’ in Retrospect and Language***

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<sup>38</sup> *Markings*, 77-8. Aulén, says that the ‘unheard-of’ could also be rendered ‘that which transcends all imagination.’ Further, he says that ‘this is obviously what Hammarskjöld later described as the mystical experience: ‘to be in the hands of God’ (Aulén, *White Book*, 26).

<sup>39</sup> For that reason, Lipsey suggests ‘openness’ and ‘yes’ are more accurate than ‘lucid’ and ‘assent.’ Lipsey, *Hammarskjöld: A Life*, 90 and 654. Erling suggests ‘receptivity.’ See *A Reader’s Handbook*, 76.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>41</sup> *Markings*, 64.

In his entry for Whitsunday (May 21) 1961, Hammarskjöld effectively summarises his inner life during his time in the United Nations. This is a passage often cited and Lipsey observes that ‘had he not written these lines there is much we would not know.’<sup>42</sup>

I don’t know who – or what – put the question, I don’t know when it was put. I don’t even remember answering. But at some moment I did answer *yes* so someone – or something – and from that hour I was certain that existence is meaningful and that, therefore my life, in self-surrender, has a goal.<sup>43</sup>

Here, his first entry’s resonance of a ‘clear pure note’ has modulated into a personal response to a question, a ‘yes’ to a call foreshadowed in 1951, recognised in 1953 and subsequently repeated in which he found his true self and unity in his life. In many ways, the text of Whitsunday 1961 distils four key issues: divine presence as transcendent and immanent, response and responsibility. Suggested here is the blend of what can be apprehended but not comprehended, grasped but still unspeakable, which raises the issue of language.

Aulén suggests that two headings characterize the names for God used by Hammarskjöld: the anonymous/impersonal and the precise/specific. Under the first would be terms such as ‘something’ or ‘someone’ or ‘the Other,’ ‘the Oneness,’ ‘the Unity.’ One point of influence on Hammarskjöld from the medieval mystics is the use of such impersonal language of God. He quotes a text of Eckhart which, to the question of how we ought to love God, replies it is ‘as if He were a non-God, a non-Spirit, a non-Person, a non-substance; love

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<sup>42</sup> Lipsey, ‘Dag Hammarskjöld and *Markings*: A Reconsideration,’ 93.

<sup>43</sup> *Markings*, 169.

Him simply as the One, the pure and Absolute Unity in which is no trace of Duality.’<sup>44</sup>

Again, there is the ‘infinite distance between the creature and the Creator.’<sup>45</sup> Hammarskjöld draws on Eckhart and the *via negativa*’s apophatic language in which all language or names for God are, ultimately, inadequate. God can only be known and described as mystery. We reach a point where we are reduced to silence before God.

In *Markings*, the two categories of language often appear side by side. This brings us to our next section on specific and personal language about God and the other wing of faith. Our investigation so far has, given its theological focus, drawn on the earlier and substantial work of Aulén, with some reference to more recent studies by Maas on theological reflection.<sup>46</sup> Our concern now is to bring other studies into conversation with *Markings*.

### **The ‘Thou’ of Hammarskjöld’s Faith**

‘Thou’ is the name most used by Hammarskjöld when addressing God whether in meditation or prayer. God’s transcendence and immanence is reflected in entries such as: ‘Thou whom I do not know but Whose I am’ or ‘Only when you descend into yourself and encounter the Other, do you then experience goodness as the ultimate reality – united and living – *in Him and through you*’<sup>47</sup> This form of address clearly has biblical roots, especially in his familiarity with the Psalter as in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. Often Hammarskjöld

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<sup>44</sup> *Markings*, 99.

<sup>45</sup> *Markings*, 105.

<sup>46</sup> Aulén’s theological approach is significant in this investigation given that studies on Hammarskjöld are mainly biographical, ethical, political or spiritual.

<sup>47</sup> *Markings*, 139. Italics in original.



cites the first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer and the threefold use of *Thy* (name, Kingdom, will). Representative of his normal practice is a prayer from 1954:

Thou who are over us,  
Thou who art one of us,  
Thou who *art* –  
Also within us,  
May all see Thee – in me also,  
May I prepare the way for Thee,  
May I thank Thee for all that shall fall to my lot,  
May I also not forget the needs of others,  
Keep me in Thy love  
As Thou wouldest that all should be kept in mine.  
May everything in this my being be directed to Thy glory  
And may I never despair.  
For I am under Thy hand,  
And in Thee is all power and goodness.

