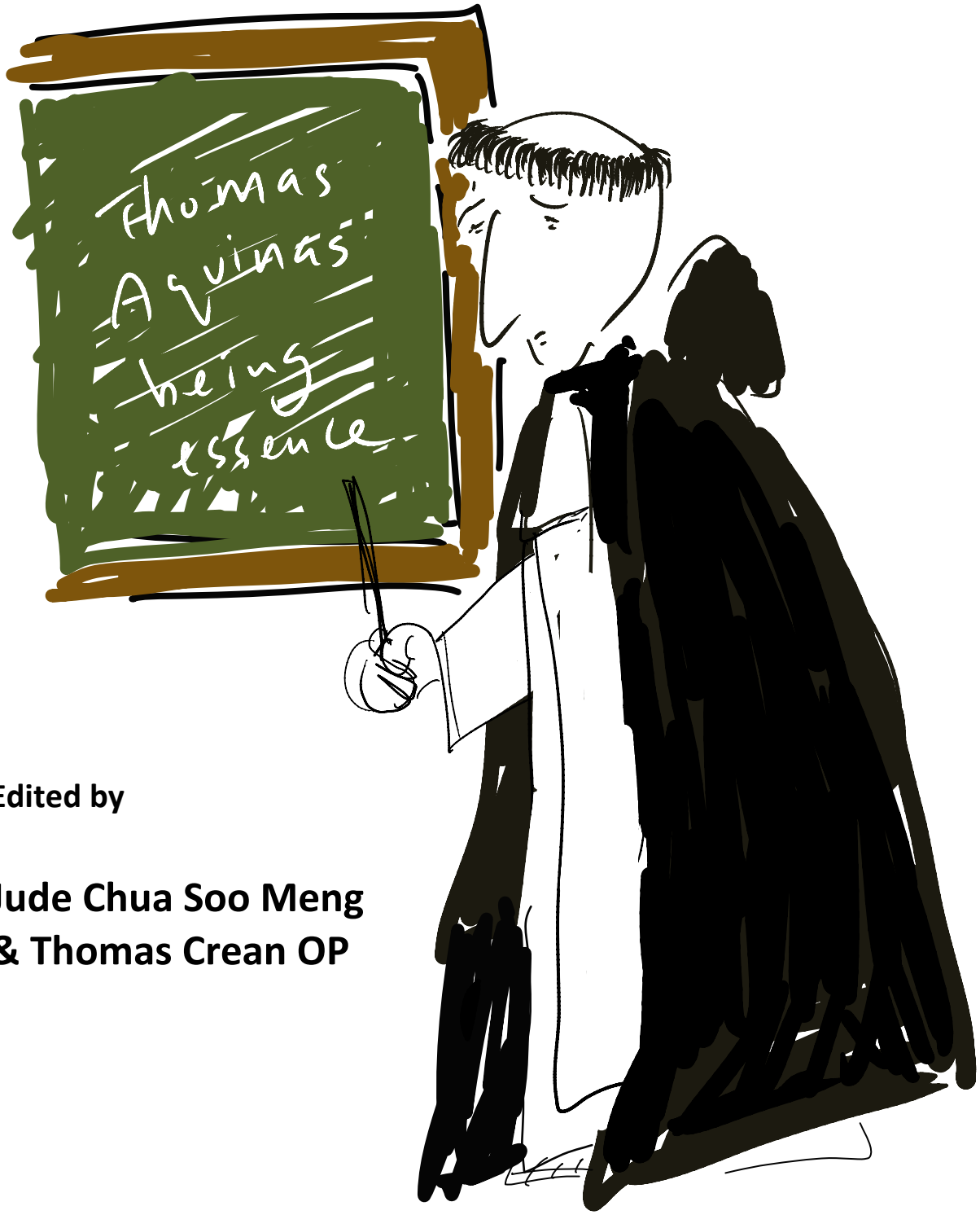
Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP: Teacher of Thomism



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Preface

It is fitting that the inaugural Special Issue of *Educational Theoria,* published by the Center for Educational Theoria in collaboration with the Thomistic Enstitute, is on Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP. What is more appropriate than for us to celebrate a good teacher, and to promulgate a source of inspiration? In many ways Garrigou might not have seemed to be what people nowadays consider a good teacher. In educational discourse, one now frowns upon the didactic and speaks of cultivating critical thinking that leads to original ideas. In graduate education, professors speak of finding your own "voice". Garrigou may not fit too nicely in this mileau. He shunned innovation, and prided in being a disciple of St Thomas and an expositor the commentarial tradition, which offered its particular reading of Aquinas. Whether he really represented Aquinas is something for scholars to debate, but he certainly thought of himself as a scribe who is to follow the master as closely as he can.

His treatises are collections of thomistic doctrines and principles, which he thought others should agree with: he was no diplomatic postmodern who would let it rest when you disagreed with him, especially on fundamental questions. In a series of letters by the thomist historian Etienne Gilson to Henri de Lubac SJ, Garrigou is described as a dogmatic bigot. Also, he was not one to be "student centred": he wrote and taught in scholastic terminology, which remains to this day difficult to access.

Gilson's impressions notwithstanding, perhaps Garrigou is best understood and appreciated in the context of his time, and this is what Fr. Richard Peddicord OP's piece, which serves as an overview of Garrigou's life and work, helps us to do. Peddicord's contribution traces the sources of his influences, in particular Garrigou's own spirituality as a Dominican Friar, whose motto is truth and is therefore not to suppress anything that can truly lead to one's neighbour's sanctification.

To moderate Gilson's remarks, Fr. Joseph de Torre, who studied under Garrigou at the *Angelicum* in the 1950s, paints us a somewhat different picture drawn from his own classnotes. His Garrigou, as he recalls, was a witty master teacher—in de Torre's words, "a consummate actor". Fr. De Torre's contribution is the highlight of our volume, giving us a first hand narrative of the teacher of Thomism.

Reading Fr. De Torre's chapter, one gets the sense that what really defines Garrigou is his commitment to the Aristotelian and thomistic corpus, and Fr. De Torre details the content of Garrigou's courses. Garrigou, it becomes obvious, is not one to shrink from complex metaphysical questions! And rightly so: Thomism is substantially *metaphysical.* Therefore, next four pieces highlight some of the metaphysical ideas Garrigou defended and taught. None of them is easy reading, and some are more critical of Garrigou than are others.

The first of these four is a contribution by Christopher Albright, who considers Garrigou's theory of *subsistence,* and Albright demonstrates Garrigou's dependence on Cajetan, another thomist in the commentarial tradition. This is followed by Jude Chua's piece, which studies the "*real distinction*" as it is defended by Garrigou. Chua ends off his study with some implications for the virtue of humility. Next is F. F. Centore's analysis of Garrigou's proof of *God's existence*. Since writing that piece for this collection, professor Centore was called home to the Lord of his Faith, whom he affirms also in his reason through this contribution. Not least is Steven A Long's detailed contribution which considers

Garrigou's take on *physical promotion,* and—very interestingly—its implications for one's willing and the will's freedom, and explains why we need not fear that God will violate our freedom.

As Peddicord and de Torre tell us, nearer the end Garrigou concentrated on more theological matters. For this reason we have included James Arraj's and Fr Romanus Cessario OP's very fine contributions. Arraj's instructive piece considers the argument made by Garrigou that we are all called to contemplative life, and also for him, contemplation is *infused,* and laments that this important theory of infused contemplation is today unhappily forgotten. Fr. Cessario OP's piece is an extended revision of another work that appeared, and in this contribution, he gives us a sense of Garrigou's thinking on the "theological life", and of Garrigou as a theologian who lives the theological life that is open to theological development—an "aggiornamento" that is living and divergent and which stands in stark contrast to theological archaeology.

Fr Thomas Crean OP wraps up the volume with an enlightening and also stimulating piece on Garrigou's political views that some might complain to be insensitive. Garrigou would not agree with any kind of catholic liberalism that thinks societies be not governed with reference to theological ends given through relevation. Instead , for Garrigou, we should all aspire towards the catholic society. Crean then extrapolates Garrigou's thinking and considers how he might have responded to the *Declaration on Religious Liberty* which appeared after his death. In this respect, Crean OP's contribution is particularly interesting.

This volume has taken quite a while to materialize. The idea for a collection of essays was first mooted by Jude on the Aquinas Yahoo Groups List almost 10 years ago, and the papers took a while to come in. We are thankful to all our contributors for their patience. Since then F F Centore and James Arraj have moved on, and await their friends from the better place, at the same time interceding for us. Like Garrigou, to the end, Centore and Arraj instantiated the spirit of openness to truth that must define what good teaching is and what their Master, St Thomas stood for, and thus are now a source of inspiration for us.

 The editors of this volume thank *Libreria Editrice Vaticana* to use the parts of Fr Romanus Cessario OP's piece that had appeared in an earlier publication. The editors also thank Jonathan Sim, the research assistant for this project for his help, and for the job well done putting together the look of this final product.

Jude Chua Soo Meng
Thomas Crean OP

28th Jan 2014
Feast of Thomas Aquinas

RÉGINALD GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, O.P.: A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Richard A. Peddicord, O.P.

Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange (1877-1964)[1] was the most prominent Dominican Neo-Thomist theologian of the first half of the twentieth century. He was professor of dogmatic and spiritual theology at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas in Rome—the "Angelicum"—from 1909 until 1959. The printed record of his written works runs to just over fifty pages.[2] He was involved in one way or another with most of the concerns of the Church of his day and was a trusted counselor to Popes Benedict XV (1914-1922), Pius XI (1922-1939), and Pius XII (1939-1958)—becoming a consulter to the Holy Office during the pontificate of Pius XII. A significant aspect of Garrigou's tenure at the Angelicum entailed directing the theses of a host of doctoral candidates. Under his tutelage, men like M.-Dominique Chenu, O.P., Benoît Lavaud, O.P., M.-Michel Labourdette, O.P., Louis-Bertrand Gillon, O.P., and Karol Wojtyła—the future Pope John Paul II—would receive the doctorate in theology.

It is a truism that every human life is inextricably contextual: one's time and place, one's culture and background, one's commitments and self-understanding provide indispensable data for an account of one's life. In light of this, this chapter offers an introduction to the life of Garrigou-Lagrange with an eye toward the historical, cultural, and religious influences on his work in philosophy, theology, and spirituality. Since he was a French Dominican friar whose formation took place in the first decade of the twentieth century, special attention must go to France's Third Republic, to the nineteenth century reinvigoration of the Dominican Order and to the Modernist crisis of the early twentieth century.

Family and Early Years

Gontran-Marie Garrigou-Lagrange was born in Auch, France on 21 February 1877. Auch, the capital of the département of Gers, is a quiet city in southwest France, approximately one hundred kilometers due west of Toulouse. The family was solidly bourgeois and Catholic. His father, François Garrigou-Lagrange, was a civil servant. His mother, Clémence Lasserre, belonged to the same family that produced the historian Henri Lasserre (1828-1900). Claims to minor nobility were found in the person of Garrigou's maternal grandmother who was a member of the David de Lastour family.[3] The member of the family who would most enthrall his imagination was his grandfather's brother, Maurice-Marie-Matthieu Garrigou (1766-1852), who had been a canon of the diocese of Toulouse. During the French Revolution and its aftermath he carried out his priestly ministry under perilous conditions. He was the founder of a religious congregation of women—the Institut de Notre-Dame de la Compassion—and his reputation for sanctity was well known.[4]

After his primary schooling in Auch, Garrigou-Lagrange studied at secondary schools in Roche-sur-Yon and Nantes. This was followed by a year of philosophical studies at Tarbes. The young Garrigou-Lagrange began studies in medicine at the University of Bordeaux in 1896. While at Bordeaux he experienced a profound religious awakening, which he would refer to later in life as his "conversion." The catalyst for this change of focus was his reading Ernest Hello's *L'Homme: la vie—la science—l'art*.

Hello (1828-1885) was a French philosopher and essayist. He had been inspired by the preaching of Henri Lacordaire, O.P. and was known as a champion of Catholic orthodoxy. His works, apologetic in emphasis, sought to answer the attacks on Christianity that so marked the ethos of the nineteenth century European intelligentsia. Garrigou found in Hello intellectual rigor coupled with profound faith; the harmonious marriage of faith and reason would, from that point on, be the ideal that he would seek for himself.

Entrance in the Order of Preachers

Along with this awakening, Garrigou discerned a vocation to the religious life and priesthood. He investigated several religious orders, spending time with the Trappists of Echourniac and the Carthusians of Vauclair, before deciding on the Order of Preachers, the "Dominicans."[5] Garrigou-Lagrange entered the novitiate of the Paris province at Amiens in the fall of 1897. He received the Dominican habit on 10 October 1897 and the religious name Réginald. He professed his vows on 30 April 1900.

After the novitiate, Garrigou was assigned to the *studium* at Flavigny for studies in preparation for ordination to the priesthood. The lion's share of this preparation entailed the assiduous study of St. Thomas' *Summa theologiae* under the guidance of the Regent of Studies, Ambroise Gardeil, O.P. During the course of studies, the *Summa* was examined in its entirety—question-by-question and article-by-article.

Gardeil (1859-1931) was at that time the Order's most distinguished theologian.[6] He had entered the Order of Preachers at the very beginning of the Thomistic revival and had himself been mentored by Réginald Beaudouin, O.P. An expert in theological method, Gardeil was confident that in St. Thomas' "metaphysics of intellect and will and in the traditional Dominican theology of the act of faith, he had found the resources needed to meet the exigencies of contemporary thought…."[7] It is safe to say that Garrigou-Lagrange's own philosophical and theological works speak to a profound sharing in this same confidence.

Garrigou was ordained to the priesthood on 28 September 1902. By virtue of his performance in the *studium*, his superiors recognized that he was destined for the intellectual

apostolate of the Order; as Regent, Gardeil's plan was to have Garrigou join the philosophy faculty of the province's House of Studies. To this end, Garrigou began complementary philosophical studies at the Sorbonne in 1904.

In 1905, Garrigou returned to the House of Studies and began teaching the history of philosophy, with special emphasis on the thought of Leibnitz and Spinoza. His career as a philosopher, however, was short-lived: one year later, with the illness of one of the province's theologians, Garrigou was called to accede to the chair of dogmatic theology at Le Saulchoir. This change precipitated what would become Garrigou's *approfondissement* of the works of St. Thomas and the key figures of the Thomist school, particularly John of St. Thomas, Cajetan, and Bañez.

In 1909, Garrigou published his first major work—*Le sens commun, la philosophie de l'être et les formules dogmatiques*. This work was a critique of the thought of Edouard Le Roy, a disciple of Bergson. Garrigou judged that Le Roy's use of Bergsonian evolutionism in his theological project amounted to a radical relativizing of the truth of the Church's dogmatic formulations.

Le sens commun caught the attention of many—including the Master General of the Dominican Order, Hyacinthe Cormier. Cormier, intent on strengthening the Order's Roman university—the "Angelicum"—transferred Garrigou there that same year. He was specifically assigned to teach the course *De revelatione*.

The Angelicum

At the Angelicum, Garrigou encountered another figure who would have a great influence on his theological project—the eminent Spanish Dominican mystical theologian, Juan González Arintero (1860-1928). Arintero, the author of the influential *La Evolucíon mística*, brought Garrigou to see that the full development of the Christian life cannot but be of the mystical order; he also helped him to see the significance of St. John of the Cross for the contemporary theological project. Garrigou's classic work in spirituality, *The Three Ages of the Interior Life*, is greatly indebted to his colleagueship with Arintero: in it Garrigou takes St. Thomas as his theological guide and St. John of the Cross as his spiritual companion.

After the First World War, Garrigou entered into an important collaboration with another of his Dominican brothers, Vincent Bernadot. He offered significant encouragement to Bernadot's vision of a journal under Dominican auspices that would be devoted to reflection on the spiritual life. When *La vie spirituelle* became a reality in 1919, Garrigou contributed three articles to its first volume.[8] Before his retirement, Garrigou would contribute a host of articles to *La vie spirituelle*.

In 1917 the Angelicum established—with prodding from Pope Benedict XV—the first chair of ascetical-mystical theology in the Church's history. From the beginning, Garrigou-Lagrange was its intended recipient. He held this honor until the end of 1959; as the years went by, and as his renown grew, Garrigou's public lectures on spirituality (held every Saturday afternoon that the Angelicum was in session) became one of the required stopping points for theologically minded visitors to Rome.

Garrigou-Lagrange and Jacques Maritain

Also after the First World War, Garrigou began a significant collaboration with the eminent French Thomist philosopher, Jacques Maritain (1882-1973). Maritain, who had been named professor of the history of modern philosophy at Paris' Institut Catholique in 1914, had the dream of establishing an organization devoted to the study of the philosophy and theology of St. Thomas Aquinas. He envisioned a network of local groups coordinated by a director and bound together by a constitution. There would be an annual gathering of these local groups that would include time for spiritual renewal through a preached retreat. Maritain's vision became the Thomist Study Circles; he and his wife Raïssa prevailed upon Garrigou-Lagrange to become the group's spiritual director.

Garrigou worked closely with the Maritain in the early years of the Thomist Study Circles; indeed, he preached all but one of the annual retreats from their inception in 1922 until 1937. However, as the years went by, the relationship between the two became more and more strained. The cause of tension involved disagreements occasioned by the turmoil of European politics in the 1930s and 1940s. Specifically, Maritain supported the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War while Garrigou supported Francisco Franco; Garrigou supported the government of Pétain at Vichy while Maritain supported the French resistance and General de Gaulle. Sadly, the twentieth-century's most prominent Thomistic philosopher, and Thomism's most eminent spiritual theologian, ended their collaboration over contrary judgments concerning the contingencies of European politics.

The Third French Republic

It is important to note that at the time of Garrigou's birth, the Third French Republic was beginning its eighth year. The humiliation of the country's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War (1870)—epitomized in Napoléon III being taken prisoner by the Germans—was still a feature of national consciousness. France had lost Alsace and Lorraine to Germany, as well as all pretensions of an empire.

The leaders of the Third Republic were hostile to the Church; once again the anti-Catholic rhetoric of the French Revolution became the currency of the land. Indeed, the government was committed to an explicit program of dechristianization—particularly through its education laws:

> The law of 1880 forbade religious teaching in State schools, while that of 1886 removed from these schools the teachers belonging to religious orders. The teacher's training colleges were reorganized and increased in numbers and formed a new body of teachers with an entirely different spirit. Catholic teachers disappeared gradually from the field of public education and by 1914 the great majority of their successors owed no allegiance whatever to the Church….[9]

In Catholic circles, the Third Republic was notorious for more than its education laws. Emile Combes, prime minister from 1902 to 1905, had as his expressed goal the destruction of French Catholicism.[10] The expulsion of the religious orders in 1904—which forced the Dominicans to leave Flavigny for Le Saulchoir in Belgium—was part of this overall goal.

It is no wonder, then, that Garrigou-Lagrange had no love for "republicanism" in general and a strong distaste for the Third Republic in particular. He was himself one of those forced into exile; he experienced first-hand the hateful policies of his own government. This goes a long way in accounting for Garrigou's eventual sympathy for Pétain and Vichy. Moreover, it is not an exaggeration to claim that not since the *ancien régime* had a French government been more hospitable to the institutional needs of the Church.

The Nineteenth Century Reinvigoration of the Order of Preachers

The Order of Preachers, founded by St. Dominic in 1216, had come dangerously close to extinction in the years following the French Revolution. Indeed, from his vantage point in England in the mid-1840s, John Henry Newman was led to ask, in reference to the Dominican Order, "Whether it is not a great idea extinct?"[11] Two factors led to a reinvigoration: Henri Lacordaire's reception of the Dominican habit and the Thomistic renaissance occasioned by Pope Leo XIII's *Aeterni Patris*.

Lacordaire's charisma and his zeal for the Order's traditional ministries of preaching and teaching led to the reestablishment of the Order in France, and from France, a resurgence of energy in the other entities of the Order. When the young Garrigou entered the Order of Preachers, the witness of Lacordaire was still a part of the memory of the older friars. His vision of providing support to the Church and challenge to the world through well-reasoned preaching was not a pious platitude from a distant past—it was a lived reality. Indeed, this was undoubtedly what led Garrigou to consider a Dominican vocation in the first place.

Leo XIII issued his encyclical letter *Aeterni Patris* on the feast of St. Dominic, 4 August 1879.[12] Leo called for a renewed study of the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas; addressing the bishops of the Church, he wrote: "We exhort you, venerable brethren, in all earnestness to restore the golden wisdom of St. Thomas, and to spread it far and wide for the defense and beauty of the Catholic faith, for the good of society, and for the advantage of all the sciences."[13] Leo XIII "was convinced that, once it had been revived, the wisdom of St. Thomas could provide nineteenth century Catholics with the philosophical resources needed to integrate modern science and culture into a coherent whole under the light of their Christian faith."[14]

It would be difficult to overestimate *Aeterni Patris*' role in the phenomenal growth of the Order of Preachers in the late nineteenth century and its fortunes in the Church of that time. Simply stated, since St. Thomas belonged by profession to the Order of Preachers and since the light of the Order's Thomistic tradition in philosophy and theology had not been completely extinguished by the time of Leo's encyclical, the Order gained a new prestige with the Pope's call for a Thomistic revival. Rather than being seen as an anachronism from the Middle Ages, the Dominicans found themselves in the vanguard of a "new" movement in the Church. And, at the same time, being a Dominican theologian after the publication of *Aeterni Patris* meant that one was a follower—in one way or another—of St. Thomas. The significance of this for the career of Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange is obvious.

Dominican Spirituality

The reinvigoration of the Order of Preachers in the nineteenth century was not merely an intellectual one: it was an explicitly spiritual enterprise. And, Garrigou, as a Dominican friar was deeply imbued with the character and principles of Dominican spirituality. In light of this, a brief excursus on Dominican spirituality is in order. Garrigou's own "Le caractère et les principes de la spiritualité dominicaine"[15] will serve as the guide.

Prayer, ministry, study and community life are the four pillars of Dominican life. At first glance, the various principles that undergird these pillars do not seem to be easily reconciled. It would seem that contemplation, which is of the mystical order and presupposes silence and solitude, would be impeded by a life of study and active ministry. Concurrently, it would seem that one's apostolic endeavors would be somewhat half-hearted if one is forever seeking quiet and explicit times for prayer. Garrigou asks: "How can these elements so opposed in appearance be reconciled in one and the same ideal? What is the dominant character which unites them?"[16]

The answer is found in the most elemental principle of St. Thomas' theology of grace: grace does not destroy nature but perfects it. God's grace elevates human nature, making it to be what God intended it to be. Dominican spirituality "does not suppress anything that can truly

lead to one's perfect sanctification and to that of one's neighbor."[17] Therefore it "does not hesitate to affirm principles which appear to be contrary, as long as each one for its part appears to be absolutely certain."[18]

This spirit of openness in Dominican spirituality comes from its dedication to *Veritas*, the Truth. Garrigou was intent on reminding his brothers and his students that the motto of the Order of Preachers is *contemplari et comtemplata aliis tradere*, to contemplate and to give to others the fruit of one's contemplation.[19]

The contemplation undertaken by the Dominican is not ultimately an end in itself. It is directed toward being of service to one's neighbor. Dominican contemplation, then, finds its perfection in the preaching of the Gospel and an important dimension of this preaching is done through the Order's intellectual apostolate. Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange lived the life of a Dominican friar for 64 years—striving to incarnate in his own life the ideal proposed by St. Dominic and the saints of the Order.

The Modernist Crisis

St. Pius X's condemnation of modernism in his encyclical *Pascendi dominis gregis* (1907) had a great impact on the apostolate of Garrigou-Lagrange. Indeed, throughout his theological career, Garrigou would remain committed to the teaching of *Pascendi*; moreover, he would see it reconfirmed in Pius XII's *Humani generis* (1950).

It bears noting that while at the Sorbonne as a student, Garrigou had attended lectures by the likes of Emile Durkheim and Lucien Lévy-Bruhl; he heard Henri Bergson lecture at the Collège de France. Later in life, he would point out that he had been present at a lecture where Alfred Loisy rehearsed his trademark theme: "Jesus preached the Kingdom of God, and it was the Church that came."[20] His experience at the Sorbonne convinced him that contemporary philosophy does not provide ground solid enough for explicating the truths of Catholic faith; it would confirm in him the conviction that the philosophy of Aristotle had no equal in this regard. The following quotation from M.-Rosaire Gagnebet, O.P. sums up Garrigou's fundamental orientation in these matters:

> If the mystery of God is accessible to our understanding in an imperfect, but true, fashion, through the formulae of faith, it is possible for the human person, by his reason guided by faith, to obtain an analogical understanding of these very fruitful mysteries, according to the expression of the First Vatican Council. This is the goal toward which the theology of Father Garrigou was directed and toward which he consecrated all the strength of his spirit.[21]

The Last Years

By the fall of 1959, Garrigou's energy had greatly dissipated. He was 82 years old and had been teaching at the Angelicum for 50 years. It was clear that the time had come for him to retire from active ministry. In 1960 he moved to the Priory of Santa Sabina in Rome—the headquarters of the Order and home to the Master General. Due to his frailty, he was unable to accept Pope John XXIII's invitation to join the theological commission's preparatory work for the Second Vatican Council. Eventually he had to be transferred to the hospital of the Fraternité Sacerdotale Canadienne on Rome's via Camilluccia. He died there on 15 February 1964; his funeral liturgy was celebrated on 17 February 1964 in the Church of SS. Dominic and Sixtus, the College Church of the Dominicans at the Angelicum. In a public statement, Pope Paul VI lauded Garrigou-Lagrange as "a faithful servant of the Church and of the Holy See."[22]

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[1] The following works are helpful for giving an account of Garrigou-Lagrange's life: Hugh Bredin, "Garrigou-Lagrange, Réginald," in *Biographical Dictionary of Twentieth Century Philosophers*, 1996 ed.; Editors, "Le Père Garrigou-Lagrange, 1877-1964," *La vie spirituelle* 44 (1964): 360-361; P. M. Emonet, "Un maître prestigieux," *Angelicum* 42 (1965): 195-199; M.-Rosaire Gagnebet, "L'œuvre du P. Garrigou-Lagrange: itinéraire intellectuel et spirituel vers Dieu," *Angelicum* 42 (1965): 7-31; M.-Benoît Lavaud, "Le Père Garrigou-Lagrange: *In memoriam*," *Revue thomiste* 64 (1964): 181-199; M.-Benoît Lavaud, "Garrigou-Lagrange (Réginald)," in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité* (Paris, 1937 ff.); Ralph McInerny, "Garrigou-Lagrange, Réginald (1887 [sic]-1964)," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 1998 ed.; Jean-Hervé Nicolas, "*In Memoriam*: Le Père Garrigou-Lagrange," *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 11 (1964): 390-395; R. M. Pizzorini, "Garrigou-Lagrange, Réginald," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1967 ed.; H. Tribout de Morembert, "Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange," in *Dictionnaire de biographie française* (Paris, 1980). See also my *The Sacred Monster of Thomism: An Introduction to the Life and Legacy of Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P.*, forthcoming from St. Augustine Press.
[2] See: B. Zorcolo, "Bibliografia del P. Garrigou-Lagrange," *Angelicum* 42 (1965): 200-250.
[3] See esp. Gagnebet, "L'œuvre du P. Garrigou-Lagrange," 8.
[4] On 14 March 1966 the process for his beatification was officially begun.
[5] See: Lavaud, "Le Père Garrigou-Lagrange," 183.
[6] Gardeil is best known today for the following trilogy: *La credibilité et l'apologétique* (1908); *Le donné révélé et la théologie* (1910); and *La structure de l'âme et l'expérience mystique* (1926).
[7] Gerald McCool, *The Neo-Thomists* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1994), 56.
[8] Viz.: "La théologie ascétique et mystique ou la doctrine spirituelle," *La vie spirituelle* (*VS*) 1 (1919): 7-19; "L'ascétique et la mystique. Leur distinction et l'unité de la doctrine spirituelle," *VS* 1 (1919): 145-165; "La mystique et les doctrines fondamentales de saint Thomas," *VS* 1 (1919): 216-228.
[9] Adrien Dansette, *Religious History of Modern France*, 2 vols., trans. John Dingle (New York: Herder & Herder, 1961), II, 415.
[10] Dansette, *Religious History*, II, 197.
[11] Cited by William A. Hinnebusch, *The Dominicans: A Short History* (Staten Island, N.Y.: Alba House, 1975), 155.
[12] The liturgical renewal following the Second Vatican Council transferred the feast day to August 8.
[13] Leo XIII, *Aeterni Patris* (New York: Daughters of St. Paul, n.d.), p. 21.
[14] McCool, *The Neo-Thomists*, 1.
[15] In *La vie spirituelle* 4 (1921): 365-384.
[16] Ibid., 367.
[17] Ibid., 368.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Gagnebet, "L'œuvre du P. Garrigou-Lagrange," 11. [*Jésus a prêché le royaume et c'est l'Eglise qui est venue*.]
[21] Ibid., 24.
[22] Quoted in Ibid., 31.

MY PERSONAL MEMORIES OF FR. REGINALD GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, O. P. (1877-1964).

Fr. Joseph M. de Torre

Introduction

I wish to thank the editors of this volume for giving me the opportunity of contributing to it as an actual disciple of an unforgettable master. Delving into my reminiscences and classnotes (which I took in the Course under him in 1952-53 at the Angelicum) has moved me to thank God for the good fortune of being directly and personally exposed to this outstanding theologian and philosopher in the best Thomistic tradition.

Much water has passed under the bridge since those early 50's : a long academic career which has been steadily swelling like a snowball rolling down the slope, to borrow Bergson's comparison. My own exposure to numerous colleagues and countless students throughout this half a century has provided a source of inputs and exchanges coming from all directions — a source of constant enrichment and readiness to learn, to reflect and to communicate what I received, doing so both orally and in writing. And much of this output is gratefully owed to Garrigou.

The academic year 1952-53 is deeply engraved in my memory. I had just received my licentiate in philosophy at the Pontifical Athenaeum Angelicum in Rome, and was then starting my doctoral studies in the same School (now the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas). Having chosen the subject for my dissertation and my thesis adviser, I had to take several required courses for the degree. One of these was the "Exposition of St. Thomas' Commentary on Aristotle's 14 Books of Metaphysics", conducted by Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange, on loan from the Theology Faculty, to teach us aspiring philosophers. He was then 75 and at the peak of his world-wide fame as an outstanding professor of philosophy, fundamental theology, dogmatic theology, and ascetical and mystical theology, teaching at the Angelicum since 1909 (he retired in 1960).

I was already acquainted with some of his books, such as *Le Sens commun, la philosophie de l'être et les formules dogmatiques,* and *De Revelatione.* Naturally, I was quite thrilled, and braced for an exciting Course under such a renowned master.

The Course went well beyond my greatest expectations, and I have kept the copious notes I took in class. Not without reason, he was famous for the rich content and brilliant delivery of his lectures. He was a consummate actor in the best sense of the word. Thinking back on that memorable Course of the academic year 1952-53, I can compare him with the present Pope, with his charismatic, even prophetic gift of effective and provocative communication. In fact, only four years earlier, in 1948, Fr. Karol Wojtyla had completed his doctoral studies in theology at the Angelicum under Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange himself. The subject of the young Polish priest's thesis was on the experience of faith in St. John of the Cross, and he wrote it in Spanish.

