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Challenging the Cultural Imaginary: Pieper on How Life might Live

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In this paper I want to do a couple of things. First, I want to characterize our situation as a "cultural imaginary of life as total work." The notion of "life as total work" I get from Josef Pieper, whose work helps me with the other task of this paper, namely, to suggest why we might challenge this cultural imaginary and how we might change the cultural imaginary. Before I do however, let me say more about the cultural imaginary itself.

The idea of the cultural imaginary which I have been using arises out of the work of Graham Ward, but has its beginnings in the writing of Charles Taylor, Cornelius Castoriadis, and others. In order to understand what is meant by the cultural imaginary, I will briefly highlight how it is used by these three thinkers.[1]

Charles Taylor conceives of the "social imaginary" (I will address the contrast to the "cultural imaginary" below) as that which allows us to imagine our "social surroundings," or literally, to see or conceive of ourselves and how we fit into the world around us through images and stories. The social imaginary is usually held not by small groups of people but by large swathes of the populace or sometimes, as in the case I am presently arguing for in considering the idea of total work, by the whole of a society. The social imaginary is not theoretical but is in fact the very fabric which allows for our practices and ways of living to make sense and have legitimacy—it allows us to have a common understanding of how to interact with each other and when we're doing so, to comprehend what we're up to.[2]

Castoriadis notes similarly regarding the significations which constitute the social imaginary, that they "create a proper world for the society considered—in fact, they *are* this world; and they shape the psyche of individuals. They create a 'representation' of the world, including society itself and its place in this world."[3]

[1] I am grateful to Joel P. Okamoto for his suggestions and reflections on organizing this paper.

[2] Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), p. 23.

[3] Cornelius Castoriadis, "Radical Imagination and the Social Instituting Imaginary" in *The Castoriadis Reader*, ed. David Ames Curtis (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), pp. 319–337.

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Ward takes issue with the idea of a strictly "social imaginary." Distancing himself from both Castoriadis and Taylor, Ward wants to use the idea of a *cultural* imaginary because he contends that even the idea of the *social* is situated within and emerges from the cultural. Thus, maintaining the idea of a cultural imaginary (while it must also admit that the ideas of culture and imaginary are situated), can be consistently done within the larger hermeneutical framework of the cultural, while at the same time more accurately accounting for itself as well as the social. Thus he says,

> There need to be then, new understandings of what constitutes the social and society as distinct from the cultural and culture, but it cannot be on the grounds of some myth of the given; human beings in some immediate and 'raw' mode of cohabitation. The cultural imaginary as that magma of social significations makes many forms of sociality possible. . .And I would see religious traditions, which long have retained theological accounts of *societas*, as having a major contribution to make here to public discourse. . .[4]

Speaking of religious accounts of *societas*, let us see how Max Weber's idea of the Protestant work ethic reflects something central to the contemporary cultural imaginary. The Protestant work ethic, in Ward's words, makes a certain form of sociality possible (and makes others, seemingly at least, impossible). That form of sociality is exactly what Pieper's work is standing against, that is, the conception of life as one of total work.

On the first page of his *Happiness and Contemplation*, Josef Pieper makes a rather provocative statement. He pronounces that "man's ultimate happiness consists in contemplation." Such a statement, he says, "contains a whole philosophy of life, a basic conception of the nature of man and the meaning of human existence."[5] Indeed, Pieper's work presupposes a particular anthropology, one which views human creatures as created for a certain purpose, one which characterizes them as being in pursuit of this end in all their living.[6]

[4] Graham Ward, *Cultural Transformation and Religious Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 163–164.

[5] Josef Pieper, *Happiness and Contemplation*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (South Bend: St. Augustine's Press, Inc., 1998), p. 13.

[6] The reader may be immediately struck by the narrow idea of contemplation alone as that for which man is created. However, this is not Pieper's view. Contemplation for Pieper, as for Thomas and Aristotle, in whose traditions he is following, is definitely aimed at something–the beatific vision. The contemplation of the divine is that end of our human pursuit of knowing of which Pieper speaks. From such contemplation, Pieper is able to conclude that contemplation of the divine "contains a whole philosophy of life, a basic conception of the nature of man and the meaning of human existence" (13). In such contemplation, man's desire to know is fulfilled in an ultimate sense, thus bringing ultimate happiness.