Give me a pure heart – that I may see Thee,  
A humble heart – that I may hear Thee,  
A heart of love – that I may serve Thee,  
A heart of faith – that I may abide in Thee.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> *Markings*, 93.

These lines are a compressed expression of Hammarskjöld's spirituality and its moral impulse. Our focus, here, is one word, namely, 'Thou.' What first strikes the reader is noted by Lipsey drawing on Bernhard Erling, namely, the Trinitarian sense of the first four lines where Father, Son and Holy Spirit are addressed, respectively, as 'over us,' 'one of us' and 'within us.'<sup>49</sup> Erling notes that [DM2]the chiastic pattern of the following lines where we find an inverted mirror of that pattern: of the indwelling Spirit 'in me' to be visible to others, of preparing the 'way' of the Son (like John the Baptist) and gratitude to the Father as creator and guide of one's destiny.<sup>50</sup> This is repeated in the final stanza but centred now in the heart: to hear as 'under' the Father; to serve in imitative love of the Son; to 'abide' in God through the Spirit. It would appear this is a multi-dimensional Trinitarian prayer - to which we will return later.

Second, the repetition of 'Thou,' nevertheless, carries a sense of distance between God and humanity, an expression of reverential awe. God is beyond and over us. Union with God is to be under God's hand. God gives but also makes demands on us. Yet, with the Trinitarian impulse in these prayers, while not implying 'person' can be applied to God without qualification, there is a sense of a daring familiarity in using *Thou* as an intimate pronoun. It is a mix of wonder and of intimacy. Again, a later entry from July 1961, two months prior to his death, begins with the final stanza of the prayer just discussed with its Trinitarian allusion.

Give us  
a pure heart  
That we may see Thee,

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<sup>49</sup> Lipsey, *Hammarskjöld: A Life*, 197.

<sup>50</sup> Erling, *A Reader's Guide*, 113.

A humble heart  
That we may hear Thee,  
A heart of love  
That we may serve Thee,  
A heart of faith  
That we may live Thee,  
Thou  
Whom I do not know  
But Whose I am  
  
Thou  
Whom I do not comprehend  
But Who hast dedicated me  
To my destiny,  
Thou—<sup>51</sup>

These final two stanzas mark a shift both in mood and to apophatic mode with an intimation of suspended wonder. Within both mystery and reverential friendship, there is peaceful surrender to a sacred task, a belonging that calls for a consecration. But can one also

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<sup>51</sup> *Markings*, 176. Aulén here and elsewhere, for ‘fate’ with its fatalistic implications, uses ‘destiny’ – a more active connotation of destination, divine will and human choice. Aulén, *White Book*, 93.

detect something suggested by novelist Sirl Hustvedt that, between lovers, there is a kind of ‘awed separateness’ necessary to maintain desire.<sup>52</sup> Let us pursue this further.

### ***Further Elaborations on ‘I-Thou’***

Aulén observes that Hammarskjöld’s relationship with God can rightly be described as an ‘I-Thou’ relation. Hammarskjöld certainly read Martin Buber, visited him in Jerusalem and, in the last summer of his life, started to translate Buber’s *I and Thou*. For Aulén, the author was understandably drawn to Buber in that the philosopher offered a framework for Hammarskjöld’s own thought, particularly, that the primary ‘relation to God was of the I to a transsubjective Thou.’ This is the experiential framework that forms consciousness. From there, statements and language about God arose (as I-It affirmations) and, hence, were secondary.<sup>53</sup> This relationship to Buber’s philosophical approach can be illuminated by more recent studies.<sup>54</sup>

First, Hammarskjöld’s entries disclose a pattern found elsewhere, for instance, in the Catholic moral theologian Bernard Haring and is an indicator that ‘spiritual/moral’ is perhaps the best descriptor for Hammarskjöld’s vision. First, religion designates both response and responsibility connoting

the relation of dialogue, word and response, in a community...[and] is most

apposite to express the personal relation between God and man – which is the I and

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<sup>52</sup> Review of her book *A Plea for Eros* in ‘Spectrum,’ *Sydney Morning Herald*, (18-19 March, 2006), 21. ‘Thou’ (Auden’s translation) rather than ‘you’ (Erling’s) seems more consonant with the mood of these Trinitarian prayers of 1954 and 1961 and their mix of familiarity and reverence, of ‘awed separateness.’