In class, Garrigou's gestures, modulations, facial expressions, use of the black-board, joviality and witty humor, etc., were truly masterful. The medium of instruction was Latin, the only language allowed in the classroom, but when he waxed eloquent with the lecture, he would stand up and switch to Italian, and when reaching the "seventh cloud" he would burst into French!

A comparison can be made with another famous Dominican, Francisco de Vitoria, O.P. (1486-1546), not only for his lecturing style, which enthralled throngs of students at the University of Salamanca, but also for his switching from Latin to Spanish and back, and for

pioneering a vigorous revival of Thomism and Catholicism in his time. This was not unlike the pioneering endeavor of Garrigou-Lagrange in the first-half of the 20th century as a response to Leo XIII's Encyclical *Aeterni Patris* (1879), and that of Pope John Paul II to Vatican II, culminating in the Encyclical *Fides et Ratio* (1998).

Actual Content of Garrigou's Course

How did Garrigou-Lagrange expound Aristotle's *Metaphysics* following Aquinas in that Course of 1952-53? Although the 14 Books were discussed, the focus was on Book IV, about the "first principles of being and reasoning". Aristotle's metaphysics presupposes his "physics", where he already adressed the dead-lock of Parmenides and Heraclitus regarding the meaning of being and becoming, showing that these are not "contradictory" but "contrary", not a question of black or white, since there is a *tertium quid.* As Aquinas would put it: *ens* (being) comes either from being or from non-being; not from being, for it is already; not from non-being, for from nothing, nothing comes. So, Parmenides concludes that nothing comes to be. And Heraclitus will retort: *contra factum non valet ratio*. And Aristotle and Aquinas would reply: *ex ente non fit ens: ex ente indeterminato seu in actu, concedo*; *ex ente indeterminato seu in potentia, nego.*

This corresponds to Aristotle's definition of becoming or motion in the *Physics*: *actus entis in potentia prout in potentia*: the act of a being in potency as long as it is still in potency. Aristotle's expanded the field of being with the potential being, which is also *real*, but not *actual*. This epoch-making discovery of Aristotle, which solved the dilemma of Parmenides and Heraclitus, was pushed by Aquinas to a sublime height under the inspiration of the God of Moses as He Who Is: from Aristotle's "prime mover" to Aquinas' *Actus Purus*.

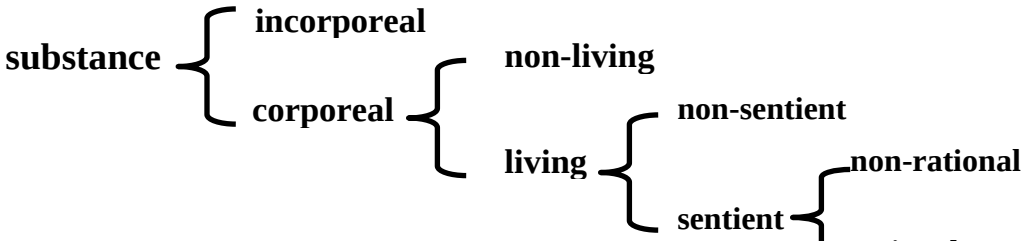
We then have a discussion on scientific knowledge (the *why* of things with certainty and universality) and sapiential knowledge (the ultimate *why*). This sapiential knowledge or Wisdom (*sophia* or *sapientia*) Aristotle will call "first philosophy of being as being". The term "metaphysics" was coined two centuries after Aristotle by Andronicus of Rhodes, who as head of the Lycaeum, compiled Aristotle's works. Andronicus placed the 14 books on the "philosophy of being as being" after the books of *Physics*. This merely referred to the location of those books in the compilation, but as St. Thomas remarked, it was an apt

description of the philosophy of being as being as *beyond*, not just "after" physics. In the course of history, this philosophy would also be called *ontology* (study of being).

After discussing all of this in the first three books, the fourth tackles the value of the "first principles of being and reasoning" in a sort of critical epistemology. This is the emphasis of Garrigou's course.

Book V is an enlightening lexicon or vocabulary of philosophy. From Book VI to X, Aristotle deals with being as being, as divided into substance and accident, and he refutes Plato: the universal exists "formally" only as we *conceive* it, not "fundamentally" as it exists in particulars. Book IX deals with potency and act "most universally" reaching toward the Pure Act. And in the rest of the Books, Aristotle goes into "natural theology", conceiving the divinity as "understanding of understanding".

At this point, Garrigou discussed the Aristotelian method of enquiry through definitions and divisions, taken up in his logic (*Organon*), thus, dividing the genus of the thing to be defined. Take specifically the case of "man". To what genus does "man" belong? To substance (being in itself, as distinct from being in another, or accident). By a *sic et non* division, we dichotomize the genus substance thus:

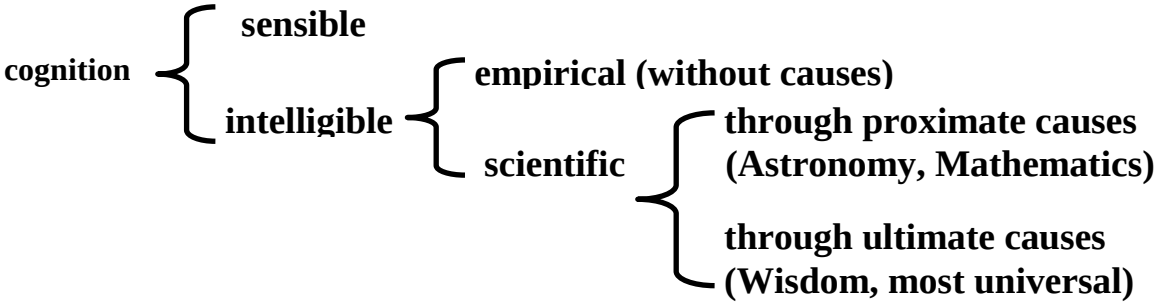


As universal, man has being; as vegetal, life; as animal, sentient. Starting from the confused concept or "nominal definition", we reach the distinctive concept and "real definition". This is arrived at by empirically verifying the characteristics ("notes") of man. According to the nominalists, man is "a speaking animal". But this is just a "property" (*proprium*), since it presupposes knowledge: he speaks because he knows: he has reason. Nor is "vertebrate", 'mammal", etc. in the essence. The real or essential "notes" are "rational animal", and as such, man has "intelligible speech". He also has "laughter": when he sees no relation, he laughs; when he sees a most profound relation, he cries; when the relation is

normal, he neither laughs nor cries. Another property is *freedom*, and the consequent *responsibility* for his actions. Another is *sociability*: man alone would not be able to attain his *agere specificum* (here Garrigou referred to Pascal, as a *magnum ingenium*). Another is *religiosity…*

Through these "notes", we arrive at the *specific difference*. It's like a man waking up, washing and looking at himself in the mirror, and saying: *O bene, ego sum*!

So, from the confused or vague concept to the distinct one: ascending and descending definition. Through this method, Aristotle comes to the concept of Wisdom: it does not belong to the genus of substance, but to that of *quality*, as a cognitive habit of knowing well and acting well. Cognition, as an analogical concept, is divided by *sic et non*, thus:



However, wisdom is like plain ordinary knowledge (common sense), differing from it in that it knows through causes. As a vague concept, then, wisdom is something excellent in the order of knowledge. And how is it clarified through its "notes"? The wise person knows through love for the truth, without material interest. He opens his mind to everything, even the most difficult. Why? Because he knows *per altissimas causas*, through ultimate causes. The "material" object of wisdom is everything, but its "formal" object is being as being.

This is proved both indirectly and directly. Indirectly, inasmuch as the other sciences consider being in some particular aspect. Directly, by looking at the totality of being and the ultimate source, namely at "theology", as explained in Book VI, Ch. 1.

The main difficulty in metaphysics lies in us, in the weakness of our intellect. It is compared to the owl, who sees only in the evening, and when the sun rises in all its splendor, he believes that night is coming! (Garrigou acted this out with real gusto.)

In Book IX, Aristotle says that being as intelligible is known only in act, since in potency it is altogether indeterminate. If we only know the seed, we cannot know the plant which will grow out of it. The more potential and indeterminate beings are, the less intelligible: the more material, the less knowable. Matter as pure potency, without any category or "predicament", as sheer potentiality, not even God has any idea of that "prime matter", totally "form-less" and "separated" from being in act.

This applies to "motion" and "time" as well. Because of this, philosophers like Heraclitus who affirmed that there is nothing fixed, said that the difficulty in knowing stems from reality, and so, fell into skepticism. William James also says that the thing-in-itself is not knowable. But the difficulty is in us: we are like owls before the sun.

St. Thomas says that the difficulty stems from the organ (vision) or from a defect of proportion. Our intellect is weak as intellectual power, because it is the last one in the ranking of intelligences . Its proportionate object is the *sensible quiddity*, and therefore it needs its substantial union with the body (*S.Th*.I,66,5). The infused faith proportions the intellect to the knowledge of God: it is like a proportioning ear for someone without a musical ear. In short, what is required is a proportion between subject and object. The comparison of our intellect to the owl is taken by Aristotle from Plato.

Now Garrigou proceeds to draw four corollaries, not from Aristotle but from Christian Theology as follows:

1. This explains the natural substantial (not accidental) union of soul and body, because the lowest intellect needs the senses in order to know the lowest intelligible: how for example, color differs from heat. One needs *conversio ad phantasma* (turning to sensible images): in order to define the lion one has to resort to his sensible difference in relation to the tiger for instance.

2. Hence, likewise, it appears that the sensible substances, although immediately visible, are very little *intelligible* because they are immersed in matter. Besides, inter-fecundity follows the specific difference: the mule is sterile since he has neither the specific difference of the horse nor that of the donkey.

3. In theology, from the comparison of our intellect to the owl, there follows the natural impossibility of knowing God as He is in Himself: he is too intelligible for us.

Eternity also is more intelligible for us. Eternity also is more intelligible than time, but it is not proportionate to our intellect. Following Denys and John of the Cross, we can see the progress of the soul through a "dark night" little by little becoming gradually clear: *via eminentiae* and *via remotionis*. Matter in itself is unknowable, because it is only the capacity to receive a form. It is knowable only in relation to the form. Here applies Denys' "principle of continuity" whereby the lowest of the higher overlaps with the highest of the lower: matter life sensitivity → intelligence → divinity, thus highest plants resemble animals; highest animals resemble men; highest men resemble angels and God. (Garrigou waxing lyrical.)

4. In *S.Th.* II-II, 17, 3, St. Thomas discusses the object of a potency and the "contingent future". Can one "read" the future when it is not necessary but contingent? The more something is intelligible *in itself* the more unintelligible it is *in relation to us:* Here Garrigou said that Juan Donoso Cortés affirmed that in order to understand historical or political events one must have a deep interior life. He cited documents of Donoso Cortés of the years 1850 and 1852 about the future of Russia engulfing Europe. According to him, neither Germany nor Britain would be able to sustain Russia's socialist onslaught as long as they remained Protestant.

On the question of knowledge, Garrigou went on, one has to avoid the two extremes of pusillanimity on the one hand and pride on the other. Simonides and the positivists fell into the former, and Plato and Hegel into the latter: Plato through his immediate intuition of the supreme good, and Hegel by not admitting the natural difference between the human and the divine intellect. Aristotle says in his *Ethics* that man should aspire to the immortal as much as he can, but he admits the aforesaid difference. In regard to the role of tradition in philosophy, we should be not "innovators" but "renovators". As Leibniz says, the present, fertilized by the past, generates the future.

The Possibility of Metaphysics

Now Garrigou turns to the question of the possibility of Metaphysics. As is well known, it has been denied by materialists, skeptics, positivists, agnostics and idealists.

Aristotle deals with this question in Book II. According to him, the end of theoretical knowledge is *truth* ,6.3Δ,, and that of practical knowledge is action .

Among the different specific sciences, philosophy has the specific difference of knowing things through their supreme causes. Aristotle then goes on to the origin of all motion, and Aquinas, in his commentary, takes up the question of Creation, and mentions the three "notes" derived from Judeo-Christian tradition: (1) *ex nihilo*, (2) *libera*, (3) *non ab aeterno.* Aristotle did not reach that far, but he said that God is not only the Prime Mover, but also the First Cause of the substances. And on the possibility of knowing the supreme truth, if there were a process *ad infinitum* there would be no possibility of knowing the supreme causes. Aristotle tries to demonstrate the possibility of "first philosophy" (metaphysics), first because there can be no process of causes *ad infinitum*, and second, there can be no infinite genus of causes.

With regard to the critical (epistemological) problem, Aristotle says that the objective value of the intellect is self-evident. This can be indirectly defended by reducing the contrary arguments *ad absurdum* (arguments from Heraclitus, the Skeptics, etc.) Here we are dealing with the possibility of the knowledge reaching the supreme truth, not any other truth. Here Garrigou mentions the four "antinomies" of Kant, and with regard to the fourth (world: eternal or temporal?), he says that even if the effect be in time (*novitas effectus*), the action is not because it is divine (eternal): *non novitas actionis*.

Garrigou then proposes to the class a possible subject for a thesis: "The Refutation of Kant's Antinomies through Book II of the *Metaphysics*".

In Book II, Aristotle states that it is impossible to have an infinite process of causes *per se* subordinate, not only efficient and final, but also material and formal.

1. Efficient causes. Otherwise, it would be suppressing the efficient cause which must necessarily be admitted according to the principle of causality. There must be an uncaused cause, since if *per se* efficient causes were subordinated to the other higher causes, there would be a process *ad infinitum*. Supposing a series of subordinated causes, we can distinguish the effect, the middle cause, and the first cause. Whether the middle causes are infinite in number it is irrelevant. Some examples of instrumental causes are cited: rain-sun, brush-painter, watch-winder, etc. (Cf. *Contra Gentiles*, I, 35; I, 19, ad 4).

2. Material Causes. Otherwise, it would be to suppress matter as the subject of change, both in "nature" and in "art". What is meant by "becoming from another"? Something becomes from another in two ways: either properly or improperly. Improperly when it becomes *after* another (e.g. night from day). Properly in two ways again: one mainly from matter, that remains under the form, and another to be perfected (from seed to plant).

In the progress of mankind there is not always irreversibility, since in this progress there are often retrogressions, as happened in the World War and its sequels: material progress, moral retrogression.

Here we understand "from another" *properly from matter*. Note that the subordination of efficient causes to the first cause is an *ascending* one, whereas the subordination of material causes is *descending* down to prime matter, hence materialism "explains" the higher by the lower (?).

Note also that there is no objection to an indefinite process of material causes subordinated "accidentally" in the past. But *per se* in that series there would be no prime matter, and so, the subject of change would be removed. That is why Aristotle says that the last cause in this order is most imperfect: the mere real capacity to receive forms, from which others come to be. The incorruptible is not above corruptibility (God), but below corruptibility. It can be destroyed only by annihilation, but this is impossible *ex parte finis.* It is ingenerable, existent *ab aeterno*, but dependent on the Pure Act. He does not have the explicit notion of creation. St. Thomas says that David Durandus fell into *stultitia* (contrary to *sapientia*) by equating God to prime matter, because *sapientia* is knowledge through highest causes, and prime matter is the lowest cause.

3. Final Causes. Otherwise it would be suppressing the final cause. The "principle of finality" states that "every agent acts for an end and ultimately for a last end".

First, is the principle of finality as self-evident as the principle of efficient causality? Even more, is it more important, since the first among the causes is the final cause? There could be an indefinite process of final causes "accidentally' subordinated, but not *per se*. If there is no end not subordinated to anything, neither will there be any intermediate causes (*S.Th.* I-II, 1,5,6,7). The principle of finality is analogical, because there are beings that have

no notion of the end, but they tend to it. Every agent acts for something fitting to it. Some tend "materially"; others both materially and "formally" (*cf*. II Physics).

Second, following from the above, it would be suppressing the reason of end, and therefore of good, because the end is nothing but the good desired for its own sake. It would be the death above all of the *bonum honestum*, and then of the *bonum utile* and the *bonum delectabile.*

Third, action would be impossible, because the last end is first in the order of intention. No agent would act if he has no end or purpose. It would be a total indifferentism. Thus, absolute evolutionism is impossible: human progress, but without ultimate end, a progress without *raison d'être*, cannot be because there is nothing without reason for being.

Fourth, the practical intellect would disappear in the end. *cf*. Plato's discussion in the *Symposium*).

4. Formal Causes. An indefinite series would suppress every form and formal causality, even the very thinking self and its formal *constitutivum* of the person.

First, the object of the intellect is being as being. The Sophists said that it was being *per accidens*, not *per se*. An indefinite process in these causes would occur in an ascent through proximate genera and specific differences without reaching the top: nothing would be definable, nothing would be knowable. Historically speaking, this indefinite process was admitted by Heraclitus, skeptics and relativists, and later by Hegelian logic. Hegel identifies "logical" with "real" process. An actually existent "synthesis" is dialectically explained by a "thesis" and "antithesis" and so on *ad infinitum* (the first proposition of Pius IX's *Syllabus*, stating that there is nothing supremely divine, was condemned by that Papal document). Spinoza, with his single Substance, concludes with an absolute nominalism: things are only "names" for the real Being. For Croce, God is the supreme synthesis of Good and Evil; "real" is a synthesis of contraries, and thus he denies the principle of identity and contradiction (Garrigou does not separate these two). An indefinite number of genera of causes would make it impossible to know reality. If we can find the four causes in a statue, for example, we know reality *per se.*

We therefore prove that the "first philosophy" (that of being as such) is possible, since it intends to know through the highest causes, and these cannot proceed *ad infinitum* (Book IV).

The Question of Method

At the end of Book II, Aristotle deals with the suitable manner to enquire about truth (here Garrigou refers to a book by Malebranche). Aristotle says that men use three modes or methods of enquiry: the mathematical, the empirical, and the poetic. The "micrologists" sin by excess, and the "scientifically incapable" by defect. It is not fitting to apply the same method to all the sciences. The diverse methods stem from "custom": what is customary is more known.

Regarding the first mode, some became accustomed from their childhood: Pythagoras, Plato, Spinoza, Leibniz, Descartes… Since they do not go beyond the second degree of abstraction, they conceive the substance as a point, and they admit nothing which is not thought out mathematically.

Regarding the second mode, others do not admit anything without a sensible example, due to a prevalence of sensible faculties and weakness of the intellect. And as for the third mode, they know through symbols, metaphors and poetry, e.g. Plato.

All of these methods are prompted by custom.

Some can be called "micrologists": they deal with all things down to the last minimal detail, and seek absolute certainty in everything. But the magnanimity of philosophers demands dealing with great problems. This, says Aristotle, avoids pusillanimity and scrupulosity. Many modern methodologists, says Garrigou, are close to this, like Kant. Others sin by defect, not recognizing the need for method due to their scientific incapacity, and they grow weary and sad in enquiry through the lack of method.

What is the solution? Man cannot simultaneously seek both science and the way to it. St. Thomas says that man should first learn Logic, as the science demonstrating the method in general, with two modes:

from composites to simple
" singulars to universals
" effects to causes

a) analysis]

b) synthesis { **from simple to composites**
" universals to singulars]
" causes to effects]

Many moderns who speak about method, overlook this need to start with Logic. They start rather with Psychology, and so, they confuse the idea with the image.

Aristotle constructs his Logic according to the three operations of the mind (simple apprehension, judgment and reasoning). He, and later the Scholastics, explain not only how to expound the truth but also the way to find the truth: divisions and definitions.

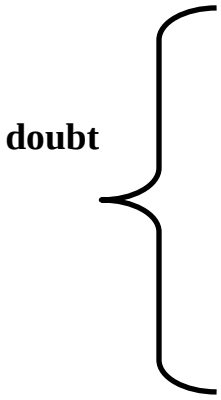
Physical laws are about motion and variations. Modern physics shows that experimental laws are about motion and variations. Mathematics, on the contrary, deals with abstractions from sensible matter. But they do not transcend the human intellect since they have an adequate phantasm (image). A 1000-sided polygon is unimaginable, while its concept is easy. Bergson said that the proportionate object of the intellect is the geometric solid, because physics is the most perfect science arrived at by man. Therefore, man cannot know life, i.e. what is in flux. One has to resort to a faculty higher than the intellect, namely the "intuition".

Continuing with the question of method, we pass now to the role of methodical and problematic *doubt.* First, we have to consider doubtable things, not evident things. To this effect, we put forward arguments for and against:

1) The need for methodical doubt.
2) Problematic of doubt.
3) Arguments for and against.

First, it is necessary to doubt well, in order to acquire the principles of science. Here we mean doubt of discussion, not of wonderment. Three reasons are presented: (a) on the

part of the agent: otherwise man cannot scientifically affirm or deny, because he does not know the true point of the difficulty to be solved; (b) on the part of the end intended: otherwise he does not know the question to be solved; (c) on the part of the end in its executing: otherwise, he does not know the conclusion of the enquiry (when to finish the discourse):



Why is this doubt not extended to the first principles of reason? Because they are immediately self-evident. The objections from skepticism are absurd: Could Kant be at the same time non-Kant? (Del Prado) – supreme value of the principle of non-contradiction.

Secondly, the problems of Metaphysics are mainly four: (a) whether Metaphysics should deal with the *real* value of the first principles of *reason*. (Whether the highest principle is that of non-contradiction or that of identity); (b) whether there is a single substance for all things (Book IV); (c) whether numbers are the principles of things (Book X, 3; Book XI): quantity presupposes substance (quantity of bread, of water, etc.); (d) whether ideas separated from matter are *real* principles: universal man can certainly be conceived independently from individual notes: he cannot *exist* separated from singular notes and from matter, because flesh and bones cannot exist without being *this* flesh and *these* bones.

Being as being and the transcendentals (one, true, good and beautiful) are abstracted from all matter, and can be verified without matter in God (Book VIII and Book XI).

At the beginning of Book IV, Aristotle recapitulates Book I, and further shows that Metaphysics is the science of all being, but in a special way of the being as being. All the sciences deal with some aspect of being. There remains, therefore, the need to examine what

being is through the highest and the most universal causes, supposing that there is no process *ad infinitum* of causes in any of their genera. Furthermore, he shows that Metaphysics must deal primarily with substantial being, and secondarily with the accidental. And he notes that being is not predicated univocally of the substance and the accident, but analogically (not only metaphorically, but properly).

In Chapter 2, he shows that Metaphysics must deal with ontological unity as a property of being. He distinguishes between ontological and mathematical unity. The latter belongs to the category (predicament) of quantity (accident). He also states the division of *unum*:

unum { ***idem* (*vs. diversum*)**
***aequale* (*vs. inaequale*)**
***simile* (*vs. dissimile*)**

The First Principles of Reas

From Chapter 3 to the end of Book IV, he deals with the first principle of reason. There are three parts: (1) the first principle of reason considered in itself; (2) in relation to those who deny it; (3) in relation to the other principles.

(1) *Per se*: this is divided into six parts: (a) It belongs to Metaphysics to deal with the real value of the first principle, not to Logic or to Pscychology. (b) What are the conditions of the first principle. (c) These conditions must fit a single principle. (d) Formulation of this principle according to the Peripatetics. (e) How we pass from sensible "cogitative" to intellectual. (f) How we arrive at the one single principle.

(2) This refers mainly to the refutation of Protagoras and the Skeptics.

(3) How the first principles are related to the absolutely first.

So, to which principle do the required conditions apply? To the principle of non-contradiction, in which we enunciate that which first fits being, namely its opposition to non-being. Its affirmative form is the principle of identity. In a more explicit way: it is impossible for something to be and not to be at the same time. Or in a logical manner: it is impossible to

say the same of the same under the same aspect. It is something inconceivable. Descartes, as a voluntarist, says that God through a miracle can make a square circle or mountains without valleys. This has been proposed under different forms. Thus, Parmenides: a multiplicity of beings, and becoming or motion, would be against this principle. Spinoza also. Heraclitus replies: the universals do not exist even in the mind. He formulates it thus: Everything becomes, nothing is, and becoming itself is its own reason, without a cause: in becoming is identified being and non-being: "evolving being".

Aristotle formulates it like this: being is being, non-being is non-being; that which is, is; that which is not, is not. It is inconceivable and impossible for something to be and not to be at the same time.

How are the conditions of the first principle verified in the principle of non-contradiction? This principle must be known to all, so that it formulates what fits being: being is being, non-being is non-being. The "habit of the first principles" is somehow natural, partly from exterior principle, partly from interior principle. Heraclitus denies it, but we say that nobody can err about this. Protagoras says that something is true when it appears so to everyone. But Aristotle replies that this depends on the imperfection of the organ of knowing.

Heraclitus and Hegel say that the principle of non-contradiction is just a principle of language (grammatical), a law of discursive reason. But it is not the supreme law of the superior reason, which does not proceed discursively but intuitively, apprehending the becoming as such. Thus, also William James.

Aristotle states how Heraclitus could arrive at that position, namely by an exclusive consideration of sensible things, which are always changing. We have a primary evidence that being is not moving, because whatever Heraclitus may say, Heraclitus cannot be simultaneously Heraclitus and non-Heraclitus. Heraclitus understood what he said, because if every contradictory is true, the position of Parmenides is also true…(!!!)

Hence, this principle is more primary than the *cogito* (Descartes) and the principle of sufficient reason (Leibniz).

What is the reason why there is only one first principle, and not many equally, or at least two? St. Thomas answers (Book IV, Lect. 6): Because of the unity of our intellect.

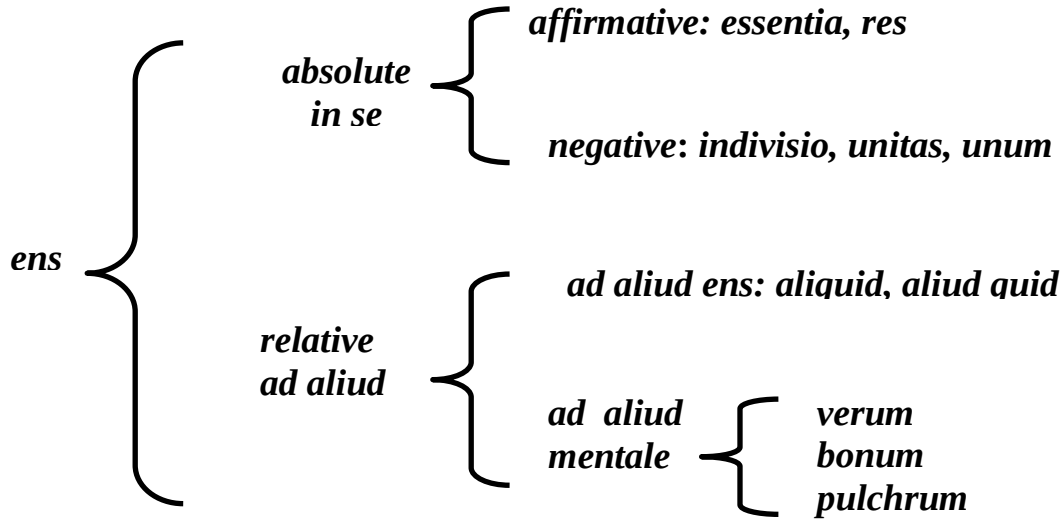
Every ordination presupposes a subordination. See also *S.Th*. II-II, 17, 6; I-II, 51, 1; I-II, 94, 2.

For Scotists: Being is being.

For Suarez: Every being has an essence.

For Thomists: Being is not non-being.

Book IV, Lect. 3: (1) being, (2) non-being, (3) division, (4) one, (5) something, (6) true, good, beautiful (splendor of one, true and good, simultaneously). See *De Veritate*, 1, I.



Subordination of the formulas: founded on the subordination of the notions. The first formula is affirmative and twofold: being is being, non-being is non-being. To this corresponds a negative one: being is not non-being.

Second proposition : every being is being. To this corresponds: no being is non-being.

Third: every being, either is or is not. To this corresponds: nothing can simultaneously be and not be. And there is no middle.

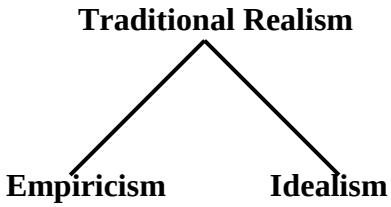
The first negative is the principle of non-contradiction. The affirmative is not tautological : it already says something profound against absolute evolutionism.

***Corollaries*:**

The principle of non-contradiction is absolutely first, at least for us humans. Our abstract cognition is often better made from two opposites. Thus, we better know the dignity of being by its opposition to non-being. Justice is better known before an injustice.

But for God, it is not so. How does the knowledge of the first principles of reason and being depend on the senses?

Three answers:



(1) For Empiricism, the knowledge of the first principles depends on the senses totally, formally and intrinsically: Metaphysics must be experimental, and hereditarily confirmed. These principles have no universality and necessity: they are contingent.

(2) Idealism:

(a) Objective: this intellective cognition of the first principles does not depend on the senses at all, but at most only occasionally. So-called ontologists see them in God "confusedly" known: this confuses the universal *in praedicando* with the universal in *essendo.*

(b) Subjective: application of subjective categories. These have no ontological value, but permit the ordering of phenomena (Kant).

(3) Realism:

The senses supply the material for the consideration from which are abstracted the first notions, whose universality and necessity are verified in their *intellectual evidence*, not sensitive. These are the fundamental laws of the mind and of being, not confused in God, but perceived in being.

The resolution of the certainty of the first principles occurs { **formally and intrinsically in their intellectual evidence.**

materially and extrinsically in sensation.

Likewise the certainty of infused faith is

- **formally and intrinsically in supreme revealing authority**.
- **materially and extrinsically in the signs of revelation**.

"I believe, *in a sole act,* in God revealing and in God revealed" (*S.Th*. I-II, 67,2)

See also *S.Th*. I, 84, 6; *C. G*, II, 77;
De Veritate, 10, 7 ad 7; I, 84, 7;
De Veritate, 12, 3 ad 2.

Conclusion

So much for my classnotes of that memorable Course 1952-53 at the Angelicum in Rome. As Papal Consultant, Garrigou had been involved in the doctrinal crises that led to Pius XII's Encyclical *Humani Generis* (1950) and the issue of the *Nouvelle Théologie* as expert in modern philosophy. After retiring in 1960, he lived to witness the opening of the II Vatican Council, but not its end, since he went to his reward in 1964; bequeathing a rich legacy of really creative Thomism. In his mature years, he concentrated his attention on Ascetical and Mystical Theology, producing his classic masterpiece: *The Three Ages of the Interior Life.* I must be counted among his devoted disciples, ever since I started my teaching career in 1953 and up to the present.

REGINALD GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE ON SUBSISTENCE

Christopher Albright

Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., treated of the problem of subsistence throughout his career.[1] Subsistence is the formal determining reality by which a supposit is a supposit. A supposit is an individual substance, e.g., Socrates. In those beings in which there is a distinction between the supposit and its singular substantial nature, subsistence might also be called that whereby a singular nature is rendered a supposit. Normally, therefore the "problem" of subsistence consists in pinpointing exactly what reality "successive" to the singular nature constitutes (together with that nature) the supposit. This perfecting reality thus plays the role of a "formal" complement in regard to the singular nature, which, as perfected, has the role of a "material" principle. Subsistence is also called the formal constituent because it *most properly* constitutes the supposit and because it is the *form signified* by the term "subsistent," just as "suppositality" is the form signified by the term "supposit." In fact, "subsistence" and "suppositality" are normally taken as having equivalent meanings.