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Yet more than 30 years before this, in his *Leisure, The Basis of Culture*, Pieper begins setting up the problem of man's life as one of "total work." Man, he says, is bound to the working process. "To be bound to the working process is to be bound to the whole process of usefulness, and moreover, to be bound in such a way that the whole life of the working human being is consumed."[7]

Pieper's work contrasts two views of life—a life of total work against a life of leisure, contemplation, festivity, and worship. I will spend time unpacking the second view later. The first view is familiar: it is the contemporary cultural imaginary which casts life in terms of an internalized sense of the necessity of production, hard work, utility, and the resultant income and satisfaction that comes from such. This internalized sense has become part of the cultural imaginary of life's meaning, its purpose, and therefore, is taken for granted by many as definitive of how life is to be lived. Thus Pieper, among others, has characterized our culture as one of total work. At least in the West, he argues that man is captured by the view—it *has* us—in such a way that we can imagine no other possibility for how life could be lived, no other way for things to be. He frames our entrapment in such a way that it is capable of causing delusion, such that man thinks he is happy living purely for production in a system that only values usefulness.

Pieper formulates the definitive attitude of those who would defend our taken-for-granted culture of total work:

> [M]an obviously feels himself happiest when he is able to work in a creatively active fashion in the world, following out his own impulses and plans. Is not the man who labors constructively, the plowman, the gardener, and above all the creative artist, considered the prototype of the happy man, in spite of all the sweat of toil or the pangs of creation—considered so because it is granted to him to bring into the world out of his own body and mind a whole *poiema*, an objective product?[8]

Readers of this thought might immediately react to what seem to be the positive factors mentioned here: creativity, happiness, a uniquely human creation. Certainly such ideas are not considered negatively by Pieper himself. What is problematic is that the conceptions of creativity, production, and happiness used above are circumscribed by the processes of usefulness defined and legitimated by the economic hegemony of modern culture—that is, an economy of commodity fetishism where work has become meaningless in itself and only products have value. To that extent, Pieper's statement that "man's

[7] Josef Pieper, *Leisure, The Basis of Culture*, trans. Gerald Malsbury (South Bend: St. Augustine's Press, 1998), p. 42.

[8] *Happiness and Contemplation*, p. 56.

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happiness consists in contemplation" or the title of his book, *Leisure, The Basis of Culture*, both tend to register only a sense of confusion in the mind of the reader. At the very least, the reader might think, much more must be said and a great deal more defense given for the ideas to even seem plausible. On their own, those statements risk almost immediate dismissal and marginalization due to the deep seated nature of the cultural imaginary of total work. As I have already mentioned, a significant constitutive element of that cultural imaginary is the work ethic of the West, stemming from Weber's idea of a Protestant ethic.[9]

Pieper's considers the Protestant work ethic which upholds the total work world to be both dangerous and destructive. Simply put, it is not conducive to life; rather, it can only lead to death. The culture of total work is, no pun intended, a death-work.[10] The American lay theologian William Stringfellow may well have captured exactly Pieper's implicit position. Stringfellow stood stridently against the death works of the Protestant work ethic. Stringfellow was concerned with the idea that prosperity has come to be a mark of virtue or salvation, thus work and the (according to Weber, Protestant) ethic that sustains it is now justified and reinforced within the culture of total work.[11] As Ben Myers has noted, Stringfellow "pointed out the demonic character of the Protestant work ethic [by noting that it is] 'an obscene justification' which underlies middle class America."[12]

This is why Pieper frames the issue of a work ethic in terms of entrapment and boundedness. It is like being a prisoner or a slave but not knowing it—the ethic is so constitutive of the cultural imaginary that it is unrecognized and taken-for-granted; it *has* us. So Pieper dares to imply that we cannot escape it. In his application of the problem to all of Western society, he says that we are all proletarians—that is, he defines being proletarian as "being *bound to the working-process*."[13] This boundedness, according to Pieper, has three possible causes – two political and one spiritual. The first possible cause is the lack of a person having something to offer

[9] See Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: Routledge, 2001). For all the criticism of Weber's work, especially that it is too narrow an account or not necessarily accurate for contemporary usage, the idea of internalization of the religious ethic is reflective of the idea of the cultural imaginary as it will be discussed herein.

[10] Much more could be said here on the idea of a "deathwork." See for example, Philip Reiff, *My Life Among the Deathworks* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006).