<sup>53</sup> Aulén, *White Book*, 76.

<sup>54</sup> Aulén made helpful comparisons of Hammarskjöld’s views with Luther, Kierkegaard and Bonhoeffer.

Thou relation – of word and response – specifically God’s word calling and inviting man and the human decision in response and acceptance.<sup>55</sup>

Again, Hammarskjöld resembles Haring in displaying two key ideas, noted by Cahalan, in common with Buber, Max Scheler and Rudolf Otto<sup>56</sup>: the person-to person encounter (including the divine persons) has an experiential basis; there is a ‘givenness’ to the divine encounter as well as a social character (i.e., the I-Thou encounter understood within the wider dynamic of the I-Thou-We). What Cahalan says of Haring’s three essential features of religion in *The Law of Christ* also applies to Hammarskjöld in that

religion is constituted by dialogue, first initiated by God, followed by a person’s response; it is personal, that is, the person is grasped by God, the divine person (and through the person of Jesus Christ) who addresses the individual as a unique person; and religion is experienced and lived out within the fellowship of community.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Bernard Haring, *The Law of Christ* Vol 1 (1961), 61 cited in Kathleen A Cahalan, *Formed in the Image of Christ: The Sacramental-Moral Theology of Bernard Haring C.Ss.R* (Collegeville MN: Liturgical Press, 2004), 65.

<sup>56</sup> Lipsey notes that Hammarskjöld had read early in his life Otto’s *Das Heilige* (1917) where he was exposed ‘to richly developed concepts of mysticism and of the components of direct religious experience.’ He also was very attached to Jacques Rivière’s *A la trace de Dieu* (1925). Lipsey, ‘Dag Hammarskjöld and *Markings*: A Reconsideration,’ 98.

<sup>57</sup> Cahalan, *Formed in the Image of Christ*, 70-71.

Second, Aulén's comment, noted above, that the primary 'relation to God was of the I to a transjective Thou' and that language about God (as I-It) was secondary can be probed further in the light of the recent work of philosopher Andrew Tallon.

In Buber's philosophy of dialogue and intersubjectivity, the key aspect of his thought is the category of 'the between.' Tallon's approaches this area within the framework of intentional consciousness understood in terms of cognitive, affective and volitional intentionalities. Tallon points out that explanation of 'the between' in Buber requires recourse to the concept of 'affective intentionality' where there is an 'intending by the I of the Thou in an actual, present relation (I-Thou).' This is 'prior, chronologically and ontologically, to the subsequent experience which for Buber is the loss of the present Thou in an I-It relationship.'<sup>58</sup>

Tallon argues that, for Buber, 'the between' must be designated as an 'encounter,' namely, 'an affective consciousness that keeps the distance that makes relation possible,' - perhaps analogous to the 'awed separateness' needed to maintain desire noted above? 'Experience,' alternatively, is a 'cognitive consciousness that absorbs the otherness...making others the same as my ideas or images of them.' Where space becomes intentional through embodiment, the 'between' of encounter brings a sense of nearness that is 'felt intersubjectively' as an 'ethical space.' Meaning, then, for Buber is neither in *you* or in *me* as free-standing subjects but *between* us. It is revealed in the moment of encounter as embodied, felt meaning, a resonating of one's being with that of another. Even 'before we know it' (in concepts, through cognitive intentionality), we experience it through affective intentionality as the *immediate and interpersonal appreciation of value*.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Andrew Tallon, *Affection, Cognition, Volition as Triune Consciousness* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1994), 29. Tallon offers a phenomenological development of the Thomistic model of intentionality.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 39, 42. Italics added. Connections to Levinas are clearly evident but beyond the scope of this article.