Catholic philosophers are certainly familiar with this problem, and almost all would affirm that it is a problem which *de facto* arose from the encounter with the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation.

(1) In the Triune God there is *one* singular nature, yet *three* subsisting personalities or intellectual subsistences. The absolute subsisting singular divine nature, identical with its existence, is also identical with each of the three persons. Yet the persons are really distinct from each other by a relation of opposition.

(2) In the Incarnation there is one divine personality (intellectual subsistence) possessing two natures really distinct from each other: the divine and the human natures. The human nature assumed is a *singular* human nature, and yet this nature neither is nor constitutes a human person with a human personality. Rather it is drawn to the eternal and uncreated personality or subsistence of the Word.

Clearly then some other note, property, mode, status (negative or positive) or principle (beyond the nature and its singularity) must formally constitute a supposit. This reality or status is normally given the name "subsistence."

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[1] See the following works of R. Garrigou-Lagrange: *Christ the Savior*. Trans. B. Rose. St. Louis & London: Herder & Herder, 1950; *God: His Existence and His Nature*. 2 vols. Trans. B. Rose. St. Louis: Herder, 1934; *The One God*. Trans. B. Rose. St. Louis: Herder, 1943; *Reality*. Trans. P. Cummins. St. Louis: Herder, 1953; Review of Carlo Giacon's *La Seconda Scholastica: I grandi Commentatori de S. Tomasso*. *Angelicum*. June (1945), 83-85; *Le Sens Commun*. Paris: Desclee de Brouwer, 1934; *The Trinity and God the Creator*. Trans. F. C. Eckhoff. St. Louis & London: B. Herder Book Co., 1952. "De Vera Notione Personalitatis." *Acta Academiae Pontificiae Romanae Sanctae Thomae* (1938), 78-92; and *Angelicum*, June, 1945, 83-85. His most complete treatment of the problem of subsistence is in *Christ the Savior*, 119-72.

Although the necessity for affirming subsistence is obvious from a theological standpoint, it is not immediately clear that such a necessity is found in philosophy, at least if philosophy is considered as a historical phenomenon. For prior to the development of the Christian ontology of the Trinity and the Incarnation, philosophy seemed content to argue that: (1) a supposit is an individual substance (e.g. Socrates) as distinct from the absolute substance (e.g. man); (2) every supposit is constituted a *quid* (a "what") by its substantial nature *quo* (which in the case of corporeal substances is common as, e.g., humanity), and (3) is constituted an individual substance by the addition (if necessary) of an individuating principle to the substantial nature. This was all that was thought necessary to clarify the notion of individual substance or supposit. In corporeal substances, therefore, the supposit was thought to be realized by the presence of an individualizing matter which determined the common form or nature, resulting in a supposit. And in separate substances, the individual substance was thought to be identical with its nature inasmuch as a pure form, unrelated to matter, is of itself individual.[2] Consequently, there was no need for the addition of an individualizing principle to the nature.

In fact, it must be said that in many places, St. Thomas himself is content to clarify the notion of the supposit in a similar limited manner.[3]

However, even though the historical awareness of a distinction between substantial singular nature and supposit was something which was *de facto* prompted only by the Christian mysteries, it, of course, does not follow that such a distinction does not belong to philosophy essentially. Indeed, many thinkers (including Garrigou-Lagrange) have argued for the necessity of admitting such a distinction upon the basis of reason alone.[4]

Whatever the origins of the awareness of such a distinction, the solutions which have been propounded are well-known.

(1) Firstly, there is the negative theory, which teaches that subsistence is something negative, like the fact of a singular substantial nature's not being assumed by a higher power. The most famous defender of this theory is Scotus, though a variant of it has been

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[2] That the ancients in some way discerned matter as individualizing can be seen in the works of Plato and Aristotle. See the relevant sections of Plato's *Timaeus*, *Sophist*, and *Republic* as well as Aristotle's *Metaphysics IV*, c. 2 and *VII*, cc. 3, 7, 10, 13-16 and *Physics II*.

[3] See *De Ente*, c. 3; *ST I*, q. 3, a. 3, c.; and *De Pot.*, q. 9, a. 1, c.: "Hoc autem quod est in substantia particulari praeter naturam communem, est materia individualis quae est singularitatis principium...." (Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1965).

De Pot., q. 9, a. 1, c.: "In substantiis vero simplicibus, nulla est differentia (1) essentiae et subiecti, cum non sit in eis materia individualis naturam communem individuans, sed ipsa essentia in eis est subsistentia. Et hoc patet per philosophum (*in vii metaph*.) et per Avicennam, in sua *metaphysica*, quod quidditas simplex est ipsum simplex." (Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1965).

[4] Jacques Maritain, *Existence and the Existent*, trans. L. Galantiere and G. B. Phelan (New York: Image Books, 1959), 72-73 and *The Degrees of Knowledge*, 4th ed., trans. G. B. Phelan (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), 430-444. R. Garrigou-Lagrange, *Christ the Savior*, pp. 144-72 and *Reality*, pp. 392-396. John of St. Thomas, *Philosophia Naturalis*, Ia Pars, q. 7, aa. 1-3.

defended more recently by Othmar Schweizer.[5]

(2) Then there are the positive "substantialist" theories.

(a) One such theory affirms that a substantial *mode* "precedes" and underlies a substantial, supposital existence. Subsistence is the pure *terminus* of a substantial singular nature, or a substantial mode by which the singular nature becomes that subjective *that which* (*quod*) which is immediately susceptible of the act of existence. This *susceptivum* is the supposit, the primary receptor and possessor of substantial existence. This position holds that the supposit belongs to the line of *quod est* (which reduces to the line of essence) and not to the line of *esse* (existence). This doctrine is taught by Cajetan, John of St. Thomas, Domingo Bannez, the Salmanticenses.[6]

(b) Another such theory also holds that subsistence is indeed a substantial mode, but one *following upon* substantial *existence.* Such is the view of Suarez. Suarez, the mediator between Thomism and Scotism, taught that there is no real distinction between substantial nature and existence. Consequently, the mode which determines the substantial nature is subsequent to the act of existence of the nature.[7]

(3) Thirdly, there is the existential theory, which teaches that subsistence is the act of existence of a singular substantial nature. Notable defenders of this theory have included Louis Billot, Mieczyslaw Krapiec, and Joseph Owens.[8]

(4) Fourthly, there is the relational theory, which teaches that subsistence is a relation of the singular nature to its proportional act of existence. This theory has drawn supporters from the two major camps--the substantialist and the existential school. Defenders of this theory include Thomas Mullaney, and, some say, Capreolus.[9]

Garrigou-Lagrange was a defender of the first "substantialist" view, the view which holds that subsistence is a substantial mode or a *terminus purus* by which an individual

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[5] J. Duns Scotus, *In III Sent*., d. 1, q. 1, n. 5 and d. 5, q. 3, par. 2; Othmar Schweizer, *Person und Hypostatische Union bei Thomas Von Aquin* (Freiburg: Universitats-Verlag Freiburg Schweiz, 1957).

[6] Cajetan, *In IIIam*, q. 4, a. 2, ; John of St. Thomas, *Philosophia Naturalis*, Ia Pars, q. 7, aa. 1-3; Banez, *In Iam*, q. 3, a. 3; Salmanticenses, *Cursus Theologicus*, tract. XXI, d. 8-d. 10.

[7] Federico Suarez, *Metaphysicarum Disputationum Pars Prima* (Venetiis: Apud Sebastianum Coleti, 1751), disp. 34, sect. 1, 2, 4, nos. 9 f; *De Incarn*., disp. 11, sect. 3.

[8] M. A. Krapiec, *Metaphysics*: *An Outline of the History of Being*., Trans. T. Sandok (New York: Peter Laing Publishing, Inc., 1991), 299-302; L. Billot, *De Verbo Incarnato* (Roma: Gregorianum, 1927), 49, 69, 140; J. Owens, *An Elementary Christian Metaphysics* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1963), 151-54; J. Reichmann, "St. Thomas, Capreolus, Cajetan, and the Created Person," *The New Scholasticism* 33 (1959): 202-30; G. Mattiussi, *De Verbo Incarnato* (Roma: Gregorianum, 1914).

[9] T. U. Mullaney, "Created Personality: The Unity of Thomistic Tradition," *The New Scholasticism* 29 (1955): 369-402; J. Capreolus, *Defensiones theologiae divi Thomae Aquinatis, In III Sent*., d. 5, q. 3, a. 3. Philippe de la Sainte Trinite, O.C.D., "La Recherche de la Personne," *Etudes carmelitaines*, (April, 1936), 125-171. B. Pena. *Soteriology* (Manila: UST Printing Office, 1985).

nature becomes a supposit, a whole individual substance: the *principium et subiectum quod* immediately capable of the act of existence.

Garrigou-Lagrange's *Philosophical Arguments for the Terminus Purus or Modus Theory.*

First, Garrigou-Lagrange emphasizes the testimony of natural reason, the intuitions and judgments of which are direct and infallible. He sees the metaphysical concept of the supposit as a development and clarification of the descriptive definition provided by natural reason. This descriptive, nominal definition acts as a "guiding star" which may not be contradicted, because philosophical reason is based upon natural reason.[10].

The nominal definition of supposit is a thing which exists by itself separately.[11] It is thus a whole, entirely incommunicable substance, and the primary existent thing. Moreover, beyond its own substantiality and existence, the supposit possesses accidents and exercises actions. Therefore, it is the first subject of all attribution. For we say that Peter exists, is a man, is white, and walks. [12]

The genuine notion of subsistence must also preserve the truth of the following judgments: Peter is existing, but Peter is not his existence. The first judgment is affirmed by natural reason, and the second is the judgment of the Thomists, as well as of most theologians.[13] Something positive, factually self-identical, incommunicable, complete and one *per se* must be at the basis of both of these truthful judgments.

Bearing the foregoing in mind, Garrigou-Lagrange rules out certain theories concerning that which intrinsically and formally constitutes a supposit.

The negative theory is not tenable, he says, for supposits possess the most perfect mode of existence: *esse per se separatim*.[14] But the perfect should be constituted by the positive, not by the negative. Moreover, all of the lesser modes of existence, e.g., those of accidents and substantial parts, are constituted by something positive. *A fortiori*, therefore, the supposit is constituted by something positive. Finally, though many positive things are explained negatively, they are still intrinsically constituted by the positive.[15]

Neither is subsistence something accidental to the supposit, since anything accidental presupposes the prior constitution of that to which it "occurs" or "attaches".

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[10] *Christ the Savior*, 163.

[11] *Ibid.*, 146, 160, 163.

[12] *Ibid*. , 126. The *ratio*, attributes and determinations presented here occur in the context of Garrigou-Lagrange's discussion of the *person*, which adds to the notion of the supposit the dignity of the rational nature. Thus, a person is a rational supposit, and personality is the subsistence of a rational supposit.

[13] *Ibid*., 123, 146.

[14] *Christ the Savior*, 147-49, 164. *ST III*, q. 16, a. 12, ad 2.

[15] *Christ the Savior*, 147-49. *Reality*, 211.

Moreover, subsistence must be intrinsic to and necessarily belong to the supposit, whereas "the accidental" by definition does not necessarily belong to that to which it is accidental. Nor is subsistence a predicamental accident, even a necessary permanent predicamental accident, since subsistence intrinsically constitutes a first *substance*.[16]

Moreover, subsistence is not the common substantial nature, since subsistence formally constitutes an *individual* substance. As Thomas teaches: "whatever is in him [Socrates] is individuated,"[17] and subsistence (which in rational supposits is called personality) is most decidedly *in* the *individual* substance.

Furthermore, the supposit is not the individual substantial nature, nor is it constituted by the individuality of the nature as such. The reason for this is that the supposit is naturally discerned to be a subjective "that which" (*quod*), and the singular nature is naturally discerned to be *only* a *principium quo*, a principle *by which*, a principle by which a thing is placed in a certain species. Upon encountering Peter, natural reason affirms that, primarily and properly, it is *Peter* who exists, not his individual nature. Peter's singular nature is instead considered to be an intrinsic formal perfective part which "falls short" of that whole to which existence, accidents, and operation primarily belong. Therefore, neither the nature, nor its singularity, are sufficient to be or to formally constitute the supposit.[18]

Nor can the existence of a substantial singular nature be that determination which formally constitutes a supposit. Existence is rather a "contingent predicate" of the created supposit, advening to a supposit already constituted as the subjective *quod est*.[19] He summarizes:

Peter is not his existence, but only has existence. Peter exists contingently, whereas Peter is necessarily Peter, and, by virtue of the principle of identity, can be only Peter.[20]

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[16] *Christ the Savior*, 148, 160, 164. *Reality*, 211.

[17] *De Ente*, c. 3: "...sed quicquid est in eo est individuatum." (Rome: Leonine, 1882--).

[18] *Christ the Savior*, 125-26, 164. *Reality*, 212. Thomas himself associates subsistence with a "second singularity " distinct from the individuality of the nature. See *In III Sent*., d. 2, q. 2, a. 1, sol. III, ad 2: "...est duplex singularitas scilicet singularitas naturae, ut haec humanitas; et singularitas subsistentis in natura, ut hic homo." (Mandonnet-Moos edition. Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1929-1947).

SCG IV, c. 49: "Si quis eamdem objectionem ad humanam naturam transferat, dicens eam esse substantiam quamdam, non universalem, sed particularem, et per se consequens hypostasim, manifeste decipitur. Nam humana natura, etiam in Socrate vel Platone, non est hypostasis, sed id quod in eo subsistit hypostasis est." (Rome: Leonine, 1882--).

The notion of supposit clearly adds to the notion of singular substantial nature (1) the status of subsisting and being the subsistent thing and (2) the status of ultimate substantial incommunicability.

[19] *Christ the Savior*, 164.

[20] *Christ the Savior*, 164. *Reality*, 212.

The supposit, necessarily of a certain nature and necessarily itself, receives an actuality--existence--which composes with and perfects the whole singular receptive potency: the supposit itself. The Petrine subsistence or personality is necessary to Peter, who necessarily is himself, whereas his existence is not necessary to him but contingent.[21] Thus Peter is constituted by something of the substantial/essential order, not by his act of existence.

If subsistence is not existence, is it perhaps a substantial mode subsequent to existence? But this cannot be, because whatever follows upon the substantial *existence* (the ultimate proportionate completion of the subsistent thing) of a thing is a predicamental accident.[22]

Finally subsistence is not a relation. It cannot be a predicamental relation since that belongs to the genus of accident. Nor can it be a transcendental relation to primary substantial existence, since this presupposes the constitution of the separate whole *aliquid,* to which *subsistere* belongs as proper act. Moreover, as Thomas teaches, created supposits are not constituted by a relational subsistence.[23]

Therefore, having omitted all the other possibilities, the Dominican concludes that subsistence (or "personality" if we are speaking of the subsistence of rational supposits):

> ...is...that whereby the singular nature becomes immediately capable of existence, and thus the subjective what [*quod* or "that which"] is really constituted.[24]

What provides this immediate capacity? A substantial mode, a *terminus purus* which brings substantial totality and incommunicability to the nature, rendering it a substantial, singular whole with respect to existence,[25] and hence a supposit. For nothing else is the natural and immediate receiver and possessor of the central act of existence (*esse per se separatim vel subsistere*), not an accident, not a common substantial nature, not an individual substantial nature *quo*--only the *whole singular substantial reality*

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[21] *Quodlibet II*, q. 2, a. 1, c.: "...ista propositio: 'Sortes est', est de accidentali predicato, secundum quod importat entitatem rei..." (Rome: Leonine, 1882--).

Moreover, the supposit is some thing one *per se*. But the thing composed of essence and existence is not some thing one *per se*. Therefore, the formal-actual role played by existence in regard to the singular nature is insufficient to intrinsically constitute a supposit. In fact, Thomas teaches (in *Quodlibet II*, q. 2, a. 1, ad 1) that the composition of existence and essence does not result in a third thing (*tertia res*) but only in a composite notion, as of the composition of the *thing itself* and *another.*

[22] *Christ the Savior*, 153.

[23] *ST I*, q. 29, a. 4, ad 4. "...in significatione personae divinae contineatur relatio, non autem in significatione angelicae personae vel humanae...." (Rome: Leonine, 1882--).

[24] *Christ the Savior*, 164 (brackets mine). It should be noted that the *subjective* "what" (*quod*) is not the same as the *definitional* "what" (*quid*). In fact, "*quod*" is perhaps better translated as "that which," which is how Patrick Cummins translates it in the English version of Garrigou-Lagrange's *Reality*.

[25] See especially J. Maritain on this in *The Degrees of Knowledge*, 433.

terminated in its substantiality: the supposit. Subsistence, as he has shown, is not something negative, accidental, a predicamental accident, nor the act of existence. Therefore it must be something positive and substantial, reducible to singular essence, but not quite the same as its purely definitional content or the sheer singularity (considered as merely excluding universality) of that definitional content.[26] We are therefore left not with a new substantial principle but with a substantial term *naturally successive* to the singular form and nature.

Subsistence is thus the final complement of the substantial, "the terminus" of substance that follows immediately upon the substantial singular nature. Existence "then" perfects the receptive whole individual substance.

Although he could present the above as a satisfactory proof by elimination, Father Garrigou strengthens his teaching by setting forth the following observations, which are mainly directed against the "existence" theory.

First, he reaffirms the notion of the supposit as a substantial subject existing separately by itself, a notion which he combines with the following judgments of natural reason.

> ...Peter is a man, Peter is existing, Peter is acting. In these affirmative propositions, the verb "is"...affirms a real identity between subject and predicate, and postulates the same real subject underlying nature, existence, and operation.[27]

These observations are unimpeachable. Natural reason infallibly affirms that there are things which exist separately through themselves--supposits. The encountered supposit is naturally discerned to be the same one thing which exists, which acts, and which is of a certain nature. It is therefore the positive, unitary, singular substantial basis for all truthful predications which center on it.

But then there is also the judgment of philosophical reason and of most theologians "that Peter is not his existence."[28] What solution will preserve the truth of these two judgments: "Peter is existing" and "Peter is not his existence?" He says:

> ...there must be a foundation for the real identity between subject and predicate ["Peter" and "existing"], which is affirmed in the first judgment, yet such that there

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[26] Nor can we say that the supposit is constituted by some *third* advening substantial principle, distinct from both essence and existence, perhaps another substantial form, or some created super-existence which would determine substantial existence itself, since these principles would be superfluous and perhaps nonsensical. Rather, we must say that for one finite created supposit there must be only one substantial form and one substantial (supposital) existence. See *De Pot.*, q. 7, a. 2, ad 9 & q. 5, a. 4, ad 3; *ST I*, q. 4, a. 1, ad 3.

[27] *Christ the Savior*, 146.

[28] *Ibid*., 146, 163. Garrigou-Lagrange holds that the real distinction between essence and existence is proven through the real distinction between potency and act. Existence is grasped as an act (perfection) and essence as a potency (perfected). Hence they must be distinct, and in such a fashion that one does not enter into the *intrinsic ratio* of the other. See *Reality*, 55.

is not [the] identity, which is rightly so denied in the second judgment [Peter is not his existence]. But this foundation, must be something positive, real, which is substantial and not accidental, which is not existence, however, for this a contingent predicate of Peter, or nature, which is related as whereby and as essential part of this subject. It must formally be that whereby anything is a what [a *quod* or "that which"] or a real subject of these divers predications.

Therefore a terminus is required or a mode that is substantial and not accidental.[29]

The Dominican's assertions may seem puzzling at first. What does he mean by saying that there is a *real identity* between the subject and predicate, and yet a *real distinction* between the subject and its existence?

First, if subject and predicate are considered only as *logical* terms of an affirmative proposition, then they are *always identified* in the mind. But in this case, because the proposition is grounded in infallible natural reason, Garrigou-Lagrange intends to say something *ontologica*l: that a *thing* intrinsically characterized by its essence and singularity (human Peter) is also a *thing* in fact determined by existence. In discerning this one also spontaneously discerns the real subjective status of Peter himself as the singular basis of determination, actuality, and predication. Thus "Peter, the human, *hoc aliquid*" (factually and spontaneously considered as thing-subject) is identical with "the existing thing" (factually and spontaneously considered as thing-predicate).[30]

Therefore, we say that Peter and *actually existing* real thing (existing Peter) are (at least) *in fact identical*.[31] But what is the basis for this identity? It is, paradoxically, real distinction and composition: the fact that Peter and actuality *quo* (existence) are *united in fact.*

As all Thomists know, existence is an act (a perfection). It is present *in* Peter as his proper act, and yet precisely as his *act*, existence cannot be contained within the intrinsic <u>*ratio*</u> of Peter, who is in an *actual relationship of potency* (being perfected) to act (perfection).[32] Peter is thus not his existence, and yet Peter is existing. However, it might

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[29] *Christ the Savior*, 163-64. The bracketed segments are my own.

[30] *Christ the Savior*, 123: "Peter is the same real subject that is the man that exists..."

[31] But see in note 35 our observations which argue that the act of existence of Peter is *necessary for* the actual intrinsic reality of Peter, his nature, and subsistence (even though this existence is extrinsic to the *ratio* of the Petrine identity). For how can Peter have his unity, singularity, personality, and identity if he does not exist? In this sense, there is a "necessary" identity between Peter and existing Peter.

[32] For existence as act of acts see *De Pot.*, q. 7, a. 2, ad 9. For act as extrinsic to the *ratio* of potency, we have the following (*De Pot*., q. 5, a. 4, ad 3): "...esse non dicitur accidens quod sit in genere accidentis, si loquamur de esse substantiae (est enim actus essentiae), sed per quamdam similitudinem; quia non est pars essentiae, sicut nec accidens." (Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1965); See also *Quodlibet II*, qq. 1-2 and *SCG II*, cc. 53-54.

Something extrinsic to a thing's *ratio* is not necessarily "outside" of the *thing*. For instance, the soul of the brute is *in* the body of the brute, yet it is outside the *ratio* of that body. "*Ratio*" signifies "notion" or "meaning." Viewed logically, the *ratio* of a thing is the objective notion signifiying the entire *intrinsic*

be asked, since we call him "*actual* Peter," "*factual* Peter," "*actually human* Peter," and yet still affirm that the *positive he* is really distinct from his *positive existence*, is there perhaps a twofold positivity (even a twofold actuality) in Peter? We hold that there is. This is the real distinction between the factual *intrinsic* singular essential positivity of Peter (which might be called his *esse essentiae* or *esse quidditativum*) and his act of existence (his *esse actualis existentiae*). According to Thomas, these two *positive* factors are inseparable, but radically distinct.[33]

Is Peter identical with his total factual essence, that is, his total factual *esse essentiae*? The answer to this must be yes, if "*esse essentiae*" is taken without precision to include the totality of his intrinsic concrete substantial reality (including his subsistence). If, however, the *esse essentiae* is taken in precision from his subsistence, then Peter is not identical with his *esse essentiae*, and *esse essentiae* is then considered as the singular essence or nature *quo* (by which), a nature which falls short of the whole Peter.[34]

To summarize, then, there are the following identities.

(1) An identity between the *logical subject* and *logical predicate* in the true proposition arising from an actual ontic situation. Although all judgments identify subject and predicate in the mind, not all do so correctly. But the proposition "Peter is existing" is affirmed by natural reason upon encounter with Peter, and natural reason cannot lie. Thus, reality is the ground for the natural infallible judgments: "Peter is existing," and "Peter is an existing thing."

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reality of the thing in question (whether that "thing" be substance, accident, principle, part, etc.). Viewed ontologically, the *ratio* is that very entire intrinsic reality itself.

[33] Though the terminology is certainly Cajetan's (*In De Ente et Essentia*, q. 9, n. 83, q. 12, n. 101), Thomas, too, seems to teach such a distinction, as when speaking, e.g., of the subsistent form in *De Spir. Creat*., a. 1, c. : "...non dico autem ut potentiam separabilem ab actu, sed quam semper suus actus comitetur." (Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1953). See also *De Ver*., q. 27, a. 1, ad 8: "...omne quod est directe in praedicamento substantiae est compositum saltem ex esse et quod est." (Rome: Leonine, 1882--); *ST I*, q. 50, a. 2, ad 3: "...nam quod est est ipsa forma subsistens; ipsum autem esse est quo substantia est, sicut cursus est quo currens currit." (Rome: Leonine, 1882--); *In de Hebdo*., c. 2; *De Ente*, c. 4; *SCG II*, cc. 53-54;; *In Lib. De Caus*., c. 6.

It seems, furthermore, that *esse essentiae* itself is twofold. First, there is the intrinsic positivity and self-identity of the essence conceived as non-repugnant to being in an actual state, or as non-repugnant to standing for a singular in the actual state. Second, there is the intrinsic positivity and self-identity of the essence as a *factual receptive context* for the factually received act of existence. This latter *esse essentiae* can only be a singular (non-universal) essentiality, whereas the first *esse essentiae* is not necessarily or determinately singular. (It is the singular *esse essentiae* which is present in the concrete, entitative order).

It must be said that factual *esse essentiae* is a potency in regard to the act of existence, but an "actuality" when considered in regard to essence considered as possibility. Factual *esse essentiae* can also be called the "intrinsic actuality" of a thing (intrinsic to the *ratio* of the thing, e.g., to Peter as Peter), provided we understand that this intrinsic actuality can only be realized *in the context of the act of existence*. See note 35.

The view which I have presented here is substantially inspired by the observations of Francis C. Wade, S. J. and Lottie H. Kendzierski, in the introduction to their English translation of Cajetan's *Commentary on Being and Essence* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 1964), pp. 3-19.

[34] See Cajetan, *In IIIam*, q. 4, a. 2, nn. 25-28.

(2) A real identity *in concrete reality* between:

(a) Peter himself and his entire *intrinsic* substantial actuality. This might also be expressed as an identity between Peter and the totality of his factual *esse essentiae*. It is expressed by the propositions "Peter is Peter" and "Peter is this man."

(b) Peter himself and Peter *as existing* (i.e., as thing possessing the "extrinsic" actuality of existence). For Peter is the same thing that is in fact existing, *by possessing* the distinct act by which he does in fact exist. This is the identity expressed by the phrases "Peter is existing," "Peter is an existing thing," and "Peter is an actual being." [35]

(c) Finally there is an identity between Peter himself and Peter *as bearing* numerous accidents. Thus we say: "Peter is white," "Peter is running" or "Peter is a white thing," and "Peter is a running thing." Peter obviously is neither his whiteness nor his running, but he is the thing which is in fact white and the thing which in fact runs. Therefore, although these formalities ("whiteness" and "running") are not intrinsic to Peter's *ratio*, there does arise from their determining presence a genuine and truthful predication.

Peter is thus the same real subject concerning whom all of these diverse correct predications are made. He is the same real subject that is the human who exists, is white, and acts.[36] The ground of the factual identity of subject and predicate in the aforementioned natural judgments is the *intrinsic* positivity, unity, singularity, and substantial completeness of an entitative whole substance *in potency to* existence,

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[35] It must be pointed out that the positive Petrine identity appears only *in the context of* his existence. *Peter is not truly himself unless he actually exists*. For in God, the idea of Peter entitatively considered is God himself and is therefore not Peter himself; and the "objective" idea (which presents Peter as an imitation of the divine essence) is also not the same as Peter himself. Nor is the possibility of Peter (grounded in the idea of him) the same as Peter. It must be said: a created finite supposit is neither an idea of nor the possibility of such a supposit.

However, although Peter is not himself save under the influence of his existence, his existence does nothing to constitute him *intrinsically* (i.e. as Peter). Rather existence is the co-present "extrinsic" perfection necessary for the "intrinsic" *esse essentiae* of Peter to be "realized" or "brought out." Thus the truthful propositions "Peter is Peter" and "Peter is existing" arise because of the real composition of a supposit with its proper act of existence (*subsistere*).

Moreover, the influence is reciprocal, because the existence (*esse existentiae*) of Peter cannot be real or "be itself" *apart from the receptive context of Peter and his esse essentiae*. (Causes are causes to each other, though in different ways, as the axiom goes). And above both existence and individual substance is the creative cause, which produces both of these co-dependent realities. As Thomas says (*De Pot*., q. 3, a. 1, ad 17): "Deus simul dans esse, producit id quod esse recipit." (Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1965).

I seem to differ from Garrigou-Lagrange in the views which I express here regarding the self-identity of Peter, and its dependence on his act of existence. But we must remember the words of Thomas (*De Pot*., q. 3, a. 5, ad 2: "...quia antequam esse habeat, nihil est." (Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1965). Thus, apart from existence, Peter is a non-supposing subject, and so his positive self-identity can neither be affirmed nor denied.

For a discussion of these issues, see my doctoral dissertation *Subsistence and Attendant Issues in St. Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America, 1998).

[36] *Christ the Savior*, 123, 124 (n. 50).

whiteness, and running.

To recapitulate: We wish to explain and harmonize the facts: "Peter is existing, but Peter is not his existence," and present the reasonability of Garrigou-Lagrange's solution. The distinction between Peter and his existence is a conclusion flowing from the real distinction between potency and act. Peter's existence is an act, and this act is affirmed of Peter as of the perfected subject. Now, since any actuality is extrinsic to the *ratio* of its proper potency, existence cannot constitute Peter, the *subiectum quod*.[37] Thus, here we have a distinction between an immediate and complete receptive potency and its proportionate and distinct act or fulfillment. Here we are not speaking of the *logical quasi-predicate* "existing," but of the reality-act *esse* (existence). This *esse* (called *esse existentiae* by Cajetan) is really distinct from Peter and enters into composition *with* Peter. What results from this is actually existing Peter with his intrinsic (singular, terminated) *esse essentiae* and his "extrinsic" *esse existentiae*.[38]

The ground of the identity of the first judgment ("Peter is existing") and the distinctiveness ("Peter is not his existence") affirmed in the second judgment can only be accounted for by a substantial reality which terminates the singular nature, rendering it the substantial singular *whole* (the subject "Peter") to which it belongs to immediately "face" the primary existential act[39] (an act expressed by the quasi-predicate "existing"). The entitative subject is not its existence, but it *is per se* its total terminated singular quidditative positivity. Thus, we philosophically justify natural reason by explaining both the encountered subsistent subject (through its nature, individuality, and substantial terminus) and its existential status (through the received *esse existentiae*). In this way we conceive of the supposital subject as the primary existing thing (not its nature, nor its accidents) whose existence is the direct "ecstatic" actuality of its total substantial positivity (*esse existentiae* is "ecstatic" because it is of another order of positivity than that of the subject).

Garrigou-Lagrange, therefore, affirms not only the real and radical distinction between essence and existence, but also the real and radical distinction between supposit and existence.[40] He emphasizes that "existing" is truthfully predicated of a whole

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[37] *De Pot*., q. 5, a. 4, ad 3: "...esse non dicitur accidens quod sit in genere accidentis, si loquamur de esse substantiae (est enim actus essentiae), sed per quamdam similitudinem; quia non est pars essentiae, sicut nec accidens." (Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1965); See also *Quodl. II*, qq. 1-2.