[11] William Stringfellow, *Dissenter in a Great Society* (New York: Holt, Reinhardt and Winston, 1966), p. 40.

[12] Ben Myers, comment on "William Stringfellow: A Special Offer," Faith and Theology blog, comment posted March 7, 2009, http://faith-theology.blogspot.com/2009/03/william-stringfellow-special-offer.html (accessed 21 May 2009).

[13] *Leisure, The Basis of Culture*, p. 42, emphasis his.

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beyond his mere ability to work—that is, no property or unique goods of his own to sell, thus all one can sell is oneself. Nevertheless, having such property would not liberate one from the boundedness of the working-process, but merely place him at a different location within it. As Pieper argues—and this amounts to the second cause—because of the "dictate of the total-working state" man is bound to the process of producing goods in one way or another. The spiritual cause of this binding, which may be of even greater import, finds its "roots in the inner poverty of the person: the proletarian is one whose life is fully satisfied by the working-process itself because this space has been shrunken from within, and because meaningful action that is not work is no longer possible or even imaginable."[14]

Here we encounter what may be the heart of the problem that Pieper is trying to point out. While man's boundedness to the total working-process can find its cause in part as a result of being a member of the state and therefore trapped within the cultural imaginary in which one cannot imagine life otherwise, Pieper's story of a spiritual cause reveals a deeper problem. The cultural imaginary in which the total work world as a form of sociality is possible, emerges from a spiritual poverty in which the image of life has no room for any greater good than merely the production of "goods." Thus life itself must be re-imagined so that the spiritual dimension once again plays a central role. In other words, Pieper offers a momentous challenge to the cultural imaginary.

Challenging the Cultural Imaginary

Pieper creatively suggests that only through a life of leisure can one re-imagine life and even transform culture altogether. Leisure for Pieper does not amount to inactivity, as if the answer to the total work world is simply less work, or that the remedy to constant productive activity is simply inactivity. Leisure is a different sort of activity but one which is not circumscribed within the boundaries of *activity as production*. Leisure then, is distinct from work and to be at leisure requires being not "at work." However, due to the boundedness or entrapment to one's life of total work, leisure seems impossible. Yet paradoxically, it is from leisure itself, if Pieper is correct, the very idea of a culture of total work emerged. What then, does Pieper mean by Leisure? And how is Leisure the basis of culture?

Leisure for Pieper does not mean a vacation, a long weekend, or time off, because in fact, these things find their meaning only within the total working life.[15] For Pieper, leisure is much more cognitive

[14] Ibid., p. 43.
[15] *Leisure, The Basis of Culture*, pp. 31, 34.

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and contemplative. And it is specifically religious. This emerges out of the real problem Pieper seems to be trying to address—the loss of an appropriate anthropology. But he is not referring to a strictly secular anthropology. Rather he is advocating one which repristinates in a way the reflections of ancient Greek philosophy and early and medieval Christianity: Who is man? What is the good life? Where does man find happiness? In the life of total work, Pieper points out what is paradoxically missing, the very thing which man believes he will find there—true happiness, fulfillment, a "being at home with oneself." In the modern cultural imaginary in which total work is the dominant way of life, the ancient questions about man, the good life and happiness are at best limited in how they can be answered—that is, the possibility of defining those concepts beyond utilitarian boundaries is slim—and at worst such questions are elided altogether. Nevertheless, because happiness and fulfillment are promised in the life of hard work, man restlessly labors away.

Pieper helpfully tracks the restlessness of work for work's sake back to the middle ages as a cure for idleness. Yet in the middle ages, idleness did not mean merely *doing nothing*; it meant far more. It meant giving up on one's responsibility to be what God wants him to be. In Pieper's words, "the metaphysical-theological concept of idleness means then, that man finally does not agree with his own existence; that behind all his energetic activity, he is not at one with himself."[16] In other words, the life of total work is self-destructive. Thus, here we return again to the spiritual problem we mentioned above. Ironically, the cure for idleness was productive labor, yet the man who labors lives with an "inner poverty" because the idea of life as something meaningful outside of being productive is unimaginable. So the Protestant work ethic which Weber notes emerges out of Lutheran and Calvinist teachings only serves to exacerbate the spiritual problem. Pieper laments the fact that the sin of idleness came to be defined as lacking of "economic ambition or enterprise," noting "especially to be regretted is the apologetic enthusiasm of the attempt to legitimize 'Christian teaching' through making it agree with the current fashion and, in this connection, to read modern activism into the 'working-ethos' of the Church."[17]