### *Transforming Consciousness: Love, Wisdom and Virtue*

These reflections on Haring and Buber offer a helpful interpretative tool when applied to Hammarskjöld and *Markings*. With regard to Haring, there are clear allusions by Hammarskjöld to his awareness of the initiative and action as primarily from God analogous, as in the image, noted earlier, to someone gripping a sling to hurl a stone at a target.’<sup>60</sup> Again, the author’s life and actions are as an instrument of God - ‘Not I but God in me.’<sup>61</sup> The ‘Yes’ of Hammarskjöld is not to an anonymous but to a personal yet mysterious ‘Other.’ It encapsulates the dynamic of dialogue, of call and response and overflows into responsibility for the other. The very core of his faith is an experienced reality of trust and surrender. The vertical and the horizontal forms of relationship, then, appear to share a pattern of what Davies refers to as ‘kenotic consciousness.’ In this, self-dispossession and surrender to God and to ‘others’ is a manifestation of being itself, of what is ultimately real, namely, compassionate love.<sup>62</sup>

Other entries underscore the qualities noted above from Buber, namely, encounter of I-Thou centred on affective intentionality and felt sense of value. First, in 1955, Hammarskjöld reveals his awareness of the need to somehow ‘enter into’ the subjectivity of the ‘other.’ Lasting solutions in conflict, for instance, involve both a learning ‘to see the other objectively’ but, at the same time, to experience his difficulties subjectively.’<sup>63</sup> This

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<sup>60</sup> *Markings*, 134.

<sup>61</sup> *Markings*, 127.

<sup>62</sup> See Oliver Davies, *A Theology of Compassion: Metaphysics of Difference and the Renewal of Tradition* (United Kingdom: SCM; USA: Grand Rapids Mich: Eerdmans, 2001), 232-33.

<sup>63</sup> *Markings* 102. Hammarskjöld expands on this passage and quotes at length from Buber in his speech ‘The Walls of Distrust’ delivered in 1958 at Cambridge University. See Aulén, *White Book*, 74.

expression of political wisdom is underpinned by an attitude of self-dispossession and of accountability to a transcendent ‘subject’ revealed in Hammarskjöld’s earlier 1950 entry (but far removed from the autonomous ethic of Kant): ‘Treat others as ends, never as means’ and of shifting

the dividing-line in my being between subject and object to a position where the subject, even it is in me, is outside and above me –so that my *whole* being may become an instrument for that which is greater than I.<sup>64</sup>

Second, 1958-59 entries reveal important integrating insights and return us to the theme of faith as being ‘*one* in God and God is wholly in you,’ and, in this, *everything* has meaning. In loneliness and darkness, one comes to know ‘the only real thing, love’s calm unwavering flame...’<sup>65</sup> For Hammarskjöld, in silence and stillness, love’s action creates a union and the singleness of heart, hence, giving light that transforms how we perceive reality, oneself and ones actions. Through the divine power, one experiences a ‘liberation from things’ such that ‘you encounter in them an experience which has the purity and clarity of revelation.’<sup>66</sup> This has various levels in Hammarskjöld’s search for wisdom, reflected in his 1959 entry from Psalm 51: 6, ‘thou require truth in the inward parts, and shall make me to understand wisdom secretly.’<sup>67</sup>

This takes, first, a general form in 1958:

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<sup>64</sup> *Markings*, 64. See Erling, *A Reader’s Guide*, 53.

<sup>65</sup> *Markings*, 139, 140.

<sup>66</sup> *Markings*, 139.

<sup>67</sup> *Markings*, 147.



Only in man has the evolution of the creation reached the point where reality encounters itself in judgment and choice...Only when you descend into yourself and encounter the Other, do you then experience goodness as the ultimate reality – united and living – *in Him and through you*.<sup>68</sup>

Here, ‘the Other’ reflect his reading of Otto and the ‘Wholly Other.’ Using language of encounter, Hammarskjöld conveys his movement beyond the frontier of ‘the unheard-of’ (where ‘desire is purified into openness’) into a more immediate and embodied consciousness of the mystery of being and its revelatory power. It is noteworthy how the resultant shaping of one’s rational capacities, as reflected in this and further entries (examined below), converges with a similar approach in the Christian tradition found, for instance, in the virtue ethics of Thomas Aquinas. As ‘one’ in God, we share in the wisdom and providence of the divine exemplar through affective consciousness, namely, an appreciation of God as the absolute centre of value, of good as the ‘ultimate reality.’ Again, we are images of God (the exemplar) in judgment, freedom and the capacity for self-direction, especially through practical wisdom.<sup>69</sup>

A more specific expression of this is captured earlier in 1956 when Hammarskjöld refers to Eckhart.