[38] Again, "extrinsic" does not here mean "separate," but extrinsic to the *ratio* of the thing in which it (existence or *esse existentiae*) is present. See note 32, *supra*.

[39] J. Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, 431.

[40] *In I Sent*., d. 23, q. 1, a. 1, c. (1: 554-55): "...dicendum est, secundum Boetium, ut sumatur differentia horum nominum, 'essentia, subsistentia, substantia,' secundum significationem actuum a quibus imponuntur, scilicet esse, subsistere, substare. ... Inde patet quod 'esse' dicit id quod est commune omnibus generibus; sed 'subsistere et substare' id quod est proprium primo praedicamento secundum duo quae sibi conveniunt; quod scilicet sit ens in se completum, et iterum quod omnibus aliis substernatur accidentibus, scilicet quae in substantia esse habent. Unde dico, quod 'essentia' dicitur cujus actus est esse, 'subsistentia' cujus actus est subsistere, 'substantia' cujus actus est substare." (Mandonnet-Moos edition. Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1929-1947). Garrigou-Lagrange emphasizes the strong substantialist character of this text and

supposit, because it receives and faces *esse per se separatim as a constituted positive substantial whole*.

For Garrigou-Lagrange, the formality of existence contributes nothing to Peter as Peter. There is nothing of quidditative notes, of nature, of contracted nature, of sealed nature, of concrete subject, in the notion of existence. Existence is rather a simple actuality *of a subject*, contributing nothing to the intrinsicity of entitative subjectivity. The Dominican asserts: existence is not that whereby anything is a *quod* (a "that which"), it is that whereby the *quod* exists.[41] It is affirmed *of* the *quod* as of a distinct subject. Moreover, there is the authority of Thomas himself, who says: "...licet ipsum esse non sit de ratione suppositi."[42]

Garrigou-Lagrange also says that if the supposit were the *thing composed of* a singular nature and its act of existence, one could not accurately propound the judgment "*Peter* is existing."[43] The reasons for this are apparently twofold:

(1) The status of being "a thing which exists" cannot belong to a *whole* composed *of* a singular essence *and existence*, as if we are to say "the *thing composed of* essence *and existence* exists." For by natural reason we say "this human exists," "this soul exists," and "this whiteness exists." These statements vaguely affirm that the individual essential content[44] (or, in the case of "this human," individual suppositized content) *relates to* a proportionate concrete existence (or to a share of such existence). But we cannot say that an entity *composed of* essence and *existence* is a thing which exists, a thing which faces towards existential actuality. Otherwise we could say that "existence exists," just as, for example, we may rightly say that, in a certain way, the soul (the substantial form) of a dog exists.[45] However, we are able to say that the dog-soul exists, because it is *essential-formal content* (or, more exactly, part of essential content), which as such relates to a

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the notion of "*subsistere*" as the *proportionate existential act* of the subsistent. See *Christ the Savior*, 170.

[41] *Christ the Savior*, 159.

[42] *Quodlibet II*, q. 2, a. 2, ad 2 (Rome: Leonine, 1882--); *Christ the Savior*, 156.

[43] *Christ the Savior*, 159.

[44] The use of the word "content" when speaking of essence (whether of the common, individual, or concrete essence) is derived from Krapiec who uses this word throughout his *Metaphysics* (*op. cit.*).

[45] In the strictest and most proper sense, existence is affirmed of the supposit. The supposit only merits the title "*quod* habet *esse*," and "*quod* est." Accidents are only principles *quo*. Nevertheless, they are contexts in which a proportionate lesser existence (*esse in*) is present. A substantial part (one that is not self-subsistent), unlike the accident, does not have a proper *esse*. Rather it shares in the one *esse* attributed to the substantial supposit. Thus all factual modes of existence originate in, and from our human perspective, "converge upon" the supposit.

Here are some quotes from Thomas on the supposit and existence. *De Unione Verbi Incarnato*, a. 4, c. : "Esse enim proprie et vere dicitur de supposito subsitente." (Turin: Marietti, 1953); *De Spir. Creat*., a. 1, ad 8 (2: 372): "Sed quod est, est id quod subsistit in esse..." (Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1965); *In XII Meta*., L. 1, n. 2419: "Nam ens dicitur quasi esse habens, hoc autem solum est substantia, quae subsisit." (Turin: Marietti, 1950). The substance which subsists is the supposit, not the absolute nature (e.g. "man").

proportionate existential actuality (or to a share of an existential actuality). But any concrete existence is the *existential actuality* of the concrete thing in question. Existence is not a thing *of which* we affirm *existence*, not even as an intrinsic part of the composite. It is not a *thing which* exists, nor a *part of a thing which* exists, it is the existential act *in* things and parts of things. Thus, although existence is real and positive, in a certain way it does not exist--a paradox and mystery of reality.[46] Utterly lacking intrinsic essential content (singular or common, terminated or "open"), the existential act cannot face another existential act, nor is it conceived of as an *intrinsic* part of a thing *of which we affirm existence*.

Thus, natural reason, when it says "this exists," is saying that the subject-term "this" corresponds to the apprehended essential content (and, most centrally, to the suppositized essential content) and that the quasi-predicate "exists" corresponds to the *existential act of* the essential content or of the supposit.[47] It is strange and superfluous to conceive of existential *act* as the proper act of a thing composed *of* essence and *existence*. For *existential act correlates to potency*, not to some composite of potency and act which *already has existential act* in its *intrinsic ratio.*[48]

We must also stress the *simplicity* of substantial, existential act. Existence is not an *in*forming form. That is, it does not effect a determination distinct from itself in the receptive potency. It is rather the very existential determination of the potency, communicating nothing beyond its own presence to the singular receptive nature.[49] In fact,

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[46] As Etienne Gilson has pointed out: "What is the existence...of the existent? It is not itself a being....As such the existence of the existent does not exist." See "Propos sur l'etre et sa notion," *San Tomasso e il pensiero moderno*, ed. A. Piolanti (Citta Nuova: Pontificia Accademia Romana de S. Tomasso d'Aquino, 1974), 10. The translation is by J. F. X. Knasas from his "Gilson vs. Maritain: The Start of Thomistic Metaphysics," *The Future of Thomism*, ed. D. W. Hudson & D. W. Moran. Notre Dame, IN: American Maritain Association, 1992.

[47] *In I Sent*., d. 23, q. 1, a. 1, c. (1: 554-55): "Unde dico, quod 'essentia' dicitur cujus actus est esse, 'subsistentia' cujus actus est subsistere, 'substantia' cujus actus est substare." (Mandonnet-Moos edition. Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1929-1947). M. A. Krapiec has argued powerfully that existential judgment is not predicative judgement in his *Metaphysics*, pp. 86-90 (hence the use of "quasi-").

[48] Obviously, existential act can be correlated to a composite of potency and act which is in the line of *quod est* or of essence. For example, the existence of a dog is the act of a thing (the dog) composed of dog-soul (act) and dog-flesh (potency).

[49] There is no formally similar effect of *esse existentiae* upon the intrinsic structure of the nature, whereas, e.g., in certain non-subsistent forms, as the soul of a dog, the soul brings about dog-fleshiness in the receptive matter, and the soul is the perfecting reason why the whole dog is susceptible of life.

While it is true that existence is a cause of Peter as a necessary "*extrinsic*" act-condition for Peter's self-identity (a self-identity which is not, however, *intrinsically* constituted by existence), there is no further substantial-*existential* effect wrought in the receiving nature. However, if existence was an informing form, or not totally simple, one might argue for a real distinction between *esse* as existential principle and *esse* as a fact or result flowing from the principle. This fact-result would then serve as the basis for predicating existential "*est*" or "existing" of the *whole reality composed of singular nature and existence.*

Some names imposed upon this "existence as result" are "thereness" and "facticity." See G. Lindbeck's "Participation and Existence in the Interpretation of St. Thomas Aquinas." *Franciscan Studies*, 17 (1957), 1-22, 107-125.

Thomas himself affirms the simplicity of existence when he calls it "*completum et simplex*."[50] Now, if existence is so simple, then no formally similar result (similar to and flowing from existence) will arise in the creature, a result which can serve as the basis for an existential quasi-predicate affirmed of *the whole composed of* essence and existence.[51]

Thus, we always affirm the existence of the supposit as if "pressing" the form *esse existentiae* upon a distinct subject that does not contain that form (*esse existentiae*) in its intrinsic *ratio*. When we say "Peter exists," we already vaguely distinguish the whole concrete supposit (an object of simple apprehension) from its simple existential actuality (a perfection affirmed by judgment). We do not say: "Peter *and* his act of existence is the thing-which-exists;" nor do we say "Peter, *as a composite of* this singular essence and this existence, exists;" nor do we say: "the singular nature of Peter is the primary thing which exists." We say: "Peter, who is precisely that which exists (*quod est*), exists." In saying this, we say that a concrete singular substantial whole (a supposit, *id quod est*) faces its really distinct existential act.[52]

Thus, one cannot correctly discern the substantial unicity and unity of a being (*ens*) by conceiving of it as a whole composed *of quod est and esse* (existence). This is to conceive of two radically distinct fields of intelligibility as if together they constituted some sort of *tertia res*, some one integral thing *of which* act and attribution are affirmed.[53] On the contrary, the positive substantial *quod est* is intrinsically a *principium* and *subiectum quod-est*, which receives and underlies the distinct act-principle (existence) which composes with it, as Thomas says on many occasions.[54] *Quod est* is the factual one thing, the *hoc aliquid*, the self-identical complete substantial reality of which existential act is affirmed. True, existence, as proper actuality, is *necessarily indicated* in the meaning of

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[50] *De Pot.*, q. 1, a. 1.

[51] Again, see G. Lindbeck (*op. cit.*, 1-22, 107-125) on the distinction between existence as a principle and existence as a result or fact.

[52] This doctrine will perhaps be more evident if we stress that Peter is an object of simple apprehension, whereas his existence is attained *via* judgment. These are two distinct operations bearing upon two radically distinct aspects of reality. In the judgment: "Peter exists," we presuppose the (prior) apprehension of the whole subject "Peter" (even if the intrinsic determinations (or *esse essentiae*) which constitute him are only cognized vaguely). The "action" of existence is "then" affirmed of the whole Peter, thereby perhaps manifesting the "extrinsic," "advening" status of *esse existentiae.*

Observe also the following (*ST I*, q. 4, a. 1, ad 3): "Cum enim dico esse hominis, vel equi, vel cuiuscumque alterius, ipsum esse consideratur ut formale et receptum: non autem ut illud cui competit esse." (Rome: Leonine, 1882--). Here Thomas's language is very strong, apparently affirming natural reason's knowledge of existence as the *received act* of the supposit (concrete terms such as "horse" or "man" signify the supposit, rather than the nature of the supposit).

[53] As Krapiec affirms (*Metaphysics*, 96), following Ferrariensis, a being (*ens*) is not that which is *composed of* essence and existence, but *the supposit or essence* (if one wishes to speak analogically and most universally) *as underlying a proportionate act of existence*.

[54] *De Spir.Creat.*, a. 1; *In de Hebdo*., c. 2; *SCG II*, cc. 53-54; *De Ente*, c. 4; *De Ver*., q. 1, a. 1, ad 3; *In Lib. De Caus*., c. 6.

created finite being (*ens*), but only *indirectly* (again, as befits a proper act).[55]

(2) Moreover, according to the existence theory, the existence which formally constitutes the supposit is the act *of the singular nature*, which is the receptive potency. In that case, however, existence then would be primarily, properly and naturally affirmed of Peter's singular nature rather than of Peter himself. But natural reason's affirmation that it is the *supposit* Peter who exists and is the primary subject of existential act will then be falsified by philosophy. But this cannot be, because philosophy proceeds from the infallible intuitions and judgments of natural reason. Natural existential judgment follows the structure of reality, and when it says "Peter exists," it does so because primary substantial existence is the act *of the whole Peter, who is therefore himself the primary and immediate receptive potency*.[56]

Although I believe that Garrigou-Lagrange is largely successful in the defense of his position, there are some criticisms which might be made.

Very interesting is his assertion that the real distinction between the supposit and its singular nature is *something discerned by natural reason*, which affirms, e.g., that Peter is not his individual nature, because Peter is the whole subject (*quod*) who exists by himself

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[55] Objection: That existence is simple and direct existential reality, I concede. That it cannot be a part of a whole of which a certain existence is affirmed, I deny. For, just as a predicate arising from a substantial form can be truly predicated of the whole which the form constitutes (as "water" for instance, can be predicated of a raindrop because of the role which the substantial water-form plays in the constitution of the whole), so "being" (*ens*) can be predicated of the subsistent thing composed of a singular essence and existence, and formally constituted by that existence. In this case what is predicated ("subsistent," "being," "subsistent being") is drawn from the concrete entitative actuality-principle (existence), and the predicate term signifies the *actual whole itself* as the primary actually existing being. Thus we say: "Peter is an actual being." And he is so in virtue of existence, which renders him a supposit: that complete and total substantial reality which most deserves the name of an actual existent.

Reply: If Peter as supposit or subsistent being (*ens*) is the total composite of singular nature *and existence*, then the constitution of Peter and the judgment "Peter is an actual being" already *presuppose* existence and its affirmation. The question then becomes: *of what* was existence affirmed? Not, certainly, of that composite Peter who is subsequent to existence. Existence cannot be the proper act of a composite which *already includes existential act* in its intrinsic *ratio*, for an act is properly affirmed of its proper potency. On the supposition, therefore, of the existential theory, we must say that the act of existence is properly affirmed *of the singular nature*, not of the supposit. So if Peter is the supposit or subsistent being (*ens*) precisely because he is the composite *of* essence and existence, then we must say that "being" (*ens*) no longer means "that which exists," and that the statement "Peter is an actual being" no longer means the same thing as "Peter exists." For the singular nature, not Peter, will be "that which exists," because it will be the proper potency in regard to existence. At best, therefore, "Peter is an actual being" will mean: "Peter is some factual substantial composite reality" (that is, composed of substantial singular essence and substantial existence); but the normal *existential*meaning of the natural judgments "Peter exists" and "Peter is an actual being" will be severely diminished.

[56] *In I Sent*., d. 23, q. 1, a. 1, c. : "Unde dico, quod 'essentia' dicitur cujus actus est esse, 'subsistentia' cujus actus est subsistere, 'substantia' cujus actus est substare." (Mandonnet-Moos edition. Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1929-1947). It cannot be emphasized enough that the proper act of something is always extrinsic to the *ratio* of that of which it is the act. Thus *subsistere*, the existential act proper to the supposit (here called "*subsistentia*"), is extrinsic to the (intrinsic) *ratio* of the supposit.

separately, whereas his singular nature is only that by which (*quo*) he is human, that by which he is placed in a certain species.[57]

We would say this: certainly, our reason naturally distinguishes the encountered supposit from its *strictly definable* specific nature. Thus one naturally asserts that there is a genuine distinction between Socrates and humanity (common humanity). As for the singular nature *quo* (e.g., "this humanity"), that this nature is *conceived* and *signified* merely as a *principium quo* and *part* is certainly true. Hence, this nature will be at least logically distinct from its supposit. However, that such a singular nature is *really* different from its supposit (I mean the supposit considered in its *intrinsic ratio*) does not seem evident to natural reason.[58]

Moreover, it must be said that Thomas rarely explicitly distinguishes the corporeal supposit from its singular nature, and that when he does so, he does so *not* because he claims to discern a substantial *terminus purus* distinct from the singular nature, or a singular nature "falling short" of the status of *substantial* singular whole, but because the factual subsistent is that which *de facto* possesses realities (e.g., the act of existence, accidents) which go beyond the substantial nature and its singularity, *even though these realities may not constitute the supposit intrinsically.*[59]

One might say then that supposit and singular nature *quo* differ in that the supposit is that singular nature which *in fact has* existence and accidents, whereas the singular nature considered precisively is not conceived as having them. But this does not suffice to indicate a *real intrinsic* difference between the supposit (e.g., *this man*) and the singular nature *quo* (e.g., *this humanity*). It would seem to establish only a *real extrinsic difference*, because in the one instance the nature *quo* is considered precisely, whereas in the other it is considered to be *composed with* the "extrinsic" existence and accidents. At best, it might establish a *quasi-intrinsic* difference based upon the supposit-nature's *relation to* existence and accidents, a relation which the singular nature as such does not possess. But a difference based on relation will not constitute the absolute subsistent which a created supposit is supposed to be.[60]

Garrigou-Lagrange also says that the singular nature must be "suppositized" first in

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[57] *Reality*, 212; *Christ the Savior*, 164.

[58] But it may be evident to *philosophical* reason. The proof that there is a real difference (in virtue of something *intrinsic* to the supposit) between the supposit and its singular nature is provided by Maritain, who, following John of St. Thomas, asserts: the supposit is certainly an entitative *subject.* But the singular nature of the supposit only manifests the supposit as *object*. Hence it fails to manifest the *substantial subjectivity* of the supposit, which subjectivity must be real if the subject is real. See J. Maritain, *Existence and the Existent*, 72-73.

[59] See, e.g., *Quodlibet II*, q. 2, a. 2. For the distinction between differing really in virtue of something intrinsic and differing really in virtue of something extrinsic see Cajetan, *In Iam*, q. 3, a. 3 (4: 38-39). See also James Collins, *The Thomistic Philosophy of the Angels* (Washington, D.C.: 1947), 102-07.

[60] *ST I*, q. 29, a. 4, ad 4. "...in significatione personae divinae contineatur relatio, non autem in significatione angelicae personae vel humanae...." (Rome: Leonine, 1882--).

order to be immediately capable of the substantial act of existence.[61]

But why is the singular substantial nature *really* incapable of directly receiving and possessing the act of existence? Is it not sufficient to render incommunicable the *esse* received?[62] At any rate, he does not show why the singular nature is insufficient to serve as the real subjective "that which" (*quod*) of existence. Of course, a substantial singular nature conceived as a *principium quo* is different from such a nature conceived as a *subiectum quod est*, but he never shows, from philosophy alone, why this is not merely a distinction of reason. Why must we hold that the singular nature, considered intrinsically, is *really* only a *quo* and part, and thereby insufficient to possess primary actual existence?

Moreover, Garrigou-Lagrange calls the *singular* substantial nature "the formal, and perfective part" of the corporeal supposit.[63] But this appears to be different from the teaching of Thomas, who tends to hold that it is the *common nature* that is the formal part of the corporeal supposit.[64] If the singular substantial nature is the *formal* part of Socrates, then what "material" component will it determine? A receptive singular matter, a singular matter which the singular corporeal nature *already possesses* in its *ratio?* This cannot be. Or will the singular nature *formally* determine the subsistence which is said to *succeed* it? Again, this cannot be. Perhaps, then, by "formal...perfective part," Father Garrigou means that the singular essence is that entitative part which discloses the definitional aspect of the supposit. In this sense "formal and.perfective part" signifies not so much actuality but "eidetic" contribution to the realized whole.[65]

Despite these criticisms, Garrigou-Lagrange's exposition and defense of the solution of Cajetan is rigorous and complete. Through a systematic examination of the problem and precise reasoning, he consistently presents a philosophically and theologically reasonable solution to a vexing problem. Especially to be commended is his emphasis

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[61] *Christ the Savior*, 164.

[62] As Maritain came to conclude, in a revision of his earlier views. See *The Degrees of Knowledge*, Appendix 4 (*Further Elucidations*), pp. 434-44.

[63] *Christ the Savior*, 123, 126, 157, 160; *Reality*, 212. It might be asked: why does Garrigou not call his *terminus purus*-substantial mode the "formal perfective part" of Peter since it formally constitutes Peter a rational supposit, a person? This is probably because: (1) it is improper to call a pure term a part; (2) it does not effect anything in the nature which it terminates, for it is the mere termination of the nature, not a formal principle which "formalizes" or actuates the terminated nature; and (3) because as a pure term it follows upon and is *of* the nature or of the form which it terminates, and is not a form or quiddity itself.

[64] *ST I*, q. 3, a. 3, c. ; *In VII Meta*., L. 2, n. 1275; *De Pot*., q. 9, a. 1; *SCG I*, c. 21. "Common humanity" might be called a "principle-part" in regard to Socrates, not an "entitative-concrete" part. A "principle-part" is an intrinsic constitutive principle conceived as "prior" to its union with the other parts and principles, and prior to the constituted (principiated) thing. An entitative-concrete part, on the other hand, is an intrinsic reality-part *in* a constituted concrete existent thing, *a part really influenced by the other principles with which it composes and by the whole which results.* An example of an entitative part is the individual soul of and in an existent cat.

[65] I borrow the word "eidetic" from Maritain (who employs it throughout his speculative works), and use it here to emphasize the signal intelligibility of a thing: its whatness.

upon what natural reason teaches us about the supposit: that it is the primary, positive, and complete subjective ground of attribution and existential act. It is then the work of philosophy to clarify what belongs to the supposit necessarily and intrinsically and what belongs to the supposit as proper actuality and accident. The search for subsistence, therefore, by careful reflection and process of elimination, concludes by affirming a reality which is neither existence nor a new formal principle. This reality is a final and pure *terminu*s, which by a natural entitative sequence[66] follows upon the singular nature *quo*, rendering it the supposit *quod*, the thing immediately in potency to the central existential act: *esse per se separatim*.

[66] For a discussion of Thomas's doctrine of the causality of natural resultance see Chapter 3, part C of my dissertation *Subsistence and Attendant Issues in St. Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America, 1998).

REGINALD GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE OP AND THE REAL DISTINCTION

Jude Chua Soo Meng

In this post-modern age, when the promises of modernity in terms of technological, material comforts fail to satisfy and the thirst of the spirit proves more enduring, religion has become big business. Never mind atheists like Richard Dawkins writing *against* religion; our persistent interest in those writings against religion—and therefore, *about* religion—suggests, quite ironically, our persistent fascination with religion! A visit to one of those huge book shops like Borders or Barnes and Nobles will prove my point: books on religion fill whole, long stretches of shelves, and these do not merely stock the traditional palettes such as Christianity, Buddhism, Islam or Judaism, but especially various new up-coming contenders, what we call New Age religions—religions which boast of an elaborate mixture of elements of the traditional religions and also selections of occult practices, loosely defined. What is interesting about all these New Age thought is that they usually articulate a belief in some kind of transcendent, divine being, which they also confusedly represented as intimately part of the world. Because Christianity also affirms a Transcendent God who is intimately in the world, there can be the temptation for Christians to conclude some fundamental metaphysical agreement between New Age and Christianity, and so erroneously assimilate other aspects of New Age thought. To borrow from Aristotle and St. Thomas, a little error at the beginning can lead to terrible divergences in the end.[1] It is here that the eminent Thomist Fr. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP can be a sure guide and offers a curative theology for the discerning Christian to judge the overwhelming deluge of New Age thought.

Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange OP is well known for his unwavering defense of what has traditionally been called "The Real Distinction", or more completely, the real distinction between act and potency, especially understood in terms of the real distinction between existence and essence in creatures, but also in terms of form and matter. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP's stubborn and persevering adherence to and defense of this scholastic formulae had done us the great favor of preserving a very delicate and perhaps painfully difficult doctrine of St. Thomas. This doctrine is of immense import, especially as it comes to steering oneself aright to avoid pantheism in affirming the immanence of God. As he himself explains, commenting on Q. 8 of the Prima Pars of the *Summa Theologiae* concerning the existence of God in all things:

> "[Here] we consider how God is immanent to the world, although at the same time transcending it. We shall also clearly distinguish between this immanence and pantheism, as much as immanence belongs to God not as formal or material cause of the world, but as its efficient or extrinsic cause, which is intimately connected…"[2]

At first look the tension is already evident: how can anything which is outside of the world taken as a whole, i.e., transcendent to the world, still be within it, i.e., immanent to the world? If something is completely outside of the world, then insofar as "being totally outside of anything" implies "not being inside of the same", then God's being totally outside of the world necessarily excludes his being inside it—no thanks to the principle of non-contradiction. And this is true vice versa. So if we are to insist that God is still somehow within creation, it is difficult to see how that can be affirmed without sacrificing the point about God's transcendence. Hence pressed for its ultimate implications, one might have to affirm that God is really nothing other than creation itself, since insofar as he is within creation, he cannot be anything outside of it. This of course the tenet of the pantheist: that creation is itself God.

Not quite so. For Garrigou-Lagrange as for St. Thomas, there is a way to resolve this tension, and this one does by affirming that God while in creatures, is not within them as constituting their essences. Let us go to the text of St. Thomas in the *Summa Theologiae,* Ia, q. 8., art. 1[3] and Garrigou-Lagrange's commentary.[4]

St. Thomas Aquinas	Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP
"God is in all things, not, indeed, as part of their essence, nor as an accident; but as an agent is present to that upon which it works." (ST Ia, q. 8., art. 1., *corpus*)	God is in all things, and intimately so. In evidence of this we may quote the following texts from Holy Scripture: "Wither shall I go from Thy spirit? Or wither shall I flee from thy face? If I ascend into heaven, Thou art there; if I ascend into hell, Thou art present." (Ps. 138:7f) "Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?" (Jer. 23:24) "He is not far from everyone of us, for in Him we live and move and are." (Acts 17:27) "In Him are all things." (Rom. 11:36) "One God and Father of all, who is above all and through all, and in us all." (Eph. 4:6) Moreover, Isaias says: "Lord, Though hast wrought all our works for us." (Is. 26:12) But we must seek for the reason why God,

who is pure spirit, and ineffably exalted above all things, is in all things, even those which are corporeal. St. Thomas gives us the reason for this in the body of this article, when he says: "God is in all things, neither as part of their essence (matter or form) nor as an accident, but as an agent is present to that upon which it works."[5]

Reply Obj. 1. **God is above all things by the excellence of his nature; nevertheless he is in all things as the cause of being of all things; as was shown above in this article.**

Reply to the first objection. God, who transcends all things, not locally but by the excellence of his nature, is in all things, *not as a part of their essence* but as the agent who is the cause of being in all things.[6]

The commentary on the *Reply Obj. 1* reveals what for Garrigou-Lagrange is especially important in the body of St. Thomas' text; St. Thomas, Garrigou-Lagrange comments, is able to achieve the two-fold affirmation of God's transcendence and immanence by pointing out that while God is in creatures, God's being in creatures is *not so by being within the essence of the creature, but outside of the essence*.

Still, what can this cryptic scholastic clause possibly mean? This: that in as much as God is present in any creature by preserving it in existence through giving it existence (*esse*), yet this existence (*esse*) which the creature receives from God is not part of *what* the creature is, i.e., his essence. Again, one must note that for St. Thomas God holds creatures in being *directly* by his divine power, and this is so by sharing with the creature his own infinite store of existence (*esse*), which for St. Thomas is really God's own essence, insofar as God's activity, essence and existence are all identical. So there is no question of a compromise on God's presence in creation—as it were that God might be in creation by means of something else other than himself. If this were that case the contradiction is easily solved by explaining that God is not really in creation but only so through something else which traces causally to him. But no; he is *himself* really in it. Garrigou-Lagrange explains,

> …there is no intermediate suppositum (subject) between God preserving and the being of the thing preserved; for there is no instrumental cause in the creative act and in the immediate preservation of things in being. Nor is the divine power something distinct from God, for it is the very essence of God, since God is his own action and his own being. Thus St. Thomas proves that God is in all things by his preservative action."[7]

Yet in spite of this direct presence in creatures through the divine diffusion of existence (*esse*), this existence (*esse*) remains outside of the essence of any creature. So take for example, a flower. God is present in the flower by his direct act of preserving it in being and his gift of existence (*esse*), yet nothing of that which we affirm of the flower insofar as it is a flower includes God in it. Nothing, that is to say, which we must affirm of the flower in order to describe a flower as flower—be it petals, stem, color, etc—includes the flower's very existence (*esse*), and therewith, God. To put it in more traditional parlance, we say that the flower's essence is distinct from its existence. Hence in creatures, essence and existence are distinct, so that God's presence in creatures by the gift of existence (*esse*) through his divine activity—of which act and existence collapse into his very essence: *himself*—is nevertheless distinct from and hence outside of (the essence of) any creature.

Is this just a play of words, or an effort to be politically correct—as it were a grammatical trick to avoid the stake? Or at least it is at most a mental distinction. God forbid! For the affirmation of the distinction on the *ontological* dimension is not only a requirement of theological orthodoxy but an unavoidable admission from the point of view of reason—without which one not only risks lapsing into pantheism but is compelled to deny the evidence of common sense, namely motion or change, as Garrigou-Lagrange makes clear in his summa of thomism, *Reality: A Synthesis of Thomistic Thought.* He writes,

> "The doctrine on act and potency is the soul of Aristotelian philosophy, deepened and developed by St. Thomas….According to Aristotle, real distinction between act and potency is absolutely necessary if, granting the multiplied facts of motion and mutation in the sense world, facts affirmed by experience, we are to reconcile these facts with the principle of contradiction or identity. Here Aristotle steers between Parmenides, who denies the reality of motion, and Heraclitus, who makes motion and change one reality."[8]

Act, or more completely *being in act*, refers to the state of being where being *is*, as opposed to pure privation, wherein being is *not.* If being is, and non-being is not, what meaning could there be in including the special additional qualification of being as being *in act*—is that not a superfluous qualification? To put the question another way, is not all being being in act, and if so, why speak of being *in act*? Is there anything else? Yet precisely this is the very *differentia* between Aristotelian philosophy and all other philosophies—that being is not merely being in act, but really divided into two kinds of being: being in act, and also *being in potency*, or potential being, the latter which signifies a medium state between pure non-being and actual being.