True leisure for Pieper stands against both idleness in its original spiritual sense (man not being what God wants him to be)[18] and the restlessness of laboring for the sake of labor. Leisure means "the cheerful affirmation by man of his own existence, of the world as a whole, and of God—of Love, that is, from which arises the special

[16] *Leisure, The Basis of Culture*, p. 28.
[17] Ibid., p. 29.
[18] *Leisure, The Basis of Culture*, p. 28.

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freshness of action, which would never be confused by anyone with any experience with the narrow activity of the 'workaholic.'"[19]

Pieper re-imagines how life could be, re-invoking the contemplative way of life heard in the voices of the ancient Greeks and medieval Christian thinkers like Thomas Aquinas. Their interest was clearly in questions of anthropology, and Pieper returns to their thought because he believes their conception of human life thoroughly stands in opposition to the modern cultural imaginary. What then is their conception of life; what does man live for? Pieper says it like this: "The ancients conceived the whole energy of human nature as a hunger. Hunger for what? For being, for undiminished actuality, for complete realization—which is not attainable in the subject's isolated existence, for it can be secured only by taking into the self the universal reality."[20]

In both *Happiness and Contemplation* and *In Tune with the World*, Pieper raises the specifically Thomistic idea of the beatific vision. His argument is that man is made for "seeing" and the ultimate kind of seeing is, as Plato concluded, "contemplation of divine beauty." And before Plato, Anaxagoras gives the same purpose for life: seeing.[21] In seeing, we are presented with a sharp alternative to the present cultural imaginary which sees life as purposed for productivity.[22]

Yet seeing does not strictly mean the seeing of God Himself in the beatific vision. If we are to reconnect again with the idea of "being at home with oneself," we find Pieper expressing the importance of seeing oneself as a creation of God, a creature of the Creator, and by admitting the truth and goodness of this situation, one is also implicitly recognizing the goodness of everything else through one's own relation to it as part of all Creation. Thus Pieper says, "there can be no more radical assent to the world than the praise of God, the lauding of the Creator of this same world. One cannot conceive of a more intense, more unconditional affirmation of being. . .the heart of festivity," which for Pieper encompasses and constitutes a life of contemplation and worship. Leisure itself "consists in men's physically expressing their agreement with everything that is."[23]

The "seeing" that occurs in leisure, contemplation, or in the idea just noted, festivity, is a different kind of activity than that legitimized by the total work world. Leisure is active, and it is a participation in the celebration of life, the kind of celebration most specifically related

[19] Ibid., p. 29.

[20] Ibid., p. 64.

[21] See *Happiness and Contemplation*, chapter 7; Josef Pieper, *In Tune with the World: A Theory of Festivity*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (South Bend: St. Augustine's Press, 1999), p. 16.

[22] It is important to note here, that Pieper points out that work, or productiveness, is presented in the Scriptures as a *punishment*. See *In Tune with the World*, p. 6.

[23] *In Tune with the World*, pp. 31–32.

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to festival, but which gets its primary impetus, force, and meaning from worship. For it is in worship that man is able to encounter that which is other, that which is transcendent, that which allows for meaning to be imparted to his immanent experience.[24] Man escapes the necessity of activity-for-a-useful-purpose but engages in an activity that is meaningful in itself. And here we are presented with one more challenge if we are hoping to transform the cultural imaginary (much less merely accept Pieper's thesis): "the death of the concept of human activity that is meaningful in itself." And with this perishes also "the possibility of any resistance to a...laboring society."[25] Thus, Pieper suggests that we must re-envision work as meaningful only if it is considered in light of other activities that are meaningful in themselves—that is, worship, festivity, leisure, and contemplation as activities that, in contradistinction to work for work's sake, allow man to take into himself the "universal reality" and live an embodied agreement with all that is as created by God, including man himself.