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<sup>68</sup> *Markings*, 139. In this excerpt, Hammarskjöld uses ‘the Other’ twice and earlier in 1950 (54).

<sup>69</sup> See STh I-II.1.91.2 and I.II. Prol.

*Semina motuum*. In us the creative instinct became will. In order to grow beautifully like a tree, we have to attain a peaceful self-unity in which the creative will is re-transformed into instinct.—Eckhart’s ‘habitual will.’<sup>70</sup>

In an earlier entry, Hammarskjöld cites Eckhart’s distinction between contingent/non-essential will and ‘habitual will’ which is ‘providential and creative’ and that God only gives himself to a will that is open and receptive.<sup>71</sup> The relationship of trust between God and the very core of a person, the ‘yes’ of surrender and love, is captured in the term ‘habitual will.’<sup>72</sup> This meeting of wills, hence, is a collaborative relationship that is not a loss of human freedom but its fullest expression. It also denotes an openness to, and creative influence on, the ‘wills’ and lives of others. ‘Re-transformed into instinct’ suggests the will’s habituated tendencies to true values that we call virtues, dispositions that are second-nature and, in a sense, ‘instinctive.’ This is in continuity with the eudaimonian ethics of Eckhart’s Dominican

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<sup>70</sup> *Markings*, 117. Lipsey notes that ‘*semina motuum*’ is taken from Ezra Pound’s translation [one of three \(is the word order correct here?\)](#) Confucian sourcebooks, ‘The Great Digest.’ Its context needs to be noted: ‘One humane family can humanize a whole state; one courteous family can lift a whole state into courtesy; one grasping and perverse man can drive a nation to chaos. Such are the seeds of movement (*semina motuum*, the inner impulses of the tree]. That is what we mean by: one word will ruin the business, one man can bring the state to an orderly course. (*Pound*, 59–61). Lipsey, ‘Interpreting Hammarskjöld’s Political Wisdom’ at <http://www.dag-hammarskjold.com/interpreting-hammarskjold-s-political-wisdom/the-unwobbling-pivot-part-2/> accessed 10.1.2015.

<sup>71</sup> *Markings*, 111.

<sup>72</sup> See Manuel Frölich, *Political Ethics and the United Nations: Dag Hammarskjöld as Secretary General*, 78, <https://books.google.com.au/books?id=Rh4FompyKiAC&pg=PA78&lpg=PA78&dq=eckhart%27s+habitual+will&source=bl&ots=lt46FLDkDt&sig=o5meS8KTDLgi8LzoHLEv9QkZcS8&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MJu5VLaMJEPAmAW3yIH4DQ&sqi=2&ved=0CB0Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=eckhart%27s%20habitual%20will&f=false> accessed 10/1/2015.

predecessor, Aquinas. Again, Hammarskjöld's guiding Confucian image, the tree with its inner impulses ('seeds of movement') and implied 'fruits,' is also used by Jesus in the Gospels.

Third, Hammarskjöld's longing for wisdom is further specified later in 1959. He speaks of encountering the world from a 'point of rest at the centre of our being' where 'to be *one* or *whole*, namely, single hearted, is to experience reality, not *in relation to ourselves*, but in its sacred independence. It is to see, judge and act from the point of rest in ourselves. Then, how much disappears and all the remains falls into place.'<sup>73</sup> In this, wisdom's secrets should acknowledge the autonomy of earthly realities (the secular realm) together with their claims concerning truth and goodness in moral evaluation and action from God's perspective. This also entails a way of 'recognising' and gaining 'full insight' into that 'dark, counter-centre of evil in our nature' (Original Sin).<sup>74</sup> There is the associated need to 'purify the eye of [your] attention until it becomes utterly simple and direct.'<sup>75</sup>

Overall, such insights from two to three years before his death mark a significant stage in Hammarskjöld's evolving consciousness. It is from the inter-subjective, even participatory, context of the I-Thou relationship that perceptions, dispositions, judgments, choices and actions find their true objects and meaning through the life of the virtues. There is a resonating of one's being with that of God (the Other) by sharing the divine 'ethical space.' By being 'in' Him, what is truly good can be discerned and enacted in cooperation with God ('*through you*'), in practical wisdom. This is to be self-effaced in the Light 'so that

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<sup>73</sup> *Markings*, 148. Aulén suggests 'single-hearted' or 'simplicity' as best capturing the Swedish word rather than 'humility.' Aulén, *White Book*, 68.