In other words, act and potency really signify two ways of being—in the first, actual being where being fully is, and the second, potential being, which is not being which

fully is, and yet at the same time is not pure non-being. Now this insistence on a distinct middle way between pure being in act and pure privation or nothingness called being in potency is of extreme importance, and must be grasped aright. For the third time I repeat, for the sake of being absolutely sure that our reader will not miss this very important thesis: potency, it is to be observed, is a state which is *not pure nothingness*, and yet is also *not being which fully is*, but rather sits between these as a *unique way of being* on its own. In fact this for Garrigou-Lagrange is absolutely critical for getting ourselves landed squarely on thomism and not other systems of thought:

> "The great commentators often note that the definition of potency determines the Thomistic synthesis. When potency is conceived as really distinct from all act, even the most imperfect, then we have the Thomistic position. If, on the other hand, potency is conceived as an imperfect act, then we have the position of some Scholastics, in particular of Suarez, and especially for Leibniz, for whom potency is a force, a virtual act, merely impeded in its activity, as, for example, in the retrained force of a spring."[9]

The necessity of admitting this middle state between pure nothingness and complete being—a unique really distinct middle state called (being in) potency—is the *sine qua non* of cohering reason with the demands of common sense and experience. In other words, insofar as reason commands that we observe unwaveringly the principle of contradiction, i.e., *that something cannot be and not be at the same time and in the same respect*, and common sense commends through experience that we do have change and mutation, i.e., *becoming,* then unless we admit this state of being which is potency in beings, we will have to give up one of the former two. And the consequence of that is not merely a desecration of rationality and common sense experience, but the sacrilegious admission of pantheistic conclusions, as Garrigou-Lagrange rightly points out. These errors go as far back as Parmenides and Heraclitus, between whom Aristotle steers. Thus, contemplating change, Garrigou-Lagrange tells us,

> "Parmenides has two arguments. The first runs thus: If a thing arrives at existence it comes either from being or from nothing. Now it cannot come from being (statue from existing statue). Still less can it come from nothing. Therefore all becoming is impossible. This argument is based on the principle of contradiction or identity, which Parmenides thus formulates: Being is, non-being is not; you will never get beyond this thought."[10]

In polarizing reality into being and non-being simply, Parmenides had reasoned himself into a corner where there could not possibly be change or *becoming*, as when we say

something has changed from A to B, or when we say A has become B. For if there was the *becoming* of a being, to that extent that it now is being, it must have come from non-being or from being, for apart from these Parmenides admits nothing else. If it came to be from being, then being was before just as being is now, i.e., there was no change but simply a persistence of being. Again, if being came from non-being, then it is not so much an assertion of becoming as a denial of becoming, since what we are saying here is that something has come from *nothing* rather then from something else, which latter is change whereas the former is not but more properly creation *ex nihilo.*[11]

Now not only do we have thus the denial of change, we also have a pantheistic identity of the world with God. Again,

> "Multiplicity of beings, [Parmenides] argues again from the same principle [that being is, and non-being is not], is likewise impossible. Being, he says, cannot be limited, diversified, and multiplied by its own homogenous self, but only by something else. Now that which is other than being is non-being, and non-being is not, is nothing. Being remains eternally what is, absolutely one, identical with itself, immutable. Limited, finite beings are simply an illusion. Thus Parmenides ends in a monism absolutely static which absorbs the world in God."[12]

Assuming that a multiplicity of beings requires that being be limited so that there can be various degrees of finitudes of being and therefore many differing finite beings each with its limit of being greater or less than others, it follows then that each being must be limited by something else. Again, being is either limited by being, or by non-being, since for Parmenides again apart from these there is nothing else. If it is limited by itself, i.e, if being is limited by being, this is would be absurd, since to be limited is to be limited by something else *other than itself*, meaning to say then that limitation by means of self-limitation wherein being is limited by being simply cannot be. Now if we are to suggest the other alternative, that being is limited by non-being, and hence being is limited by nothing, then one might just as well say being is not limited at all, since there is nothing to limit it. Hence again, being cannot be said to be limited. Either way, we cannot have limited and hence finite beings. All we have is simply being, undifferentiated, and one. If there is the world, it is this being. If there is God, he too must be being, because besides being would be only nothing.

Heraclitus fares no better. He too ends with similar pantheistic consequences but he errs by taking the opposite path; indeed "Heraclitus is at the opposite pole" since for him, as Garrigou-Lagrange explains,

> "[e]verything is in motion, in process of becoming, and the opposition of being to non-being is an opposition purely abstract, even merely a matter of words. For, he argues, in the process of becoming, which is its own sufficient reason, being and non-being are dynamically identified. That which is in the process of becoming is already, and nevertheless is not yet. Hence, for Heraclitus, the principle of contradiction is not a law of being, not even of the intelligence. It is a mere law of speech, to avoid self-contradiction."[13]

Recall that if we divide reality into being and non-being, we had problems accounting for becoming, as we saw in the above with Parmenides. After all, if being is being, and non-being is non-being, (i.e., the principle of identity) and one cannot at the same time and in the same respect be the other (i.e., the principle of contradiction), then, one cannot say that being came from nothing which is at the same time also being, or that it came from non-being which is also being, but only that it came from either being or non-being, and hence there is no becoming at all, as we saw. If however unlike Parmenides we are insistent on the truth of becoming, it would seem that we would have to *modus tollens* deny these two principles. And indeed, that is what Heraclitus does. And in doing so, he implicitly undercuts every real affirmation of distinctions, and therewith the distinction between God and the world. For if one denies the ontological applicability of the principle of contradiction, so that one denies that what anything is in the real cannot be at the same time and in the same respect what it is not, then one would be committed to saying that something can be what it is not at the same time and in the same respect. Hence if we are to affirm that God and the world are not one and the same, we would also be committed to the affirmation that God and the world can indeed be one and the same, on top of other ridiculous consequences. Hence in his stubborn adherence to the flux of worldly becoming, Heraclitus sacrifices God's distinctiveness from this very worldly flux—indeed therefore, he could well be committed to the opinion that apart from the world of becoming that is always evolving, there is no separate existing God, just as absurdly he would be committed to the contrary. And for that matter, he would also affirm that God, who can now be identified with this constant flux of becoming, will himself be constantly in the state of becoming. This God will not be that constant, perfect, unchanging Being whom God should be, because insofar as change implies a state prior to the present state of perfection, namely imperfection, to attribute this of God would be blasphemy, to say the least. A related point, of course, is that if there is constant becoming, then from the point of view of sanity, meaning granting the principle of contradiction, one could only say that beings constantly come to be from non-being or nothing, which means then that the world is constantly creating itself *ex nihilo*. Thus one would concur with Garrigou-Lagrange's assessment of the Heraclitian opinion:

> "Thus Heraclitus, like Parmenides, ends in Pantheism. But whereas the pantheism of Parmenides is static, an absorbtion of the world into God, the pantheism of Heraclitus is evolutionist, and ultimately atheistic, for it tends to absorb God into the world. Cosmic evolution is self-creative. God, too, is forever in the process of becoming, and hence will never be God."[14]

The way out of all these, is in the teaching of Aristotle, who retains the principle of contradiction, and rightly so, while at the same time saves the reality of becoming. "Aristotle's solution…rests on a distinction of potency from act, a distinction his thought could not escape"[15]. Garrigou-Lagrange explicates it like that:

> "[Granted,] that which is in process of becoming cannot arise from an actual being, which already exists. The statue, in process of becoming, does not come from a statue which already exists. But the thing in process of becoming was at first there in potency, and hence arises from unterminated being, from real and objective potency, which is thus a medium between the existing being and mere nothing. Thus the statue, while in process, comes from the wood, considered not as existing wood, but as *sculptilis*. Further, the statue, after completion, is composed of wood and the form received from the sculptor, which form can give place to another. The plant is composed of matter and specific (substantial) form (oak or beech), and the animal like wise (lion, deer). The reality of potency is thus a necessary prerequisite if we are to harmonize the data of sense (e.g. of multiplicity and mutation) with the principle of contradiction or identity—with the fundamental laws, that is, of reality and thought. That which begins, since it cannot come either from actuality or from nothing, must come from a reality as yet undetermined, but determinable, from a subject that is transformable, as is the prime matter in all bodies, or as is second matter, in wood, say, or sand, or marble, or seed."[16]

In other words, if we are to escape the absurdities in Parmenides and Heraclitus, we have to admit a third state of being, namely being in potency, which is not nothingness, nor already the being in act. If and only if we now admit that there is this potential being in things, we see how *becoming* really can be. As being becomes being in act, it proceeds not from non-being, nor from being itself as actual, both of which we have to rule out as erroneous as we had seen in Parmenides and Heraclitus, but from potential being. Hence potential being, which is present, becomes being in act. With this we need not admit that being comes from non-being, so that there is no becoming, as did Parmenides, for now apart from non-being, there is potential being, nor again need we say that being (in act) comes from being (in act), which again is no becoming, because now apart from being in

act, there is potential being, or potency. Nor again need we insist that there is becoming at the price of denying the principle of contradiction, when as in Heraclitus one would have to deny the principles of reason, since now if we insist on the reality of becoming given in sense experience, it coheres with the conclusions of reason—thanks to potential being. In other words, the becoming called change is nothing other than a process by which potential being or potency comes to be being in act, or simply, act. Potential being, or potency, is not non-being or nothingness, and hence when if it comes to be actual being, or act, it is not an event by which something comes from absolute nothing, since potency is not absolute nothingness. Again, when potency comes to be act, it is not a matter of actual being coming to be actual being, which is no process of becoming at all, but really potential being—which is not actual being in any sense of the word, not even an imperfect act, but a really distinct principle—becoming being in act. Hence only in this way, and precisely in this way, becoming occurs: a process of potency moving to actuality, each principle really distinct from the other. Only in admitting the really distinct principle of potency—distinct ontologically from non-being and from being in act—can the mystery of becoming be explained.

Let us look at potential being, or potency again, set in a concrete example. Consider the becoming of a statue. If something becomes a statue, that from which it comes to be a statue cannot be nothing, since from nothing, nothing becomes; nor can it be the statue, since if it already is a statue, it cannot *become* a statue but is already one. There must therefore be something which is *not nothing*, and also *not a statue*, which then becomes the statue. This is nothing other than the wood, which is not nothing, but which prior to being given a statue-shape by the sculptor, is not a statue. In other words, the being in question is the statue, and when this being came to be, i.e., came to become a statue, it came not from mere nothingness, nor from being in act (statue), but from *being in potency*, which is not nothing nor the actual statue. Considered in relation with that statue, wood is the statue to be. It is the potential statue—but not the statue as yet. The wood here is the potential being, potential in relation to the actual being in question, i.e., the actual statue.[17] The wood as potential statue, or statue-in-potency, *not nothing, not the statue,* we say, after being sculpted, has become a statue. Potency, *not non-being, nor act,* has become act. Again, the wood or material stuff, i.e., *matter*, is really distinct from the statue, and to the extent that the statue is a statue thanks to its statue-shape or *form* then to speak of the real distinction between act and potency is also to speak of the real distinction between the *form* and *matter*. Again, we can proceed to ask of the wood itself, as it came to be: from what did it come, or what became it? It came not from wood, which is the being in act under consideration, nor can it come from non-being, but from really distinct potential being in relation to the wood, in this case, the stuff or *matter* prior to its being wood through reception of the wood-shape or *form*. Again, we could ask in turn of this matter until we finally arrive at one which, really distinct from its corresponding form, cannot be further analyzed. This matter we call *prime matter*, a pure potential being or potency

without any actuality to be stripped of it; a pure potential being which is not nothing, and which all the same is not any kind of being in act. Notice how now we finally manage to cohere the reality of becoming at all levels of being without collapsing God into the world, thus averting pantheism—so long that when we consider any the becoming of any being, we admit of the existence of a corresponding (pure) potential being, (prime) matter, which is not nothing, and yet is not the actual being under consideration, but rather a medium principle of being really distinct from the two.

What about the error of pantheistic monism to the extent that it is opposed to multiplicity? Here too, the doctrine of the real distinction of act and potency effects its corrective powers. Because in order that there be many beings, a potential principle really distinct from act must be present to effect the diversity of beings, as we shall explain here. For St. Thomas this diversity occurs at two levels: first at the level of the multiplication of individuals within a species, and secondly at the multiplication of different species itself. In the first case we have the many of the one type, say many men from the species man, and in the second instance we have the many kinds of specific being—being an angel, a man, a lion or a flower, for example. Material beings enjoy both types of multiplication, since they are not merely a certain kind of being amongst many other kinds, but also they are one of the many within their particular type. Hence Socrates is not only one man amongst many other beings who also are of the species man, but as man he is different from other beings which are not man, like lions, for example. Any immaterial being, however, such as is an angel, enjoys only one kind of multiplication, namely that which brings about its kind apart from other kinds. Hence each angel is the only one of its kind, because each angel is actually a unique type of immaterial being, so that no two angels are of the same species. In both cases the being is multiplied *by being received and limited by the receiver*, a premise St. Thomas assimilated from the *Book of Causes*, a Neoplatonic work. However since the Neoplatonic text does not supply the reasonability of this premise, it remains for St. Thomas himself to defend it, and here Garrigou-Lagrange rightly reads St. Thomas as justifying it based on the real distinction between form and matter, an Aristotelian thesis as was said above, yet also surpassing Aristotle.[18]

Given that we have established that form and matter are really distinct, we further consider what matter does to form. St. Thomas writes, "form is made finite by matter, inasmuch as form, considered in itself, is common to many; but when received in matter, the form is determined to this one particular thing."[19] To which Garrigou-Lagrange comments,

> "the figure of Apollo actualizes this portion of wax, but is also limited by it, enclosed in it, as content in vessel, and as such is thus no longer multipliable, although it can be multiplied in other portions of wax.[20]

> "…as long as the form called statue remains in the wood, it is received and *limited* by it. This same numerically one form *is no longer susceptible of participation,* although a form in every respect like it can be produced in other matter of this kind. Thus is explained the *multiplication* of Apollo's form, for instance, according as it can be received and is so, in fact, in the diverse kinds of second matter: wood, earth, marble, etc., and thus it is *susceptible of unlimited participation.*"[21]

Now one must note that only the form as such is knowable; matter is in principle unknowable, but known through the form. Still we can know of matter that it restricts or limits the form's capacity of multiple participation not because we know anything of matter as such, but really because we know that form as such is unlimitedly multipliable, and now in composition with matter is not, and therefore this allows us to say something about matter—that it limits the form to a location.

It is to Garrigou-Lagrange's credit that he is at pains to repeatedly explicate this very short statement in St. Thomas, which for me reveals him as sighting here a (philosophical) source for the fundamental insight in St. Thomas: *that any principle considered in itself cannot be supposed to operate outside of ways implicit in its notion except by the interference of another principle,* ***i.e., act is limited by potency, apart from which act is altogether unlimited.*** Let us see how we might arrive at this step by step, by a process of induction.[22] Because nothing in the notion of form requires that it is located in a thing; if it is located in something, it is so thanks to something besides itself. It is this sufficient reason alone that allows us to explain why any form though in itself can be anywhere is now *here*. Put this another way, more generally, abstracting from limitation *in terms of location*. To be a form is to be fully the ways a form is essentially a form—of course; how else could a form be? Now suppose the form is now unable to be a form in all ways that being a form entails. This can only be so due to an interference by a principle apart from the form, for nothing in the form can oppose or prevent the form from being all that is entailed in being a form, insofar as the form itself entails all that being a form entails. Now again abstract from form, and speak more generally of the form's being fully all that a form entails as simply actuality, since to be fully whatever is to be in act. Now if such an actual principle is not actual, then it must be prevented from being actual by another principle apart from itself. This cannot be non-being, since then that would be nothing. It leaves us to conclude that such an interfering principle is potency.[23] Therefore we conclude that act is limited only by a really distinct potency, without which act is altogether unlimited. Thus, Garrigou-Lagrange:

> St. Thomas considers this principle of Aristotle, that "the form is limited only by the matter," not only from the physical, but according to the highest degree of abstraction, from the metaphysical point of view. He remarks that

> form is limited not only, and precisely in so far as it is a form of the sensible order, but also as act or perfection. Every perfection indeed which is not limited by itself is so, in fact, by a certain capacity that it has for perfection or by the matter inasmuch as it is a potency. Hence the absolute universality of the principle, either in the sensible or suprasensible order, that "act as a perfection is limited only by the potency which is itself a certain capacity for perfection."[24]

Now given that this principle, "that act is limited by really distinct potency, without which it is altogether unlimited" is arrived at by induction (*ascensus*), we do not say it is demonstrated. On the contrary, it is self-evident, but it is instantiated in the limitation of form by matter, which Garrigou-Lagrange reads St. Thomas as having seen. Therefore if there is any principle which can be shown to be act, then it will be limited, if it be limited, by a corresponding potency. Such is existence. Why? Garrigou-Lagrange points to St. Thomas' reason: "Existence…is compared to all things as that by which they are made actual; for nothing has actuality except so far as it exists. Hence existence is that which actuates all things, even their forms…"[25] It is always and everywhere an act. Therefore this is as it were a no-miss situation; you cannot go wrong on this one. Existence is related to everything as act and never as potentiality, which means therefore that everything else, i.e., the essences of all things, will be related to existence as a corresponding potency, which then limits existence that is itself unlimited if without the principle of essence. Just as form as act is received and limited by really distinct matter as potency, so existence, which is necessarily act, is received and limited by really distinct potency, namely essence.[26] Conversely, if existence is not limited by essence, then of itself it is unlimited, or infinite, which is the case with the Divine Existence, God. Thus Garrigou-Lagrange OP concludes in the words of St. Thomas,

> "Hence existence is not compared to other things as the receiver is to the received, but rather as the received is to receiver. When therefore I speak of the existence of a man, say, or of a horse, or anything else, existence is considered a formal principle and as something received, not as that which exists." (Ia, q. 4., a. 1, ad 3) Further, since existence (*esse*) is of itself unlimited, it is limited in fact only by the potency into which it is received, that is, by the finite essence capable of existence. By opposition, then, "divine existence (God's existence) is not received existence, but existence itself, subsistence, independent existence, [hence] it is clear that God is infinitely and supremely perfect." Consequently God is really and essentially distinct from the world of finite things…."[27]

At this point we come full circle and rejoin where we began: that the existence of things is outside of their essences, i.e., existence and essence are really distinct. And here we see that this thesis is a necessary implication if we are to cohere reason with the reality of sensed mutation, change and multiplicity, which for Aristotle, St. Thomas Aquinas and Garrigou-Lagrange OP are not to be put into question, then we will have to admit that act (existence, form) and potency (essence, matter) are really distinct—a distinction that at the same time is a clear anti-thesis of pantheism, since God, though as unlimited existence is immanently present in things, is nevertheless outside of the essences of things, which are really distinct from their existence.

Amongst contemporary explications of this distinction, that which is most akin to Garrigou-Lagrange's treatment of the distinction, and hence of St. Thomas' to the extent that Garrigou-Lagrange properly represents the position of St. Thomas, seems that of John Wippel. Wippel is careful to avoid the pitfalls of some other recent scholars who seem to reduce essence into a kind of modality of existence[28], so that essence is not an ontologically distinct principle with positive content. Meaning to say, essence would then not be ontologically something positive, but simply a *way* that existence is. We recall that the major portion of our above discussion is concerned with the importance of affirming an ontological category of being which is *not nothing,* while it is also not actuality, and this we call potentiality, or potency, and essence is a potency. Therefore for Garrigou-Lagrange and St. Thomas Aquinas, essence must be ontologically distinct *as an ontologically positive principle,* i.e., it cannot be understood as mere *modality* taken strictly. On the contrary, essence is a positive principle that *accounts for the particular mode which existence takes on in its limitation.* It is not merely the way existence is, but *the ontological cause or reason* for existence being this limited way. Wippel's signal remark below hits the nail right on its head:

> "for Aquinas essence is not to be identified with absolute nonbeing or nothingness. Because essence is not identical with the act of being of a given entity, it may be described as relative nonbeing. But this is not to imply that it enjoys no positive or formal content in itself. According to Aquinas' metaphysics, an essence can never be realized as such apart from its corresponding act of being (*esse*) within a given substantial entity. Strictly speaking, it is neither essence nor the act of being that exists as such in finite beings; it is rather the concrete subject or substance which exists by reason of its act of being. This same concrete subject is what it is by reason of its essence. This presupposes that the essence principle has its own formal content, and is an intrinsic constituent of the existing entity."[29]

All this, perhaps, seems up in the clouds, abstract and indeed irrelevant. So what if there is a real distinction between act and potency, between existence and essence in creatures, which are united in God alone? Yet this speculative truth is, apart from its own intrinsic value as truth, pregnant with spiritual insights. The real distinction between essence and existence in creatures directly implies what we may call the *ontological difference* between God and creatures, insofar as it marks, as we have discussed above, God's infinite transcendence from creation. Precisely because God, though intimately present as existence to every created essence, is nonetheless not identified with any essence but always and forever outside of each essence. God as Unlimited Existence, whilst intimately sustaining in existence each creaturely essence by sharing Himself with the essence, is always really distinct from it. Creaturely essences are always ontologically separate and different from the God who sustains them, no matter how present he is to them. Yet he is present to them, since for a fact they exist. A moment's reflection by any man, the *human being* on these truths points out at least the following insights, and inspires corresponding dispositions before God: All creation is as if nothing before God, and if something at all, is only so because of God, who is both near and far. Man, as a creaturely being, therefore is nothing without God, and really separate from God, Who Is (Existence Itself), because man's essence has no existence apart from God, and his existence is outside of his essence. The distance between man and God inspires our awe and the realization of our existential finitude and nothingness, but his presence inspires our gratefulness. Our posture before God is therefore one of humility and thanksgiving. We may end with Garrigou-Lagrange OP's own meditations on this point:

> "Humility is based...on the truth that there is an infinite distance between the Creator and the creature. The more this distance appears to us in a living and concrete manner, the more humble we are...[I]n relation to God the Creator, we should recognize not only speculatively, but practically and concretely, that of ourselves we are nothing: "My substance is nothing before Thee." "What has thou that thou hast not received?" We were created out of nothing from a sovereign free *fiat* of God, by His love of benevolence, which preserves us in existence, without which we would immediately be annihilated. Furthermore, after creation, though there are a number of beings, there is no increase in reality, no increase of perfection, wisdom or love; for before creation the infinite plenitude of divine perfection already existence. Therefore in comparison to God we are not."[30]

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[1] C.f. St. Thomas Aquinas, *On Being and Essence,* Prologue.

[2] Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP, *The One God: A Commentary on the First Part of St. Thomas' Theological Summa,* Dom. Bede Rose, OSB, (trans.), (NY: Herder, 1946), 253

[3] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae,* Fathers of the English Dominican Province (trans.), Vol. 1., (Texas: Christian Classics, 1981)., Ia, q. 8., art.1. All citations from St. Thomas' Summa Theologiae taken from this edition except otherwise noted.
[4] Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP, *The One God,* op. cit.
[5] ibid., 254
[6] ibid., *italics* mine.
[7] ibid., 257
[8] Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Reality: A Synthesis of Thomistic Thought,* Patrick Cummins OSB (trans.), (NY: Herder, 1950), 37-38
[9] ibid., 37
[10] ibid., 38
[11] Also see Ralph McInerny, *A First Glance at St. Thomas Aquinas: A Handbook for Peeping Thomist.* 90-91. This little book is an excellent introduction to thomism.
[12] Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP, *Reality,* op. cit., 38
[13] ibid., 38-39
[14] ibid., 39
[15] ibid.
[16] ibid., 40
[17] At certain places Garrigou-Lagrange seems to incorrectly suggest that the wood is *ontologically* distinct from the potency in question, so that as it were, the potency, as a capacity for becoming is not itself the same subject as the wood. For example, he writes, "Potency, the determinable, out of which arises the statue, is not the essence of the wood, which makes wood to be actually wood." (c.f., *Reality,* 40) At other places he intimates this ontological difference between the wood and potency by not explicitly identifying them ontologically, but says that the potency is *in* the wood, as it were that it is some principle inhering in a really distinct subject, the wood. For example, he writes, "What is this real, objective potency, presupposed to…mutation, to transformation? It is a real capacity to receive a definite, determined form, the form, say, of the statue, capacity which is not in air or water, but is in wood, marble or sand. This capacity to become a statue is the statue in potency." (*Reality,* 40-41). The actual text of Aristotle does indeed sanction a difference between potency as such and the wood or bronze, as is the case with Aristotle's example, or indeed whatever material which is made to become a statue, and hence Aristotle does indeed differentiate the intentions involved in saying that the wood as wood becomes the statue, or that wood considered as a potential statue becomes actually a statue. Thus Aristotle writes in book XI, Chapter 9 of the *Metaphysics*, "I call motion the actualization of what is potential as such…Motion, then, belongs to what is potential when it is actual and is engaged in activity, not inasmuch as it is itself, but inasmuch as it is movable. And by the phrase *inasmuch as* I mean this: **bronze is potentially a statue, but the actuality of bronze inasmuch as it is bronze is not motion; for to be bronze and to be some potentiality are not the same**. If they were absolutely the same in meaning, the

actuality of bronze would be a kind of motion; but they are not the same." (975-977) to which St. Thomas comments, "Then he explains a phrase which was given in the definition of motion, namely, *insofar as it is such,* or *inasmuch as it is of this kind.* With a view to making this clear he says that bronze is in potentiality to being a statue**, and thus the subject bronze and bronze in potentiality to being a statue are the same, although they are not the same in their meaning; for the concept of bronze as bronze and that of bronze insofar as it has some potentiality are different; and this is what he means when he says that to be bronze and to be some potentiality are not the same.**" (c.f. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle,* Vol. 2., John P Rowan (trans.), (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1961), XI, L.9:C 2296, pp. 818-821, **Bold** mine) Hence St. Thomas reads Aristotle as establishing only a *intentional* or *conceptual* distinction between the wood (or bronze) and potency and not an ontological or real distinction, and hence these two are in fact two in *meaning* but one same subject ontologically.

[18]See W. Norris Clarke SJ, "The Limitation of Act by Potency in St. Thomas Aquinas: Aristotelianism or Neoplatonism" in *Explorations in Metaphysics,* (Indiana: Univ. Notre Dame Press, 1994), 65-88, in which he rightly notes, against the claims of Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP that Aristotle did not explicitly teach any kind of limiting function of the form, but this does not exclude our thesis here that for St. Thomas Aquinas it is greatly indebted to the Aristotelian act and potency real distinction.

[19] St. Thomas Aquinas, Ia. q. 7., art. 1

[20] Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP, *Reality,* op. cit., 44

[21] Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP, *God: His Existence and Nature,* Bede Rose OSB (trans.), Vol II, , Epilogue, 551

[22] This kind of inductive thinking is likely not too far off from a kind of "ascending induction" or more simply, ascent (*ascensus)* mentioned by John of St Thomas (Jean Poinsot, 1631). See John Deely, *Introducing Semiotic: Its History and Doctrine,* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982. Pp. 71-73: "Induction, as regards *ascent,* is ordered to the discovery and proof of universal truths as they are universal, that is, insofar as they correspond with the particulars contained under them….(c.f. *Liber Tertius Summularum,* cap. 2)".

[23] Also see John Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: From Finite Being to Uncreated Being,* (Washington DC: CUA Press, 2000), 188-190.

[24] Garrigou-Lagrange, *God: His Existence and Nature,* Vol II, op. cit., 553

[25] St. Thomas Aquinas, Ia, q. 4., a. 1., ad. 3

[26] Thomistic historical scholarship, such as the work by W. Norris Clarke SJ, *op. cit.,* strongly suggests that Aquinas drew on Neoplatonic sources for this idea; however, Garrigou-Langrange's very sophisticated analysis demonstrate its Aristotelian "fit" and develops warrants for it based on Aristotelian principles, as did Aquinas himself.

[27] Garrigou, *Reality,* op. cit., 45

[28] For a discussion of two such scholars, William E Carlo and Rudi A. te Velde, see my "What Limits? A Comparative Look at Recent Positions on the Limitation of Existence by Essence", in *Jaarboek 2000,* Henk J M Schoot (ed.), (Netherlands: Thomas Instituut te Utrecht, 2001), 42-61.

[29] John Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: From Finite Being to Uncreated Being,* op. cit., 190

[30]Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP, *The Three Ages of the Interior Life: Prelude of Eternal Life*, Sr. M Timothea Doyle OP (trans.), Vol 2, (NY: Herder, 1948), 118-119

GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE'S GENERAL PROOF FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

+F.F. Centore

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam

Over the years, the Dominicans and the Jesuits could agree on at least one thing, namely, that everything done by a Christian scientist, philosopher, or theologian should be done for the greater glory of God. So, as a philosopher, am I writing this article for my own glory or for the greater glory of God? According to the Italian Thomas Aquinas, the Spaniard Juan Gonzalez Arintero (1860-1928), the Frenchman Ambroise Gardeil (1859-1931), and Gardeil's Frenchman and student, Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange (1877-1964), all members of the Order of Preachers, if I am to have any success in my efforts, it had be for the glory of God.

How, though, practically speaking, can those who labor in the fields of academia work for the greater glory of God? The answer is found in Holy Scripture, to wit, "Make it your first care to find the kingdom of God, and his approval, and all these things shall be yours without the asking"(Matthew 6:33, Knox translation; also Mark 10:29, Luke 18:29). We should never forget that the proper order of things must be observed at all times, that the proper order brings peace, and that peace brings intellectual enlightenment.[1]

Garrigou-Lagrange is adamant about maintaining the proper order of things. An essential aspect of the proper order of things is the pre-eminent place of love. Referring back to Aquinas himself (*Summa Theologiae* II-II, 188, 6), the modern master theologian insists that all teaching must proceed from the fullness of contemplation, that is, from a frame of mind that always keeps God's love and God's will at the heart of all one's work. The love of God will always trump an intellectual knowledge of divine subjects because, with knowledge, we bring (not very successfully) the superior being to us, whereas, with love, we go out to the superior being, and we are sure to have a much higher degree of success as measured by the unity achieved between the lover and the loved one.

In this unity, both the theologian seeking knowledge and the contemplative seeking spiritual elucidation mutually benefit each other. Theology gives content to contemplation, and loves gives life and meaning to theology. Scholarship provides something for the contemplative to contemplate, while faith enlivens the dry dust of scholarship.[2] Far from distracting us from our intellectual tasks, therefore, the continuous contemplation of God and his goodness actually adds to the value of our work, whether in science, philosophy, or theology.

Garrigou-Lagrange himself started his higher education as a medical student, and only later turned to theology. Most of his adult life was spent as a professor of theology at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome. While there, Garrigou-Lagrange wrote what a colleague of his at the same university called his most important philosophical work, namely, *Dieu, Son Existence, Sa Nature*, the first edition of which was published in Paris in 1915.[3]

Even though a modern master theologian by profession, Garrigou-Lagrange knew very well that is not possible to do theology without a thorough grounding in philosophy. Where, though, do we begin philosophizing? It must be with commonsense and nowhere else. Starting with what all normal human beings share in common, such as the basic principles of reasoning and a direct intuitive contact with the real world outside of their own minds, we can mount the stairway to heaven. Science nested within philosophy and philosophy nested within faith provides us with a sure and continuous contact with reality, the very thing we most need in order to maintain a balanced and harmonious view of the way things really are.

In general, the Thomistic philosophical methodology avoids both the extremes of empirical nominalism, with its emphasis on the senses to the exclusion of the mind, and subjective idealism, with its emphasis on the mind and ideas to the exclusion of the senses. Said differently, both the sensate exaggeration of the materialists and the conceptualistic exaggeration of thinkers such as Plato are rejected. In religious matters, we avoid both the extremes of rationalism and fideism. In moral matters, Aquinas' methodology avoids the extremes of intellectualism and sentimentalism. The latter may take the form of subjectivism in which a group will is substituted for an individual will. Garrigou-Lagrange calls this latter kind of thing a "particularism", meaning that morality is decided by the excessive influence of whatever cultural fad in thinking happens to be prevalent in a certain place at a certain time in history. Consequently, more often than not, being level-headed and well balanced means being counter-cultural.[4]

The Foundation of Garrigou-Lagrange's Approach to God

Everybody starts out with commonsense. The most fundamental aspect of our rational life includes the basic principles of reasoning, the most basic of which is the ever-present principle of non-contradiction, which is known by everyone in an intuitive way. It cannot be demonstrated in any way. It is indeed the necessary condition for the demonstration of anything else. The best way to understand it today is the same way used by Aristotle so many years ago, which is the method of *reductio ad absurdum*. As soon as anyone tries thinking without the principle of non-contradiction, everything becomes meaningless, and all intelligent conversation grinds to a halt.