Changing the Imaginary

If Pieper's critique of the cultural imaginary is convincing, which I believe it is, how can we conceive of changing the imaginary? One might even wonder if this is possible. Pieper's concept of "leisure as the basis of culture" begs the question of whether or not the current culture which Pieper considers problematic does not find its own basis in leisure. I think that we can admit that it does. And surprisingly, this admission is a step in the direction of changing the cultural imaginary, even if it complicates the problem. For if we say that the current culture of total work results from the kind of leisure that Pieper is imagining (celebration, festival, worship), then the idea of transformation presents itself as aporetic. How can leisure find a place in a culture of total work, especially if what is meant by leisure is not merely time off or a vacation?[26]

Charles Taylor notes that changing the cultural imaginary can occur when there is recognition that the current imaginary is problematic.

[24] *In Tune with the World*, p. 7. Here Pieper is quick to point out that there is not merely a dichotomy between work and festival/worship/leisure, as if they were opposites. Certainly in festival/worship/leisure there is activity in the sense of *free* work, work that is done not for usefulness or practical end, but is meaningful in itself.

[25] Ibid., p. 9.

[26] To reiterate, vacations, time off, breaks—all of these only tend to play complicitly into the current system because they are defined by and over against the culture of total work, which Pieper is trying to overcome. For example, one of the newest buzzword concepts in the total work world is "weisure," which is a blending of work and play to the extent that they cannot be totally separated. Play is simply being incorporated into work for the sake of more work. See Dalton Conley, *Elsewhere, U.S.A.* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2009).

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The current imaginary itself can only be judged problematic in light of an idealized image of itself. It's through that image that the modern imaginary has arisen, and thus it is through it, through the ideals intrinsic to it, that new images which are better than the present images can take shape. These new images often come to us as theories at first, but if persuasive enough are put into practice by certain portions of society—e.g., religious groups, the elite—and can eventually spread into the larger population.[27]

Pieper's work is extending from exactly this kind of location—from within a religious group, a place where a different anthropology than that which underlies the modern cultural imaginary demands and renders a direct challenge to that imaginary. To return to Graham Ward, and to add a key thought I left out the first time,

> I would see religious traditions, which long have retained theological accounts of *societas*, as having a major contribution to make here to public discourse *and to the transformation of the cultural imaginary*. They have resources for the repoliticisation of cultural agents; resources for new humanisms. Without that repoliticising, then, systematic dissatisfaction cannot be registered in a way that demands and forces change. For 'satisfaction' means that you, I, they, we, he or she have nothing to complain about. And yet it is the visibility of complaint, of contestations between standpoints, that is vital for cultural transformation to come about. It makes manifest the irreducibility of the imaginary and symbolic institution it engenders. . .In this making visible of complaint, antagonism or contestation lies not only a future for politics and democracy, but cultural transformation *tout court*. A culture of 'satisfaction' is a culture where aesthetics have become anaesthetics, because what it aims at is the erasure of desire: that is, stasis (or death).[28]

Pieper is brilliant in saying that whatever it is we end up doing, because it emerges out of the sense of leisure that is the basis of culture, it is our worship. If the total work culture has emerged out of our celebratory festivals, which themselves find their origin in worship, then our celebration of total work, of productivity, and of usefulness has become our religion. Extending from this, these ideas are then shored up and reinforced by our politics and economics, our philosophy, and finally our basic agreement exemplified in our nonresistance and our taking for granted that things are as they should be—or in Ward's words, our "satisfaction." So Pieper's work is ultimately a contestation, an alternative standpoint against the hegemony of total work, commodity fetishism, and the "totalitarian laboring society."[29]

[27] Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries*, pp. 28–29.
[28] Ward, *Cultural Transformation and Religious Practice,* pp. 163–164. Emphasis mine.
[29] *In Tune with the World*, p. 19.

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So how do we "lose our religion?"[30] That is, how do we change the cultural imaginary where productivity is our god? By this I mean, can we actualize the different kind of living that Pieper is presenting to us in theory? Can we go beyond theory to practice? Graham Ward advocates the position that such change of the imaginary is possible, and that new practices may eventually become dominant, but he is cautious in noting that we cannot be in direct control of how this will play out on the large scale.[31] Individually however, Michel de Certeau's idea of tactics is useful in framing what you or I might do. Certeau's idea of tactics in the life of the individual stands in opposition to the idea of strategies as applied by institutions.[32] Tactics are those practices which allow individuals to break free from forms of life which have become the strategies of the institution. A worker's strategy then serves to interrupt or subvert his "work" for the institution into work for himself. An example of a tactic might be as simple as using company time and property to do personal research online.