<sup>74</sup> *Markings*, 128.

<sup>75</sup> *Markings*, 95

it may be focused or spread wider.’<sup>76</sup> Hammarskjöld’s is, like Aquinas, a sapiential vision animated and directed by love’s ‘calm unwavering flame.’ All this underpins two other excerpts: ‘The only value of a life is its content – for *others*’ and ‘In our era, the path to sanctification necessarily passes through action.’<sup>77</sup> We find converging in Hammarskjöld the affective, cognitive and volitional intentionalities of Tallon’s triune consciousness. There is a continuum of the mystical and the ethical.

### **A Trinitarian Consciousness and Theosis?**

It is often asked whether Hammarskjöld was a mystic. Given the term’s ambiguity, as in its elitist associations or its privatized view of interiority, Aulén considers a simple yes or no is not possible.<sup>78</sup> Rather, he asks what the mystics meant for Hammarskjöld. He suggests it is a dialectical relationship, reflected in the interplay of apophatic and kataphatic language discussed earlier, Lipsey sees it as ‘reverent discipleship’ such that, for Hammarskjöld, mysticism ‘had a natural place in his inner life.’<sup>79</sup> Taking another approach, I will examine Hammarskjöld’s religious consciousness in relation to the Trinity and to *theosis*.

*Markings* unveils the gradual transformation of Hammarskjöld’s consciousness of being ‘in’ God and of God’s presence and action ‘in’ him. While it involved longing or ‘desire’ being ‘purified into openness’ in 1951, he distanced himself from identifying his encounter with the divine as grounded solely in ‘feelings.’ It was a relationship of loving surrender that ‘gripped’ his whole person and, as discussed above, an ‘entire process’ of

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<sup>76</sup> *Markings*, 133.

<sup>77</sup> *Markings*, 140 and 108. Aulén prefers ‘sanctification’ to ‘holiness’ because of its stronger sense of God’s action and its centrifugal character. Aulén, *White Book*, 100.

<sup>78</sup> He does suggest an affirmative answer on occasion. See note 38 above.

<sup>79</sup> Lipsey, ‘Dag Hammarskjöld and *Markings*: A Reconsideration,’ 99.

affective or evaluative change that shaped and directed him in his perceptions, dispositions, judging, loving and deciding – the realm of the virtues. He speaks of ‘mystical experience’ as ‘the receptive attention of assent’ in one ‘free from self-concern’ to the mystery that ‘is a constant reality,’ that is *here* and *now*—in that freedom which is one with distance in that stillness which is born of silence...a freedom in the midst of action.’<sup>80</sup>

Typically, in *Markings*, Hammarskjöld’s mode of address in prayers is to a unitary Thou. But, through the person of Jesus, we can detect Hammarskjöld’s consciousness of union with the persons of the Trinity. We have discussed this earlier of a prayer from 1954 and its multidimensional Trinitarian texture. While couched in the primary mode of address, these 1956 entries also suggest a personal and intimate aspect to ‘I-Thou’ relationship, again by using prepositions.

*Before* Thee, Father,

In righteousness and humility.

*With* Thee, Brother,

In faith and courage.

*In* Thee, Spirit,

In stillness.

However, in the entry’s second part, as Erling notes, what is implied is the ‘unity of the triune God. ..it is the one God’s will that is DH’s destiny.’<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> *Markings*, 108.

<sup>81</sup> Erling, *A Reader’s Guide*, 148.

*Thine* – for Thy will is my destiny,

*Dedicated* – for my destiny is to be used and used up according to Thy will.<sup>82</sup>

The second entry from June 1956 is immediately preceded by the passage discussed earlier on ‘habitual will.’

