Conduct Your Affairs with Humility: Homily at St. Philip Neri Church Waban, Massachusetts

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ALL OVER OUR PLANET, for the past two weeks, the eyes of millions of men and women, young and old, of virtually every nationality, have been glued to television sets. The heroics of athletes from different countries competing at the Athens Olympics have arrested the attention of many citizens of our world. Nations and races have been celebrating the excellence of their representatives in one sporting event or the other. Families have stayed up all night to watch the performance of their sons, their daughters, brothers, sisters, or cousins. Apart from the officially stated objective of the Olympics, which is to foster friendship among nations, the spirit of competition among nations has been put on display. It is not an unusual thing for nations and the competitors who represent them to show their pride in circumstances such as these. Those who have closely followed the men's soccer event would have seen how the unexpected brilliance of the Iraqi soccer team rekindled the pride and morale of a nation moving from the throes of dictatorship through the terrifying chaos of bomb blasts and, God wills it, to the tranquility of order.

In a season when nations celebrate the number of medals they have won as they show justifiable pride, and politicians campaign for public office proudly presenting themselves to their compatriots as the best option at the polls, the word of God cautions and invites us to differentiate between the overestimation of self-worth that is arrogance and the justifiable celebration of hard-earned achievement that is pride. In undiluted frankness, the

wisdom of the book of Sirach challenges us to take a critical look at the way we view ourselves as individuals, as Christians, and as men and women of the twenty-first century.

"My child, conduct your affairs with humility, and you will be loved more than a giver of gifts. Humble yourself the more, the greater you are, and you will find favor with God" (Sirach 3:17–18).

And Christ Jesus, who is the Wisdom of God itself, confirms this teaching in the Gospel: "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not recline at table in the place of honor. . . . Rather, when you are invited, go and take the lowest place. . ." (Luke 14:8–9).

Hubris comes from the mistaken and unexamined assumption that one is the most distinguished, the most outstanding personality in the pack. The one who calls himself the greatest probably does so because he has not made a sufficiently intelligent inquiry as to what others can do and what they have in fact done. Those who have a lot to celebrate by way of achievement must avoid the kind of attitude that looks down on those who have little or nothing to display.

How do I celebrate my achievement without looking down on others? How do I nurse my aspirations, as legitimate as they can be, without falling victim to the stubborn myth of entitlement?

First, I must see God as the greatest. I must see the image of God in every human being, even in the one who may not be as talented as I am, or who may never accomplish what I have accomplished. For while our achievements may be very important, and our contributions to civilization eminently laudable, what counts is the dignity of our common humanity and the fundamental equality that pertains to it.

Second, I must learn to thank God for what I am and for what I have accomplished. For without God we would have been nothing. In fact, we would have no being at all. Without God we would accomplish nothing. The talents we have, the life and energy in us, we did not create. Even the greatest genius is not the product of self-creation. He or she is a creature of God. The admonition the Apostle Paul addressed to the Corinthians is addressed to us, too: "[N]o individual among you must become filled with his own importance and make comparisons, to another's detriment. Who made you so important? What have you got that was not given to you? And if it was given to you, why are you boasting as though it were your own?" (1 Cor 4:6–7).

Third, rather than use personal achievement to diminish the humanity in the other person, I should use it to enhance the beauty of that humanity. If you are up do not keep others down. If you are up it is because you have been placed there by Divine Providence. The same

Divine Providence intends to use you as an instrument to bring others up. Granted, some people cannot be helped up because they find comfort in mediocrity. But there are people who are striving for excellence even though they have no means or insufficient means to attain the excellence they so much desire. By using what we have achieved to help others would be working to reduce or eradicate the unhealthy rivalry of a pull-him-down syndrome. By using what we are, what we have, and what we have accomplished to help others up, we would be like God who, in the words of the Response to the Responsorial Psalm of this Mass, uses his goodness to provide for and to empower those who are deprived (cf. Ps 68).

Our God reveals himself to us in the words of Scripture as a God who, though high above, lifts up the lowly. The psalmist understood this very well when he wrote:

> High above all nations is the Lord,
> above the heavens his glory.
> Who is like the Lord, our God,
> who has risen on high to his throne
> yet stoops from the heights to look down,
> to look down upon heaven and earth?
>
> From the dust he lifts up the lowly,
> from his misery he raises the poor
> to set him in the company of princes,
> yes, with the princes of his people. (Ps 113).

This is the same God who personally introduces himself to us in the humanity of his Son our Lord Jesus Christ as a God who assumed the status of a slave to transform the slave into a prince (cf. Phil 2:6). Christ, who, in the words of the letter to the Colossians, has primacy in everything, showed the human family the face of a God who was willing to take the lowliest position so as to extinguish the flame of the passion of mutually destructive rivalry that sin brought into the world.

Today, the word of God, by exhorting us to humility, challenges us to recognize the folly of a self-affirmation that annihilates other selves and to embrace the wisdom of a self-effacement that elevates humanity, the self-effacement of Christ which every Christian worth the name ought to imitate.

For the recession of unhealthy rivalry, and for the emergence in our world of a civilization of love driven by respect for every member of the human family, let us pray: May the body of Christ which we shall receive

in a few moments at this Mass give us the courage, the inspiration and the strength to conform our minds to the same Christ in the self-effacement that elevates. Through the power of this Eucharist, may we all become agents of the civilization of love. N V

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The Collects at Sunday Mass: An Examination of the Revisions of Vatican II*

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THE COLLECT, called the "opening prayer" in our present English missal, is the first proper Mass prayer. The Latin text is always just a single sentence. Because of its brevity, it is easy to discount the collect's importance. But the collect is the true proper prayer of the day and, as such, it is uniquely expressive of the liturgical day. On Sundays and days with the rank of feast or higher the collect is also prayed at all the Hours of the Liturgy of the Hours save Compline, so that a person who goes to Mass and prays the Hours on a given Sunday or solemnity prays the same collect six times. The collects for Sunday and Holy Days, that is the days of obligation,[1] are especially important for they are the only collects that the majority of the faithful hear year after year.

The set of Sunday and Holy Day collects in the Vatican II missal is not the same as the set found in the 1962 missal, but scholars have not yet devoted much attention to exploring the extent and character of the differences.[2] The task is enormously complex because of the multiplicity of texts involved, and the present essay is only a modest beginning.

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[1] The six traditional Holy Days of Obligation in the dioceses of the United States are the Nativity of the Lord, the Solemnity of Mary Holy Mother of God, the Ascension of the Lord, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, All Saints, and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

[2] A noteworthy exception is Lorenzo Bianchi, "A Survey of the Theology, History, Terminology, and Syntax in the Prayers of the Roman Missal," in *Theological*

By using quantitative analysis as a tool, this article first establishes the extent to which the 1970 missal includes the Sunday and Holy Day collects of the 1962 missal, incorporates collects drawn from other Mass books,[3] and introduces collects that are new. The quantitative analysis finds that the corpus of Sunday and Holy Day collects in the 1970 missal is significantly different from that of the 1962 missal without, however, replicating in any subsection the contents of the corresponding subsection of another Mass book. The post-Vatican II editors made changes to the ancient collects and composed new ones. For this reason, the essay also examines editorial practices at work in the selection and revision of ancient orations and in the confection of new collects.

The significance of the material changes in the collects increases greatly if it signals substantive changes in the theological or spiritual import of the resulting corpus of collects. For this reason, the quantitative analysis is followed by a comparative examination of the four Advent Sunday collects[4] of the respective missals in order to ascertain whether the two sets express the same truths of faith and accent the same aspects of Christian existence, and if they do not, to identify the key differences. This second level of inquiry finds that when the Church prays the 1970 Advent collects she assumes a markedly different posture before God and seeks very different things from him compared to her posture and petitions in praying the 1962 set.

Because the Advent Sunday collects comprise the smallest single subset of Sunday or Holy Day collects, it would be a serious error to draw conclusions about the whole corpus of Sunday and Holy Day collects in the 1970 missal on the basis of these findings. Nevertheless, the extent both of the material changes in the full set of collects and of the substantial changes in the Advent Sunday collects raises the question of whether the new corpus of collects expresses a significantly different understanding of relations between God and his Church, and whether, in consequence, it forms the faithful who pray by means of it differently from the way in which its predecessor formed previous generations. Needless to say, this question deserves serious scholarly attention. Unless we know how our present liturgical texts are like and unlike those used by earlier generations, and how we may be different on their account, our understanding

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and Historical Aspects of the Roman Missal, The Proceedings of the Fifth International Colloquium on Historical, Theological, and Canonical Studies on the Roman Catholic Liturgy (Kingston and Surbiton: Centre International d'Études Liturgiques, 2000), 127–64, which is briefly discussed below.

[3] The revisers mined ancient liturgical codices.

[4] That is, those of the first season of the liturgical year.

of our liturgy and its history, and possibly of our own graced lives in Christ, will be deficient.

The present study is based on the Latin texts of the typical editions of the respective missals. Unless otherwise noted, everything said of the *Missale Romanum* (1970), the first typical edition of the Vatican II missal, is also true of the second and third typical editions—*Missale Romanum* (1975) and *Missale Romanum* (2002), respectively. Because some of the facts presented in this essay suggest editorial practices that some may find disturbing, it is important to say at the outset that the object of this study is not to raise questions about the legitimacy of the Vatican II missal or in any way to undermine its authority. Rather, the goal is to identify, as we are able, the unique features of the new missal and so gradually come to understand its place in the Western liturgical tradition. Lastly, unless otherwise indicated, the translations are my own. These are provisional, in part because textual difficulties attach to a number of the ancient orations and resolving them lies beyond the scope of the present study.

Quantitative Analysis

There are 66 Sunday and Holy Day collects in each missal. Table 1 (see page 8) indicates the number of collects in the 1970 missal that are (1) from the 1962 missal, (2) from other Mass books or liturgical collections, and (3) new compositions.

Of the 66 collects in question, 34 are from the 1962 missal and 32 are from other Mass books or are new compositions, indicating that slightly more than half the collects were retained from the previous missal and just under half were either imported from elsewhere or newly minted. The distribution over the course of the liturgical year, however, is not nearly so even. Whereas 100 percent of the collects for the solemnities, and 71 percent of the collects for the Sundays that fall outside the proper seasons[5] come from the 1962 missal, only 25 percent of the collects for proper seasons are from the 1962 missal.

The material difference between the 1962 and 1970 collects is actually much greater than Table 1 (see page 8) indicates because the table does not show how many prayers taken from earlier missals were edited prior to inclusion in the new missal or how many were put to significantly different uses. The first of these is shown in Table 2 (see page 9).

Only 21 of the 66 Sunday and Holy Day collects of the 1970 missal come directly from the Sunday and Holy Day collects of the 1962 missal—that is, 32 percent. Many of the collects common to both missals,

[5] The proper seasons of the 1970 missal are Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter.

TABLE 1. Sources of Sunday and Holy Day Collects in *Missale Romanum* (1970)

	Total #	From the 1962 Missal[a]	From Other Missals	New Compositions
Solemnities[b]	6	6	0	0
Sundays *per annum*[c]	32	21	10	1
Subtotal	38	27	10	1
Advent	4	0	4	0
Christmas	8	4	2	2
Lent	6	1	3	2
Easter	10	2	5	3
Subtotal	28	7	14	7
Total	66	34	24	8

[a] This column tallies only the Sunday and Holy Day collects of the 1962 missal. If a particular 1970 collect came from the 1962 missal but was not a Sunday or Holy Day collect there, it is counted in the "Other" column.

[b] Included here are Trinity Sunday, Corpus Christi, the Assumption, All Saints Day, Christ the King, and the Immaculate Conception. These solemnities, whether or not they are observed on Sunday, either fall outside the proper seasons or are not calculated with respect to them. The remaining Holy Days belong to the Christmas or Easter season.

[c] Sundays *per annum*. *Per annum* (through the year) is the Latin designation for what the English missal calls "Ordinary Time."

TABLE 2. Edited and Unedited 1970 Collects according to Sources and Seasons

	Collects from 1962 Missal	Unedited from 1962	Edited from 1962	Collects from Other Other Mass Books	Unedited from Other Mass Books	Edited[a] from Other Mass Books
Solemnities	6	4	2	6	4	2
Sundays. *per annum*	21	15	6	21	15	6
Subtotal	27	19	8	27	19	8
Advent	0	0	0	0	0	0
Christmas	4	1	3	4	1	3
Lent	1	1	0	1	1	0
Easter	2	0	2	2	0	2
Subtotal	7	2	5	7	2	5
Total	34	21	13	34	21	13

[a] Only collects that were revised in a way that changed the denotative or connotative import of the original are counted as edited.

however, are not used in the same way in each, nor do they appear in the same order in the two missals. For example, collects previously used to express sentiments proper to a particular season have been moved to *per annum* Sundays.[6] The many changes in the days on which particular collects are used and in the order in which they appear are impossible to quantify.[7] It suffices to acknowledge that the new corpus of Sunday and Holy Day collects differs greatly from its predecessor.

The 32 Sunday and Holy Day collects of the 1962 missal that were not included among the Sunday and Holy Day collects of the 1970 missal met different ends. Ten appear in the 1970 missal without textual change as ferial or votive mass collects;[8] two appear in edited form as ferial collects;[9] twenty were set aside.[10] A bit more precisely than Table 1 is able to show, these 32 collects were supplied for as follows: (1) two orations, a ferial collect and a feast day postcommunion prayer, were adopted from the 1962 missal—the former was emended, the latter not;[11] (2) 22 orations were taken from ancient liturgical codices—eight were adopted

[6] The collects of the Sunday within the Octave of Christmas and of the fourth and fifth Sundays of Paschal time in the 1962 missal are the collects of the third, twenty-first, and tenth Sundays *per annum*, respectively, in the 1970 missal.

[7] This, of course, is complicated by revisions to the calendar.

[8] The 1962 collects of the first and third Sundays of Advent are the 1970 collects of Friday of the first week and Thursday of the second week of Advent, respectively; the 1962 collect of the third Mass of Christmas is the 1970 collect of December 30; the 1962 collect of Sunday within the Octave of the Epiphany is the 1970 collect of first week *per annum*; the 1962 collect of the third Sunday after the Epiphany is the 1970 collect of Saturday after Ash Wednesday; the 1962 collect of Sunday *in Albis*, the Octave day of the Pasch, is the 1970 collect of Saturday of the seventh week in Paschal time; the 1962 collects of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and twenty-third Sundays after Pentecost are the 1970 collects of Tuesday of the second week, Monday of the third week, and Friday of the fifth week of Lent, respectively; the 1962 collect of Pentecost Sunday is the 1970 collect of the first votive Mass of the Holy Spirit.

[9] The 1962 collects of the fourth Sunday of Advent and seventh Sunday after Pentecost appear in edited form as the 1970 collects of the Thursdays of the first weeks of Advent and Lent, respectively.

[10] The collects of the third Sunday in Advent; the Sunday between the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord and the Epiphany (the Most Holy Name of Jesus); Sunday within the Octave of the Epiphany (Holy Family); fourth Sunday after the Epiphany; Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima Sundays; the first, second, third, and fourth Sundays of Lent; Passion Sunday; Ascension Thursday; the ninth, seventeenth, eighteenth, twentieth, twenty-first, twenty-second, and twenty-fourth Sundays after Pentecost.

[11] The collects of the eleventh Sunday *per annum* and the fourth Sunday of Advent, respectively.

without change,[12] and fourteen were edited;[13] (3) eight collects are modern compositions.

In order to appreciate more fully the constitution of our present missal, we must look more closely at the ways in which old orations were selected and new ones were composed.

The Selection of Collects

Lists of the sources of the collects of the 1970 missal began to be published shortly after it appeared.[14] From these scholars could learn the age of particular collects,[15] but not how widely the prayer was used, for how long, in what liturgical settings or, frequently, whether it appears in the new missal in a revised form. Between 1992 and 1999, eleven volumes of orations were published as part of *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* under the title *Corpus Orationum* [Corpus of Orations].[16] These volumes present, in alphabetical

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[12] The collects of the third Mass of the Nativity of the Lord; the first Sunday of Lent; the second Sunday in Paschal time; Pentecost Sunday; the fourth, fifth, thirteenth, and twenty-fourth Sundays per annum.