Pieper's Christian perspective offers tactics in an economy of hope for those living within the total work world, one which holds out a hope and a desire that the current form of life might be different in the future. To return again to his idea of festivity/worship/leisure, Pieper posits these as an interruption of the workaday life.[33] In the workaday world, one's entrapment to the total work life causes the sense that the passing of time is marked only by work. Festivity, worship and leisure are all possible interruptions of that time in which the marking of time can take a different form, one which is specifically not circumscribed by the terms of the total work world—that is, it cannot simply be considered "time off" or a "break." Rather it is something else altogether which in fact has the potential to give meaning to the workaday life in a transcendent sense.

[30] Castoriadis notes, "[I]n any closed society, any 'question' which can be formulated at all in the language of this society must find its answer within the magma of the social imaginary significations of the society. This entails, in particular, that questions concerning the *validity* of the social institutions and significations cannot be posed. The exclusion of such questions is ensured by the position of a *transcendent*, extrasocial, source of institutions and significations, that is religion." If this is so, how can we consider Pieper to be authentically challenging the cultural imaginary at all? The key is to note with Castoriadis that our society (Western society) is not *closed*. We have the ability to self-reflect. "And this," he says, "is what allows us to take some distance from our own society, to talk about society and history in general, and to accept rational criticism of what we say in this or any other respect." Hence the idea of "losing our religion"—*religion* as that which prevents us from self-reflection and challenging of the cultural imaginary from within–is legitimate. See Castoriadis, "Radical Imagination."

[31] Ward, *Cultural Transformation and Religious Practice*, p. 112.

[32] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. xvii–xxii, 24–28, 34–39.

[33] Pieper, *In Tune with the World*, p. 3.

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What Pieper's thought cannot do is release us altogether from work. He admits that while work is scripturally characterized as punishment, it is still constitutive of life. However, his thinking does challenge the cultural imaginary of life as total work in that he operates with a desire for something different, a hope for restoration to a life we know not fully now, but only in part. His perspective calls into reality the eschatological vision. Therefore, we still labor but our life is not defined by *meaningless* labor. "It is a labouring in hope that distinguishes that hope from merely wishful thinking and fantasy."[34] Our work can be both meaningful and transformative of the cultural imaginary when it puts the future into practice now. As a labor of hope, our work may feel foreign and even impossible, but it is akin to learning a new language—the end result of our actualized transformed practice is virtually unimaginable, but in theory, the idealized vision is available. And so we suffer through the present contradiction of what is visible in the Christian promise of the future in the midst of the "surrounding foreignness."[35] Through the conflict, to use the idea of Alasdair MacIntyre, the "tradition" of the cultural imaginary is challenged and changed.[36] And so, even as Pieper's work envisions the impossible by calling forth an eschatological reality in the present, for the Christian, the practice of the future is possible because the hope that is embodied in the Christian life emerges out of life in the religious community of the Church, which is a living sign of the age to come.

Conclusion

Josef Pieper's unique thought presents a formidable challenge to the modern cultural imaginary and offers a creative understanding of our predicament in order for us to be able to change it. The cultural imaginary of total work is a death-work because it sees man's end in work, in mere functionality and productivity. Man's end, according to Pieper, is to rightly envision all things—which culminates in an eschatological contemplation of the divine. Thus work is not an end in itself but rather ordered and subjugated to that greater end of contemplation and leisure. Since worship is the primary means of re-ordering time and space towards the transcendent, it provides an

[34] Ward, *Cultural Transformation and Religious Practice*, p. 170.

[35] Ward, *Cultural Transformation and Religious Practice*, p. 171.

[36] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 2nd ed. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), p. 222. MacIntyre argues that a tradition is a living, socially embodied argument, and therefore conflict is unavoidable for a tradition is one standpoint in a world of standpoints. Ward argues similarly, citing Althusser: "The suffering of the contradictory…pertains to all standpoint-projects. Althusser observes that 'contradiction is the motor of all development' (*For Marx*, pg. 217)." *Cultural Transformation and Religious Practice*, p. 171, footnote 137.

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interruption in the time and space formed by the cultural imaginary of total work and work becomes meaningful from a transcendent perspective. The Christian is in an inimitable position to practice the present/future reality of the eschaton through the worshipping life of the Church, a living sign of the future age and an embodiment of hope.

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