-looking straight into one’s own heart –

(as we can do in the mirror-image of the Father)

-watching with affection the way people grow-

(as in imitation of the Son)

coming to rest in perfect equity

(as in the fellowship of the Holy Ghost)

Like the ultimate experience, our ethical experience is the same for all. Even the Way of the Confucian world is a ‘Trinity.’<sup>83</sup>

Here, the similar pattern of the prayer of 1954 is evident as, too, is the central role of the ‘heart’ and affections in offering a unifying point for the roles of the persons of the Trinity (suggested in the one verse of 1961 noted above). But, here, the context is more the Trinity seen in relation to ‘habitual will,’ namely, cultivating the virtues and their social implications. Also, with the associated controlling metaphor of the ‘tree’ (noted above), and a focus on the ‘heart’ and the ‘still’ centre of the person, there are clear resonances with the

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<sup>82</sup> *Markings*, 109.

<sup>83</sup> *Markings*, 117.

Biblical understanding of 'heart' as a person's spiritual and moral core from which attitudes and actions emerge.

In these and the earlier texts, Hammarskjöld tries to articulate his consciousness of the differing functions of the Father, Word and the Spirit in transforming human subjectivity. This Trinitarian awareness (in perception, affective disposition, self-awareness and peaceful solidarity), even if partially developed, complements, even if it is not fully synchronized with, his later insight into the ethical texture of encounter with the Other and with what is ultimate, namely, goodness- as discussed earlier. Again, the texts here reflect the Unity of the experience of God while implying its expressions in different religions. Further, the use of an analogue between the Christian Trinity and an ethical Confucian 'trinity' suggests the divine image present in human beings as also the work of the Trinity, through the Spirit, in all sincere quests for goodness.

The only other entry with any Trinitarian allusion appears, as noted earlier, in July 1961. While, in the four entries from 1954 to 1961, Hammarskjöld articulates an initial awareness of union with God as a sharing in the relations that are constitutive of divine life, namely, between Father, Son and Spirit, this is not elaborated further. When, in July 1961, Hammarskjöld prays 'Thou...Whose I am,' in the underlying sense of identity and vocation as a gift - from, in and for God- the emphasis appears to be less Trinitarian and more in relation to the one God understood in the context of 'I-thou,' as noted earlier. Nevertheless, our considerations have indicated that Hammarskjöld's later religious consciousness, as reflected in *Markings*, seems to be a developing interplay between the presence of God as a unitary 'Thou' and as Trinity.

Further, Hammarskjöld's consciousness of God's presence and action can be considered in terms of deification or *theosis*, namely, the process of transformation through grace in which the human person is raised in union with Christ to share in and to live the life

of God. In this Hammarskjöld is part of a tradition reaching back to Augustine, the Pseudo-Denys through the Dominicans Eckhart and Aquinas.<sup>84</sup> This ‘partaking of the divine nature’ (2 Peter 1:4) does not connote either becoming divine or absorption of the human person into God. Dodd notes that divinization as ‘transforming consciousness’ has two aspects: its impact on the ‘reality of the person, in particular in knowing and loving.’ This is evident in Hammarskjöld. But as, noted above, there is only a partial development of consciousness of what is of the ‘greatest importance,’ namely, ‘entry in divine relationship.’<sup>85</sup>

Relevant, here, are parallel comments. McIntosh observes that the fundamental quality of the divine life and of the person as God’s image is the ‘life of giving to the other and establishing the inherent patterns of relationship.’ So too, for Hammarskjöld, God’s union with the soul results in a ‘union with other people which does not draw back before the ultimate surrender of the self.’<sup>86</sup> Again, Hammarskjöld’s self- reflections share something with Augustine: that desire or longing provides the attraction towards the Other by which the human subject finds its true self through ‘an availability to be drawn into the divine activity of knowing and loving.’<sup>87</sup>

Further, Hammarskjöld’s language of union, intimacy and transformative participation with their personal repercussions seem to suggest less a forensic justification and more what Louth describes as a ‘breaking of, and reconstruction of the heart, as the

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<sup>84</sup> See Denys Turner, *The Darkness of God: Negativity in Christian Mysticism* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 143.