[13] The collects of the first, second, and third Sundays of Advent; the second Sunday after the Nativity of the Lord; the third, fourth, and fifth Sundays of Lent; the third, fourth, fifth, and seventh Sundays in Paschal time; the sixteenth, eighteenth, and twenty-third Sundays *per annum*. In the first and second typical editions of the new missal, the same collect is used on the fifth Sunday of Paschal time and the twenty-third Sunday *per annum*. The repetition is eliminated from the third typical edition which presents a different collect for the fifth Sunday in Paschal time. The new collect reproduces a portion of a *secret* or *super oblata* in the Mass for the newly baptized celebrated on Tuesday within the Octave of Easter attested in Eugenio Moeller and Joanne Maria Clément, eds., *Corpus Orationum* vol. 1, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 160a (Turnholt: Brepols, 1992), n. 637. This suggests that the new collect is either a radically edited version of *CO* I, n. 637 or a centonization for which *CO* I, n. 637 is but one source. It is also possible that the new collect reproduces the whole of an ancient oration that is not included in the *Corpus Orationum* volumes which are described and discussed more fully below in the body of the essay.

[14] See A. Dumas, "Les Sources du Nouveau Missel Romain," *Notitiae* 7 (1971): 37–42, 74–77, 94–95, 134–36, 276–80, 409–10; Anthony Ward and Cuthbert Johnson, "The Sources of the Roman Missal (1975)," *Notitiae* 22 (1986): 445–747 and 32 (1996): 7–179. Ward and Johnson also cite earlier editions of the *MissaleRomanum* and Placide Bruylants, *Les Oraisons du Missel Roman*. Dumas headed the *Consilium* study group that revised the orations of the missal.

[15] The presence of an oration in a particular ancient codex means only that it is at least as old as that codex. It may be much older.

[16] Eugenio Moeller and Joanne Maria Clément, eds., *Corpus Orationum,* vol. 1–11, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 160 (Turnholt: Brepols, 1992–1999). Hereafter *Corpus Orationum* = *CO*.

order, all the orations contained in 201 extant Latin liturgical codices[17]—6,829 different orations in all. For each, the editors list every codex in which the prayer appears, identify the way it is used in each manuscript, and cite the textual variations. Separate lists in each volume date the codices.

It is from the relevant entries in the *Corpus Orationum* volumes that we are able to state above that eight of the 22 collects that came to the 1970 missal from ancient codices were incorporated without any textual change and 14 were emended. Relevant *Corpus Orationum* entries also indicate that:

1. Five of the 22 orations appear in only one of the 201 codices included in the *Corpus Orationum* volumes.[18]
2. Eleven of the 22 selected orations have no history of ever having been used as the principal collect of Sunday Mass before serving as such in the 1970 missal.[19]
3. None of the emendations made to the ancient orations by the post-Vatican II editors corresponds to a variant reading in the manuscript tradition.

In contrast, a similar examination of the 32 Sunday and Holy Day collects of the 1962 missal that were not retained in the cycle of Sunday and Holy Day collects of the 1970 missal finds:

1. Except for the collects of the modern feasts of the Holy Family and Holy Name of Jesus (established in 1893 and 1721, respectively), all had been in continual use from the eighth century until the sixteenth when they were incorporated into the Tridentine missal.

[17] A few of the codices are earlier than the eighth century. The rest date from the eighth through the sixteenth centuries, although all are prior to the Council of Trent. The earliest, *Rotulus* of Ravenna, is dated fifth/sixth century.

[18] The collects of the third Sunday of Advent (*Rotulus* 25), the second Sunday in Paschal time (*Gothicum* 309), the fourth Sunday *per annum* (*Veronense* 432), the twenty-fourth Sunday *per annum* (*Veronense* 1045), and the thirty-first Sunday per annum (*Veronense* 486). The modern critical edition of the *Gothicum* is Leo Cunibert Mohlberg, ed., *Missale Gothicum* (*Vat. Reg. lat.* 317), Rerum Ecclesiasticarum Documenta, Series maior, Fontes 5 (Rome: Casa Editrice Herder, 1961). Critical editions of both *Rotulus* and the *Veronense* are found in Leo Cunibert Mohlberg, Leo Eizenhöfer, Petrus Siffrin, eds., *Sacramentarium Veronense*, Rerum Ecclesiasticarum Documenta, Series maior, Fontes 1 (Rome: Casa Editrice Herder, 1956).

[19] The collects of the first, second, and fourth Sundays of Advent; the fifth Sunday of Lent; the second Sunday in Paschal time; the fourth, thirteenth, sixteenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, twenty-fourth, and thirty-first Sundays *per annum*. In addition, it is not clear that the collect of the third Sunday of Advent (*Rotulus* 25) ever served as the collect of a Sunday Mass.

2. All are used on Sundays or Holy Days in the ancient codices, and usually on the same Sunday or Holy Day as in the 1962 missal.[20]
3. Save only the collect of the first Sunday of Advent to which *quaesumus* [we beseech you] has been added, none appears in a form not attested in an earlier codex.

Those responsible for the post-Vatican II revision drew on a variety of weaker currents—sometimes even unique sources, often revised what they selected, and frequently put adopted or adapted texts to unprecedented uses. Those responsible for the Tridentine missal, in contrast, drew from strong currents in the antecedent liturgical tradition and accepted what they selected without emending the text or changing the usage. When the revisers replaced these 32 1962 Sunday and Holy collects, they departed from at least 1,200 years of verifiable liturgical practice, not simply the 400 years represented by the Tridentine missal, for they did not replace these long-favored prayers with others of comparable antiquity or prominence.[21] Rather they substituted collects that we must regard, in light of the many adjustments made to both the texts and their uses, to be largely of their own making.

The Composition of New Collects

Eight of the Sunday and Holy Day collects in the 1970 missal are new compositions. These were crafted in three different ways. Three of the new collects are the products of a method called "centonization"—that is, they were woven together from phrases taken from two or three existing orations.[22] Four of the new collects are composed of phrases adapted

[20] Twenty-one are used on the very same days to which they are assigned in the 1962 missal. Eight of the collects of Sundays after Pentecost appear one week earlier in the ancient Mass books than they do in the 1962 missal, and therefore in the same sequence. The remaining collect, that of the twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost, was used on a variety of *post Pentecosten* Sundays in the ancient Mass books—that is, unlike the others, it had not became associated in antiquity with only one particular *post Pentecosten* Sunday.

[21] We say 1,200 years only because the dearth of manuscript evidence prevents investigation beyond the middle of the eighth century.

[22] The collect of the third Sunday in Paschal time combines *Gelasian Vetus* 515 and *Veronense* 1148; that of the sixth Sunday in Paschal time combines *Veronense* 229, *Veronense* 1282, and *Gelasian Vetus* 504; that of the twenty-fifth Sunday *per annum* combines *Veronense* 493 with *Liber Mozarabicus Sacramentorum* 1374. The modern critical edition of the *Gelasianum Vetus* is Leo Cunibert Mohlberg, Leo Eizenhöfer, Petrus Siffrin, eds., *Liber Sacramentorum Romanae Aeclesiae ordinis anni circuli: (Cod. Vat. Reg. Lat. 316/Paris Bibl. nat. 7193, 41/56)*: *(Sacramentarium Gelasianum)*, Rerum

from texts of another genre—either scripture or patristic sermons.[23] Lastly, one new collect was composed from scratch by the modern editors.[24] In addition, some 1970 collects are part 1962 collect and part new composition. Two such hybrids are the collects of the solemnities of the Most Holy Trinity and Christ the King.[25]

Ecclesiasticarum Documenta, Series maior, Fontes 4 (Rome: Casa Editrice Herder, 1960). The *Liber Mozarabicus Sacramentorum* is found in Marius Férotin, ed., *Le Liber Mozarabicus Sacramentorum et Les Manuscrits Mozarabes, Réimpression de l'éditio de 1912, et bibliography générale de la liturgie hispanique, préparées et présenté par Anthony Ward, SM et Cuthbert Johnson, OSB,* Bibliotheca "Ephemerides Liturgicae" Subsidia 78; Instrumenta Liturgica Quarreriensia 4 (Rome: C.L.V. Edizioni liturgiche, 1995).

[23] The collect of the second Sunday of Lent is adapted from a Mozarabic preface, *Liber Mozarabicus Sacramentorum* 385, and the collect of the solemnity of the Ascension from St. Leo the Great's *Sermo de Ascensione* 14 [PL 54, 396b]. The collect of the Baptism of the Lord draws heavily on Scripture. The new collect of the fourth Sunday of Lent is a hybrid that contains part of an ancient oration (*Ge V* 178), part of an ancient sermon (St. Leo the Great, Sermon on Lent 2 [PL 54, 270b]), and a bit of new composition. This prayer is discussed in more detail in the body of the essay.

[24] The collect of the Feast of the Holy Family.

[25] In Table 2 these appear in the column titled "Edited from 1962." The 1962 and 1970 collects for Christ the King are presented and discussed briefly in the body of the essay. The collects for Trinity Sunday are:

1962	**1970**
Omnipotens, sempiterne Deus, qui dedisti famulis tuis in confessione verae fidei, aeternae Trinitatis gloriam agnoscere, et in potentia maiestatis adorare Unitatem: quaesumus: ut eiusdem fidei firmitate, ab omnibus semper muniamur adversis.	Deus Pater, qui,Verbum veritatis et Spiritum sanctificationis mittens in mundum, admirabile mysterium tuum hominibus declarasti, da nobis, in confessione verae fidei, aeternae gloriam Trinitatis agnoscere, et Unitatem adorare in potentia maiestatis.
Almighty, everlasting God, who granted your servants in confession of the true faith to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and to worship the Unity in the power of majesty; we beseech you: that in the steadfastness of the same faith we may ever be defended from all adversities.	O God, who sending the Word of truth and Spirit of sanctification into the world have revealed your wondrous mystery to all men, grant us, in confession of the true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity and to worship the Unity in power of majesty.

For a discussion of the changes made in the collect for Trinity Sunday, see Lauren Pristas, "*Missale Romanum* 1962 and 1970: A Comparative Study of Two Collects," *Antiphon* 7 (2003): 29–33.

Our concern in what immediately follows is not so much the methods used to create new collects, but the ways in which the methods were applied—that is, the editorial practices or judgments that become evident when the new compositions are compared with their contributing sources.

Editorial Discretion in the Selection of Texts

First, when composing new collects by means of centonization, the editors sometimes took phrases from orations that had no clear thematic connection to the setting of the collect into which they were incorporated. Also, in centonizing the editors did not always select substantial chunks of the source texts. Sometimes they only took the smallest bits—for instance, a prepositional phrase. The collect of the sixth Sunday in Paschal time is an example of both practices. To produce it, the revisers wove phrases from three sources: (1) the preface of a Mass celebrated on the fast days following Pentecost, (2) a postcommunion prayer for the feast of St. John the Evangelist in December, and (3) the collect of the Mass celebrated on the first anniversary of Baptism received the previous Pasch.[26]

In Table 3 (see pages 16–17), the first three columns show the source texts in bold, italic, and regular type, respectively. The parts selected for centonization are in small capitals and the portion of the prayer left behind is printed in lower case. The new collect is in the fourth column, where the phrases supplied or revised by the modern editors are underscored. The thought of the new composition is that if God grants us to celebrate with diligent devotion, we will retain in deed what we pass through in remembrance. That is, the collect asserts, or seems to assert, that the quality or

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[26] *Veronese* 229, *Veronese* 1282, and *Gelasian Vetus* 504, respectively. Only the last of the three appears in more than one codex. *CO* II, n. 1308 cites 23 codices dating from the eighth through the sixteenth centuries that use the prayer in two different settings: as the *super populum* of the Wednesday following the third Sunday *post Pascha*, and as the collect or *orationes et preces* of the *Pascha annotina*. The *Pascha annotina* is the first anniversary of Baptism that had been conferred on the Pasch of the preceding year. In antiquity, as now, the Pasch did not fall on the same date each year. In the Gelasian Sacramentary the Mass of the *Pascha*, *annotina* follows the Mass of the Octave of the Pasch. Orations *super populum* [over the people] are blessings prayed at the end of Mass. In ancient Mass books, orations *super populum*, like collects or postcommunion prayers, are assigned to specific Masses. In the various editions of the Tridentine Missal, orations *super populum* are found only in Lenten ferial Masses but, again, particular orations are assigned to particular Masses. The Vatican II missal has orations *super populum* but does not assign particular prayers to particular Masses, leaving the decision of whether any oration *super populum* is prayed at a particular Mass and, if so, which one, entirely to the discretion of the celebrant.

TABLE 3. Sources of 1970 collect of the sixth Sunday Paschal Time.

Ver 229: At the fast of the fourth month,[a] Preface	*Ver* 1282: December, Anniversary of the Death of St. John the Evangelist, PC[b]	*GeV* 504: Orations and Prayers of the *Pascha annotina*, collect	*MR* 1970: 6th Sunday in Paschal Time
Vere dignum: post illos enim LAETITIAE DIES, QUOS IN HONOREM DOMINI **a mortuis** RESURGENTIS **et in caelos ascendentis exigimus, postque perceptum sancti Spiritus donum necessarie[c] nobis haec ieiunia sancta provisa sunt, ut pura conversatione viventibus quae divinitus ecclesiae sunt collata permaneant.**	*Miserator et misericors Domine, qui nos continuis caelestium martyrum non deseris sacramentis: praesta quaesumus ut quae SEDULO CELEBRAMUS AFFECTU, grato tibi percipiamus obsequio.*	Deus, per cuius providentiam nec praeteritorum momenta deficiunt nec ulla superest expectatio futurorum, tribue permanentem peractae quam[d] recolimus sollemnitatis effectum, UT QUOD RECORDATIONE PERCURRIMUS SEMPER IN OPERE TENEAMUS.	Fac nos, omnipotens Deus, hos **LAETITIAE DIES, QUOS IN HONOREM DOMINI RESURGENTIS** exsequimur *AFFECTU SEDULO* celebrare, UT QUOD RECORDATIONE PERCURRIMUS, SEMPER IN OPERE TENEAMUS.

TABLE 3. *(continued)*

Ver 229: At the fast of the fourth month,[a] Preface	*Ver* 1282: December, Anniversary of the Death of St. John the Evangelist, PC[b]	*GeV* 504: Orations and Prayers of the *Pascha annotina*, collect	*MR* 1970: 6th Sunday in Paschal Time
Truly is it fitting: for after those DAYS OF JOY which we spend IN HONOR OF THE LORD'S RISING from the dead and ascending into heaven, and after the gift of the Holy Spirit has been received, necessarily these holy fasts have been provided for us who live, that they who have been brought into the Church by divine providence may persevere in a pure way of life.	*Compassionate and merciful God, who do not fail us in the ever present sacraments of the heavenly martyrs, grant, we beseech you, that what we* CELEBRATE *WITH DILIGENT DEVOTION we may receive with a reverence that pleases you.*	O God, through whose providence no moment of the past is wanting [and] no expectation for the future suffices, grant the abiding effect of the celebrated solemnity[e] which we recall, THAT WHAT WE PASS THROUGH IN REMEMBRANCE WE MAY RETAIN ALWAYS IN DEED.	Grant us, Almighty God, as we follow THESE DAYS OF JOY IN HONOR OF THE LORD'S RISING, to celebrate *WITH A DILIGENT DEVOTION,* THAT WHAT WE PASS THROUGH IN REMEMBRANCE WE MAY RETAIN ALWAYS IN DEED.

[a] *In ieiunio mensis quarti*. The fourth month is May. The fast corresponds to the Ember days in the week following Pentecost observed from antiquity until the reform of the calendar following Vatican II.

[b] In natale sancti Iohannis Evangelist[a]e. This postcommunion seems to assume that St. John the Evangist was a martyr.

[c] *Veronense* 229 has *"necessariae."* Text follows Eugenio Moeller, ed., *Corpus Praefationum textus (A–P),* Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 161a (Turnholt: Brepols, 1980), #727.

[d] GeV 504 has quae. Text follows *CO* III n. 1308.

[e] This, I believe, is a reference to the sacrament of Baptism which had been received on the same date one year earlier.

character of our devotion, although a gift, does of itself obtain a good result. The theology of grace or efficacy implied here is markedly different from that found in any of the three source texts wherein our efforts produce nothing of themselves but rather that (1) fasting is understood as that without which a pure way of life is not possible (*Ver* 229); (2) God is the grantor of our receiving with a reverence pleasing to himself what we celebrate with diligent devotion (*Ver* 1282); and (3) God grants the abiding effect of the solemnity so that we may retain in deed what we pass through in remembrance (*GeV* 504).