This fact of human life immediately gives rise to another aspect of commonsense, which is the ever-present principle of causality. A contingent thing is defined as something that may or may

not exist. A cause defined as any kind of perfection giving rise to some other perfection. We all know intuitively that all perfections require a cause, which must be at least as perfect as the thing caused. Ultimately, all existents require the ultimate existent, who is God. Any hierarchy, consisting of causes and effects that are dependent upon one another in the here and now (an essentially subordinated series), must have a first cause capable of accounting for the series as a whole. Even assuming that the series is infinite in duration (in time), it would still require a first cause. Taking his cue from Aquinas (*Summa Contra Gentiles* II, 38), Garrigou-Lagrange points out that, even though one can prove scientifically that the world is not eternal, a footprint being made in the sand here and now still requires a foot, even if both have been around for all eternity.[5]

Another way of saying the same thing is to talk in terms of the negative principle of causality, which means for Garrigou-Lagrange that nothing can come from nothing, and that, by extension, nothing superior can come from something inferior. *De nihilo nihil*. It is a matter of commonsense that something more perfect cannot come from something less perfect. Imagine what the world would be like if this were not the case. If something more perfect could arise from something less perfect, the difference in the degree of perfection would be without a cause. For instance, if the universe just popped into existence without a cause, then anything could come from anything at any time. Human brains could pop up in monkeys and monkey brains could pop up in snakes, and so on through a countless number of other examples. Such pseudo-explanations are anti-scientific. If this were the best rational science could do, it would surely be more laughable than any comedy routine.

On the basis of commonsense, then, in his work *The One God*, Garrigou-Lagrange is able to offer the philosophically inclined God-seeker an argument leading to the existence of God as He Who Is. Although not his main argument, it is a general proof, implicitly containing all other proofs. The major premise is the indubitable commonsense negative principle of causality. The minor premise is drawn from our ordinary human experience of the world and our own place in the world, and is also indubitable. The conclusion can only be the selfsame God as revealed in Holy Scriptures.

> All perfections are things requiring a cause adequate to the perfections in question.
> All existence, life, mind, and morality are perfections.
> Ergo, all existence, life, mind, and morality are things requiring an adequate cause.[6]

What could such an adequate cause possibly be? It must be something that can give existence in an absolute way. Such a being must be one that possesses existence in its own right rather than having it from another. Such a being is the unique God of Holy Writ.

Everyone recognizes the fact that you cannot get something from nothing, and, as a result, the certitude of commonsense continues on even when the average person is not fully aware of all the possible difficulties and answers to the difficulties that beset the indistinct knowledge of God we all possess. Turning to his own purpose the famous observation of Cardinal Newman, Garrigou-Lagrange agrees that when it comes to the existence of God, even ten thousand difficulties do not make a doubt. Our commonsense knowledge survives, regardless of how bad the explicitly stated proofs may be at any particular time in human history.

In the case of God's existence, this is what happens because every rational human being at least recognizes the force of the middle term. Earlier in *The One God*, Garrigou-Lagrange had emphasized the importance of the middle term in any argument involving a formal categorical syllogism. As Aristotle discovered in ancient times (*Posterior Analytics* I, 2), true science tells us why things are the way they are and why they cannot be any other way. Science is always of the universal and necessary. This locking together of things, both intramentally and extramentally, depends upon finding middle terms suitable to the subject matter of the particular science.[7]

Garrigou-Lagrange notes that once the middle term is clearly seen, the intelligent person can also see the conclusion, without the speaker having to spell it out for him. For example, once we see the meaning of a simple subsistent form, we know that the human soul is immortal. Once we see the meaning of an ultimate most universal effect, we know that the original existence (being) of the world could only have been caused by a Supreme Being capable of giving existence. In this way, we can have a logical presentation of a case without undue formalism of expression. So it is that our knowledge of the meaning of perfection necessarily ties together the very existence of things along with their particular perfections, with the existence of God.[8]

The Main Argument for the Existence of God

In both *The One God* and *Reality*,[9] when discussing the rational arguments for God's existence, Garrigou-Lagrange refers the reader back to his main work in philosophical theology, namely, the work translated into English as *God: His Existence and His Nature*. It is here that Garrigou-Lagrange develops to the fullest extent his on main general argument, the argument that encompasses all of the more particular arguments, such as Aquinas' famous five ways. The conclusion of the argument is that *quod est non a se, est ab alio quod est a se*. This is simply another way of saying *in solo Deo essentia et esse sunt idem*. The main argument combines both deduction and induction as it moves from indubitable commonsense principles and indubitable human experiences to the fact that only Existence Itself can rationally account for the existence of the universe.[10]

We know with certitude that *ex nihilo nihil fit*. We also know with certitude that the universe is composed of a vast hierarchy of different orders and levels of things, some more perfect then others. All of these things are contingent things, meaning that they are existentially dependent upon something else in order to exist. Whatever the cause of something may be, it must be sufficient to overcome the thing's existential deficit. Even assuming for the sake of argument that the series of causes and effects is infinite, at any arbitrarily chosen point in the past the thing in question would still be indigent, that is existentially impoverished. At any point in the past, anything that cannot account for its own existence cannot account for the existence of anything else. To claim otherwise would get us into the irrational situation of saying that a non-existent thing could bring itself into existence. Once the impossibility and irrationalism of such a view is fully realized, the conclusion flows quite easily from the given facts of the case.

Nothing incapable of accounting for its own existence is capable of accounting for the existence of anything else.

All contingent things are things that are incapable of accounting for their own existence.

Ergo, no contingent thing is capable of accounting for the existence of anything else.[11]

The form of the reasoning here is clear. That category of things that is incapable of accounting for its own existence is separated one hundred percent from that category of things that is capable of accounting for the existence of something else, and all contingent things fit into the former category. Now, it is obvious that things exist. How, though, could anything at all exist if every last real thing were a contingent thing? It must be the case that there is at least one non-contingent being, meaning one that is not existentially dependent. And this being is what everyone recognizes as God.

Once we grasp the middle term, to wit, that the things of the world are contingent things, that they are radically dependent things, that they are all of them things requiring an adequate cause to bring them from non-existence to existence, the conclusion leaps out at us in a fashion that is so clear and obvious that only a fool would say seriously (in his heart) that God does not exist as He Who Is.

Moreover, we can see that this existentially independent being must possess certain attributes that make God a personal being. Quite rightly, as Garrigou-Lagrange takes pains to point out, an impersonal law, force, logos, or the like, animating the world would be of no use in a Judeo-Christian religious context. And indeed, as the proof indicates, the Supreme Being is not any of these impersonal things. The necessary being cannot be an aggregation of contingent beings, a

scientific law governing the movement and development of bodies, a process of becoming, or a substance or substratum common to all things.[12]

In contrast to anything impersonal, the adequate cause of existence, life, intelligence, and morality must possess all of these traits in a superlative way. "Therefore, there must be a First Being, who is at the same time Life, Intelligence, supreme Truth, absolute Justice, perfect Holiness, and sovereign Goodness. This conclusion is based on the principle that 'the greater cannot proceed from the less,' which in turn is merely a formulation of the principle of causality, already discussed."[13] To the mind of Garrigou-Lagrange, one of the most attractive features of Thomistic natural theology is the way it brings together faith and reason. The Supreme Being arrived at by reason is the same God revealed to us in Holy Scripture.

By the same token, Thomistic natural theology avoids the usual extremes that afflict other ways of thinking about and describing God. We do not find in the first cause of existence, life, intelligence, morality, justice, and holiness any hint of the extreme positions of deism and pantheism. In contrast to pantheism, God is not in any way the same as the world, nor is he the same as any part or aspect of the world. God is the creator of the world, the one who gives existence, and who remains forever separate from the world.[14]

The whole rational process boils down to the one central existential fact that God's proper name is He Who Is. "Thus the supreme truth of Christian philosophy, or the fundamental truth by way of judgement, is that 'in God alone essence and existence are identical.' God is 'He who is.' [Exodus 3:14] This is the golden key to the whole treatise on the one God, and its dominating principle."[15] In this way the sincere seeker after God is rationally satisfied, even while Holy Scripture is preserved. Thus is Garrigou-Lagrange, with respect to both reason and faith, *ad finem fidelis.*[16]

Notes

[1] Neither should we overlook another passage from Matthew: "At that time Jesus said openly, Father, who art Lord of Heaven, I give thee praise that thou hast hidden all this from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed it to little children" (11:25, Knox translation). Only those who are humble and trusting will find any sort of true and lasting academic fulfilment.

[2] See Garrigou-Lagrange, *The One God*, trans. by Bede Rose, O.S.B., St. Louis: Herder, 1943, pp.26-37. Well-known to Garrigou-Lagrange was the work of Martin Grabmann (1875-1979), whose book *The Interior Life of St. Thomas Aquinas: Presented From His Works and the Acts of His Canonization Process*, trans. by Nicholas Ashenbrener, O.P., Milwaukee: Bruce: 1951, was a sustained study of Thomas' commitment to the importance of prayer before embarking upon scholarship, and which also explained that there was a certain mystical strain in the thought of the Angelic Doctor. The work was originally a series of lectures delivered in 1923 on the sixth centennial of Aquinas' canonization. A revised and enlarged third edition was published in 1949, the same year as Grabmann's death. Grabmann thought that Aquinas learned to appreciate the contemplative life from his early years with the Benedictines at Monte Cassino. According to Grabmann, Aquinas' inner life was defined by Aquinas himself in *Summa Theologiae* II-II, 145, 2. Paraphrasing Aquinas, Grabmann states: "The intellectual and supernatural beauty of the soul is seen in the fine proportion of life and action, which reveal harmony and symmetry in conformity with the clarity of the intellect supernaturally enlightened through faith" (p. 66).

[3] There was a fifth edition in 1928, and a sixth in 1933. See the article on the life and work of Garrigou-Lagrange, written by his colleague Reginaldo Maria Pizzorni, in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1967, vol. 6, pp. 293-94.

[4] See Garrigou-Lagrange, *Reality*, trans. by Patrick Cummins, O. S. B., St. Louis: Herder, 1950, pp. 22-33. With respect to particularism, today we are more likely to call such a view deconstructionism, post-modernism, culturalism, or perspectivism. It is the sort of thing found in thinkers such as Martin Heidegger and his disciple Hans-Georg Gadamer, and is certainly anti-Catholic. One of its more obvious manifestations nowadays is feminism, according to which there are no non-cultural differences between the sexes. Everything designated by society as male or female is the result of cultural conditioning. Needless to say, the difference between feminism and

the position of Garrigou-Lagrange is so fundamental that for Garrigou-Lagrange talking about a Catholic feminist would be a contradiction in terms.

[5] See *Reality*, pp. 72-81.

[6] See *The One God*, pp. 138-39. In this context, Garrigou-Lagrange is especially interested in the way human beings, who are especially contingent creatures, represent the height of earthly perfection. Is it possible to take seriously the theory that we were accidentally regurgitated up out of primeval slime? Although Garrigou-Lagrange does not say so explicitly, he may be implying that herein resides the answer to Charles Darwin and Martin Heidegger, whose secular humanistic doctrines attributed human perfection to purely natural causes.

[7] See *The One God*, pp. 20, 28.

[8] See *The One God*, pp. 16-22. The following are the full arguments. (1) Every simple subsistent form is incorruptible. Every human soul is a simple subsistent form. Ergo, every human soul is incorruptible. (2) All ultimate most universal effects are caused by the first most universal cause. All existence (being) is the ultimate most universal effect. Ergo, all existence (being) is caused by the first most universal cause (God).

[9] See p. 139 and p. 71, respectively.

[10] See Garrigou-Lagrange, *God: His Existence and His Nature, A Thomistic Solution of Certain Agnostic Antinomies*, trans. from the fifth French edition by Bede Rose, O.S.B., 2 vols., St. Louis: Herder, 1934, vol. I, pp. 250-52.

[11] See *God*, I, pp. 253-54.

[12] See *God*, I, pp. 295-99.

[13] *God*, I, p. 256.

[14] See *God*, I, pp. 256-61.

[15] *The One God*, p. 153.

[16] Gilson, Langan, and Maurer, although they thought that Garrigou-Lagrange had missed the boat with respect to Aquinas' unique existentialism, nevertheless thought enough of his Neo-Thomism to afford him a paragraph and a long footnote in their history of philosophy series. The three authors thought that Garrigou-Lagrange was unduly influenced by rationalists such as Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz and his pupil Freiherr Christian von Wolff (1679-1754), thinkers who were much more essentialistic than existentialistic in their philosophies. They traced back Garrigou-Lagrange's essentialism to the fact that he reduced Thomas' real distinction between essence and *esse* to the Aristotelian distinction between potency (matter) and act (form). In other words, he missed the fact that in Aquinas *esse* is an act superior to form. Now it is true that many Dominicans in the twentieth century embraced the Aquinas of the hyphen (Aristotelian-Thomistic); for example see Grabmann, *Interior Life*, pp. 26, 31, 33 and Garrigou-Lagrange, *The One God*, p. 13. However, even assuming that this portrayal of his position is accurate, it is clear that Garrigou-Lagrange honestly intended to pray and think within an existential philosophy of being, as can be seen from his philosophical treatment of God. See Etienne Gilson, Thomas Langan, and Armand A. Maurer, *Recent Philosophy: Hegel to the Present*, New York: Random House, 1966, pp. 352, 787-88 note 49.

REGINALD GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE OP ON PHYSICAL PREMOTION

Steven A Long

Throughout the body of his Thomistic work, Fr. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., resolutely defends St. Thomas's teaching that created liberty is subject to divine providence and divine causality. In particular, he defends the idea--clearly present in St. Thomas's writings although not summarily expressed in the same technical terminology--of "physical premotion". This terminology, derived from the work of the famed Thomist commentator Domingo Bañez, refers to the teaching of St. Thomas that (*Sth.*I-II.109.1) "no matter how perfect a corporeal or spiritual nature is supposed to be, it cannot proceed to its act unless it be moved by God."[1] This motion is called "physical" as distinct from "moral" not to indicate that it is the act of a material substance but rather to indicate (in accord with the Greek sense of the term) that the motion is *real*. It is called "pre" motion as referring to priority not in *time* (because insofar as a thing *is being moved* from potency to act it is *simultaneously moving* from potency to act) but in *nature* (nothing can move from potency to act unless it be moved by something in act). It is called a "motion" because it refers to a transition from potency to act. In the first part of this essay I shall briefly and summarily argue that the writings of St. Thomas vindicate this as the Master's authentic teaching--something that I believe would be well to the liking of Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange. Then I shall say a few words about Garrigou-Lagrange's lifelong efforts in behalf of the elucidation and defense of this doctrine.

I. St. Thomas's actual teaching

Along with other great Dominican commentators such as Capreolous, Bañez, Poinsot (John of St. Thomas), and Cajetan, Garrigou-Lagrange upheld the high Thomistic account of freedom as chiefly rooted in the human intellect. Because the will as a *rational* faculty is ordered to *universal* rather than merely sensory and particular good, and since no finite good is in every respect good, there is always the possibility of seeing any finite good--even if it is our authentic good here and now--as not-good. No finite good *is* the subsistent universal good, and hence can always be viewed as in some way "not-good" for one. It is good for a student to study--but bad, because he is bored. It is good to go to Mass--but bad, because one is tired. And so the dominating indifference of the will *vis a vis* finite goods is rooted in the intellect, because it is owing to the rational form of volition as desire for the properly *universal* good that these implications ensue. We respond even to the divine good through the intermediation of

[1] *Sth.*I-II.109.1.resp.: "Et ideo quantumcumque natura aliqua corporalis vel spiritualis ponatur perfecta, non potest in suum actum procedere nisi moveatur a Deo." All citations to the *Summa theologiae* derive from the Ottawa edition; all other citations from St. Thomas's corpus are taken directly from the Leonine editions. Translations are a combination of the translation used in the *Collected Works of St. Thomas* in CD-ROM from Folio Corp., and small revisions here and there that seem to me reasonable.

creatures--e.g., through the words of Sacred Scripture, through holy persons, places, and things, through the matter of the sacraments, the human nature of Christ, and so on. Hence the will is free with respect to its proximate finite objects (cf. *Sth*.I.82.2.ad2). However, the will has a nature, and it is not free with respect to the willing of happiness. Nor--were one ever to know God directly rather than through creaturely mediation--would the will be free with respect to cleaving to God in beatitude, because then the will is so actualized and perfected in the dynamism bestowed upon it by God that there is no potentiality for it to be elsewise actuated. Only God is in every respect good, the very subsistent universal Good, such that if God is ever directly and beatifically known, the will in its utter fulfillment cannot be separated from God. Even in this life, insofar as we determinately know that some action is necessary for our happiness, just so far does it seem to partake of the necessity of the Last End, although there is always a possibility--rooted in the very nature of rational volition--for the person to fail to advert to the proper respect in which some finite good or act is ordered to the *finis ultimus*, the ultimate end. Hence the rational agent is volitionally capable of shunning that which is ethically obligatory, as the will retains a dominating indifference at all times *vis a vis* its proximate finite objects.

Thus for St. Thomas, created liberty or freedom is denominated as such in relation to its proximate objects--finite goods--and so our choices are said to be "free". But general volition of the end--the desire for happiness--is not among those desires of which a human person is the master. But further still and on the other side of this equation is the issue of the conditions requisite for the free act of the creature: that is to say, the issue of the real dependence of all creatures upon God both in order *to be* and in order *to act*.

Everyone will acknowledge that *free acts of the will presuppose the existence of the will*. But just as the will cannot act freely *if it does not exist*, likewise it cannot act freely *unless it be moved so as to transit from potency to act*. Every finite creature requires to be moved by God in order to act, because nothing in potency moves from potency to act save by that which is in act. Thus, the rational creature's own moving from potency to act with respect to its volitional self-determination occurs through a motion bestowed upon the creature by God. Created liberty presuppposes that the creature has itself been moved from potency to act with respect to its own free act of self-determination. Just as only the author of a thing's being can bestow upon it its natural motion--a motion without violence--so among extrinsic causes only God can apply this natural motion to further act without violence. This does not, on St. Thomas's account, limit human or angelic persons to the status of mere automatons, because the motion received is not a natural necessitation, but rather this motion is a condition of the free act itself. Far from this actuation being contrary to free choice, it is the actualization of this very freedom itself. To quote St. Thomas (*Sth*.I.83.1.ad3):

> Free-will is the cause of its own movement, because by his free-will man moves himself to act. But it does not of necessity belong to liberty that what is free should be the first cause of itself,

> as neither for one thing to be cause of another need it be the first cause. God, therefore, is the first cause, Who moves causes both natural and voluntary. And just as by moving natural causes He does not prevent their acts being natural, so by moving voluntary causes He does not deprive their actions of being voluntary: but rather is He the cause of this very thing in them; for He operates in each thing according to its own nature. [2]

Here the emphasis is upon the rational nature of volition, and freedom is as noted above denominated as such in relation to the proximate objects of the will. This is merely the further extension of the causal entailment of creation, for the existential nothingness of the creature apart from God is mirrored by its operational indigence. The maxim that *agere sequitur esse* is pertinent here. The finite rational creature, which at each instant can only be at all because it is sustained in being by God, likewise can only act inasmuch as God actualizes creaturely free acts. Complete or absolute autonomy of action, in the strict sense, is impossible to a creature, for the very reason that the creature does not exist absolutely autonomously and so cannot act absolutely autonomously. Having determined that the will of a rational or intellectual creature must first *be* in order for it to act, further inquiry simply seeks to determine the other conditions *sine qua non* for the actualization of created liberty. Inasmuch as potency is not self-actualizing, and the creature is not incessantly choosing, the will must be actualized as the very condition of its being applied in an act of choice. This is, as it were, a transcendental presupposition of created choice. God is the first mover, the first object of appetite, and the first willer. Thus as he puts it (*Scg*.IIIa.67), "every application of power to action is chiefly and primarily from God."[3]

The question is then raised whether at the instant that God is moving the will from potency to act the will can do other than be moved. Some--conspicuous among them Molina--have thought that if the answer is "no" that this account denies human freedom and must be rejected. St. Thomas himself provides the principles for the solution of this problem, however. Tradition has crystallized terminology for this account that is expressly derived from St. Thomas's writings. Thomas speaks of "the composite" and "the divided" senses of possibility. The "composite sense" is to be illustrated as follows. Insofar as Socrates is sitting, he cannot at the same time--composite with sitting--simultaneously not-be sitting. But, in the "divided sense"--at a different time or as pertains to a diffferent act, divided from this act--Socrates can stand. So inasmuch as one sits one cannot simultaneously stand (composite

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[2] *Sth*.I.83.1.ad3: "Dicendum quod liberum arbitrium est causa sui motus; quia homo per liberum arbitrium seipsum movet ad agendum. Non tamen hoc est de necessitate libertatis, quod sit prima causa sui id quod liberum est; sicut nec ad hoc quod aliquid sit causa alterius, requiritur quod sit prima causa eius. Deus igitur est prima causa movens et naturales causas et voluntarias. Et sicut naturalibus causis, movendo eas, non aufert quin actus earum sint naturales; ita movendo causas voluntarias, non aufert quin actiones earum sint voluntariae, sed potius hoc in eis facit; operatur enim in unoquoque secundum eius proprietatem."

[3] *Scg*.IIIa.67: "Sed omnis applicatio virtutis ad operationem est principaliter et primo a Deo."

sense) but one does have the power to stand later; whereas one can in a different time & act actually stand (divided sense). Using these distinctions, it is clear that insofar as one is moving from potency to act in any order, one cannot simultaneously not be moving (composite sense). But in the divided sense, one may not move (i.e., at another time). The creature always retains the power not to move at another time, but the power of free will cannot be actualized simultaneously to two contrary possibilities.

Similarly, insofar as one is being moved from potency to act by God with respect to one's own free self-determination, one is not not-being moved, and so in the composite sense one is not "free" not to be moved, because freedom is not a contradiction in terms. But in the divided sense it remains true that at the very instant when God is actualizing our created liberty--which far from destroying it makes it to be what it is--we retain the power to act differently with respect to another act or time. The impossibility in the composite sense of the will extending simultaneously to contraries will only count as a restriction of freedom if we insist upon defining freedom as a contradiction in terms. St. Thomas's analysis is simply an account of human liberty which does not build into itself a metaphysically spurious liberty of indifference with respect to the divine causality and providence. Thus construed, volitional freedom is a higher, rational, immaterial mode whereby God moves the the creature both to perfections proportionate to the creature's natural powers, and finally to Himself.

It is to be noted that the datum that some tendencies which God bestows upon the will do not lead to action is not a sign that God cannot freely move the will, as St. Thomas in many places affirms that God can do. Rather, it merely indicates that some of these motions are only remote preparations for action rather than themselves effectuating action. It is also important to note that, when this analysis is raised to the theological level, the claim is *not* that created graces--as creatures which are not God--are by their own nature necessitants to the will. For the will is a contingent cause. Thomas clearly and everywhere affirms that necessary and contingent are *modes that ensue upon universal being*, and that *God is the cause of universal being*. Hence the causality of God extends both to what is, and to the mode whereby it is--God causes necessary things necessarily and contingent things contingently.

But to say that God brings about something contingently is not to say that God does not bring it about; to say that God moves the creature freely is not to say that the creature is not moved. It is only to say that the creature is moved according to its contingent nature--freely--rather than violently. For example, God does not, in moving the will, make the will to be such that it can no longer ever act other than in one way--God does not violently transform the will into a naturally necessitated power determined only to one thing. Rather, the will is a contingent cause, and God actualizes it as such, contingently--the divine efficacy extends to the very mode in which God wills an effect to occur.

Hence that which God absolutely ordains to bring about through the use of created grace comes about in this way, not merely because the nature of created grace as a creature is such, but because of the infinite efficacy of the principal cause--God--which extends even to the mode of the effect, and to whom the effect is more assimilated than it is to the created grace deployed.

Similarly, that I paint with green paint on white specifies the *color* of the painting, but that I make certain to put it *here* or *there*, or to give a second or third coat, is not determined by the greenness of the paint, but simply by the painter. In this way, the *nature* of the grace (like the greenness of the paint) specifies the type of the effect, but that it be *surely* given as well as *where* and *to whom* and *to the degree* that it is given, is determined simply by the divine author of grace. If God ordains surely to bestow a grace of perfect contrition, then the penitent is freely moved to an act of perfect contrition. The nature of the grace specifies its effect, but the surety with which it is given along with the one to whom it is given and the degree to which it is given are wholly matters of the divine predilection.

The efficacy of the divine motion entails only a necessity of supposition and not a natural necessitation of the will: insofar as one is being freely moved, one is not not-being freely moved. Just as our being is contingent, and yet--on the supposition that God causes us to be--is necessary with a necessity *ex suppositione*; so likewise our free will is a contingent cause, and that it be moved freely to some determinate choice is--on the supposition that God moves it so--necessary with a necessity *ex suppositione* rather than natural. Since nothing in potency can move itself to act unless it first be moved by a principle in act, our own volitional tendencies and acts require prior divine motion.

To be volitionally moved is to be moving either tendentially or in choice. As Thomas argues (Disputed Questions on Truth.III.22.8.resp.), God changes the will in two ways: either merely by moving it without introducing any form into the will--as for example when without adding any new habit or grace God moves a man to desire; or else by introducing a new form into the will such as grace or virtue.

That this is actually the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas is quite clear from a variety of texts. As for the language of divided and composite senses, one sees it surfacing in *Scg.*I.67 in relation to the divine knowledge:

> Further, if every single thing is known to God as seen present to Him, that which God knows will be so far necessary as it is necessary that Socrates is sitting from the fact that he is seen to be sitting. Now this is necessary, not absolutely or as some say by necessity of consequent, but conditionally, or by necessity of consequence. For this conditional statement is necessary: If he is seen to sit, he sits. Wherefore if the conditional be rendered categorically, so as to run, That which is seen to sit, necessarily sits, it is clear that if it be referred to the statement, and in a composite sense, it is true, and if referred to the thing and in a divided sense, it is false. And so in these and in all like arguments employed by

> those who gainsay God's knowledge of contingencies, there is a fallacy of composition and division.[4]

Additionally, one then in *De malo*.16.7.ad15 notes Thomas applying this distinction in the context of holding that the divine will is "universally the cause of being and universally of all the things that the following on this, hence even of necessity and contingency":

> And in regard to knowledge this is clear from what was said above (in the Reply to 14): for just as divine knowledge is in relation to future contingent events, so our eye is in relation to contingent things that occur here and now, as was said (in the Response); hence just as we most certainly see Socrates sitting while he is sitting, but nonetheless it does not follow from this that his sitting is absolutely necessary, so also from the fact that God sees in themselves all the things that take place, the contingency of things is not done away with. And as regards the will we must take into account that the divine will is universally the cause of being and universally of all the things that follow on this, hence even of necessity and contingency; but His will itself is above the order of the necessary or contingent just as it is above all created being. And therefore necessity and contingency in things are distinguished not in relation to the divine will, which is a universal cause, but in relation to created causes which the divine will has ordered proportionately to the effects, namely in such a way that the causes of necessary effects are unchangeable, and of contingent effects changeable.[5]

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[4] Leonine ed., *Scg*.I.76: "Praeterea, si unumquodque a Deo cognoscitur sicut praesentialiter visum, sic necessarium erit esse quod Deus cognoscit, sicut necessarium est Sortem sedere ex hoc quod sedere videtur. Hoc autem non necessarium est absolute, vel, ut qa quibusdam dicitur, *necessitate consequentis:* sed sub conditione, vel *necessitate consequentiae*. Haec enim conditionalis est necessaria: *Si videtur sedere, sedet*. Unde et, si conditionalis in categoricam transferatur, ut dicatur, *Quod videtur sedere, necesse est sedere*, patet eam *de dicto* intellectam, et *compositam*, esse veram; *de re* vero intellectam, et *divisam*, esse falsam. Et sic in his, et in omnibus similibus quae Dei scientiam circa contingentia oppugnantes argumentantur, *secundum compositionem et divisionem* falluntur."

[5] Leonine ed., *De malo*.16.7.ad15: "Et hoc quidem quantum ad scientiam patet ex his que supra dicta sunt: sic enim se habet diuina scientia ad futura contingentia sicut se habet oculus noster ad contingentia aue in presenti sunt, ut dictum est; unde sicut certissime uidemus Sortem sedere dumsedet, nec tamen proper hoc sit simpliciter necessarium, ita etiam ex hoc quod Deus uidet omnia que eueniunt in se ipsis, non tollitur contingentia rerum. Ex parte autem uoluntatis considerandum est quod uoluntas diuina est uniuersaliter causa entis et uniuersaliter omnium que consequntur <ipsum>, unde et necessitatis et contingentie; ipsa autem est supra ordinem necessarii et contingentis sicut est supra totum esse creatum. Et ideo necessitas et contingentia in rebus distinguitur non per habitudinem ad uoluntatem diuinam que est causa communis, set per comparationem ad causas creatas, quas proportionaliter diuina uoluntas ad

This last point is conspicuous: i.e., that the divine will is universally the cause of being and ergo also of necessity and contingency, and these last (necessity and contingency in finite things) hence are distinguished *not in relation to the divine will* which is an absolutely universal cause, *but in relation to other finite created causes*. In other words, we do not call the will "free" because it possesses a liberty of indifference to divine causality, for like every creature the will can neither *be* nor *act* save that God bestows its being, its natural motion, and the application or activation of this natural motion to act. To say otherwise is to make the creature rather than the creator the exclusive cause of that quantum of being, actuality, or perfection that constitute the free determination of the will, and this is just so far to remove these from the divine causality and the divine providence, and to render the creature a cause *a se*, which is incompatible with the evidence.

Clearly inasmuch as no finite thing is its own existence, but rather receives it from God, there is correspondingly one gigantic theistic presupposition of any created action as such whatsoever: namely that the agent must actually exist if it is to will anything. The creature's natural motion is alike received from God, as are its essential powers. Since nothing can, absolutely speaking, move itself from potency to act without first being activated, the creature cannot turn to act unless it first be actuated and moved by God. This is no more contrary to the free act of which it is a condition, then is that condition of the free act which is the very being of the will. The free act is, like being itself, simultaneously most one's own, while nonetheless also most a gift.

Thus it is that one must be moved from potency to act with respect to one's own act of free self-determination, an activation that does not destroy liberty but rather actualizes it. Every choice selects one thing as opposed to others, and the will itself does this--but it does it as first moved from potency to act with respect to its own self-determination. Another way of putting this is that *the act of self-determination belongs to the will, but the motion whereby the will determines itself has its origin extrinsically in God.* Lest there be any doubt about his teaching, we have Thomas's words from *De malo*.3.2.ad4:

> When anything moves itself, this does not exclude its being moved by another, from which it has even this that it moves itself. Thus it is not repugnant to liberty that God is the cause of the free act of the will.[6]

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effectus ordinauit, ut scilicet necessariorum effectuum sint cause intransmutabiles, contingentium autem trnasmutabiles."