<sup>85</sup> Michael Dodd, OCD, ‘Divinization’ in Michael Downey, ed., *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality* (Collegeville: MN: The Liturgical Press, 1993), 285.

<sup>86</sup> *Markings*, 137.

<sup>87</sup> Mark A. McIntosh, *Mystical Theology: The Integrity of Spirituality and Theology* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 1998), 220-21.



ontological centre of human beings.’ Further, it is true of Hammarskjöld that, while deification is quite beyond human achievement, it demands ‘strenuous human effort’ and ‘a serious asceticism as the human is shaped to the presence and activity of the divine.’<sup>88</sup>

Finally, Louth notes that the patristic doctrine of deification sees the arc of human destiny not primarily within the lesser arc of fall/redemption but in deification’s principal arc in which ‘creation finds its fulfilment.’<sup>89</sup> Hammarskjöld’s entries are marked by a love for creation, and of its revelatory power in nourishing the presence of God. He is, nevertheless, aware of the reality of sin and evil, particularly in terms self-centredness and the need of redemption. He speaks of God creating the world ‘each morning anew, *forgiven*’—in Thee, by Thee’ while, elsewhere, alluding to the God’s victory in the eschaton.<sup>90</sup>

However, there is a telling 1955 ‘vision’ complementing the image of a magnetic field for the Communion of Saints and reinforcing Hammarskjöld’s deep yearning for fellowship.<sup>91</sup> Aulén notes it would be an error to translate the entry into ‘theological formulas.’ Yet, it can be seen as a wavering ‘needle in a compass...even as it indicates a definite direction.’ In the ‘dream’ we are offered a ‘window opening up to wide vistas.’<sup>92</sup> In a dialectical pattern, it adumbrates, even anticipates, a divinely-oriented future. It offers an insight into Hammarskjöld’s hopes about humanity’s and creation’s destiny as seen, in God’s company, reaching down into the silent depths of the mystery of reality.

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<sup>88</sup> Andrew Louth, ‘Deification,’ in Philip Sheldrake, ed., *The New Dictionary of Christian Spirituality* (Louisville KY: Westminster John Know Press, 2005), 229-30, at 230.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid*, 230.

<sup>90</sup> *Markings*, 138. Also ‘Thou who has created us free, Who sees all that happens—yet art confident of victory’ (92).

<sup>91</sup> See note 21.

<sup>92</sup> Aulén, *White Book*, 120.

In a dream, I walked with God through the deep places of creation; past walls that receded and gates that opened, through hall after hall of silence, darkness and refreshment –the dwelling place of souls acquainted with light and warmth—*until, around me, was an infinity into which we all flowed together and lived anew*, like the rings made by raindrops falling upon wide expanses of calm dark water.’<sup>93</sup>

## Conclusion

*Markings*, with its blend of image, distilled insight and compressed emotion, resembles the haiku often used by Hammarskjöld. These very personal reflections, while a record and a tool giving shape to his life, are amenable to theological analysis, even if limited.

Hammarskjöld’s frame of reference, with its mix of the dialectical and the analogical is, perhaps, best described as a dialogical imagination. Again, while his journal reveals a man whose consciousness could well be described as ‘mystical,’ its overall quality in terms of the divine presence has four modulating keys: the inter-subjective and theocentric, namely, oriented towards a unitary God of ‘I-Thou; the Trinitarian with its personal intimacy; persistent elements of ‘kenotic consciousness;’ and its sapiential quality. Finally, reflecting the influences of his upbringing, of his contemporary Albert Schweitzer and of medieval authors, Hammarskjöld’s sense of fidelity to his vocation, with God and for others, is a wholesome reminder that spirituality’s scope includes moral and social responsibility.

In many ways, Hammarskjöld’s words concerning a poem are applicable to his journal. *Markings* is

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<sup>93</sup> *Markings*, 105, italics added.

like a deed in that it is to be judged as a manifestation of the personality of the maker. This in no way ignores its beauty as measured by aesthetic standards of perfection, but also considers its authenticity as measured by its congruence with an inner life.’<sup>94</sup>

This is encapsulated in the journal’s opening (and recurring) image of a mountaineer seeking ‘where life resounds,’ searching to find but, ultimately, being found by, ‘A clear pure note in the silence.’

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<sup>94</sup> *Markings*, 112.