Editorial Excision of Particular Spiritual Practices, Attitudes, or Themes

In composing new prayers the editors often excised mention of themes that are present in, or even that dominate, the source texts. One example is the new collect of the fourth Sunday of Lent which combines an ancient collect with words from a sermon of St. Leo the Great (see Table 4).

TABLE 4. Sources of the 1970 collect for the fourth Sunday in Lent.

GeV 178: Wednesday of the second week of Lent, collect	St. Leo the Great, Sermon on Lent 2	*MR* 1970: 4th Sunday in Lent
Deus qui per verbum tuum humani generis reconciliationem mirabiliter operaris, praesta, quaesumus, ut *sancto ieiunio et tibi toto simus corde subiecti et in tua nobis efficiamur*[a] *praece concordes*.	Quia . . . dignumque est ut populus Christianus in quantacumque abstinentia constitutus, magis desideret se Dei verbo quam cibo satiare corporeo, *prompta devotione et alacri fide suscipiamus solemne jejunium. . . .*	**Deus, qui per Verbum tuum humani generis reconciliationem mirabiliter operaris, praesta, quaesumus,** *ut populus christianus prompta devotione et alacri fide ad ventura sollemnia valeat festinare*.
O God, who do wondrously accomplish the reconciliation of the human race through your Word, grant, we beseech you, *that in holy fasting we may both be subject to you with our whole heart and made to have one mind among ourselves in your peace.*	Since . . . and it is fitting that the Christian people, insofar as they are established in a greater abstinence, should have a greater desire to be filled with the word of God than with bodily food, *let us undertake this solemn fast with prompt devotion and ready faith. . . .*	**O God, who do wondrously accomplish the reconciliation of the human race through your Word, grant, we beseech you,** *that the Christian people may be able to hasten to the coming solemnity with prompt devotion and ready faith.*

[a] *GeV* 178 has *efficiamus*. Text follows *CO* III, n. 1998.

The editors began with a Lenten ferial collect found in the Old Gelasian sacramentary.[27] From the beginning through the first part of the subordinate clause, "that in holy fasting we may be subject to you with our whole heart," the prayer is unambiguous. The second half of the compound subordinate clause, however, has a conspicuous error: *praece*. We cannot simply assume an aberrant spelling of the ablative form of *prex*, which is usually translated "prayer" but also means "request," because *"tua praece"* appears in a context where the *tua* [your] refers to God. We do not speak of God praying or making requests. The same oration is found in other ancient sacramentaries,[28] some of which have *prece* (prayer) and others *pace* (peace).[29] The translation given above assumes that *praece* is a mistranscription of *pace* rather than of *prece* because, quite aside from the difficulty already named, the petition "that through holy fasting . . . we may come to have one mind among ourselves in your peace" seeks a practical effect of the reconciliation that the *qui* clause acknowledges God accomplishing through his Word. That is, God reconciles us to himself, which both makes us *concordes* with him and establishes us in his peace, and we petition him to make us *concordes* with one another in the same peace—his peace, the peace flowing from the blood of the cross (cf. Colossians 1.20). Thus the *pace* (peace) reading

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[27] Anthony Ward and Cuthbert Johnson, "The Sources of the Roman Missal (1975)," 50.

[28] *CO* III, n. 1998 lists sixteen witnesses dating from the eighth to the twelfth centuries. The oration appears as a *super populum* in a Mass in time of fasting [*in Missa in tempore ieiunii*]; as, variously, *oratio ad vesperos, collecta,* and *oratio super populum* on Wednesday of the second week of Lent, and as the collect of Thursday of the fourth week of Lent.

[29] Uncharacteristically the *CO* entry, which has *pace*, does not report variants. But see Alban Dold and Leo Eizenhöfer, eds., *Das Prager Sakramentar [Cod. O. 83 (fol. 1–120) der Bibliothek des Metropolitankapitals]*, Texte und Arbeiten I, heft 38–42 (Beuron: Beuroner Kunstverlag, 1949), #56, 1: *prece*; Alban Dold and Klaus Gamber, eds, *Das Sakramentar von Monza (Im Cod. F1/101 der Dortigen Kapitalsbibliothek)*, Texte und Arbeiten 3 (Beuron: Beuroner Kunstverlag, 1957), #170, which does not choose but reports on four other witnesses: *pace* (2), *prece* (1), *precede* (1); A. Dumas, ed., *Liber Sacramentorum Gellonensis,* Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 159a (Turnholt: Brepols, 1985), #368: *praece*; Odilo Heiming, ed., *Das Sacramentarium Triplex (die Handschrift C 43 der Zentralbibliothek Zürich)*, Corpus Ambrosiano Liturgicum 1, Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen, heft 49 (Münster: Aschendorffsche, 1968), #790: *pace*; Angelo Paredi and Giuseppe Fassi, eds., *Sacramentarium Bergomense Manoscritto del secolo IX della Biblioteca di S. Alessandro in Colonna in Bergamo,* Monumento Bergomensia 6 (Bergamo: Edizioni Monumenta Bergomensia, 1962), #1448: *pace*; Patrick Saint-Roch, ed., *Liber Sacramentorum Engolismensis: Manuscrit B.N. Lat 816,* Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 159c (Turnholt: Brepols, 1987), #383: *prece*.

achieves a stronger parallelism of thought than any rendering using *prece* (prayer/request) is able to attain.[30]

The main point is that the editors selected an oration with a textual problem that they then had to address. Instead of choosing from among the ancient variants, they replaced the entire *ut* clause of the original prayer with: "that the Christian people may be able to hasten *to the coming solemnity* with prompt devotion and ready faith." The source of the new clause has been explicitly identified as a Lenten sermon of St. Leo the Great.[31] St. Leo, after stating how fitting it is that "Christian people" fast, urges his congregation: "Let us undertake *this solemn fast* with prompt devotion and ready faith."[32] In this case, the editors combined two ancient texts, both having the Lenten fast at the center, and with some judicious tinkering confected a modern Lenten collect that makes no mention of fasting.[33]

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[30] Parallelism of one sort or other is, perhaps, the most common rhetorical device found in Roman orations. Therefore, everything else being equal, it seems safest to prefer the variant that brings the greatest parallelism to the text.

[31] Ward and Johnson, "The Sources of the Roman Missal (1975)," 50.

[32] Cf. PL 54, 270b. The whole sentence follows with the relevant portion in italics: "Quia ergo, dilectissimi, sicut Redemptoris nostri magisterio edocti sumus, non in solo pane vivit homo, sed in omni verbo Dei, dignumque est ut populus Christianus in quantacumque abstinentia constitutus, magis desideret se Dei verbo quam cibo satiare corporeo, *prompta devotione et alacri fide suscipiamus solemne jejunium,* non in sterili inedia, quam plerumque et imbecillitas corporis et avaritiae morbus indicit, sed in larga benevolentia celebrandum: ut scilicet simus de illis de quibus ipsa Veritas dicit: Beati qui esuriunt et sitiunt justitiam, quoniam ipsi saturabuntur." Translation: "Because, therefore, dearly beloved, as we have been instructed by the teaching of our Redeemer, 'not by bread alone does man live, but by every word of God,' it is fitting that the Christian people, insofar as they are established in a greater abstinence, should have a greater desire to be filled with the word of God than with bodily food, *let us undertake this solemn fast with prompt devotion and ready faith,* not in a useless hunger, that commonly both the feebleness of the body and the disorder of avarice betray, but celebrated with great generosity, so that indeed we may be among those concerning whom the Truth himself says: 'Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.'"

[33] The unpublished *Consilium* Schema n. 186, De Missali n. 27, September 19, 1966, contains the cycle of Orations *de tempore* originally proposed by *Coetus* 18bis, the study group entrusted with the revision of the orations and prefaces. The collect proposed for the second Sunday of Lent on page 23 of the Schema is *Gelasian Vetus* 178 emended as follows: "Deus, qui per Verbum tuum humani generis reconciliationem mirabiliter operaris, praesta, quaesumus, ut sancta *continentia* tibi toto simus corde subiecti et in tua *efficiamur prece* concordes." Translation: "O God, who do wondrously accomplish the reconciliation of the human race through your Word, grant, we beseech you, that in holy *restraint* we may be subject to you with our whole heart and be made to have one mind in your prayer [in prayer to you?]. Schema n. 186 is on file at the offices of the International Commission on

Similar editorial selectivity abounds in the new missal.[34] We shall look at two other examples that involve Sunday collects.

First, the vocabulary of submission or subjection, whether of the divine Son to human parents or of human beings to God, has been completely eliminated from the corpus of Sunday and Holy Day collects by four editorial changes.[35] (1) In the collect we just examined, the phrase "subject to you with our whole heart" was omitted along with the reference to fasting. (2) The 1962 collect of the feast of the Holy Family, which speaks of Jesus being subject to Mary and Joseph, was replaced with a new composition that makes no mention of the submission of the Christ child:

TABLE 5. The 1962 and 1970 collects of the feast of the Holy Family.

MR 1962, Holy Family	*MR* 1970, Holy Family
Domine Iesu Christe qui, *Mariae et Ioseph subditus*, domesticam vitam ineffabilibus virtutibus consecrasti: fac nos, utriusque auxilio, Familiae sanctae tuae exemplis instrui; et consortium consequi sempiternum.	Deus, qui praeclara nobis sanctae Familiae dignatus es exempla praebere, concede propitius, ut, domesticis virtutibus caritatisque vinculis illam sectantes, in laetitia domus tuae praemiis fruamur aeternis.
O Lord Jesus Christ who, *subject to Mary and Joseph,* have sanctified family life with ineffable virtue, grant us, through the assistance of both, to be instructed by the example of your Holy Family, and to attain everlasting fellowship [with them].	O God, who deigned to grant us the splendid example of the holy Family, mercifully grant that following it in the domestic virtues and bonds of charity, we may enjoy eternal rewards in the happiness of your house.

(3) "To the people subject to you" *[subditis tibi populis]* of the source oration for the new collect of second Sunday after the Nativity of the Lord was changed to "to all people" *[cunctis populis]* (see Table 6 on page 22).

(4) The *ut* clause of the 1962 collect of the feast of Christ the King, "that the whole family of nations, divided by the wound of sin, may be subject

English in the Liturgy, Washington, DC. I am grateful to Rev. Bruce Harbert and Mr. Peter Finn for permitting me access to ICEL's collection *Consilium* schemata.

[34] See A. Dumas, "Les oraisons du nouveau Missel," 263–70 and Lauren Pristas, "Theological Principles that Guided the Redaction of the Roman Missal (1970)," *The Thomist* 67 (2003): 157–95. An English translation of Dumas's essay is available in Lauren Pristas, "The Orations of the Vatican II Missal: Policies for Revision," *Communio* 30 (2003): 621–53 at 629–39.

[35] That complete elimination required only four changes indicates that, prior to these revisions, neither the language nor the concept of subjection was particularly dominant.

Table 6. The 1970 collect of the second Sunday after the Nativity of the Lord and its source.

Hadrianum 94, Ides of January, that is the sixth day of the month of January, the Epiphany at St. Peter, *alia oratio*[a]	*MR* 1970, 2nd Sunday after the Nativity of the Lord:
Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, fidelium splendor animarum *qui hanc sollemnitatem electionis gentium primitiis consecrasti, imple* mundum gloria tua et *subditis tibi populis* per luminis tui appare claritatem.	Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, fidelium splendor animarum, dignare mundum gloria tua implere *benignus*, *et cunctis populis* appare per tui luminis claritatem.
Almighty, everlasting God, splendor of the souls of the faithful *who have sanctified the solemnity of the election of the nations with first fruits,* fill the world with your glory and through the resplendence of your light manifest yourself to the people *who have been made subject to you*.	Almighty, everlasting God, splendor of the souls of the faithful, kindly deign to fill the world with your glory and through the resplendence of your light manifest yourself *to all people.*

[a] *Idus Ianuarias id est VI die mensis Ianuarii Epiphania ad Sanctum Petrum*. The *Hadrianum* is available in Jean Deshusses, ed., *Le Sacramentaire grégorien, ses principales form d'après les plus anciens manuscrits,* t. 1, 3rd ed., Spicilegium Friburgense 16 (Friburg: Éditions universitaires, 1992). *CO* VI, n. 3838 cites 22 codices in which this oration, in every case save one, is used in connection with the Epiphany/Theophany. The exception is *alia oratio Natalis Domini* ["other oration for the Nativity of the Lord"].

to your most gentle/agreeable rule," was replaced with "that every creature, freed from servitude, may serve your majesty and praise you without end" (see Table 7 on page 23).

Our last example of editors excising ideas that are prominent in the source texts is the centonized collect of the third Sunday of Paschal time. The new prayer does not mention sin or our need for purgation, although one or the other dominates each of its sources (see Table 8 on page 23).

Collects of the Proper Seasons

In the quantitative analysis above, we noted in passing that the collects of the proper seasons in the new missal were more amply revised than the others. The following details, which expand upon information provided in Tables 1 and 2, demonstrate the extent to which this is the case.

1. None of the 1962 Advent Sunday collects are used on an Advent Sunday in the new missal.

Table 7. The 1962 and 1970 collects of the feast of Christ the King.

MR 1962, Christ the King	*MR* 1970, Christ the King
Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, qui in dilecto Filio tuo, universorum Rege, omnia instaurare voluisti, concede propitius, *ut cunctae familiae gentium, peccati vulnere disgregatae, eius suavissimo subdantur imperio.*	Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, qui in dilecto Filio tuo, universorum Rege, omnia instaurare voluisti, concede propitius, *ut tota creatura, a servitute liberata, tuae maiestati deserviat ac te sine fine collaudet.*
Almighty, everlasting God, who willed to restore all things in your beloved Son, the King of the universe, mercifully grant that *the whole family of peoples, divided by the wound of sin, may be brought under his most gentle rule.*	Almighty, everlasting God, who willed to restore all things in your beloved Son, the King of the universe, mercifully grant that *every creature, freed from slavery, may serve your majesty and praise you without end.*

Table 8. The 1970 collect of the third Sunday in Pascal Time and its sources.

GeV 515: Orations and prayers in the parish, *super populum*[a]	*Ver* 1148: For the Dead,[b] in October	*MR* 1970: 3rd Sunday in Paschal Time.
Populus tuus, quaesumus, Domine, renovata semper exsultet animae iuventute, **ut** qui **ante[a][c] peccatorum veternoso in mortis venerat senio,** nunc laetetur in pristinam se gloriam restitutum.	*His, quaesumus, Domine, sacrificiis quibus purgationem et viventibus tribuis et defunctis, animan famuli tui benignus absolve: ut* RESURRECTIONIS DIEM SPE CERTAE GRATULATIONIS EXSPECTET.	Semper exsultet populus tuus, Deus, renovata animae iuventute, ut qui nunc laetetur in adoptionis se gloriam restitutum, *resurrectionis diem spe certae gratulationis exspectet.*
May your people, we beseech you, **O Lord,** always exult in renewed youth of soul, **that they who in the sloth of sin had fallen into the decay of death in time past,** now may rejoice in the original glory which has been restored in them.	*Through these sacrifices by which you grant purgation both to the living and the dead, we beseech you, O Lord, kindly set the soul of your servant free: that he (she)* MAY AWAIT THE DAY OF RESURRECTION WITH HOPE OF CERTAIN HAPPINESS.	**May your people,** O God, always exult in renewed youth of soul, that they who now rejoice in the glory of adoption having been restored to them *may await the day of resurrection with hope of certain happiness.*

2. Of the six Lenten Sunday collects, only the collect of Palm Sunday is retained from the 1962 missal.
3. Of the ten Sunday and Holy Day collects of Paschal time, only the collects of the Paschal Vigil and Easter Sunday are from the 1962 missal, and both were significantly modified.[36]
4. Four of the eight Sunday and Holy Day collects of the Christmas season come from the 1962 missal, but three were edited.
5. Five of the 21 1962 Sunday collects that are found among the Sundays *per annum* in the 1970 missal are Christmas or Paschal season collects in the earlier missal.
6. Only two of the 28 Sunday and Holy Day collects in proper seasons are identical in the two missals (the collects of the Epiphany and Palm Sunday).