[6] "Similiter cum aliquid mouet se ipsum, non excluditur quin ab alio moueatur a quo habet hoc ipsum quo se ipsum mouet. Et sic non repugnat libertati quod Deus est causa actus liberi arbitrii." The antecedent text of this response to the fourth objection is also very much to the purpose: "Ad quartum dicendum quod cum dicitur aliquid mourere se ipsum, ponitur idem esse mouens et motum; cum autem dicitur quod aliquid mouetur ab altero, ponitur aliud esse mouens et aliud motum. Manifestum est

Now, the will *as free* refers exemplarily and directly to choice, and so when Thomas says that God is the cause of the free act of the will Thomas is stating that free choice as such is caused by God. One must be careful not to suppose that God is a creature on a level with other creatures--for all of being is caused by God, necessary things necessarily, and contingent things contingently. One also needs to observe that the language of "pre"motion refers to priority in nature and not in time. For *parri passu* with one being freely moved, tendentially or in choice, one freely moves.

Thomas's response to the third objection in the fourth article of the *Summa theologiae* I-II, question 10 here is crucial. The objection is as follows:

> Further, a thing is possible, if nothing impossible follows from its being supposed. But something impossible follows from the supposition that the will does not will that to which God moves it: because in that case God's operation would be ineffectual. Therefore it is not possible for the will not to will that to which God moves it. Therefore it wills it of necessity.[7]

In response to this objection, St. Thomas clearly does not wish to concede that the will is necessitated by natural necessitation, because the will is a cause that by virtue of its rational object--the universal good--is not naturally determined to one finite effect. Yet clearly he also does not wish to deny that God's imparted motion to the will--the divine motion whereby the will determines itself to act--is effective. *Pari passu* with being moved is the motion of the one moved. His response is directly to the point:

> If God moves the will to anything, it is incompatible with this supposition, that the will be not moved thereto. But it is not

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autem quod cum aliquid mouet alterum, non ex hoc ipso quod est mouens ponitur quod est primum mouens: unde non excluditur quin ab altero moueatur et ab altero habeat hoc ipsum quod mouet."-- "To the forth it should be said that when it is said that something moves itself, that the same thing is mover and moved. But when it is said that something is moved by another, the moved is taken to be one thing and the mover another. But it is clear that when something moves another, from this it is not taken to follow that it is the first mover: wherefore it is not excluded that from another it is itself moved and from this other it has even this, that it moves." Thence the lines follow that "when something moves itself, this does not exclude that it is moved by another from which it has even this, that it moves itself. And thus it is not repugnant to liberty that God is the cause of the free act of the will."

[7] *Sth.*I-II.10.4.3: "Possibile est quo posito non sequitur impossibile. Sequitur autem impossible, si ponatur quod voluntas non velit hoc ad quod Deus eam movet, quia secundum hoc operatio Dei esset inefficax. Non ergo est possibile voluntatem non velle hoc ad quod Deus eam movet. Ergo necesse est eam hoc velle."

> impossible simply. Consequently it does not follow that the will is moved by God necessarily.[8]

In other words, because the will is a contingent cause, it is not impossible for it ever to do otherwise than it is now being moved to do, and therefore the will is not naturally necessitated to the act it freely performs. But insofar as God is moving the will, it is necessary--not with natural necessitation, but necessary *ex suppositione* or given the datum of the divine motion--that it move. The passage quoted begins with a conditional "If God moves the will to anything". In this light it is conspicuous that, according to the doctrine of St. Thomas, "God moves the will" to something, for the will cannot move to anything *unless* God moves it. It follows that every single act of free will is both free *simpliciter* and necessary *ex suppositione* of the divine motion (because the natural motion of the will must be applied by God, the creature must be moved from potency to act with respect to its own free act of self-determination). It does not follow that God is the cause of evil, because the defect deforming a volitional motion--the deprivation of that which is needful for the good of the volitional act--is a nonbeing that belongs to the creature and which has no *per se cause* and *a fortiori* is not caused by God. Rather, God is the prime source of redress for every defect. Not only is it clear from St. Thomas's general account that God moves the will to something inasmuch as every act of the will requires prior application to act by God; but it is also clear that God moves the will to something by the very character of *intention*, since God does not bestow either natural motion or grace for no purpose. If He wills to give the will a tendency, a tendency is bestowed; if He wills to move the will to complete act, then the will in freedom will determine itself by the divine motion bestowed.

As pertains to the motion of the will being both that of the agent and derived from God, one notes the words of Sth.I.105.4.ad2:

> To be moved voluntarily, is to be moved from within, that is, by an interior principle: yet this interior principle may be caused by an exterior principle; and so to be moved from within is not repugnant to being moved by another.[9]

Immediately thereafter, there is Sth.I.105.4.ad3:

> If the will were so moved by another as in no way to be moved from within itself, the act of the will would not be imputed for reward or blame. But since its being moved by another does not

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[8] *Sth.*I-II.10.4.ad.3: "Dicendum quod si Deus movet voluntatem ad aliquid, impossibile est poni quod voluntas ad illud non moveatur. Non tamen est impossibile simpliciter. Unde non sequitur quod voluntas a Deo ex necessitate moveatur."

[9] *Sth.*I.105.4.ad2: "Dicendum quod moveri voluntarie est moveri ex se, idest a principio intrinseco; sed illud principium intrinsecum potest esse ab alio principio extrinseco. Et sic moveri ex se non repugnat ei quod movetur ab alio."

> prevent its being moved from within itself, as we have stated, it does not thereby forfeit the motive for merit or demerit.[10]

Hence St. Thomas's point (Sth.I-II.109.2.ad 1):

> Man is master of his acts, both of his willing and not willing, because of the deliberation of reason, which can be bent to one side or another. And although he is master of his deliberating or not deliberating, yet this can only be by a previous deliberation; and since this cannot go on to infinity, we must come at length to this, that man's free choice is moved by an extrinsic principle, which is above the human mind, namely by God, as the Philosopher proves in the chapter on *Good Fortune* .[11]

"Man's free choice is moved by an extrinsic principle, which is above the human mind, namely by God..." It should be noted that this is essentially a *hopeful* teaching. The One Who is perfectly Good, is the Prime cause of the positive substance of my own acts of freedom. Just as my very being is most my own and yet also most a gift, so my free willing is most my own, yet most a gift. And defect is permitted for the sake of the manifestation of the divine justice and mercy, to teach the soul humility, and to manifest that which defect is, that which it merits, and most of all that which is one's hope of redress from defect, one's hope of healing, of elevation, and of bliss. Hence St. Thomas's words from the *Summa contra gentiles* 3b, Chapter 91: "For acts of choice and will are under the immediate governance of God";[12] and "Therefore all movements of will and choice must be traced to the divine will: and not to any other cause, because God alone is the cause of our willing and choosing."[13]

Later authors--most conspicuously, Jacques Maritain[14]--have argued that in the ordinary case it is not God but the creature who determines whether the creature will receive an

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[10] *Sth.*I.105.4.ad3: "Dicendum quod, si voluntas ita moveretur ab alio quod ex se nullatenus moveretur, opera voluntatis non imputarentur ad meritum vel demeritum. Sed quia per hoc quod movetur ab alio, non excluditur quin moveatur ex se, ut dictum est; ideo per consequens non tollitur ratio meriti vel demeriti."

[11] *Sth.*I-II.109.2.ad 1: "Dicendum quod homo est dominus suorum actuum, et volendi et non volendi, propter deliberationem rationis, quae potest flecti ad unam partem vel ad aliam. Sed quod deliberet vel non deliberet, et si huiusmodi etiam sit dominus, oportet quod hoc sit per deliberationem praecedentem. Et cum hoc non procedat in infinitum, oportet quod finaliter deveniatur ad ad hoc quod liberum arbitrium hominis moveatur ab aliquo exteriori principio quod est supra mentem humanam, scilicet a Deo; ut etiam Philosophus probat in cap. *De Bona Fortuna*."

[12] *Scg*.IIIb.91: "Nam electiones et voluntatum motus iimmediate a Deo disponuntur."

[13] *Scg*.IIIb.91: "Oportet ergo omnium voluntatum et electionum motus in divinam voluntatem reduci."

[14] See Jacques Maritain, *Existence and the Existent*, tr. by Lewis Galantiere and Gerald B. Phelan (New York: Pantheon Books), 1948, especially pp. 85-122 which comprise Chapter Four, "The Free Existent and the Free Eternal Purposes"; also see his *St. Thomas and the Problem of Evil* (Milwaukee: Marquette

efficacious *motio* (or, at the theological level, efficacious grace), or not. Maritain thought that although God can simply and efficaciously move the will without violence to its freedom, that more often He proffers the soul an aid that is not of itself efficacious but which will be made so by God if only the creature *does not negate the motio, defect from it, or shatter it*. I have argued at great length elsewhere as to the failure of this line of argumentation, whose beauty and innocence of intent nonetheless are conspicuous and worthy of honor.[15] But it may suffice for now to point out the following. It is true that the *absence* of negation, i.e. *non*-negation, may logically be consistent with there being no universe. E.g., in the hypothesis of there being no universe the absence or the negation of creaturely negating requires the supposition of nothing positive at all. Nonetheless, *in the creature, not to negate must be something positive.* Negation is a pure-nonbeing, and for the creature *not to be subject* to a pure nonbeing in some respect, is for something positive to be present, and this derives from God. Ergo for one not to negate some *motio* is simply for God to have freely moved one. Thus either God moves the creature freely to good, or permits it to suffer evil consequent on the divine permission of defect in its free volition. Escape from this subtle and volatile fallacy regarding creaturely negation frees one to see the genuine value of Garrigou-Lagrange's intellectual witness regarding divine providence and the will, a witness that to some degree has been occluded by the popularity of what I consider to be Maritain's fallacious revisionist account.

II. The Witness of Pere Garrigou-Lagrange

The texts cited above are merely the prologue to the many texts cited from St. Thomas by Garrigou-Lagrange to this effect. In his work *God: His Existence and His Nature*, by far the better part of the appendices to the second volume, particularly its Epilogue, are devoted to explicating the non-necessitating but determining divine motion whereby the volitional creature is moved to determine itself in freedom. Likewise, in *Reality*, he treats this issue both in his

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University Press), 1942. Others, such as Fr. William Most, hold similar positions--see the author's work *Grace, Predestination, and the Salvific Will of God: New Answers to Old Questions* (Front Royal, VA: Christendom Press), 1997. Fr. Most lists several other contemporary authors who seek a similar solution to the problem of the relation amongst divine causality, free acts, and evil, including Fr. Philippe de la Trinite', OCD, Dom Mark Pontifex, OSB, Charles Cardinal Journet, and F. Muniz. Cf. *Grace*, pp. 484-485 & pp. 516-518. See also the magisterial work by Michael Torre defending Fr. Marin-Sola, O.P.: *God's Permission of Sin: Negative or Conditioned Decree, A Defense of the Doctrine of F. Marin-Sola, O.P. Based on the Principles of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Dissertation Services). Marin-Sola held a predecessor version of Maritain's argument, and Torre considers there to be reason to hold that Maritain gained his inspiration from Marin-Sola. I consider that without the fallacy regarding negation found in Maritain, no similar theoretical account will be coherent; but that given the presence of such a fallacy, no similar theoretical account can be true. Hence the original Thomistic account to me appears far preferable, although Torre's argument is the most extensive extant in behalf of Marin-Sola's account (outside of Marin-Sola's own writings).

[15] Cf. my forthcoming essay in *Revue thomiste*, tentatively titled "Providence, Freedom, and Natural Law," wherein I argue extensively on this precise point, and also make the further argument that any theonomic doctrine of natural law presupposes and implies that the human will is subject to divine causality and providence.

chapter on grace and in the supplement regarding efficacious grace. He particularly stresses the transcendent efficacy of God and the mellifluity with which God moves the will freely in accord with its nature.

Garrigou-Lagrange was wont to argue that the issue is one of "God determining or determined". And this is true, in that Perfect Act cannot be a passive spectator *vis a vis* the positive actuality of choice without implicitly derogating the divine transcendence, omnipotence, and causal efficacy. Moreover, clearly that quantum of actuality and perfection that differentiates act from non-act must be accounted for by divine causality, unless one is prepared to abandon the claim of theism that God is the author of everything that is insofar as it is--a claim which is buttressed by the evidence of movement from potency to act as well as by the real distinction of essence and existence in finite things. Nonetheless, to the ears of those accustomed only to an incorrectly conceptualized account of liberty that pits "determinism" against an irrationalist & voluntarist freedom, this language may prove distracting and forbidding.

Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange rightly argues for the hopeful character of this teaching. Hence we see his words in Appendix IV at the end of the second volume of *God: His Existence and His Nature*:

> The objection against Thomism is that it is a discouraging doctrine. Instead of being opposed to the virtue of hope, it induces us to place all our trust in God and not in ourselves. On the other hand, what is there more discouraging than the doctrine which would have to result in maintaining that God is *powerless* in certain circumstances to keep us from falling into certain defects and cause us to will what is good? Interior tranquility and peace of mind depend upon the divine action in which we place our trust. How could we hope to reach heaven, if God could give us only an *indifferent* grace, and if we had to *make it efficacious* by the effort of our own poor and inconstant will: *Is not our salvation incomparably more assured in God's hands than in our own*?[16]

Yet even today there persists an unwarrented gloomy and dark sense of this teaching. In defining human liberty the tendency today is not to follow St. Thomas in the earlier-cited passage from *De malo*.16.7.ad15: "therefore necessity and contingency in things are distinguished not in relation to the divine will, which is a universal cause, but in relation to created causes which the divine will has ordered proportionately to the effects, namely in such a way that the causes of necessary effects are unchangeable, and of contingent effects changeable."

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[16] Rev. R. Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., *God: His existence and His Nature*, Vol. II., tr. from Fifth French Edition by Dom Bede Rose, O.S.B., D.D. (St. Louis, MO.: B. Herder Book Company, 1949), p. 501.

Rather than distinguishing necessity and contingency in things "in relation to created causes", there is a tendency to distinguish necessity and contingency absolutely and logically. The consequence is a notion of liberty that is incompatible with creaturliness as such. Thus it is thought that to be "free" is to be the absolute and first cause of one's acts, a notion that by its very nature can pertain solely to God. Even when the absurdity of this notion of human free will begins to become clear, many still wish to define contingency of the human will in relation to God rather than in relation to created causes. This manner of defining the contingency of the human will in relation to God rather than in relation to the will's proximate created objects requires the postulation of an absolute liberty of indifference on the part of the created will *vis a vis* the divine causality. Rather than locating the source of liberty in the very intellectual/rational nature whereby the will is ordered to universal good and hence cannot be coerced by any finite good whatsoever, this view defines the liberty of the will as an exemption from the universal causality of God. Such a postulation of freedom as a zone of independence from divine causality and providence is simply incompossible with theism.

But no finite being or act escapes divine causality and divine government. When this metaphysically spurious conception of liberty intrudes itself into the psyche of the Christian, the effect is to render the idea of subjection to divine providence either nonexistent, or *fearful* and *gloomy*. The idea of providence clearly is utterly void when our free choices are removed from the divine causality and governance, because providence extends only so far as power. There is, in short, no point in praying to a God for the overcoming of volitional faults--or for preservation from volitional fault--if He cannot govern the will because volition is outside the divine power. To ask an agent for an effect outside the power of the agent is an unreasonable request--on such an account, the petition should not be "deliver us from evil" but rather "give us good weather (the right circumstances) and then please watch us as *we deliver ourselves* from evil". On the other hand, if one does within this theoretical conspectus assert that God has providence over our free choices, this conception of providence will ineluctably imply *violence*. For on this libertarian understanding of freedom as a liberty of indifference to divine causality, God is not the first source of the natural motion and application to act of our wills. Thus, for God to move and providentially govern our wills from without will be for God to constrain our wills from outside--contrary to their own natural tendency--which is the very definition of violence. For this reason reference to providence within such a theoretical context will, if heartfelt, be *gloomy* and in the pejorative sense *fatalistic.* From inside such a way of viewing providence, there is always anxiety either that God *will* violate our freedom--because it is thought that He cannot move us freely and so the conclusion is reached that to be subject to God is to be coerced; or else there is a sadness and fear lest He *will not* violate our freedom, thus failing to deliver us from so crushingly insupportable and chimerically absolute a liberty.

St. Thomas's teaching insists that freedom is denominated as such in relation to created causes, *vis a vis* the proximate finite objects of the will in regard to which the will possesses a dominating liberty of indifference. Hence God moves the will according to its contingent nature, freely, and does so certainly owing to the transcendent efficacy of the divine will.

We need neither fear nor hope for divine *coercion*. Rather we must work and pray, realizing that the Author of every Good freely moves us according to our nature and works within us to perfect us. This realization that the one Who is all Good freely moves and perfects the human will in choice should be a source of the most profound confidence and, in the supernatural life, hope. Few authors in the history of Thomism have more consistently and profoundly argued this point than Fr. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange. Despite the persistent flight of the anxious mind from this ineluctable implication of theism, his writings still powerfully explain and defend this teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas: that God is the First Cause of our volitional motion whereby we are moved to determine ourselves in freedom, and that we ourselves are the second causes.

REGINALD GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE AND THE RENEWAL OF THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE

+James Arraj

Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, OP, (1877-1964) was one of the leaders of the wide-spread and often contentious attempts to renew the Christian contemplative life which roughly coincided with the first half of the 20th century. He was a student of the Dominican scholar, Ambrose Gardeil, and when the Dominicans sent him to Paris to study at the Sorbonne, it was at Henri Bergson's course in philosophy, probably at the Collège de France, that he made the acquaintance of Jacques Maritain. He went on to teach philosophy and theology at the newly founded Angelicum at Rome in 1909, and from 1917 to 1959 taught a course on aescetical and mystical theology. His influence in these matters was to radiate throughout Europe, North America and beyond. (1)

Two examples will give us the flavor of his deep involvement in renewing the contemplative life and set the stage for looking at two of the central positions that he championed.

It was at the Angelicum in 1909-1910 that he met Juan Gonzalez-Arintero, OP, and read his *Evolución mística*. Arintero was one of the most prominent figures in Spain in these early 20th century attempts to restore the contempative life to its former glory, and his doctrine was fundamentally in accord with Garrigou-Lagrange's. The Archivo del P. Arintero in Salamanca preserves Garrigou-Lagrange's unpublished letters to Arintero written between 1911 and 1927. (2)

The Universal Call to the Contemplative Life

The second historical example introduces us to one of the major themes in Garrigou-Lagrange's work in mystical theology, the universal call to contemplation. In France, in 1922, Garrigou-Lagrange collaborated with Jacques and Raissa Maritain in a series of spiritual initiatives which were to have a wide and lasting influence on the theology of contemplation and in which he appears to have played the role of the elder brother. In the fall of 1921, the Maritains had

decided to try to rekindle their idea of a Thomism study circle that would not only intellectually examine the philosophy and theology of St. Thomas and his great commentators and make it known to the lay intellectual world which was their home, but also would require of its members a vow of prayer. It was to Garrigou-Lagrange they turned to become its director-general, who accepted, and in return requested them in June of 1922 to write a study guide for the members which first appeared out of commerce as *De la vie d'orasion*. (3) That fall he led at Paris the first retreat of the Thomist Circle with Charles Journet, Henri Ghéon, Jean-Pierre Altermann, and Yves Congar, among those attending. (4)

At the end of 1922 and the beginning of 1923 Garrigou-Lagrange wrote three articles for *La vie spirituelle* that were to be taken up later in 1923 in one of his most influenctial books on the spiritual life, *Perfection chrétienne et contemplation selon St. Thomas d'Aquin et St. Jean de la Croix* (*Christian Perfection and Contemplation According to St. Thomas Aquinas and St. John of the Cross*) that annunciated one of his enduring contributions to mystical theology. He summed up with admirable clarity the traditional teaching of the Church on the nature and call to contemplation that was to be found in complementary ways in Thomas Aquinas and John of the Cross, and other saints. Contemplation, that culmination of the life of prayer in which the presence of God manifests itself in a very real and experiential, yet mysterious way, is, he asserted, the normal outcome of the development of the life of grace. It is the very flowering of the Christian virtues and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, that is of the whole Christian organism of grace. Contemplation, therefore, ought not to be confused with visions or revelations, or with other accessory or accidental phenomena of the spiritual life, but it is simply the blossoming of the life of the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity which are perfected in their mode of operation by the gifts of the Holy Spirit so that contemplation is both supernatural by substance, since it is based on the life of grace, and by its mode of activity since it is infused by God. Further, the ascetical life cannot be separated from the mystical life in which it finds its culmination. If contemplation is thus the normal development of the life of the virtues and gifts, then we are all called to it.

Once enunciated with such clarity and force, this thesis appeared as an obvious expression of the Catholic mystical tradition, and gained the center ground among theologians and spiritual writers who recognized it as such. But the very clarity of this enunciation made it immediately evident that it appeared to clash

with the facts of experience. If contemplation was the normal and natural outcome of the spiritual life, why was it that so few people appeared to receive it? Garrigou-Lagrange's three articles in *La vie spirituelle* had touched on this issue, and Jacques Maritain had submitted to the same journal an article in January, 1923, called "Une question sur la vie mystique et la contemplation" ("A Question on the Mystical Life and Contemplation") (5) that both embraced Garrigou-Lagrange's central thesis, and attempted to nuance it and deal more fully with the questions it carried in its train. This article appeared in March, 1923, with a response of Garrigou-Lagrange called "Les lois supérieures et leurs exceptions." ("The Superior Laws and Their Exceptions")

The apparent dilemma of how all could be called to contemplation and so few reach it was resolved by both of them by invoking a distinction that can be expressed in various forms, for example, the difference between the formal and the material, or the objective nature of things and the subjective, or as Maritain would later put it in another context, the difference between the essential and the existential, or nature and state. Once this kind of distinction was brought forth, the apparent contradiction disappeared. When the organism of the spiritual life is looked upon from a formal perspective, that is, according to its essential characteristics, then it is clear that the virtues and gifts are meant to lead us to contemplation, which, itself, is a foretaste of the life to come. But the life of grace is received in each of us in diverse ways. It is received, as the philosophers used to say, according to the mode of the recipient. Therefore, any number of reasons can impede its full flowering. Some of those reasons might have to do with our own faults and imperfections. We might, for example, be too attached to the things of this world, or lack the courage to endure the suffering that comes with the journey to contemplation. But, as Maritain felt important to emphasize in his intervention in *La vie spirituelle*, there could be other reasons that could not and should not be reduced to our own faults. We might have, for example, a temperament, or apostolate, that simply did not lend itself to contemplation in the overt classical form to be found in Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross. Contemplation might, in these cases, express itself in the lives of holy people in more hidden and tempered ways where the active gifts of the Holy Spirit were more to the forefront than the contemplative gifts, such as the gift of wisdom.

In summary, Garrigou-Lagrange played a central role in putting a spotlight on the nature of contemplation and our universal but remote call to it. This was one

of his major contributions to mystical theology, and became and still remains the most common view of theologians of the spiritual life.

On the Nature of Contemplation

His second major contribution to spiritual theology that we want to examine was much more controversial then, and points to a central issue that has yet to be resolved in contemporary attempts to renew the contemplative life. It is all well and good to say that we are all called to contemplation, and that the very organism of the spiritual life is geared to it, but what does the word contemplation really mean? It has had a variety of meanings through the course of the history of Christian spirituality, and it still does. But for Garrigou-Lagrange its meaning was very clear. Contemplation meant infused contemplation, a loving knowledge or wisdom that comes from God, that gift of the loving presence of God that is expressed so clearly in John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila, and in other mystics.

Here we have to digress a moment in order to understand why Garrigou-Lagrange was insisting that the contemplation of the saints meant infused contemplation. In the 17th century with the spread of the writings of John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila, all Catholic Europe was fascinated with mystical contemplation and how one might become a contemplative. But John of the Cross' sublime and nuanced teaching on infused contemplation had soon become misunderstood, first within the Discalced Carmelites, themselves, and then outside the Order. The whole length of the 17th century became a battleground not only between the true and false mystics, but between two very different and ultimately incompatible interpretations of what John of the Cross was saying about contemplation and how to arrive at it. The century ended without this conflict concerning the meaning of John of the Cross' writings being resolved, and mysticism, whether genuine or bogus, being relegated to oblivion. The Church entered a long, dark night of the mystics, which it did not begin to recover from until the beginning of the 20th century. But no sooner had mystical studies begun to revive under the impetus of a renewal of philosophy and theology, the same long-buried controversies came to life again. Auguste Poulain, SJ, together with many discalced Carmelites, entered into battle with Abbé Saudreau, who was seconded by Garrigou-Lagrange and Arintero, who were convinced that Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross knew only of infused

contemplation rather than a kind of contemplation that we could do ourselves whenever we wished. To their mind, it was destructive to the mystical life of the Church to take teachings that were developed in the context of infused contemplation, and apply them to an acquired or active one. These often acrimonious debates lasted until about 1950 when they finally ceased, not with any commonly accepted solution, but with the deaths of the some of the major figures that had carried them on.

With this panorama of the rise and fall of contemplative spirituality in mind, it is worth summarizing some of the basic points that Garrigou-Lagrange made in regard to the nature of contemplation.

1. Contemplation for John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila, as well as Francis de Sales and Jane de Chantal, means infused contemplation. (6)

2. It would be a misconstrual of Teresa of Avila's writings to find in them a kind of contemplation that would be distinct on the one side from simplified affective prayer, or her acquired recollection, and which could be identified on the other with her supernatural recollection, or prayer of quiet, in which there could be a prolonged cessation of discursive activity. (7) "It is altogether untenable to say that acquired contemplation is that in which we can place ourselves by our own industry, and to include in it supernatural recollection, quiet, spiritual intoxication, and mystical sleep." (8)

3. The infused contemplation described by John of the Cross in his *Dark Night of the Soul* "is not specifically different" from the contemplation he talks about in *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*. (9) "To acquired contemplation, which the Quietists continually recommended to everybody, they applied what the saints say about infused contemplation." (10)

At first glance, these assertions may appear as subtle points of interest only to historians of Western Christian spirituality, or theologians of mystical theology. They are not. They give a very definite answer to the question of just what contemplation is. The universal call to contemplation, and this identification of contemplation with infused contemplation are the twin pillars that support Garrigou Lagrange's mystical theology, and instead of being forgotten, they

ought to remain in the forefront of our minds when we look at the contemporary attempts to renew the contemplative life.

When a new interest in the contemplative life arose after the Second Vatican Council, these battles, when they were remembered at all, were remembered with distaste, and while Garrigou-Lagrange's idea of the universal call to contemplation had gone mainstream, and thus survived, his insistence on contemplation as infused contemplation was forgotten.

Today movements to renew the Christian contemplative life, like centering prayer and the Christian meditation movement based on the teaching of John Main, OSB, have had the great merit of introducing people to the serious practice of the life of prayer.

How should we evaluate them in the light of the two foundational principles of Garrigou-Lagrange's mystical theology? They both have clearly accepted the first one, that is, the call of all people to contemplation. In fact, it may even be wondered if they have overdone their acceptance of it and forgotten the nuances it had in the days when it was first formulated. They seem to invite everyone, even those at the beginning of their life of prayer, to practice contemplative prayer without inquiring how well they are grounded in the more discursive forms of prayer like meditation and affective prayer.

But how else can people be rather indescriminately invited to practice contemplative prayer unless contemplation is understood as something within our power to do? But if it is something that we can do, then it is a matter of the exercise of the human faculties, however subtly we are urged to exercise them, and it is not the infused contemplation which Garrigou-Lagrange accepts at being at the heart of the Christian mystical tradition. In centering prayer, for example, which claims John of the Cross as part of its inspiration, the clear distinction in St. John between meditation and infused contemplation, that is, between the kinds of prayer we can do whenever we want, and the gracious gift on God's part of contemplation, is blurred. Contemplation becomes something more akin to the kinds of acquired or active contemplation that flourished for a time in the 17th century.

Both centering prayer and the Christian meditation movement operate in a kind of historical and theological vacuum that prevents them from examining not only what happened in the first half of the 20th century, but what transpired in the centuries before that time. This is regrettable. The unresolved crisis in mystical theology that led to the dark night of the mystics in the 17th century came to light in the first years of the 20th century where Garrigou-Lagrange played a major role in unsuccessfully trying to resolve it. Will the now popular interest in contemplative spirituality lead to a similar crisis when it collides with this still unresolved question of the nature of contemplation?

The failure of centering prayer and the Christian meditation movement to come to grips with Garrigou-Lagrange's ideas on the nature of contemplation, and through him with the debates of those times is a fitting symbol of a wider failure of contemporary Christian spirituality which is curiously blind to its own history when it comes to the question of the nature of contemplation. Contemplation is promoted as a way of praying accessible to all, while contemplation in the sense of the gift of infused contemplation and the goal and summit of the spiritual life is forgotten.

Garrigou-Lagrange, Arintero, the Maritains, Poulain and Saudreau represent only some of the lights of those days, and behind them, crowding the 17th century, which was the last time that there was a wide-spread interest in contemplative prayer, is a whole cast of characters that followed in the wake of Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross and shaped the future that we now live in: the Carmelite Thomas of Jesus, who altered John of the Cross' thought before St. John's writings were even published, his fellow Carmelite, Francisco Quiroga, Antonio Rojas, Juan Falconi, now all but forgotten, and Miguel de Molinos, who ushered in the night of the mystics we are still trying to recover from, and many others. I have told this story in *From St. John of the Cross to Us: The Story of a 400 Year Long Misunderstanding and What it means for the Future of Christian Mysticism*. (11) Against this panorama the works of Garrigou-Lagrange on the universal call to contemplation as infused contemplation still maintain their vitality and importance.

Notes

1. See the article "Garrigou-Lagrange" in the *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, 129.
2. See Arturo Alonzo Lobos' *Presentación*, p. 12, note 12 of the second edition of Juan Arintero, (1980) *La verdadera mística tradicional*, Salamanca.
3. Raissa Maritain. *Raissa's Journal*. (1974) Presented by Jacques Maritain. Albany, NY: Magi Books, Inc. p. 128ff.
4. Jacques Maritain. *Notebooks*. Albany, NY: Magi Books, p. 148.
5. Jacques Maritain. (1924) "Sur l'appel a la vie mystique et a la contemplation." *De la vie d'oraison*. Paris: Louis Rouart et fils, p. 72.
6. "Contemplation" in the *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, 207.
7. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange. (1954) *Christian Perfection and Contemplation According to St. Thomas Aquinas and St. John of the Cross*. St. Louis: Herder, p. 225.
8. Ibid., p. 227.
9. Ibid., p. 231.
10. Ibid., p. 234.
11. James Arraj. (1999) *From St. John of the Cross to Us: The Story of a 400 Year Long Misunderstanding and What it means for the Future of Christian Mysticism*. Chiloquin, OR: Inner Growth Books.

GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE OP AND LA VIE THÉOLOGALE

Romanus Cessario, O.P.