Taken together this means that the collects of most intense liturgical times were quite sweepingly revised. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* no. 109 stipulates a revision of the Lenten texts so that the character of the season, namely as preparatory for the celebration of the Paschal Mystery through the twofold means of recalling or preparing for Baptism and of penance, may be put into clearer light, but the document does not explicitly call for a revision of the texts of the other seasons.[37]

In sum, our quantitative analysis shows that the corpus of Sunday and Holy Day collects in the 1970 missal is not only materially different from that of the 1962 missal, it is unique. This is verified in: (1) the number of instances in which editors either revised orations found in earlier missals or composed new ones; (2) the frequency with which the editors put old prayers to unprecedented uses; (3) the fact that no single grouping of

[36] The collect of Easter Sunday was edited twice. The first change restored the prayer to its oldest surviving form, *Gelasian Vetus* 463. The second change, which corresponds to no variant in the manuscript tradition, was made at the discretion of the modern editors. See the unpublished *Consilium* Schema n. 186, p. 2 for an explanation of the first change, and A. Dumas, "Les oraisons du nouveau Missel," 268 for the rationale of the second. Dumas's explanation can be found in translation in Lauren Pristas, "The Orations of the Vatican II Missal," 636. Sister Mary Gonzaga Haessly, *Rhetoric in the Sunday Collects of the Roman Missal: with Introduction, Text, Commentary and Translation* (St. Louis: Manufacturers Printery, 1938), who makes no mention of the Gelasian text, discusses the Paschal collect as it appears in the 1962 missal on pp. 4, 58–59 and 138–39.

[37] For a brief discussion of the way those responsible for the revision of the orations interpreted *Sacrosanctum Concilium* no. 109, see Lauren Pristas, "The Orations of the Vatican II Missal," 642–43, n. 34.

collects reprises the corresponding group in an earlier missal. The four Advent Sunday collects, for instance, come from three distinct sources.

The Problem of Method

As we indicated in the introduction, the material uniqueness of the cycle of Sunday and Holy Day collects is all the more significant if it signals substantive changes in the theological or spiritual import of the whole corpus of collects. The next, and more important task, is to determine whether there are substantive differences and, most important of all, to identify them if they exist.

The task presents methodological difficulties, however: How do we approach two sets of 66 collects in different missals and assess the respective collective contents accurately? There is no tried and trustworthy method. Indeed, to date, only one study that attempts a comparative appraisal of the two sets of collects has appeared.

Lorenzo Bianchi did a linguistic statistical analysis of the Sunday and Feast Day collects which was published in English in 2000.[38] Interested in the respective presentations of sin and grace in the Sunday and Feast Day collects of the two missals, Bianchi identified six pertinent categories of words and expressions and then counted the number of occurrences in each category in each missal.[39] Bianchi's methodology is sound, but

[38] Lorenzo Bianchi, "A Survey of the Theology, History, Terminology, and Syntax in the Prayers of the Roman Missal," International Colloquium on Historical, Theological, and Canonical Studies on the Roman Catholic Liturgy (Kingston and Surbiton: Centre International d'Études Liturgiques, 2000), 127–64. A team of translators, whose names appear on p. 273 of the volume, prepared the English translations of the foreign language papers delivered at this international conference. For the credibility of Bianchi's work, it is important to state that the responsibility for infelicities in the translation, particularly the error in English rendering of the collect for Christ the King, lies with the translators. I am indebted to Susan Reilly, the United States delegate of C.I.E.L., who kindly obtained a copy of Bianchi's unpublished Italian text for my examination from C.I.E.L. France.

[39] The six categories are: (1) the sinful human condition; (2) perils arising from the external world; (3) God's compassion toward man; (4) God's love for man; (5) things given to man by God; (6) forms of the words *"donum"* and *"gratia"* Bianchi found that words in the first three categories occur more than twice as frequently in the 1962 missal as in the 1970 missal, but the words *gratia, donum,* and *dilectio* [grace, gift, and love] appear almost twice as many times in the 1970 missal as they do in the 1962 missal. He concludes: "[W]hereas in the Missal of St. Pius V the realistic recognition of the human condition as marked by sin, and the connection of that condition with grace, is very much present, the Missal of Paul VI is different in that it has a tendency to separate grace and the sinful human condition, [and tends] not to make explicit the absolutely inseparable connection between the two. If the reality of the human condition, marked by

for two reasons it is not a methodology that can serve us here. First, linguistic statistical analysis requires the prior identification of specific interests. Second, although linguistic statistical analysis can tell us a great deal about the preoccupations and even the theological idiosyncracies of a set of collects by demonstrating the presence or absence of words belonging to particular domains of meaning, it does not seem capable of identifying the heart of a particular collect or set of collects.

Our object is to get to the very core of the four individual collects that make up the Advent collects in each missal and accurately compare the two sets which have not a single prayer or even a single source prayer in common, and to do this without becoming hopelessly mired in a mass of details. Unlike Bianchi, we are not looking for anything specific. In the examination that follows we use a two-pronged approach which first examines the verbs of the respective sets and then the logical assumption that undergirds each collect.

The Advent Collects: Comparative Analysis

The Advent collects of the two missals appear in Tables 9.1–9.4 (see pages 27–29). The source texts for the 1970 collects are presented in footnotes. Italics indicate words and phrases that differ from those in the source texts.

Analysis of the Verbs

Our examination does not consider the formulaic *quaesumus* [we beseech you], and the various forms of *mereri* are considered only in the context of the verbs which they govern.[40] The verbs of the Advent collects in the respective missals appear in Table 10 (see pages 30–31) and are arranged according to their particular types.

The eight strong imperatives in the 1962 missal set its Advent tone. We cry out to Christ, and our need and eagerness are so intense that we beseech him with imperative verbs to rouse his power and come, to bend ear to our prayers and illumine the darkness of our minds with the grace of his visitation, to hasten to help us with his great might. In the one collect not addressed to Christ, we cry to God to stir up our hearts to prepare the way for his Son. The eagerness expressed in imperatives verbs

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sin, is forgotten, or rather made void, then even grace, while being nominally referred to, becomes an extra. . . ." Ibid., 131.

[40] *Mereri:* to be worthy, to be made worthy, to be deemed worthy, to merit. The grace of Christ makes us worthy; it also makes us able to merit. In liturgical usage *mereri* sometimes means "to be able." As such, it insists upon a capacity in the human person to receive graces and gifts from God without implying that the graces or gifts are deserved.

Table 9.1. Advent Sunday 1.

1962	1970a
Excita, quaesumus, Domine, potentiam tuam et veni: ut ab imminentibus peccatorum nostrorum periculis, te mereamur protegente eripi, te liberante salvari. qui vivis et regnas.	Da, quaesumus, omnipotens Deus, *hanc tuis fidelibus voluntatem,* ut, *Christo tuo venienti iustis operibus occurrentes,* eius dexterae sociati, regnum mereantur possidere caeleste. Per.
Stir up, we beseech you, O Lord, your power and come, that from the threatening dangers of our sins we may be able to be delivered by you protecting, saved by you delivering. Who live and reign.	Grant, we beseech you, O Lord, this will *to your faithful*, that, *hastening to meet your coming Christ in just deeds,* assigned to his right they may be worthy to possess the heavenly kingdom. Through.

[a] Source: *Gelasian Vetus* 1139, an Advent postcommunion. *CO* II, n. 1006 lists twelve additional witnesses to the prayer. All date from the eighth to the tenth centuries and in all the oration appears as either a postcommunion or a *super populum*. Source Prayer: Da, quaesumus, omnipotens Deus, *cunctae familiae tuae* hanc voluntatem in Christo *Filio* tuo *Domino nostro* venienti *in operibus iustis aptos occurrere*, [ut] eius dexterae sociati, regnum mereantur possidere caeleste. Translation: Grant, we beseech you, almighty God, *to your whole family* this will *in Christ your Son, our coming Lord: to meet [him] made fit in just deeds,* that joined (or assigned) to his right, we may merit to possess the heavenly kingdom.")

Table 9.2. Advent Sunday 2.

1962	1970[a]
Excita, Domine, corda nostra ad praeparandas Unigeniti tui vias: ut, per eius adventum, purificatis tibi mentibus servire mereamur. Qui tecum.	Omnipotens et *misericors* Deus, in tui occursum Filii festinantes nulla opera terreni actus impediant, sed sapientiae caelestis eruditio nos faciat eius *esse* consortes. Qui tecum.
Stir up, O Lord, our hearts to prepare the ways of your only begotten Son, that we may be able to serve you with minds made pure through his coming. Who with you.	Almighty *and merciful* God, may no works of earthly deed impede us as we hasten to meet your Son, but may the training of heavenly wisdom make us to be partakers of him. Who with you.

[a] Source: *GeV* 1153, Advent oratio. *CO* IV, n. 2669 lists eight manuscripts, dating from eighth to eleventh centuries, in which the prayer is always an advent *oratio*. Source Prayer: Festinantes, omnipotens Deus, in occursum Filii tui *Domini nostri* nulla impediant opera actus terreni, sed caelestis sapientiae eruditio faciat nos eius *esse* consortes. Translation: May no words of earthly deed impede us, Almighty God, as we hasten to meet your Son our Lord, but may the training of heavenly wisdom make us to be partakers of him.

TABLE 9.3. Advent Sunday 3.

1962	1970[a]
Aurem tuam, quaesumus, Domine, precibus nostris accommoda: et mentis nostrae tenebras gratia tuae visitationis illustra. Qui vivis.	Deus, qui conspicis populum tuum *nativitatis dominicae festivitatem* fideliter exspectare, praesta, quaesumus, ut valeamus ad tantae salutis gaudia pervenire, et ea votis sollemnibus alacri semper laetitia celebrare. Per.
Bend your ear, we beseech you, O Lord, to our prayers, and illumine the darkness of our mind with the grace of your visitation. Who live.	O God, who see your people faithfully awaiting *the feast of the Lord's nativity*, grant, we beseech you, that we may be able to arrive at the joys of such a great salvation, and ever to celebrate them with solemn prayers and ready rejoicing. Through.

[a] Source: *Rotulus* 25 5th–6th century. Unique. Source Prayer: Deus, qui conspicis populum tuum *incarnationem dominicam* fideliter exspectare, praesta, quaesumus, ut valeamus ad tantae salutis gaudia pervenire, et ea votis sollemnibus alacri semper laetitia celebrare. Translation: O God, who see your people faithfully awaiting *the incarnation of the Lord*, grant, we beseech you, that we may be able to arrive at the joys of such a great salvation, and ever to celebrate them with solemn prayers and ready rejoicing.")

intensifies as Advent progresses. The two imperatives in the collect of the first Sunday give way to the single imperative in the collect of the second Sunday (the only collect of the four addressed to the Father), but then we find two imperatives again in the collect of the third Sunday, and three in the collect of the Sunday immediately prior to the Lord's birth. No other Sunday collect in the 1962 missal has three imperative verbs.[41]

The active participles and indicative verbs describe either Christ's activity: protecting and freeing, or the agency of a harm that besets us: dangers threatening, sins impeding. The passive participle describes what we hope will be done through Christ's coming—that our minds will be made pure. The subjunctive verbs express particular petitions: that Christ's pardon may speed what our sins impede and that we may be worthy to serve God.

Except for what is implicit in the act of praying itself, there are only two agents in the 1962 prayers. On the one side, the divine Persons who bend ear to prayers, rouse, come, illumine, succor, protect, deliver, purify, and speed; and, on the other side, our sins and the dangers that attach to

[41] Sister Mary Gonzaga Haessly, *Rhetoric in the Sunday Collects of the Roman Missal,* 29.

Table 9.4. Advent Sunday 4.

1962	1970
Excita, quaesumus, Domine, potentiam tuam et veni: et magna nobis virtute succurre; ut per auxilium gratiae tuae, quod nostra peccata praepediunt, indulgentia tuae propitiationis acceleret. Qui vivis.	Gratiam tuam, quaesumus, Domine, mentibus nostris infunde, ut qui, Angelo nuntiante, Christi Filii tui incarnationem cognovimus, per passionem eius et crucem ad resurrectionis gloriam perducamur. Per.[a]
Stir up, we beseech you, O Lord, your power and come, and hasten to aid us with your great might that through the help of your grace what our sins impede the grace of your mercy may speed. Who live and reign.	Pour forth, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy grace into our hearts that we to whom the incarnation of Christ thy Son was made known by the message of an angel may by his passion and cross be brought to the glory of his resurrection. Through.[b]

[a] This oration is the postcommunion for the Annunciation in the 1962 missal. Placide Bruylants, *Les Oraisons du Missel Roman: Texte et Histoire,* vol. 2 (Louvain: Centre de Documentation et d'Information Liturgiques, 1952), 156, #575 notes that this same prayer was an oration *pro diversitate temporum* [for a variety of times] from the first Sunday of Advent until December 23 in the Roman Missals of 1471 (first printed edition of the *Missale Romanum*), 1570 (first typical edition of the Pius V missal), 1604 (2nd typical edition of the *Missale Romanum* by Clement VIII). *CO* IV n. 2748 lists 44 witnesses to this oration which date from the eighth to sixteenth centuries, but none bears witness to use during Advent.

[b] This translation is the traditional rendering of the Angelus prayer.

them, which both threaten and impede. We are situated between Christ who saves and the perils from which we need saving.

The dangers named are interior to us: our sins, darkness, and impurity. The theology of grace at work in the aggregate of 1962 Advent Sunday collects is manifest most clearly, perhaps, in the collect of the second Sunday. We ask God to rouse our hearts to prepare the way for his Son, implying that unless he rouses us we will not be able to prepare for the Son. But unless we prepare the Son's way, our minds will not be made pure through his coming; and unless they are made pure through him we will not be able to serve God. Everything pertinent to salvation comes forth from God, catches us up and transforms us, and then returns us to himself with our own human willingness fully engaged.

The picture painted by the verbs in the 1970 collects is quite different. It is not simply that the imperatives are far fewer (three) and weaker ("grant" and "pour out"); but that the human subjects, however they are named (variously "the faithful," "we," "your people") are far more active;

TABLE 10. The verbs of the Advent collects in the 1962 and 1970 missals.

Verb Form	1962 Advent Collects	1970 Advent
imperative	**Total: 8** excita/rouse (3); veni/come (2) succure/hasten to aid (1) accommoda/bend (1) illustra/illumine (1)	**Total: 3** da/grant praesta/grant infunda/pour forth
present active participles	**Total: 3** imminenibus/threatening (modifies dangers of sin) protegente/protecting, liberante/freeing (both modify Christ)	**Total: 3** venienti/coming (modifies Christ) occurentes/hastening to meet (modifies us) festinantes/hastening (modifies us)
perfect passive participles	**Total: 1** 1: purificatis/having been made pure (modifies our minds)	**Total: 0**
present indicative active	**Total: 1** nostra peccata praepediunt/our sins impede	**Total: 2** conspicis/you see (you = God) cognovimus/we know
present subjunctive active	**Total: 1** indulgentia . . . acceleret/ may pardon speed	**Total: 2** nulla opera impediant/may no works impede eruditio faciat/may training make
present subjunctive passive	**Total: 0**	**Total: 1** perducamur/may we be led

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TABLE 10. *(continued)*

Verb Form	1962 Advent Collects	1970 Advent
active infinitives	**Total: 1** mereamur . . . servire/ may we be worthy to serve	**Total: 5** • mereantur possidere regnum/may they merit to possess the kingdom • faciat nos *esse* consortes/may it make us to be partakers • expectare festivitatem/to await the feast • valeamus pervenire ad gaudia et . . . celebrare ea/may we be able to arrive at the joys and . . . to celebrate them • subject of the above verbs is variously the faithful, we, your people
passive infinitives	**Total: 1** mereamur . . . eripi, salvari/may we be able to be delivered, saved	**Total: 0**

indeed, they are the subject of the five active infinitives. In one collect God is described as seeing their activity (they are faithfully awaiting), and in others he is asked to make their activity fruitful: to grant that they may inherit the kingdom, be made partakers of Christ through training in heavenly wisdom, to attain the joys of salvation, to celebrate these joys with solemn prayers and ready rejoicing. Moreover, the motion verbs of the two sets describe exactly opposite movements: in the 1962 collect Christ comes to meet us; in the 1970 collect we go to meet Christ, arrive, are brought to, and so forth. In the 1970 set, Christ is described as coming only in the collect of the first Sunday.

A second difference is that the 1970 collects name no overwhelming obstacles. In contrast to the 1962 collect in which we ask God to rouse our hearts in order that we may prepare for the coming of his Son, in the 1970 collects we are twice described as already hastening to meet him and once as faithfully awaiting the feast of his birth. The only suggestion in the 1970 collects that there are things that could cause us to stumble is the prayer that God let no works of earthly deed impede us as we hasten—where the works can be understood as either our own or those of others. In other words, the collect does not insist upon the existence of interior impediments. In fact, the 1970 prayers contain no reference to sin or its dangers; to darkness or impurity of mind; to human weakness or need for mercy, forgiveness, protection, deliverance, purification; nor to the fact that any or all of us require a divine jump start to begin preparations for Christ's coming. Also, the idea that we must undergo a transformation in order to enter heaven is intimated only by the word *eruditio*, instruction or training, in the collect of the second Sunday.

A third difference is that those who pray the 1970 collects do not seek divine assistance to survive perils or to begin to do good things. Indeed they express no need for such helps. Rather they ask to enter heaven at the last. In contrast, those who pray the 1962 collects do not explicitly seek heaven, but demand—the imperative verbs—immediate and personal daily help on the way.

In these three differences we come to something very delicate. Put simply the Catholic faith holds that every good deed that advances us toward salvation depends on divine grace. This doctrine is formally defined and is not susceptible to modification that would reverse its import.[42] Every

[42] See the canons of the Second Council of Orange (529), especially can. 5, 6, 7, 9–11, 13, 16–20, 22, 24–25 and the conclusion in H. Denzinger and Peter Hünermann, *Enchiridion Symbolorum,* 2nd ed. (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane, 1966), Nos. 375, 376, 379–81, 383, 386–90, 392, 394–95, and 396. See *Summa theologiae* I–II, q. 109, a. 10.

nuance of the 1962 Advent collects expresses this Catholic doctrine of grace unambiguously in the somewhat subtle, non-expository manner proper to orations. While the 1970 Advent collects do not explicitly contradict the Catholic teaching on grace, they neither articulate it nor, more worrisomely, seem to assume it. The delicate bit is how to sum this up fairly, for while the 1970 collects may not legitimately be understood or interpreted in a way that is inconsistent with Catholic truth, they are in fact susceptible of being misunderstood by those inadequately schooled in Catholic truth.

In conclusion, when we examine the verbs of the Advent collects in the respective missals, we find not two different spiritualities of Advent, but two different presentations of our spiritual situation and the way in which God responds to it. Our next step is to see whether the impressions gleaned from our study of the verbs are verified or controverted by the logical analysis which comprises our second approach to the same collects.

Analysis of Logical Statements

Each collect rests implicitly upon a logical statement. We believe certain things about God and pray according to the logic of our faith convictions. Roman collects, always a single sentence, are generally comprised of an independent and a dependent clause. Most usually the subordinate clause begins with *ut* ("so that"), and the *ut* clause describes a causal relationship between God's gift and what we understand in faith to be its effect.

The assertion that each collect rests implicitly upon a logical statement does not mean that each prayer reduces to a logical proposition. Rather, it recognizes that our prayers reflect what God has revealed to be true and that the facts of revealed reality, as well as the causal relationships within it, are as amenable to propositional expression as any other truths.

The logical statements undergirding the collects can be expressed in various ways. They are expressed here as "if/then" statements, although in several instances the minor premise is lacking. Table 11 (see pages 34–35) presents an attempt to identify the logical statements underlying each Advent Sunday collect, together with the missing premises.

What is attempted here may be clearer if we take the collect of the first Sunday of Advent in the 1962 missal as an example. The logical core, the logical heart of "Stir up, we beseech you, O Lord, your power and come, that from the threatening dangers of our sins we may be able to be delivered by you protecting, saved by you delivering" is "If Christ rouses his power and comes, then we will be delivered from the threatening dangers of our sins and saved." Why? Because the request turns on an unstated premise, or more precisely the unstated faith conviction, that Christ's presence delivers and saves.

TABLE 11. Logical statements undergirding the Advent Sunday collects in the 1962 and 1972 missals.

Sun	*MR* 1962	*MR* 1970	Source Oration for 1970 Collect
1	If Christ rouses his power and comes, then we will be delivered from the threatening dangers of our sins and will be saved.	If God grants this will to the faithful, they will meet Christ in just deeds.	*GeV* 1139: If God grants this will in Christ to his whole family, they will be *made fit* in just deeds to meet Christ.
	Missing premise: Christ's presence protects, delivers, and saves.	If they meet Christ in just deeds, they will merit . . . to possess the heavenly kingdom.	If the members of the family are *made fit* in just deeds to meet Christ, they will merit . . . to possess the heavenly kingdom.
2	If God rouses our hearts to prepare for his Son, then through his Son's coming our hearts will be purified.	If God permits no work to impede us as we hasten to meet Christ, and grants heavenly wisdom to instruct us, then we will be sharers of Christ.	*GeV* 1153: Same as *MR* 1970
	If our hearts are made pure, we will be able to serve God.	*Missing premise:* The prevention of impediments and instruction in heavenly wisdom are necessary for us to be sharers of Christ.	
3	If Christ bends his ear to our prayer, the darkness of our minds will be illumined by the grace of his visitation.	If God grants it, we will be able to arrive at the joys of such a great salvation and to celebrate them with ready joy in solemn prayers.	*Rot* 25: If God grants it, we will be able to arrive at the joys of such a great salvation and to celebrate them with ready joy in solemn prayers.
	Missing premise: If Christ hears, he acts.	*Missing premise:* Feast = joys of salvation.	*Missing premise:* Incarnation = salvation.

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Table 11. *(continued)*

Sun	*MR* 1962	*MR* 1970	Source Oration for 1970 Collect
4	If Christ rouses his power and comes, and hastens to help with his great might, we will have the help of his grace.	If God pours his grace into our hearts, then we will be brought through Christ's passion and cross to the glory of his resurrection.	*MR* 1962, Annunciation, postcommunion. Same as *MR* 1970
	If we have the aid of his grace, then what our sins impede the pardon of his mercy will speed.	*Missing premise:* Grace suffices.	

As it turns out, all the 1962 Advent Sunday collects rest upon the logical assumption or, more accurately, the firm belief that divine assistance is the actual presence of Christ. Christ *comes* and, thereby, frees, saves, purifies, acts, and overturns the effects of our sins. His presence and action toward us is personal, intimate, interior, and effective: we are protected, delivered, and saved; our minds are purified; the effects of our personal sins are reversed. Collectively these collects give genuine, even breath taking, force to what "Advent," that is "the Coming," signifies.

If there is a single assumption or faith conviction that underlies all of the 1970 collects, it is not so easily detected. The various gifts sought by these collects do not reduce, as it were, to the simple presence of Christ or God himself. Although God confers a will, instructs or trains in heavenly wisdom, and grants us to arrive at the joys of salvation—great goods, wondrous goods in themselves—their recipients, in the nature of things, enjoy a less intimate relationship with God than those whose hearts he rouses, whose minds he illumines with the grace of his visitation, and whose sins he reverses the effects of with his pardon. The Advent Sunday collects of the 1970 missal, then, portray God as standing further off and acting toward us in a less personal and more extrinsic manner than the corresponding collects in the 1962 missal.

In light of these observations the changes made to the source oration that produced the collect of the first Sunday of Advent are of particular interest (see Table 12 on page 36). The source prayer seeks for us from God a will in Christ to hasten to Christ made fit in just deeds. By implication, the will, the hastening, and the just deeds are all *in Christ*. The effect is that we are made ready, or made fit, in the just deeds that we do in Christ as a

TABLE 12. The 1970 collect of the first Sunday in Advent and its source.

Source: *GeV* 1139 (cf. *CO* II, n. 1006)	*Missale Romanum* (1970): Advent Sunday I
Da, quaesumus, omnipotens Deus, *cunctae familiae* tuae hanc voluntatem *in Christo Filio* tuo *Domino nostro* venienti *in operibus iustis aptos occurrere*, ut eius dexterae sociati, regnum mereantur possidere caeleste.	Da, quaesumus, omnipotens Deus, *hanc tuis fidelibus voluntatem,* ut, *Christo tuo venienti iustis operibus occurrentes,* eius dexterae sociati, regnum mereantur possidere caeleste.
Grant, we beseech you, almighty God, *to your whole family this will in Christ your Son, our coming Lord, to meet [him] made fit* in just deeds, that joined (or assigned) to his right, we may merit to possess the heavenly kingdom.	Grant, we beseech you, O Lord, this will *to your faithful,* that, *hastening to meet your coming Christ in just deeds,* joined (or assigned) to his right they may be worthy to possess the heavenly kingdom.

result of the will in Christ that God graciously grants to us in Christ. Because we have been made fit, we, like the sheep of Matthew 25:33ff., are assigned to Christ's right and given possession of the heavenly kingdom.

This oration is a theological advance over the scriptural parable which, taken by itself, can be understood simply to teach that those who serve Christ in the least of his brethren by practicing the corporal works of mercy will be rewarded in the life to come, and, of course, the opposite also: those who fail to serve Christ in this way will suffer eternal punishment. The theological advance has two aspects. First, God gives the will in Christ to serve Christ in his needy brethren—we do not muster it for ourselves. Second, heaven is not simply a reward for just deeds; it is something for which we are prepared by graced living and willing in Christ (the *aptos*). Heaven is for the Christified.

In the 1970 collects, the will is not explicitly in Christ nor are we made ready/fit (there is no *aptos* or equivalent). Thus the theological advance over the parable that we observe in the source prayer was forfeited in the revision. One consequence of the new oration making no mention of the transformation that takes place in Christ is a more transactional depiction of relations between God and man. The increased transactionalism, by definition, requires a corresponding diminution of the synergy of divine grace and human freedom that drives the original oration.

Findings of the Verbal and Logical Examinations

The two analyses of the Advent collects yield much the same picture of each set and of the differences between them. The changes made in the

Advent Sunday collects plainly alter the essential character of the whole set. The two sets do not approach God in the same way, seek the same things from him, exhibit the same preoccupations, or depict the same relationship between God and his human subjects.

The sample of collects that we have examined, however, is too small for us to make a judgment about the entire corpus of Sunday and Holy Day collects based on our findings here. Further study is required to determine whether the new tendencies manifest in the Advent collects are tempered or offset by the other collects, or whether they are indeed representative of a new liturgical posture and new theological and spiritual preoccupations.

Conclusion

The facts and figures presented in the first part of this essay indicate that those responsible for the revision of the missal made extensive changes to the corpus of Sunday and Holy Day collects. The result is not the revival of either a Roman or non-Roman Latin liturgical tradition that fell into disuse over the centuries, but something essentially new.

Two things need to be said about this newness. First, while the deliberate confection of an annual cycle of collects is unprecedented as far as we know in liturgical history, the new corpus enjoys ecclesiastical approval and, on this account, is to be received by the faithful with the utmost respect. Second, the new and untraditional character of the cycle of collects requires that we study it well, not simply in itself, but in relationship to its predecessor and to the use of sources that produced it. Only then will we be able to identify the unique features of our present Sunday and Holy Day collects and to understand both their place in the Latin liturgical tradition and the specific character of their contribution to Christian formation.

The latter part of the paper is an experiment in comparative textual analysis. The findings must be regarded as exceedingly provisional for the analysis encompasses only four of the 66 Sunday and Holy Day collects. In these four, however, we discern a markedly different presentation of our spiritual situation and the way in which God involves himself with us. If the 1970 collects bring to mind the psalmist's petition "give success to the works of our hands,"[43] the 1962 collects remind us of Augustine's graced realization that God is more intimate to each of us than we are to ourselves.[44]

These are not inconsequential changes. There is a reciprocal relationship between faith and prayer. On the one hand, particular prayers arise from

[43] Psalm 90:17. Grail translation.

[44] Cf. *Confessions* III, 6.

particular faith convictions and, on the other, our faith convictions are formed by the words that we are taught to pray. Moreover, in Matthew's Gospel Jesus says to the centurion, "as you have believed let it be done for you" and similarly to the blind men "according to your faith let it be done to you."[45] While it is not right to think that anything, even the meagerness of our faith, can limit the power of God, it is also true that God has revealed himself to us so that, believing him, we can expect certain things and, in our expectation, be open to the gifts he desires to give us. For these reasons the anthropological shift that we see in the new Advent prayers toward what might be described as a more capable human person is not nearly so arresting as the corresponding theological shift according to which God's dealings with us are less direct and more extrinsic—although, obviously, the two are conceptually connected. NV

[45] Matthew 8:13 and 9:29, respectively. The English translation is from the Vulgate.

Nature, Specific Difference, and Degrees of Being: Metaphysical Background to Aquinas's Anti-Monophysite Arguments

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ACCOUNTS of the Incarnation that place a premium on metaphysical coherence traditionally take the Declaration of the Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) as their point of departure. The central statement of the council states:

> Following therefore the holy Fathers, we confess one and the same our Lord Jesus Christ, and we all teach harmoniously [that he is] the same perfect in Godhead, the same perfect in manhood, truly God and truly man, the same of a reasonable soul and body; *consubstantial with the Father in Godhead and the same consubstantial with us in manhood*, like us in all things except sin; begotten before ages of the Father in Godhead, the same in the last days for us; and for our salvation [born] of Mary the virgin *theotokos* in manhood, one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, unique; *acknowledged in two natures without confusion, without change, without division, without separation—the difference of the natures being by no means taken away because of the union, but rather the distinctive character of each nature being preserved, and [each] combining in one Person and hypostasis—not divided or separated into two Persons, but one and the same Son and only-begotten God, Word, Lord Jesus Christ;* as the prophets of old and the Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us about him, and the symbol of the Fathers has handed down to us.[1]

[1] "The Chalcedonian Decree," in *Christology of the Later Fathers*, ed. Edward Rochie Hardy (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954), 373. Also important is Cyril of Alexandria's third letter to Nestorius, contained in the same volume, 34–54. On St. Thomas's knowledge and use of Chalcedon, see G. Geenen, "En marge du

Insofar as the hypostatic union is concerned, this declaration requires two things. First, against the Eutychian or monophysite position, it demands that the *integrity* of both the human and divine natures be respected. There can be no confusion of the two natures, nor can one change into the other or into some new composite nature. Second, against Nestorianism, Chalcedon holds that Christ's *unity* be respected. The conciliar declaration preserves this unity by insisting that the human and divine natures must both belong to one and the same person. There can be no talk of the Incarnation entailing a new Person in Christ. Aquinas's treatment of both of these errors is informative. In the present article, however, I shall restrict myself to a discussion of his argument against the monophysite position, which holds that in the Incarnation the human and the divine nature in some manner become one new nature.

One of the most interesting aspects of Aquinas's treatment of theological issues is the degree to which it is informed by his metaphysics. In light of this fact, the present article addresses two issues: first, the meaning of nature in Aquinas's metaphysics; and second, how Aquinas applies this metaphysics in his Christological arguments against monophysitism.

Contemporary metaphysicians have distinguished two approaches to essentialism: a modal approach and a definitional one. I will begin by arguing that Aquinas's account of nature should be understood as a development of the definitional account. This will be clarified through examining Aquinas's explanation of the etymological development of the term *natura* (nature) and the corresponding division of the various senses of the word, giving special emphasis to the latter. I will then show that even though he is writing in the context of a Christological treatise and often drawing upon the understanding of earlier Christian writers, St. Thomas presents his treatment of nature in a *philosophical* manner. I will conclude this section by examining Aquinas's ontology of nature as it is developed in the early work *De Ente*, in the later work *Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics*, and in related texts.

Having set out Aquinas's philosophical account of nature, I will go on to examine how he applies this to a specific Christological controversy, namely, the question, "Whether the union took place in the nature?"

Concile de Chalcédoine. Les textes du Quatrième Concile dans les oeuvres de saint Thomas," *Angelicum* 29 (1952): 43–59. On the historical circumstances of the council and the accuracy of Cyril's interpretation of Nestorius, see Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in the Christian Tradition,* vol. 2, trans. James Bowden (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1975). Grillmeier's work is the most detailed account of patristic and early councilar Christology.

Aquinas's various treatments of this question offer one of the most explicit applications of the concept of nature within his Christology. I will focus on a comparison of the early treatment found in the *Sentences Commentary*, with the later ones of the *Summa contra Gentiles* and the *Summa theologiae*. The concluding section will attempt to highlight the significance of this material for an adequate understanding of the relation between philosophy and theology.

The Meaning of Nature

Although there are a number of ways to understand the essence or nature of a thing, two views are common today. Modern accounts of essentialism are generally modal in nature, while the traditional Aristotelian accounts have usually been definitional.