Marie-Aubin-Gontran Garrigou-Lagrange was born at Auch (France) on 21 February 1877. While a medical student in 1897, Gontran underwent a strong religious experience that left him altogether convinced of the perennial truth embodied in the Catholic faith. His subsequent decision to join the Dominicans, where he came under the direction of the highly-gifted Father Ambroise Gardeil, brought him into contact with the important figures of early 20th-century French Catholic intellectual life. After a brief enrollment at the Sorbonne, where the young scientist disliked the heavy emphasis on literary studies in the philosophy course, Brother Reginald, as he was then called, continued his philosophical and theological studies within the Dominican Order. Once ordained, his work in France (at "Le Saulchoir") was brief, for he was called to Rome in 1909 to begin a teaching career at the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas ("Angelicum"). Except during the summer-vacation periods when he gave retreats and conferences mainly in French-speaking sections of Europe, Père Garrigou spent his long career of service to the Church entirely in Rome where, after patiently enduring a long and distressing illness, he died on 15 February 1964. In addition to his much-appreciated teaching and copious writing, the French Dominican served as consultant to several important Roman Congregations. An obituary in the French secular press reported that Father Garrigou-Lagrange shone with a certain Presence, for he was both a theologian and a truly spiritual man, one who taught more by his personal witness than by his words.

Since its foundation in 1215, the Dominican Order has generated several important waves of mysticism. As contemplative, doctor, and apostle, Garrigou-Lagrange continues a tradition that includes the late-medieval Rhineland mystics, Master Eckhart (1260-1327), Blessed Henry Suso (1295-1366) and John Tauler (1300-61), the Italian spiritual movement begun by St. Catherine of Siena (1347-1380) and continued by Savonarola (1452-1498) and St. Catherine dei Ricci (1522-1590), the Spanish renaissance exemplified by Louis of Grenada (1504-1588), and the much-neglected Parisian experience represented by Louis Chardon (1595-1651) and Alexandre Piny (1640-1709). Following the example of Catherine of Siena, Garrigou-Lagrange developed a mystical teaching within the context of a zealous and self-conscious devotion to the Church. He frequently quoted Henri-Dominique Lacordaire (1802-1861), who inspired the nineteenth-century renewal of the Dominican Order in Europe: God instituted the Magisterium to keep us from the tyranny of error into which intelligences of genius easily enthrall us. The structural Thomism that Garrigou painstakingly cultivated in his lectures and numerous writings demonstrates his life-long effort to enunciate a rational defense for the Christian faith. *Le sens commun, la philosophie de l'être et les formules dogmatiques* (1909) should be read as a philosophical commentary on the First Vatican Council's dogmatic constitution on revelation, *Dei Filius*. *Dieu, son existence et sa nature* (1914) further reveals the importance that Garrigou assigned to the capacity of the human person to arrive at a natural knowledge of God and of his nature. His efforts to demonstrate "the natural metaphysics of the human spirit" can best be appreciated

as a highly sophisticated response both to the epistemological relativism that he perceived in much modern philosophy and to the Modernist view that all religious truth represents mere rational efforts to express the human experience of an ineffable Other.

Garrigou-Lagrange articulated a finely-structured rational apologetic in order better to demonstrate the thoroughly distinctive and utterly gratuitous quality of Christian revelation, not to provide an alternative access to God. His *De Revelatione per Ecclesiam catholicam proposita* (1918) affirms that God chooses to communicate what He alone knows about Himself, so that intelligent creatures can come to an authentic knowledge of what surpasses all understanding. Theological faith then represents an essentially supernatural gift by which the human person is able to assent to such divine truths. While Father Garrigou defended the objective value and immutability of the teaching of faith, he was at the same time fully aware of the *via negativa*. Thus, in *Le sens du mystère et le clair obscure intellectuel* (1934), Garrigou expressly teaches that between the Creator and the creature one never finds a similitude that is not accompanied by an even greater dissimilitude.

At the request of Pope Benedict XV, Garrigou began to teach courses on mysticism in 1917. In reaction to the widely-held view that Christian contemplation belongs to the realm of the extraordinary, he wrote *Perfection chrétienne et contemplation* (1923), which developed the teaching of Aquinas and John of the Cross. The blend of Carmelite and Dominican traditions remained a hallmark of his mystical writings, especially apparent in *Les trois Ages de la vie intérieure* (1938), which for the sake of completeness should be read along with *La Mère du Sauveur et notre vie intérieure* (1941)—his presentation of Louis Mary Grignon de Montfort's Marian devotion. The three stages of Christian mystical life include: First, the purgative stage, which begins with the gift of habitual grace and develops through the exercise of the virtues, especially faith, hope, and charity, and of the gifts of the Holy Spirit; second, the illuminative stage, during which the passive purifications prepare one for a mature exercise of the gifts; third, the unitive stage, in which the gifts, especially wisdom and knowledge, break open into infused contemplation of the Christian mysteries. Like the Spanish Dominican theologian John of St.-Thomas (1589-1644), Garrigou emphasized Aquinas's teaching on the importance of the gifts in the everyday life of the Christian. In his stress on the vocation of all Christians to contemplative union with God, Garrigou anticipated the teaching of Vatican Council II on the universal call to holiness.

He was a prophet in other ways as well. During a period when the juridical categories of casuistry dominated accounts of Christian ethics, Father Garrigou-Lagrange emphasized the central importance that the theological virtues hold in the moral life of the believer. His explanations of a Godly life, *la vie théologale*, situated the moral life within the perspectives of the desires of creation, the movement of predestination, and the completion of beatitude, whereas the discourse then practiced in moral theology favored descriptions of conscience, categorizations of law, and analyses of the weight of moral obligation. During the first part of the twentieth century, some theologians had come to recognize that paying exclusive attention to these perspectives impaired the Christian life, and so began to emphasize a more immediate expression of the human creature's experience of God. Certain efforts to highlight the immediacy of the God-man relationship, however, jeopardized the gratuity that accompanies the gift of divine friendship. The Church's efforts against Modernism, whose roots are firmly embedded in thought forms of the nineteenth century, may best be

understood as a critical response to the undifferentiated application to Christian life of themes borrowed from Romanticism. The Romantic imperative for unity posed the most serious challenge for Christian theology. Because of his reading of Aquinas, Garrigou-Lagrange remained unalterably opposed to the conflation of nature and grace, of human freedom and divine pre-motion, of proper Christian virtue ordered to beatific fellowship and human dispositions to act well and according to nature.

The Thomist manner of expressing the immediacy of the divine intimacy observed the necessary distinctions that the one, radical distinction between Creator and creature demands. The intuition is at once philosophical and theological. The human being lives from borrowed existence; the human creature depends on God for every gift unto salvation. For the theologal life -- to translate the French expression *la vie théologale* -- the virtues of faith, hope, and charity provide the medium whereby the human creature attains God with an immediacy that is proportioned to the life of the wayfarer. Garrigou-Lagrange illustrated how Thomist realism avoids the temptation to impose on the life of faith and the condition of the wayfarer, categories that apply only to the beatific vision and the beatitude of heaven.

His instruction about the theological virtues separated Father Garrigou-Lagrange apart from the prevailing outlooks of his time. Within the perspectives of casuistry, the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity were pertinent to the Christian life only insofar as these virtues imposed an obligation to act or refrain from acting. The casuist moral theologians were given more to stipulate the sins that a Christian may commit against these virtues rather than demonstrate the beatifying ends that they enabled the believer to embrace. By stressing the power of attraction inherent in the Final Cause, the Thomist teaching provided refreshment from all manner of moralist preoccupations with duty. By pointing out the teleology of the virtues, their objects or ends, the Thomist teaching afforded relief from the casuist insistence on law. The Church still speaks about Christian life as the "theologal life" (see *CCC* 2607, 2803). As noted above, the English word "theologal" translates the French *théologal*, which is used by theologians to distinguish the life of the theological virtues from the study of the theological science. Thus, "*la vie théologale*", but "*les études théologiques*." This lexical usage reminds us that it is one thing for the whole person to live in union with God and another for the human mind to inquire about the things of God. In his *De beatitudinibus*, St Gregory of Nyssa makes the bold claim: "The goal of the virtuous life is to become like God" (*PG* 44: 1200 D as cited in *CCC* no. 1803). He is talking about the "theologal" life.

Martin Heidegger has exercised considerable influence on twentieth-century German philosophy and, consequently, theology. In a recent study of contemporary sacramental theology, a French author has remarked that one result of Heidegger's influence is the tendency to confuse the "destiny of Being" with the "design—or plan, to use a Pauline term—of grace."[1] Father Garrigou-Lagrange tolerates no such confusion. In commenting on the first forty-six questions of the *secunda pars*, he speaks to us about authentic Christian existence. But he pursues this goal through various descriptions of the theologal life, which

[1] Daniel Bourgeois, *L'un et l'autre sacerdoce. Essai sur la Structure sacramentelle de l'Église* (Paris: Desclée, 1991), p. 84. See my review in *The Thomist* 56 (1992): 162-163.

is constituted by the gift and exercise of the three theological virtues, faith, hope, and charity. Each virtues relates the believer to God in a specific manner.

In the classical treatise on the theological virtues, the contemporary reader can expect to encounter some unfamiliar, even foreign, perspectives. In his *De virtutibus theologicis*, Garrigou treats certain theological topics which today one studies in other branches of theology.[2] For example, we find questions about revelation and justification, about the meaning of the Creed and the development of dogma, about the Magisterium and the role of the Roman Pontiff in the Church treated as topics related to the virtue of faith. In the presentation of Aquinas's theology of hope, we find instruction about the psychology of Christian belief, about attachment to sin and sinful disorders, and on how heaven and hell properly figure in the proclamation of the Christian Gospel. Anent theological charity, one finds expositions on the radical foundations for Christian life, on the dynamics of Christian community and living together, on fraternal correction, war and peace among peoples, unity in the Church, and on the place of the blessed Eucharist in the Church.

The practice of good Thomism never equals theological archeology. In order to benefit fully from the perspectives of Father Garrigoou-Lagrange on the theologal life, one must bring to this study the questions which contemporary Roman Catholic theology actually considers. There occurs a twofold movement. First, we must question the theological materials of the tradition. In the case of Aquinas's *Summa theologiae*, these include the biblical and patristic sources mediated through the instrumentality of the unique version of Aristotelian philosophy that Professor Gilson has called Christian Philosophy. So we find an organized body of theological knowledge which can serve as a principle for critical analysis of current theological models. This inquiry responds to the task of the *ressourcement,* that is, the conciliar plea for paying serious attention to the sources of theology.

But there is a second movement, one which remains indispensable for the doing of theology. We must be attentive to the task of theological development, or *aggiornamento*. Unlike the great rational synthesizers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, such as, Wolff, Leibniz, Hegel, Marx, and others, Aquinas does not offer us a closed system of thought. The history of the commentatorial tradition reveals that from the fifteenth century to the present, the best illustrations of Thomism have been influenced by a lively dialogue with the questions under discussion in the broader field of theology.[3] Father Garrigou-Lagrange continues this admirable exercise in Christian theology.

In some quarters, this *aggiornamento* is threatened today by the forces of convergence in both theology and philosophy that resemble the conflationist suppositions that dominated the philosophical outlooks at the end of the nineteenth century. When the distinction between the creature and the Creator is sacrificed to the exigencies of humanist spiritualities and other forms of anthropocentric ideologies, the Christian "difference" effervesces into something that no longer allows the Church to speak her fundamentally eschatological message. Perfect

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[2] Only volume one, on faith, appeared in English translation: *The Theological Virtues*, trans. Thomas à Kempis Riley (St. Louis, Missouri: Herder, 1965).

[3] For a short overview, see my *Le thomisme et les thomistes* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1999).

Beatitude is found in the vision of God given to those whom Christ judges worthy to behold it because he himself has made them so by the power of his cross. Father Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange devoted his whole life to expounding this Christian difference, and by his own charity to encouraging a wholehearted embrace of *la vie théologale*.

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FR GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, POPE LEO XIII AND LIBERALISM

Thomas Crean OP

The word 'liberalism' has been used to mean so many things, that it is perhaps in danger of meaning nothing. In this essay, following the practice of Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, I shall use it to mean the doctrine that civil society is not morally obliged to profess or promote any religion. Opposition to liberalism was a recurring, though not dominant theme, in Fr Garrigou's work. Drawing in particular on the encyclicals of Pope Leo XIII, he consistently maintained that the State has a duty to receive divine revelation and to profess the Catholic faith. His most systematic account of this duty forms the conclusion of his treatise *De Revelatione,* a study of the theory and practice of apologetics.

Definitions

Fr Garrigou-Lagrange distinguishes first between liberalism and various forms of 'indifferentism'.[1] Indifferentism he understands to be the doctrine that men as individuals lack religious duties. Thus 'absolute indifferentism' denies that any religious practice, even of a merely natural kind, is incumbent upon man. At best, religion would be 'a symbolic expression of the absolute', or an adornment suited to certain temperaments; but never a duty. 'Mitigated indifferentism' suggests that any form of religion, or of monotheism, or of Christianity, is as good as another. Indifferentism, he notes, is properly speaking a heresy, since contrary to the dogma that none can be saved outside the Catholic Church.[2]

Liberalism is somewhat more plausible. Fr Garrigou explains that 'liberal Catholics', while acknowledging the divine institution of the Catholic Church, and hence the duty of all individual men to adhere to it, nonetheless 'defend the civil freedom of any form of worship as a condition of society which is not intrinsically disordered, but rather in conformity with reason and the spirit of the Gospel, and very useful'.[3] 'Civil freedom' we may understand as freedom to practise one's religion in public, and to seek to induce other citizens to embrace it: freedom, for example, to build public places of worship, to conduct religious processions, and to use the means of mass communication for religious teaching and suasion. Fr Garrigou will deny that there is a general right to these things independent of the *truth* of the religion in question.

Liberalism may also be defined negatively, as 'the doctrine according to which civil and social authority is not obliged to accept a divine revelation that has been sufficiently proposed to it, but can rather remain *neutral* between the true religion and

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[1] Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange *De Revelatione per Ecclesiam Catholicam proposita* (third edition), Paris, 1926, P. Lethielleux [LAGRANGE I], p. 593. An earlier edition was published in 1919.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 603.
[3] *Ibid*., p. 597.

false ones'.[4] Liberalism, therefore, is 'social naturalism': it holds that society should be governed without reference to the supernatural destiny for which man was created. This position, our author insists, if not a heresy, is nevertheless a theological error, 'for it is contrary to the necessary and certain application of principles of faith, and even of principles of reason.'[5] .

Historical Sketch

Writing in the pontificate of Benedict XV[6], Fr Garrigou distinguishes three stages in the spread of liberalism within the Catholic Church. The first began with Felicity de Lamennais and his followers, who expressed their ideas especially in the journal *L'Avenir* ('the Future'). Seeking to preserve the rights of the Church against encroachment by the State, they argued for the separation of Church and State as useful for preserving ecclesiastical liberty. Likewise they argued that civil freedom should be granted to every form of worship. This movement was checked by Pope Gregory XVI in the 1833 encyclical *Mirari Vos*. The pope here condemned, first, indifferentism, described as 'the fatal opinion that men can by the profession of any faith obtain the eternal salvation of their souls, provided that their life conforms to justice and probity'. He also condemned the liberty of printing, specifically rejecting the suggestion that 'the publication of some book printed to defend truth and religion' would compensate for the 'deluge of error' flowing from an unbridled press. Finally, he denied that happy results would be obtained from the separation of Church and State. Fr Garrigou notes that while Lacordaire and Montalembert accepted the papal teaching, de Lamennais, after a brief submission, became a bitter opponent of it.

The second stage is said to have begun with the year of revolutions, 1848, and to have lasted until Blessed Pius IX's *Syllabus of Errors* in 1864. Some Catholics were claiming that the best state of society was one in which no religion was held back by the State, except insofar as this might be necessary to preserve public peace; in other words, that it was desirable for all religions to enjoy equal public freedom, except where this would lead to riots in the street. The pope declared this to be contrary to Holy Scripture and to the doctrine of the Church and the holy Fathers. In particular, the *Syllabus* condemned the opinions that 'it is no longer expedient that the Catholic religion should be the sole religion of the State, to the exclusion of other forms of cult' and that 'the public freedom of every form of cult will not corrupt the morals and minds of the people nor spread the plague of indifferentism'.

After Pope Pius's intervention, Catholic liberalism ceased for a while to exist as a doctrine, but continued, we are told, as a tendency. To this period belong Leo XIII's encyclicals, *Immortale Dei* (1885) and *Libertas Praestantissimum* (1888). The pope confirmed the teaching of his two predecessors, while acknowledging that false religions may be tolerated in the State if this is judged necessary to avoid a greater

[4] *Ibid*., p. 598.
[5] *Ibid*., p. 603.
[6] *De Revelatione* carries a commendatory letter from this pontiff

evil or obtain some greater good. At the end of this third period, despite Leo's efforts, liberalism began once more to assume a doctrinal form, and so was rejected by Pope St Pius X in the encyclical *Pascendi* (1907), and in the *Letter to the French Bishops concerning* "Le Sillon" (1910). Garrigou-Lagrange will seek to explain and defend this consistent series of papal teachings which stretches from Gregory XVI to St Pius X, and which would shortly be renewed, in Pope Pius XI's encyclical on the Kingship of Christ, *Quas Primas*.

The rights of God

Fr Garrigou offers two refutations of liberalism. The first invokes the rights of God.[7] God has created man with a nature demanding life in society. Therefore, the Creator must be considered as the one who has established civil society, *conditor ipsius societatis civilis*. Garrigou writes that 'God is no less the creator, Lord and benefactor of civil society and of the civil authority than of any individual man'. Natural law therefore requires that civil society, by means of the civil authority, render God public worship.

Moreover, if God has revealed himself, civil authority is bound to accept his revelation: 'it would be absurd to hold that rulers, in making their laws, may act as if no revelation exists, even if it does, and that they may command things that may perhaps be forbidden [by revelation]. For this would be to say that the human law-giver is greater than the divine one.'

Not only must civil rulers avoid openly contradicting the commands of God, they must also shape society according to these commands: 'If God determines a special form of religion, and makes positive commands known, then societies and rulers, just as individual men, are obliged to show him obedience.' It is not enough, say, for rulers not to command idolatry, or even for them to promote 'religion in general'; they should seek to promote the Catholic religion, once they know it to be true. As an example of a 'positive command' that must be respected by the State, we might cite the duty of Catholics to marry only with the blessing of the Church; so a State should not claim the right to register the marriage of a Catholic who is canonically impeded from wedlock. Civil law, after all, must uphold the natural law: but *natural law itself* requires us to obey whatever God may command, and to believe whatever he may reveal. To be fully faithful to natural law, then, a society must uphold the divine positive law.

Fr Garrigou observes that Pope Leo XIII also invoked the rights of God in his rejection of liberalism. *Immortale Dei* 6 states, 'Men are no less in the power of God when joined in society than when considered as individuals; nor does society owe less gratitude to God than individuals', and again, 'the city must by public religion act up to [*satisfacere*] the manifold and weighty duties linking it to God'. *Libertas* 21 declares:

> 'Civil society must acknowledge God as its founder and parent, and must

[7] *Ibid*. p. 619-21.

obey and reverence his power and authority. Justice therefore forbids, and reason itself forbids, the State to be godless; or to adopt a line of action which would end in godlessness - namely, to treat the various religions (as they call them) alike, and to bestow upon them promiscuously equal rights and privileges'.

One might also quote from the 1900 encyclical *Tametsi futura*, in which the same Pope makes clear that societies are obliged not simply to worship God according to the natural law but also to observe his positive decrees:

'By the law of Christ we mean not only the natural precepts of morality and the ancient Law, all of which Jesus Christ has perfected and crowned by his declaration, explanation and sanction; but also the rest of his doctrine and his own peculiar institutions…the law of Christ ought to prevail in human society and be the guide and teacher of public as well as of private life' (7-8).

The goal of civil society

The second argument against liberalism depends on the proper end or goal of civil society.[8] This end, namely the temporal good of the citizens, is *intrinsically* ('per se') *subordinated* to a higher end, namely the eternal good of beatitude. But to pursue a lower good without reference to the higher good to which it is intrinsically subordinated is to pursue it in a disordered way. Hence rulers are obliged to govern society with a view to eternal life, framing the laws in such a way that the citizens may more easily attain their supernatural end.

What does our author mean by 'intrinsic subordination'? He means a subordination due not to contingent circumstances, but flowing from the very nature of things. For example, physical health is intrinsically subordinated to the moral life, since the soul is of greater worth than the body. To pursue physical health without reference to virtue is therefore to pursue it in a disordered way. By contrast, prayer is not intrinsically subordinated to housework, though in given circumstances it may be necessary to postpone one's prayers in order to wash the dishes.

Why is the temporal good of the citizens intrinsically subordinated to the eternal good promised by the true religion? It is, quite simply, because this eternal good is the supreme good, and its possession, beatitude, the supreme end of man. For example, the material possessions of the citizens exist for the sake of their spiritual good, as the body exists for the sake of the soul. To pursue such things without reference to eternity is thus to ignore the goal for which they were created, and so to violate their very natures. The laws that govern the production and use of such material things may therefore not prescind from the supernatural end of man. A simple application of this principle would be the duty to restrict trade on a Sunday.

Even if we consider the common temporal good of human society, which consists not only in an abundance of material things but above all in the natural virtues of the

[8] *Ibid*., p. 621-3.

citizens, the same subordination to the eternal good is required. For this common temporal good 'must be pursued virtuously, with an ordering to the supreme good'. A society ought not, for example, to promote courage in its citizens without promoting faith, for then it will not be promoting the virtuous pursuit of courage: for 'in practice, we cannot efficaciously intend our natural ultimate end [i.e. life according to natural virtue] while abstracting from our supernatural end'.[9] Natural virtues, no less than material things, are 'helps to beatitude'.

It is true that the specific goal of human society as such is something natural, not supernatural. But to enable citizens rightly to attain this natural goal, civil authority must allow for the possibility that they have a supernatural goal; and when this goal has been sufficiently proposed, the civil authority must acknowledge it. As Father Garrigou writes more picturesquely elsewhere, 'The true religion must be embraced by all with both arms, that is to say, both socially and individually.'[10]

Our author also offers an indirect proof, *ex effectu*, of the necessary subordination of society to our supernatural end. 'When this subordination is rejected, order and peace disappear from civil society, just as sickness often results from vice'. Why is this inevitable? Garrigou answers: social cohesion requires morality, which itself requires subordination to God. One may conclude: 'whoever impugns religion overturns the very foundations of society'. And again: 'Not only for God, but also for itself and for its own subjects, the State must acknowledge the true religion'.[11]

Once more, Leo XIII is cited in defence of this necessary subordination of life in society to eternal life:

> 'Public authority has been established for the benefit of those who are governed; and whilst it seeks most immediately [*proxime*] to lead the citizens to the prosperity of this life which is led here on earth, yet it must not lessen but rather increase the ease with which men may obtain that supreme and last of goods in which the perpetual happiness of man consists, to which none may come when religion is neglected' (*Libertas* 21).

A Catholic Society

How in practice should civil rulers acknowledge the rights of God and the supernatural goal of our life in society? Our author draws his answer from a passage in *Immortale Dei* 6:

> All who rule…[must] hold in honour the holy name of God, and one of their chief duties must be to favour religion, to protect it, to shield it under the credit and sanction of the laws, and neither to organize nor enact any measure that may compromise its safety.

The State, concludes Garrigou, has three duties in regard to divine revelation:

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[9] *Ibid*., p. 631.

[10] *On Faith: a commentary on St Thomas' Theological Summa*, B. Herder Book Co. St Louis & London, 1964, p. 452-3.

negatively, it must do nothing against revealed truth; positively, it must aid it both indirectly, by defending it from its foes, and directly, by fostering it.

Negatively, then, the State must not pass laws that would hinder the preaching of the faith or the administration of the sacraments. Neither must its laws 'impede judgement about the morality of human actions'[12]. This last injunction seems to mean that a government must not introduce laws that would weaken the people's grasp on the divine law, for example by de-criminalising practices that the citizens rightly consider immoral.

Positively, the rulers must first of all defend religion against attack. Here again our author insists that the duties of rulers are not limited to guaranteeing a simple right to worship God.[13] 'The State must defend not only natural religion but also revealed religion': to do otherwise, as we have seen, would be both to ignore the open-ended requirements of the natural law itself, and to injure the rights of God. Rulers may therefore forbid blasphemy, and check the spread of heresy or of non-Christian religions. While, as Leo XIII had recognised, toleration of such things may sometimes be necessary, for example to maintain civil peace, this is only *per accidens*, to avoid a greater evil.[14] Explaining this last point at greater length, he writes:-

> The State must not tolerate *per se*, that is, without a just cause, that which in itself is bad and injurious to God; but *per accidens* the worship of infidels and heretics may be tolerated, namely, for the sake of avoiding a greater evil. To tolerate means not to prevent an evil, but evil is as such worthy of being prevented. Thus, while the civil authority can sometime tolerate the liberty of religions [*cultuum libertatem*], it can never sanction it by law. For to sanction liberty of religions is to sanction impiety, since a false religion is a superstition and impiety.[15]

It belongs to political prudence, he explains, to decide in what circumstances, and to what extent, non-Catholic religions should be tolerated. The Catholic ruler must seek the just mean between liberalism and fanaticism; on the other hand, he must rise above the false mean of mere 'opportunism', which simply desires to keep people happy, and is not motivated by love for God and for souls[16] (incidentally, in speaking of 'toleration', both Fr Garrigou and Leo XIII are thinking of public manifestations of non-Catholic religions: there is no question of interfering with domestic religious practice.)

Thirdly, 'the State must foster revealed religion, not only by being favourable to the preaching and propagation of the true faith, to the building of churches, and to recognising clerical immunity from secular duties, for example, from military service, but also by publicly professing the true faith, for example by participation in true

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[11] *Ibid.*, p. 622.
[12] *De Revelatione*, p. 624.
[13] *Ibid.*
[14] *Ibid.* n. 2.
[15] *Ibid.* p. 631.
[16] *Ibid.*, p. 626.

worship and *by public veneration of the holy name of God and of Jesus Christ*.'[17]

What of the common objection that the civil authority is not competent to decide in religious matters? Here our author makes an important distinction.[18] The State is not infallible, and so cannot take the place of the pope and the bishops by deciding questions disputed among Catholics. But those who hold civil authority have, like other men, natural power to judge of the motives of credibility of the Catholic religion, and hence of the truth of the faith. Once they have judged in its favour, they must uphold it, not only as private individuals, but also in their public office.[19] Otherwise, they fail to revere the rights of God and fail to direct the citizens rightly even towards their natural goal. As Pope Leo had boldly declared:-

> Since the profession of one religion is necessary in the State, that religion must be professed which alone is true, and which can be recognized without difficulty, especially in Catholic States, because the marks of truth are, as it were, engraven upon it. This religion, therefore, the rulers of the State must preserve and protect, if they would provide -- as they should do -- with prudence and usefulness for the good of the community (*Libertas Praestantissimum*, 21).

Finally, Fr Garrigou insists that Catholic society is truly a goal for which Catholics should work. It is not right to say (using the rather confusing terminology then current) that this is the *thesis*, which should be preserved in the theological schools as a speculative truth, but that in practice one should follow the *hypothesis* of the liberty of all cults, in order to obtain the benefits that result from this.[20] Rather than use the language of 'thesis' and 'hypothesis', he prefers to distinguish between the end, Catholic society, and the means which are here and now opportune for this end. An active desire for this end, *efficax intentio finis*, must always dwell in the heart of Catholic statesmen and citizens; this intention will guide the correct choice of means in given, perhaps very straitened, circumstances. 'Thus have the saints acted, despite great obstacles, so that they might re-establish all things in Christ[21]; so that the Kingdom of God might come not only in the hearts of some good faithful people, but in human society itself.'[22]

By contrast, 'to laicise the State is, in the long run, to welcome the tyrant where God should reign.'[23]

A tenable position?

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[17] *Ibid.*, p. 625. Italics in original.

[18] *Ibid.*, and p. 629.

[19] Although our author does not discuss the question, it would seem to follow from his principles that a society with an overwhelming Catholic majority could exclude non-Catholics from holding positions of public authority, for example, in the legislature or the executive. It is not reasonable to expect that people will legislate and govern for the good of a religion which they do not themselves accept, to the exclusion of all other religions and philosophies of life.

[20] *Ibid*, p. 628.

[21] The motto of Pope St Pius X (taken from Eph. 1:10).

[22] *De Revelatione* p. 629.

[23] *On Faith*, p. 447.

It may be wondered whether Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange's rejection of liberalism is compatible with the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, and in particular with its 'Declaration on Religious Liberty', *Dignitatis Humanae*. True, the *Declaration* states that its teaching 'leaves untouched traditional Catholic doctrine on the moral duty of men and societies toward the true religion and toward the one Church of Christ'.[24] This traditional teaching is presumably enshrined in such documents as the *Syllabus of Errors, Immortale Dei* and *Libertas Praestantissimum*, which as we have seen, Garrigou followed closely. However, other passages in the *Declaration* seem far from his presentation of traditional teaching.[25]

For example, *Dignitatis Humanae* 2 states that 'in religious matters…no one should be prevented from acting in accordance with his conscience privately or publicly, either alone or with others, within due limits'. Again, *Dignitatis Humanae* 4 declares that 'religious communities have the right not to be hindered in their public teaching and witness to their faith, whether by the spoken or by the written word'. How do these injunctions cohere with the Catholic State's duty, affirmed by Garrigou-Lagrange, of checking the spread of heresy and of non-Christian religions?

Since Fr Garrigou died in February 1964, almost two years before the promulgation of this *Declaration*, one can only guess at what he might have said of it. But we may offer some suggestions of how he might have reconciled it with the anti-liberal position sketched in this essay.

With regard to the passage quoted from DH 2, Garrigou would, I suggest, have maintained that the 'due limits' mentioned somewhat vaguely by the *Declaration* must be set by *truth*. In other words, he would have accepted that man possesses, even before adhering by supernatural faith to revealed religion, a natural right to worship God in private and in public in accordance with naturally-known religious truth, and to make this truth known to others: but he would have added that man has no right to act against the truth. From which he could have concluded that in practice, since all non-Catholic religions contain a more or less serious admixture of error, there can be no right not to be prevented from introducing such a religion into a Catholic society.

Likewise, he could have observed that the right not to be stopped from propagating one's religion, mentioned in DH 4, must not, according to *Declaration* itself, take the form of unworthy persuasion (*suasionem inhonestam aut minus rectam*). How, he might have asked, can it fail to be unworthy to seek to convince someone of a religion that contradicts the faith coming from God? In other words, while accepting the radical right to these various freedoms, he could have urged that the wording of the *Declaration* allows one to maintain that they cannot, in fact, be exercised in favour of any non-Catholic religion. For while it is possible to imagine a world without grace and revelation in which various forms of natural religion would have the right to

[24] *Dignitatis Humanae*, 1.

[25] Much has been written on the correct interpretation of *Dignitatis Humanae*, and its doctrine still awaits, it would seem, a definitive magisterial clarification. For a clear and spirited account of the history of the document and the controversy surrounding it, see M. Davies, *The Second Vatican Council and Religious Liberty*, Neumann Press, 1992, Minnesota.

co-exist, a Catholic must hold that in the world as God has willed it, non-Catholic religions lack that 'conformity to the objective moral order' which the Council stated is a condition for exercising the natural right to religious liberty.[26] For we hold that such religions do not lead to the ultimate goal of all moral action, namely, beatitude.

No doubt the tone of *Dignitatis Humanae* is far from that of Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange. I simply wish to suggest that when carefully analysed, the *Declaration on Religious Liberty* need not exclude the teaching of this great Dominican.

[26] Cf. *Dignitatis Humanae*, 7.