Amongst contemporary philosophers it is common to account for essence in terms of modality.[2] This view can be stated as: "*x* is essentially *F* if and only if necessarily whatever is *x* has the property *F*; equivalently, *x* must be *F* to exist at all."[3] On the modal view, the essence of a thing is understood in terms of the totality of its necessary properties. Anything necessary to *x*, that is anything which always and everywhere coincides with *x*'s being the case, is an essential property.

Philosophically, several problems have been pointed out with the modal conception. Notably, from the perspective of Thomistic metaphysics, it risks making existence itself an essential property of everything, whereas St. Thomas is very clear that existence is only essential in the case of God. There may be properties that are necessary for a thing to be a thing of this or that kind, for example, rationality is necessary for a man to be a man. However, existence itself does not enter into the essence of anything other than God. One can, for example, imagine a phoenix, a man, or the nature of any other created thing without having

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[2] Cf. "Essentialism," *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy,* ed. Ted Honderich (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 250 and "Essentialism," *Handbook to Metaphysics,* ed. Hans Burkhardt and Barry Smith (Munich: Philosophia Verlag, 1991), 252–53. Both articles focus entirely on variations of modal essentialism to the exclusion of definitional essentialism.

[3] Stephen Yablo, "Essentialism," *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy,* ed. Edward Craig, vol. 3, 417. One might be able to salvage this account philosophically by understanding necessity in this definition not merely in terms of a property that always and everywhere coincides with *x*'s being the case, but with that without which the thing could not be. However, since the objection to Aquinas that I intend to consider presumes that essential properties are simply those that always coincide with the thing, it is not necessary for us to consider this alternative in detail.

any knowledge of whether such things actually exist.[4] Every created thing *has* existence, but only God *is* his own existence.[5]

Further, as Kit Fine has pointed out, the modal account entails that each thing has a virtually infinite number of unusual and extraneous essential properties. For instance, it would be part of the essence of any object that every other object has its own essential properties, for this is necessarily the case throughout the existence of any object whose essence we might chose to investigate. Thus, it would be part of the essence of Socrates that the Eiffel tower be essentially spatio-temporally continuous, or that 2 + 2 = 4.[6] Yet, clearly this is not the sort of thing we usually have in mind when speaking about the essence of a thing.

In contrast with modal essentialism, the Aristotelian approach accounts for essence in terms of a thing's definition. This can be stated formally as: "*F* is essential to *x* if and only if to be *F* is part of 'what *x* is,' as elucidated in the definition of *x*."[7] This seems to reflect Aristotle's position accurately. In the *Metaphysics* he states: "Clearly, then, definition is the formula of the essence."[8] This entails that a thing's essence is the ontological correlate of its definition. Likewise, in the *Topics*, Aristotle distinguishes between a thing's essence, its properties, and its accidents. He argues that the definition signifies that part of a thing that is its essence.[9] A property is something that, while not being essential, can only belong to a thing of that kind. Hence, having the capacity to learn grammar is a property of being a man; for all men, and only men, possess this characteristic.[10] Aquinas uses the Latin term *propria* to refer to these characteristics, although he also calls them per se accidents.

In the discussion of the *Topics*, Aristotle also offers two definitions of "accident." The first is that an accident is something that, although not a

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[4] *De Ente et Essentia,* ch. 4. The edition used is: S. Thomae de Aquino, *Opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII P. M. edita,* vol. 43: *De Ente et Essentia* (Rome: Editori di San Tommaso, 1976), 315–81.

[5] *ST* I, q. 3, a. 4. The edition used is: S. Thomae Aquinatis, *Summa theologiae,* ed. P. Caramello, 3 vols. (Rome: Marietti, 1952–56).

[6] Kit Fine, "Essence and Modality: The Second Philosophical Perspectives Lecture," *Philosophical Perspectives* 8 (1994): 6.

[7] Stephen Yablo, "Essentialism," 417.

[8] *Metaphysics,* 1031a13. Unless otherwise noted all references and translations from Aristotle refer to *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

[9] *Topics,* 101b20. "Since, however, of what is proper to anything part signifies its essence, while part does not, let us divide the proper into both the aforesaid parts, and call that part which indicates the essence a definition."

[10] Ibid., 102a18–30.

definition, a property or a genus, nevertheless belongs to a thing. The second is that an accident is something that may either belong or not belong to any individual thing. For example, being seated or being white are accidents of Socrates as they may belong or not belong to him. Aristotle suggests that the latter definition is preferable, since it does not presuppose an understanding of concepts of definition, property, and genus in the way that the former definition of accident does.[11] It is also worth noting that there is a further sense in which accidents can be understood as opposed to substance or as opposed to genus, species, difference, and property.[12] Accordingly, even rationality, which as the specific difference of man is part of the essence, could be considered accidental in a sense if we consider it as opposed to substance. Likewise, the capacity to learn grammar is unique to men, but it is hardly what constitutes man as man.

In light of these distinctions, it is clear that on Aristotle's view the essence of a thing is understood in terms of what falls under the definition.[13] Aquinas explicitly endorses the kinds of distinctions Aristotle makes in this respect. For example, in the *Summa*, he explains the notion of a property as follows: "A property is not [an aspect] of a thing's essence, but it is caused from the species' essential principles: hence it is a medium between an essence and an accident."[14] Accordingly, Aquinas is obviously committed to the distinctions between a thing's essence, its properties, and its accidents.

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[11] Ibid., 102b2–12.

[12] *ST* I, q. 77, a. 1, ad 5.

[13] The best account of the distinction between a definitional account of essence and a modal one is found in Fine, "Essence and Modality," p. 2. For a thorough study of Aristotle's view in light of contemporary essentialism, see David Charles, *Aristotle on Meaning and Essence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000).

[14] *ST* I, q.77, a.1, ad 5. "Proprium enim non est de essentia rei, sed ex principiis essentialibus speciei causatur: unde medium est inter essentiam et accidens sic dictum." *In* III *Sent*., d. 35, q. 2, a. 3, qc. 1 c. "Proprium essentiale dicitur definitio, proprium autem non essentiale vocatur nomine communi proprium." "Proprium dupliciter dicitur, uno modo simpliciter et absolute, quod uni soli convenit, sicut risibile homini; alio modo dicitur aliquid proprium non simpliciter, sed ad aliquid, ut si dicatur, quod rationale est proprium homini in comparatione ad equum, licet et alii conveniat, scilicet angelo." The edition of Aquinas's *Sentences Commentary* used in this article is from S. Thomae Aquinatis, *Opera Omnia,* ed. Roberto Busa, vol. 1 (Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 1980). Cf. *De potentia,* q. 10, a. 4, ad 7; *In* I *Sent*., d. 8, q. 1, a. 1, ad 1; *ST* I, q. 3, a. 6; I, q. 77, a. 6; and I, q. 54, a. 3, ad 2. The edition of the *De potentia* is S. Thomae Aquinatis, *Quaestiones disputatae,* t. 2: *Quaestiones disputatae de potentia,* 10th ed., ed. P. M. Pession (Rome: Marietti, 1965).

The modal account of essence asks for an exhaustive list of necessary properties, whereas the definitional account is more like a sortal concept, a means for classifying individuals into kinds or sets. As Fine argues, the modal conception of essence on its own is not sufficient to deal with the metaphysical problems of identity and universals, while the definitional account is a highly refined version of the modal one: "It is like a sieve which performs a similar function but with a much finer mesh."[15]

Although Aquinas explicitly endorses a definitional theory of essence, Richard Cross attributes the modal view of essence to Aquinas.[16] There is, however, simply no evidence for this in the texts. Aquinas would, of course, accept the claim that all essential properties are necessary. However, given the distinction he accepts between properties and accidents, he would reject the view that all necessary properties are essential. Aquinas's explicit acceptance of a definitional account of essence allows him to assert that being a necessary property of a thing is not sufficient for that property to be included within the thing's essence. Further, essential principles are distinguished from non-essential properties (i.e., per se accidents) as a cause is distinct from its effect. This is due to the fact that a thing's properties are caused by its essential principles.[17] Accordingly, a thing's essential features are its primary necessary features, while its properties are necessary results of these essential features.

Aquinas's usual manner of approaching the meaning of "nature" is through the etymology of the term. This is, however, derivative, having its original source in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* V, 4. Nevertheless, Aquinas's use of Aristotle's etymology is sufficient to indicate the wide range of senses that the term "nature" has in his philosophy. In dealing with the

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[15] Fine, "Essence and Modality," p. 3.

[16] Richard Cross, "Aquinas on Nature, Hypostasis, and the Metaphysics of the Incarnation," *The Thomist* 60 (1996): 194–96. As I have suggested above, Cross's criticism of Aquinas's claim that a hand enters into communion with the *esse* of the *supposit* requires the presupposition of a modal notion of essence, which, in fact, Aquinas would reject. On the issue of communion in *esse*, see my article "Aquinas on the Metaphysics of *Esse* in Christ," *The Thomist* 66 (2002). Both Aristotle and Aquinas, however, seem to appeal to modality to account for accidents, insofar as an accident is something that a thing may or may not have. Cf. Topics, 102b6–7. For a more detailed discussion of Aquinas's position cf. Gyula Klima, "Contemporary Essentialism vs. Aristotelian Essentialism," *Mind, Metaphysics and Value in the Thomist and Analytical Traditions* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), 175–94.

[17] *ST* I, q. 77, a. 1, ad 5. It is crucial to note that Aquinas explicitly endorses the definitional view of essence in many places, e.g., *SCG* I, ch. 24 and *ST* I, q. 29, a. 2, ad 3. The edition of the SCG I have used is: S. Thomae Aquinatis, *Summa contra Gentiles,* 3 vols., ed. C. Pera et al. (Rome: Marietti, 1961).

manner in which the union of natures in Christ took place, Aquinas begins by considering the possibility that the union occurred in the nature. In the *Summa* the article begins, as is typical of Aquinas's other accounts, with a presentation of the etymology of the term "nature":

> For a clear understanding of this question, it is necessary to consider what a nature is. Therefore, it should be known that the name "nature" was said or understood from "being born" *(nascendo)*. Hence this name was first imposed for signifying the generation of living things, which is called nativity or sprouting forth so that nature is said as if [it meant] "about to be born" *(nascitura)*.[18]

The etymology Aquinas is using here is entirely traditional. Yet, what is important for us to note is not so much the content of the etymology itself as the way Aquinas introduces it into the discussion. He tells the reader that clarifying the *quid sit* of nature is necessary *(oportet)* in order to have a clear understanding of the question. Admittedly, the phrase he uses to introduce the presentation, *ad huius quaestionis evidentiam,* is common in Aquinas. Nevertheless, it is important in this context, insofar as it grants a certain priority to clarifying the meaning of the term within the process of resolving the theological dispute. Until this terminological matter is set straight, an adequate answer to the theological dilemma cannot be attained.

The importance of this introduction becomes clearer as St. Thomas completes the etymology by telling the reader of the historical development of the *philosophical* senses of the term:

> Next, the term "nature" was transferred to signify the principle of this generation. And since the principle of generation in living things is an intrinsic principle, the term "nature" was extended further for signifying any intrinsic principle of motion, according to what the Philosopher says in the *Physics*, "nature is the principle of motion in that in which it is per se and not accidentally." Now this principle is either matter or form. Hence sometimes nature is called form, but sometimes it is called matter. And because the end of natural generation, in that which is generated, is the essence of the species, which the definition signifies, the essence of this kind of species is also called the "nature." And Boethius defines nature in this way in the book *Concerning the Two Natures* saying:

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[18] *ST* III, q. 2, a. 1 c. "Respondeo dicendum quod ad huius quaestionis evidentiam, oportet considerare quid sit natura. Sciendum est igitur quod nomen naturae a nascendo est dictum vel sumptum. Unde primo est impositum hoc nomen ad significandum generationem viventium, quae nativitas vel pullulatio dicitur: ut dicatur natura quasi nascitura."

> "Nature is the specific difference informing each and every thing," that is, that which completes the definition of the species.[19]

In this text St. Thomas's use of the term "nature" to designate the essence or form of a thing is presented as being derived from nature's primary meaning as a principle of motion.[20] From this original sense, Aquinas notes, it was later used to refer to any intrinsic principle of motion and then to a thing's substantial principles of matter and form.

The etymological aspect of Aquinas's discussion presents a somewhat simplified account of the discussions of the term "nature" given in Aristotle and Boethius. Boethius's discussion is brief and clearly organized, so I will begin with a summary of it, before moving on to Aristotle's more complex account.

Boethius's set of distinctions is as follows:

(B1) "Nature belongs to those things which, since they exist, can in some way be apprehended by the intellect";[21]
(B2) "Nature is either that which can act or that which can be acted upon;"[22]

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[19] *ST* III, q. 2, a. 1 c. "Deinde translatum est nomen naturae ad significandum principium activum huius generationis. Et quia principium generationis in rebus viventibus est intrinsecum, ulterius derivatum est nomen naturae ad significandum quodlibet principium intrinsecum motus: secundum quod Philosophus dicit, in II Physic., quod natura est principium motus in eo in quo est per se et non secundum accidens. Hoc autem principium vel forma est, vel materia. Unde quandoque natura dicitur forma: quandoque vero materia. Et quia finis generationis naturalis est, in eo quod generatur, essentia speciei, quam significat definitio, inde est quod huiusmodi essentia speciei, vocatur etiam natura. Et hoc modo Boetius naturam definit, in libro de Duabus Naturis, dicens: Natura est unamquamque rem informans specifica differentia, quae scilicet complet definitionem speciei." Also see *In* III *Sent.*, d. 5, q. 1, a. 2, and *In Metaph.*, 5.4, l. 5, 808–822 and 824–826; *SCG,* IV, ch. 53; and *ST* I, q. 29, a. 1, ad 4. The edition of *In Metaph.* is: S. Thomae Aquinatis, *In duodecim libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis exposition,* 2nd ed, ed. M. R. Cathala, R. M. Spiazzi (Rome: Marietti, 1971).

[20] David B. Twetten, "Back to Nature in Aquinas," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 5 (1996): 215–16.

[21] *Contra Eutychen,* I, l.8. "Natura est earum rerum quae, cum sint, quoquo modo intellectu capi possunt." All references to, and translations of, Boethius are from *The Theological Tractates and The Consolation of Philosophy,* trans. H. F. Stewart, E. K. Rand, and S. J. Tester for Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973).

[22] Ibid., I, l.57. "Natura est vel quod facere vel quod pati possit."

(B3) "Nature is the principle of movement per se, and not accidental;"[23]
(B4) "Nature is the specific difference that gives form to anything."[24]

From these divisions of the term "nature" Aquinas chooses to emphasize the two of the greatest philosophical importance (i.e., B3 and B4) in order to highlight the sense of the term at issue when we discuss the human and divine natures in Christ. In this context, it is B4, nature as the specific difference informing each and every thing, which is being used. Moreover, St. Thomas tells us that this sense is equivalent to a host of other terms: "So, therefore, we are now speaking of nature insofar as nature signifies the essence, or that which is, or the quiddity of the species."[25]

It is important to clarify the relation between the accounts of nature in Aristotle and Boethius, for although Boethius is one of the first to explicitly apply this sense of nature to the Incarnation, he was not the first to identify it as a unique sense of the term. In fact, the account in the *Contra Eutychen* closely follows the treatment of nature in *Metaphysics* Δ, 4. Accordingly, I will now investigate Aristotle's account of nature.

Nature in Aristotle's Physics *and* Metaphysics

Aristotle offers two relevant accounts of nature: one in the *Physics* and the other in the *Metaphysics*. In the *Physics* II, 1, the term "nature" is said to have the following senses:

(A1) "Nature is the principle of something and the cause of anything being moved and being at rest in [something] in which [it is found] primarily per se and not accidentally;"[26]

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[23] Ibid., I, l.41. "Natura est motus principium per se non per accidens."

[24] Ibid., I, l.25. "Natura est unam quamque rem informans specifica differentia."

[25] *ST* III, q. 2, a. 1 c. "Sic ergo nunc loquimur de natura, secundum quod natura significat essentiam, vel quod quid est, sive quidditatem speciei."

[26] *Phys.,* II, 1, 3; 192b22. "Est igitur natura principium alicuius et causa movendi et quiescendi in quo est primum per se et non secundum accidens." For Aristotle's *Physics* I have translated from the Latin text as found in the Marietti editions of St. Thomas's commentaries except where otherwise noted. Marietti uses the text of William Moerbeke. I have also consulted the *Aristoteles Latinus* where necessary. The numbers in the references are (1) to the book of Aristotle's text, (2) to the chapter, and (3) to the paragraph numbers in Marietti. So the reference above, for example, should be read as book 2, chapter 1, Marietti paragraph #3. For Aquinas's commentary I refer to: S. Thomae Aquinatis, *Opera omnia iussu impensaque Leonis XIII. P. M. edita,* t. 2: *Commentaria in octo libros Physicorum Aristotelis* (Rome: Ex Typographia Polyglotta S. C. de Propaganda Fide, 1884).

(A1a) "The primary material subject for each thing having a principle of motion and change in themselves;"[27]

(A1b) "The form and species which is according to [our] concept;"[28]

(A2) "But further, nature taken in the sense of "generation" is the way *to* a nature."[29]

Aristotle's motive for making these distinctions in the *Physics* is to distinguish between things that are by nature and things that are by art. To this end, he explains each of these senses in more detail. Aquinas, however, only refers to Aristotle's treatment of nature as a principle of motion in order to contrast it with the sense of nature at work in the Christological discussion.[30]

In the *Metaphysics* Aristotle gives five senses of the term "nature," but identifies one sense as primary and proper. According to Aquinas, Aristotle reduces the other senses of the term to this primary one: "the substance of things existing by nature," that is to say the form.[31] Of the various senses of nature, this one is most closely related to B4 from Boethius, which is singled out by Aquinas as what is meant by the term "nature" in Christology.

St. Thomas explains Aristotle's teaching by means of the example of the parts of man and his nature:

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[27] *Phys.* 193a28 ff.; II, 1, 10. "Uno quidem modo natura sic dicitur, prima unicuique subiecta materia habentium in seipsis motus principium et mutationis."

[28] Ibid., "Alio autem modo forma et species, quae est secundum rationem." The translation from the Greek by Hardie and Gray renders the passage as follows: "Another account is that 'nature' is the shape or form *which is specified in the definition of the thing.*"

[29] *Phys.,* 193b13; II, 1, 14. "Amplius autem, natura dicta sicut generatio via est in naturam."

[30] On the concept of nature in the Physics and its importance for Aquinas and the medievals, see Helen S. Lang, *Aristotle's Physics and Its Medieval Varieties* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), ch. 1; Helen S. Lang, "Thomas Aquinas and the Problem of Nature in Physics II, 1," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 13 (1996): 410–32; James A. Weisheipl, OP, "The Concept of Nature," in *Nature and Motion in the Middle Ages* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1985), 1–23; and James A. Weisheipl, "The Concept of Nature: Avicenna and Aquinas," in *Thomistic Papers*, ed. Victor B. Brezik, CSB (Houston: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1984), 65–81.

[31] *Metaph.* 1014b17; V, 5, 413. The five senses are: (1) "Natura vero dicitur uno quidem modo nascentium generatio"; (2)"Uno vero modo, ex quo generatur primum generatum inexistente"; (3) "Amplius unde motus primus in quolibet natura entium, et est in eo inquantum id existit"; (4) "Amplius autem natura dicitur ex quo primo aut est aut fit aliquid entium natura, cum informe sit et immutabile a sua propria potestate"; (5) "Existentium natura substantia."

> For example, we might say that the nature of man is not only the soul, but humanity and the substance which the definition signifies. For in this way *Boethius* says that nature is the specific difference informing each and every thing. For the specific difference is that which completes the substance of the thing and gives a species to it. But just as the form or matter was called nature because it is the principle of generation, which is called nature according to its first imposition; so, species and substance are called nature, because it is the end of generation. For generation is terminated at the species of the thing generated, which results from the union of form and matter.[32]

Notice that this passage is entirely in keeping with the account presented above. The specific difference completes the substance, and it is in virtue of this difference that the substance is a member of this or that species. Clearly, this difference is what locates a thing within a specific class of beings and consequently confers upon it a specific "grade" of being. To classify something as a member of a species is to assert that it holds a specific place within the hierarchy of beings. In this process the "target" of metaphysical attention is the nature which a thing is determined to through the specific difference.

The stress which Aquinas places on the metaphysical import of the specific difference in his account of nature should not be overlooked. In fact, the importance of nature in Aquinas's metaphysics primarily rests upon the relation he sees between the specific difference as expressed in the definition and the essence of a thing. "The specific difference is that which completes the substance of the thing and gives a species to it."[33] This understanding is largely due to the fact that he follows Aristotle and Boethius in their definitional account of the essence or nature of a thing.

It is important to be precise about the function of the specific difference in this context. Boethius's account of nature as the specific difference which informs each and every thing simply means that the specific difference is one of the ways in which we can speak about a nature. Yet, it should not be taken to mean that the nature is simply identified with

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[32] Ibid., V, 5, 822. "Ut si dicamus quod hominis natura non solum est anima, sed humanitas et substantia quam significat definitio. Secundum hoc enim Boetius dicit, quod natura est unumquodque informans specifica differentia. Nam specifica differentia est, quae complet substantiam rei et dat ei speciem. Sicut autem forma vel materia dicebatur natura, quia est principium generationis, quae secundum primam nominis impositionem natura dicitur; ita species et substantia dicitur natura, quia est finis generationis. Nam generatio terminatur ad speciem generati, quae resultat ex unione formae et materiae."

[33] Ibid., "Nam specifica differentia est, quae complet substantiam rei et dat ei speciem."

the specific difference. Strictly speaking the nature of man is humanity, not rationality. On Aquinas's understanding we have to emphasize the fact that the specific difference is what informs each thing, thereby establishing it in some nature. The difference considered as a second intention, just like the genus or the species, is a concept, not a reality; though when rationality is used as a term of first intention it obviously does signify an existing property in some individual. Furthermore, the specific difference has its very foundation in the nature which is in things:

> Just as a genus is a kind of intention which the intellect posits concerning the form understood; so too is a difference, and all things which signify second intentions. Nonetheless, to this understood intention corresponds a certain nature which is in particular things, although insofar as it is in particulars, this nature does not have the character of a genus or a species. Accordingly, I say that Boethius does not intend to say that the difference, insofar as the intention of difference applies to it [sc. difference], is a nature, but with respect to what is in the thing itself, namely the quiddity of the thing which the difference completes.[34]

Accordingly, on Aquinas's interpretation, it is not the difference as a concept of second intention which Boethius intends to identify with the nature. Rather, it is the quiddity in the thing itself that is completed and consituted by the difference under consideration in Boethius' account.

Returning to the texts from the *Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics*, we should note that Aquinas finds his own doctrine of the structure of beings as an ordered hierarchy in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. Aquinas's reasoning for this doctrine appears to be taken from Aristotle, or more precisely Aristotle as understood by St. Thomas. It is interesting that Aquinas should choose to cite Boethius at this point in his commentary. References to Christian authors within the Aristotle commentaries, though not unprecedented, are relatively rare. The use of Boethius on this point is important if we are to come to terms with Aquinas's own understanding of the philosophical sources he uses in theology. In this case, although Aquinas refers us to Boethius for the understanding of nature in Christology, this passage from Aquinas's commentary on the *Metaphysics* clearly shows that he sees the

[34] *In* III *Sent.,* d. 5, q. 3, a. 1, ad 1. "Sicut genus est quaedam intentio quam intellectus ponit circa formam intellectam; ita etiam differentia, et omnia quae significant secundas intentiones. Tamen huic intentioni intellectae respondet natura quaedam quae est in particularibus; quamvis secundum quod est in particularibus, non habeat rationem generis vel speciei. Secundum hoc dico, quod Boetius non intendit dicere, quod differentia secundum quod accidit ei intentio differentiae, sit natura, sed quantum ad id quod est in re ipsa, scilicet quidditas rei quam differentia complet."

remote origin of this account of nature not in Boethius alone, but in Aristotle as well.[35] According to St. Thomas himself, the definition of nature which we use in speaking about Christ is to be understood in the same way as it was articulated by Aristotle. In the case of nature it is clear, then, that St. Thomas does not change the signification of the term in light of Christian revelation. Rather, he adopts the traditional philosophical understanding developed by Aristotle in order to illumine the revealed mystery.

The treatment of nature is not merely an incidental exception. Recall that scholars who follow Gilson and Fr. Owens hold that what distinguishes Aristotle's metaphysics from Aquinas's is that the latter has a doctrine of being, while the former does not. On Gilson's reading Aristotle's metaphysics is essentialist, whereas in Aquinas essence is merely a limit on existence. Essence appears to be needed only to make the existence of creatures possible.[36] As we have seen, Aquinas does not have such a limited view of the metaphysical function of a nature. It is true that the nature or form does limit matter, contracting it to be a thing of this kind rather than that, just as the sculptor in giving bronze the form of David excludes any of the other possible forms it could have received when it was just an amorphous lump. But this limiting function is secondary; it is more important that the form gives the thing its specific perfection. What is primary in the sculptor's act of informing the bronze is not that he excludes other possible forms, but that he confers the perfection proper to the form which he creates in the matter.

The manner in which the specific difference is related to a thing's place in the grades of being is taken up in Aquinas's argument for the immateriality of angels, against those who follow Ibn Gabirol in positing

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[35] The identification of Aristotle's account with Boethius can also be found at *Q. Q.*, q. 2, a. 2 c.

[36] Etienne Gilson, *Introduction à la philosophie chrétienne* (Paris: Vrin, 1960), 170–71. It is also worth noting that this view of essence leads Gilson to deny that God has an essence, a claim that directly contradicts Aquinas's position. For a thorough critique of Gilson's claim that God transcends essence cf. Lawrence Dewan, OP, "Etienne Gilson and the *Actus Essendi*," *Maritain Studies* 15 (1999): 70–96. On essence as limit, also see W. Norris Clarke, SJ, *The One and the Many: A Contemporary Thomistic Metaphysics* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 80–84. A similar approach is the attempt to reduce essence to a mode of existence: cf. W. E. Carlo, "The Role of Essence in Existential Metaphysics," in *Readings in Metaphysics*, ed. J. Rosenberg (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1963). A very helpful critique of this minimalistic account of essence is that of John F. Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas* (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2000), 190–92. Wippel cites several other authors who defend the position criticized here at p. 190, n. 37. Obviously, this is a point that requires further investigation in its own right.

spiritual matter as a principle of potency in separate substances. In this context, St. Thomas provides a helpful explanation of the importance of the specific difference to understanding the natures of created things. Aquinas is responding to an objection that argues that everything under a genus is composed of the genus and the difference which, when added to the genus, makes the species. This is problematic because, according to Aristotle, the genus is related to matter as the difference is to form. This means that an angel, being in the genus of substance, would appear to be composed of matter and form. In response Aquinas argues:

> It is the difference which constitutes the species. But each and every thing is constituted in a species, insofar as it is determined to some special grade in beings, since the species of things are like numbers, which differ through the addition and subtraction of unity, as is said in VIII *Metaphys*. Now, in material things what determines to a special grade, namely form, and what is determined, namely matter, are different; hence, the genus is taken from one, the difference from another. But in immaterial things there is no difference between the determining thing and the thing determined, but each and every one of them holds a determined grade in beings according to itself. And, thus, genus and difference are not taken according to different things in them, but according to one and the same thing. Yet, this differs according to our consideration; for insofar as our intellect considers that thing as indeterminate, the notion of the genus is considered in them; but, insofar as it considers it as determinate, the notion of difference is considered.[37]

This passage illustrates the complex role of the specific difference within the metaphysical analysis of individual things. It is the form of the

[37] *ST* I, q. 50, a. 2, ad 1. "Ad primum ergo dicendum quod differentia est quae constituit speciem. Unumquodque autem constituitur in specie, secundum quod determinatur ad aliquem specialem gradum in entibus; quia species rerum sunt sicut numeri, qui differunt per additionem et subtractionem unitatis, ut dicitur in VIII Metaphys. In rebus autem materialibus aliud est quod determinat ad specialem gradum, scilicet forma, et aliud quod determinatur, scilicet materia: unde ab alio sumitur genus, et ab alio differentia. Sed in rebus immaterialibus non est aliud determinans et determinatum: sed unaquaeque earum secundum seipsam tenet determinatum gradum in entibus. Et ideo genus et differentia in eis non accipitur secundum aliud et aliud, sed secundum unum et idem. Quod tamen differt secundum considerationem nostram: inquantum enim intellectus noster considerat illam rem ut indeterminate, accipitur in eis ratio generis; inquantum vero considerat ut determinate, accipitur ratio differentiae." On the difference between species and form, see Lawrence Dewan, OP, "St. Thomas, Metaphysics and Formal Causality," *Laval théologique et philosophique* 36 (1980): 309–10. This article also has a useful section on substantial form.

thing that is the root of its specific difference, and consequently gives rise to the nature itself.

Further, the substantial form of a corporeal thing determines the matter placing it in "a special grade of beings" and, thereby, constituting it in some species. Since the form of material things does the determining and the matter is determined, the form and matter are distinct. However, since there is no matter in immaterial things, that which does the determining and what is determined are the same thing, namely the form, even though we can consider this form in different ways. Hence, in one way we can consider the form as providing the genus, but we can consider it in another manner as providing the difference, though these are but two aspects of one and the same thing.

In this light, it is important to recognize that the comparison of the genus-species relation to the matter-form relation is analogical in nature. This is obvious as the latter distinction is real in character, while the former is merely conceptual.[38] Further, the nature—for example, the humanity—is a formal part of a thing, whereas genus, species, and difference terms each signify in the mode of a whole. As Aquinas argues:

> Genus is not compared to difference as matter is to form in the sense that the substance of the genus remains one in number when the difference is removed; just as the substance of matter remains the same in number when the form is removed. For genus and difference are not parts of the species: otherwise they would not be predicated of the species. But just as the species signifies a whole, i.e., a composite of matter and form in material things, so the difference signifies a whole, and likewise the genus. But a genus term denotes a whole because it is like matter; but, the difference term denotes a whole because it is like form; and a species term denotes a whole because it is like both matter and form together. Just as in a man the sensitive nature is related materially to the intellective nature, for that which has a sensitive nature is called "an animal," but one who has an intellective nature is called "rational," but what has both is called "a man." Thus, the same whole is designated by all three of these terms, but not from the same characteristic. Hence it is clear that, since there is no difference unless it designates

[38] *ST* I, q. 3, a. 5 c. "Species constituitur ex genere et differentia. Semper autem id a quo sumitur differentia constituens speciem, se habet ad illud unde sumitur genus, sicut actus ad potentiam. Animal enim sumitur a natura sensitiva per modum concretionis; hoc enim dicitur animal, quod naturam sensitivam habet, rationale vero sumitur a natura intellectiva, quia rationale est quod naturam intellectivam habet, intellectivum autem comparatur ad sensitivum, sicut actus ad potentiam. Et similiter manifestum est in aliis." Also see *ST* I, q. 50, a. 4 ad 1; I, q. 85, a. 3 ad 4; and I, q. 85, a.5 ad 3.

> a genus, having removed the difference, the substance of the genus cannot remain the same. The same animality would not remain if there were another soul constituting the animal.[39]

Difference terms and species terms signify in the manner of a whole. This is why they can be predicated of a substance; for example, "Peter is rational" or "Peter is a man." Yet, these terms signify the same reality, though in different ways. Nevertheless, there is a causal aspect at work here insofar as the difference constitutes a thing in some species and the species determines the thing to some particular grade of being.

Further, all the grades of perfection must be ordered to some one principle. In material substances all the different grades which cause distinct species are ordered to matter as their first principle. In immaterial sub-

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[39] *ST* I–II, q. 67, a. 5 c. "Non enim comparatur genus ad differentiam sicut materia ad formam, ut remaneat substantia generis eadem numero, differentia remota; sicut remanet eadem numero substantia materiae, remota forma. Genus enim et differentia non sunt partes speciei, alioquin non praedicarentur de specie. Sed sicut species significat totum, idest compositum ex materia et forma in rebus materialibus, ita differentia significat totum, et similiter genus, sed genus denominat totum ab eo quod est sicut materia; differentia vero ab eo quod est sicut forma; species vero ab utroque. Sicut in homine sensitiva natura materialiter se habet ad intellectivam, animal autem dicitur quod habet naturam sensitivam; rationale quod habet intellectivam; homo vero quod habet utrumque. Et sic idem totum significatur per haec tria, sed non ab eodem. Unde patet quod, cum differentia non sit nisi designativa generis, remota differentia, non potest substantia generis eadem remanere, non enim remanet eadem animalitas, si sit alia anima constituens animal." Also see *In* II *Sent.,* d. 3, q. 1, a. 5 c. "Sed hoc differenter contingit in substantiis compositis et simplicibus: quia in compositis possibilitas est ex parte materiae, sed complementum est ex parte formae; et ideo ex parte materiae sumitur genus, et ex parte formae differentia: non autem ita quod materia sit genus, aut forma differentia, cum utrumque sit pars, et neutrum praedicetur; sed quia materia est materia totius, non solum formae; et forma perfectio totius, non solum materiae; ideo totum potest assignari ex materia et forma et ex utroque. Nomen autem designans totum ex materia, est nomen generis; et nomen designans totum ex forma, est nomen differentiae; et nomen designans totum ex utroque, est nomen speciei: et hoc patet si consideretur quomodo corpus est genus animati corporis, et animatum differentia: semper enim invenitur genus sumptum ab eo quod materiale est, et differentia ab eo quod est formale: et inde est quod differentia determinat genus sicut forma materiam. In simplicibus autem naturis non sumitur genus et differentia ab aliquibus partibus, eo quod complementum in eis et possibilitas non fundatur super diversas partes quidditatis, sed super illud simplex: quod quidem habet possibilitatem secundum quod de se non habet *esse*, et complementum prout est quaedam similitudo divini *esse*, secundum hoc quod appropinquabilis est magis et minus ad participandum divinum *esse*; et ideo quot sunt gradus complementi, tot sunt differentiae specificae."

stances, however, the order of different species is established by comparison to God, the most perfect being.[40] Yet, the fact that there is an order to one principle in each case does nothing to account for the *distance* of each species from that principle. Rather, this is determined by the nature of the thing, which is brought about through its specific difference.

Accordingly, whether material or immaterial beings are under consideration, it is the nature, in the sense we are discussing, which constitutes something as a member of a species, thereby establishing it in a "special grade of beings." This is discussed most fully in the context of Aquinas's rejection of the doctrine of the plurality of substantial forms. The claim that there are a plurality of substantial forms in individual things was developed from Aristotle's distinction between the vegetative soul, the animative soul, and the intellective soul. Many medievals argued that since the higher forms of life had all the perfections of the lower (i.e., a man has intellect, but also the motion proper to animal life and the nutritive aspects of plant life), they must have both the higher and lower substantial forms. This meant that each level of perfection required its own substantial form. Thus, a man has not only an intellectual soul, but also an animative and vegetative soul as well.

Aquinas, to the contrary, argued that in each case the highest form was sufficient to account for the operations of the lower perfections. Thus, the rational soul accounts for a man's being and living as well as his thought and there is no need to posit additional substantial forms to allow for these. St. Thomas argues that if form is a principle of a thing's act of being and a thing's unity follows upon its being, then there can only be one substantial form in any substance. If there were more than one substantial form, it would follow that there is more than one act of being and, thus, more than one substance.[41] This entails that the higher form is not

[40] Edward P. Mahoney, "Metaphysical Foundations of the Hierarchy of Being According to Some Late-Medieval Philosophers," in *Philosophies of Existence, Ancient and Medieval,* ed. Parviz Morewedge (New York, 1982), 170. Cf. *Q.D. De spiritualibus creaturis,* q. 1, a.1 c., ad 8, and *Q.D. De anima,* q. 7, c., ad 5. The editions used here are: Thomae de Aquino, *Opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII P. M. edita,* t. 24/2: *Quaestio disputata de spiritualibus creatures,* ed. J. Cos (Rome-Paris: Commissio Leonina-Éditions Du Cerf, 2000), and Thomae de Aquino, *Opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII P. M. edita,* t. 24/1: *Quaestiones disputatae de anima,* ed. B. C. Bazan (Rome-Paris: Commissio Leonina-Éditions Du Cerf, 1996). Mahoney does a good job of establishing the importance of degrees being ordered to some one principle (cf. Mahoney, 224–25, n. 39). Unfortunately, he makes no mention of the importance of the nature or specific difference in establishing a species's distance from that principle.

[41] Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas,* 333. Wippel provides a thorough and penetrating account of Aquinas's position on the unity of substantial form on pp. 327–51.

merely added on to the lower one, but exercises the functions of the lower form in accordance with its own nature. It follows from this that form, as a principle of being, is what establishes a substance's place within the hierarchy of being. This doctrine is clearly presented by Aquinas in the case of the order found in material things:

> Diverse grades of perfection are seen in material things, viz. being, living, sensing and understanding. But always the one added to the prior one is more perfect. Therefore, the form which gives only the first grade of perfection to matter is most imperfect and the second and the third and so on, is most perfect; and yet it is immediately [united] to matter.[42]

Here again it is the form that gives the grade or degree of perfection to a thing that is proper to its species, be it inanimate, animate, or intelligent. Thus, in focusing on the role of the specific difference, Aquinas is also pointing to the importance of a metaphysical account of nature or form and of hierarchy in the account of the hypostatic union.

A final point made in St. Thomas's commentary on this passage is noteworthy. This is the fact that nature in the present sense is said to have a universal character. Commenting on this aspect, Aristotle had said, "Metaphorically speaking every substance in general is called nature because of the form or species, for the nature of a thing is a kind of substance."[43] It is significant that Aristotle views the application of the term "nature" to all *ousia* as a metaphor. Yet, as Lawrence Dewan has pointed out, this designation does not have the derogatory implications of its current usage. Elsewhere Aquinas seems to interpret similar cases, such as the application of lux to spiritual things, as metaphorical *only* when the term's use is considered in relation to its first imposition, and not with respect to the way in which it has been subsequently used.[44]

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[42] *ST* I, q. 76, a. 4, ad 3. "Ad tertium dicendum quod in materia considerantur diversi gradus perfectionis, sicut *esse*, vivere, sentire et intelligere. Semper autem secundum superveniens priori, perfectius est. Forma ergo quae dat solum primum gradum perfectionis materiae, est imperfectissima: sed forma quae dat primum et secundum, et tertium, et sic deinceps, est perfectissima; et tamen materiae immediata." Also see *ST* I, q. 76, a. 5, ad 3. Such passages are not isolated incidents in Aquinas's thought. In fact, they are characteristic of his entire approach to the relation between form and being, an approach which Lawrence Dewan, OP, has aptly characterized, with reference to Aquinas's proof for the existence of God, as "Fourth Way metaphysics."

[43] *Metaphysics,* 1015a11–13. Cf. *In Metaphys.* 5, 5, 823.

[44] Lawrence Dewan, OP, "Nature as a Metaphysical Object," an unpublished paper presented at The Thomistic Insititute, University of Notre Dame, 2001, p. 1 of typescript. The example of *lux* is found at *ST* I, q. 67, a. 1. On the difference between

Accordingly, on this view, "metaphor" simply indicates the use of a term in relation to its etymological development.

Aquinas explains that the term "nature" has this metaphorical use because it can be used to denote the species:

> According to a kind of metaphorical and extended use of the term, every substance is called nature; for the nature which we called the term of generation is a certain substance. Thus every substance is similar to what we call nature. Boethius also sets out this sense. *But, it is by reason of this sense that the term nature is distinguished from other common terms. For it is common just as substance also is.*[45]

The universality of nature in this sense is important to recognize, as it highlights nature's properly *metaphysical* character. Aquinas emphasizes this point in the opening of the present text when he asks why a discussion of nature is included in a metaphysical treatise, when it seems to pertain to the philosophy of nature instead. His answer is, of course, that in one of its senses nature is predicated of every substance and, consequently, it is a fitting object for properly metaphysical inquiry. This is significant, again, because it is the sense of nature which he identifies as relevant to the Incarnation in which this metaphysical dimension is at work.

In summary, Aquinas's commentary on the *Metaphysics* offers us two valuable insights into the term "nature" as it is applied to questions concerning the Incarnation. First, and most importantly, he indicates that the sense of nature that is at work in discussions of the Incarnation has been understood by Boethius and Aristotle in the same way. This shows that in Aquinas's view the concept of nature has its origins in Aristotle and that he does not, at least consciously, shift its sense in explaining the mystery of the Incarnation. Second, the sense of nature in question has a properly metaphysical character. In this sense it extends to all beings as such.

Clarifications: The *De Ente et Essentia*

Before turning to Aquinas's application of "nature" to the Incarnation, it is important to examine the relation of the concept of "nature" to other

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things said metaphorically and properly cf. *ST* I, q. 13, a. 3, ad 1 and ad 3. Cf. Ralph McInerny, *Studies in Analogy* (The Hague, 1968), 39–44, 82, 84.

[45] *In Metaphys.* 5, 5, 823. "Et ex hoc secundum quamdam metaphoram et nominis extensionem omnis substantia dicitur natura; quia natura quam diximus quae est generationis terminus, substantia quaedam est. Et ita cum eo quod natura dicitur, omnis substantia similitudinem habet. Et hunc modum etiam ponit Boetius. Ratione autem istius modi distinguitur hoc nomen natura inter nomina communia. Sic enim commune est sicut et substantia."

terms that seem to pick out the formal aspect of a thing. Aquinas's most thorough account of these occurs in his early work *De Ente et Essentia*. The text, however, raises some problems in light of the account provided above. First, the *De Ente* seems to contradict the *Metaphysics Commentary* by holding that the metaphysical sense of nature is not to be understood in terms of the specific difference (i.e., B4), but rather in the sense of whatever can be conceived by the intellect (i.e. B1). Second, the *De Ente* appears to be inconsistent with the *Summa*'s presentation of the relation between nature and the related concepts of essence, quiddity, form, among others. Once each of these problems is resolved, it will be useful to introduce a brief account of Aquinas's understanding of the ontology of nature, as this will be an issue that comes up at several points in the sections that follow.

Aquinas begins the *De Ente* by distinguishing between *ens* in the sense of a being divided by the ten categories and *ens* as it signifies the truth of propositions. He then turns to the meaning of the term *essentia*. Essence is derived from the meaning of *ens* in the first sense (i.e., as divided by the ten categories). St. Thomas then argues that this entails that "it is necessary that essence signify something common to all natures, through which diverse beings are placed in different genera and species, just as humanity is the essence of a man, and so on concerning other things."[46]

This clearly points to the definitional character of essence and the role of the essence in determining the genus and species of a thing. Nevertheless, while St. Thomas immediately makes these connections explicit, his method of doing so appears to be somewhat confused in comparison with the approach he takes much later in the *Commentary on the Metaphysics*:

> Since that which establishes a thing in its own genus or species is what we signify through the definition indicating what the thing is, from there the term "essence" was changed by philosophers to the term quiddity, and this is what the Philosopher, in book 7 of the *Metaphysics*, frequently calls "what something was to be," that is, that which makes a thing to be what it is. It is also called form, insofar as the perfection or determination of each thing is signified through its form, as Avicenna says in book 2 of his *Metaphysics*. *This is also understood by another term, "nature," taking nature in the first of the four senses which Boethius assigns in the book* Concerning the Two Natures. *Namely, insofar as anything is called a nature which can be understood by the intellect in any*

[46] *De Ente et Essentia,* I, ll., 22–25. "Oportet ut essentia significet aliquid commune omnibus naturis, per quas diuersa entia in diuersis generibus, et speciebus collocantur, sicut humanitas est essentia hominis, et sic de aliis."

> *way.* For a thing is intelligible only through its own definition and essence: and thus the Philosopher also, in book 5 of the *Metaphysics*, says that every substance is a nature.[47]

Aquinas's identification of Boethius's definition of nature B1 with Aristotle's claim that there is a sense in which every substance is a nature is peculiar insofar as it appears to contradict what he says in the *Metaphysics Commentary*, where he identifies Aristotle's universal sense of nature with B4. Yet, in the *De Ente* passage quoted above, after referring to B1 Aquinas immediately returns to B4: "For a thing is intelligible only through its own definition and essence: and thus the Philosopher also, in book 5 of the *Metaphysics*, says that every substance is a nature." Hence, Aquinas's approach is to tie together the issue of intelligibility which is predominant in B1 with the emphasis in B4 upon the fact that a nature is an ontological correlate to the definition of a thing. In the final analysis, although the *De Ente* is less clear than the *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, there is no reason to think that the two accounts are incompatible.

In fact, the *De Ente* treatment goes on to articulate the unique character of nature in contrast to quiddity and essence in a way that refocuses the discussion upon the properly metaphysical aspect of the issue:

> Now the term "nature," taken in this way, seems to signify the essence of a thing insofar as it has an order and an ordination to the thing's own operation, for no thing lacks its own operation. But, the term "quiddity" is taken from what is signified by the definition: but "essence" is used insofar as through it and in it a thing has being *(esse)*.[48]

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[47] *De Ente et Essentia,* I, ll. 27–45. "Et quia illud per quod *res* constituitur in proprio genere uel specie est hoc quod significatur per diffinitionem indicantem quid est *res,* inde est quod nomen essentie a philosophis in nomen quiditatis mutatur; et hoc est etiam quod Philosophus frequenter nominat quod quid erat *esse*, id est hoc per quod aliquid habet *esse* quid. Dicitur etiam forma, secundum quod per formam significatur certitudo uniuscuiusque rei, ut dicit Auicenna in II Methaphisice sue. Hoc etiam alio nomine natura dicitur, accipiendo naturam secundum primum modum illorum quatuor quod Boetius in libro De duabus naturis assignat: secundum scilicet quod natura dicitur omne illud quod intellectu quoquo modo capi potest, non enim *res* est intelligibilis nisi per diffinitionem et essentiam suam; et sic etiam Philosophus dicit in V Methaphisice quod omnis substantia est natura."

[48] Ibid.: "Tamen nomen nature hoc modo sumpte uidetur significare essentiam rei secundum quod habet ordinem ad propriam operationem rei, cum nulla *res* propria operatione destituatur; quiditatis uero nomen sumitur ex hoc quod per diffinitionem significatur. Sed essentia dicitur secundum quod per eam et in ea ens habet *esse*."

Yet, if this text helps solve this difficulty, it raises a further one, as the distinction it draws between nature and essence seems to be in conflict with St. Thomas's explicit identification of these terms in his discussion of nature in the *Summa theologiae* III, q. 2, a. 1. In that text he states that Boethius said that, "Nature is the specific difference informing each and every thing, which, of course, completes the definition of the species. Therefore, in this way we now speak of nature, insofar as nature signifies the essence, or that which is, or the quiddity of the species." The distinctions made in the *De Ente*, however, point to different aspects of the same thing, so there is no real contradiction.[49]

Moreover, these distinctions are in keeping with other accounts in the *Summa theologiae*. For example, in the context of asking whether the three divine Persons are of one essence, an objector argues that since the divine nature and the divine essence are the same, it suffices to say that the three Persons are of one nature. Aquinas responds to this by stating:

> Since nature designates the principle of an act, but essence is taken from being, things can be said to be of one nature which agree in some act, just as all things giving heat, but things can only be said to be of one essence which have one being *(esse)*. Thus, the divine unity *is better expressed* by saying that the three persons are of one essence, than if it were said that they are of one nature.[50]

His concern seems to be that asserting a oneness of nature would be ambiguous, for it could be misinterpreted as meaning that the Divine Persons only agree in their acts. In order to emphasize that the three Persons of the Trinity also agree in their *esse*, we ought to say that they have one essence, rather than saying that they have one nature.

In this respect it is important to note that Aquinas does not have a rigidly fixed philosophical vocabulary. His tendency to identify nature, essence, quiddity, in one context only to distinguish them in another is easier to understand once one recognizes the degree to which he relies upon etymological factors in making these distinctions. Nature is used to denote a principle of action and operation due to the connotations of

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[49] For a handy list of the contrasts between the terms essence, form, quiddity, and nature, see Roy J. Deferrari, *A Latin-English Dictionary of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1960), 358.

[50] *ST* I, q. 39, a. 2, ad 3. "Quia natura designat principium actus, essentia vero ab essendo dicitur, possunt dici aliqua unius naturae, quae conveniunt in aliquo actu, sicut omnia calefacientia: sed unius essentiae dici non possunt, nisi quorum est unum *esse*. Et ideo magis exprimitur unitas divina per hoc quod dicitur quod tres Personae sunt unius essentiae, quam si diceretur quod sunt unius naturae."

the term that arise from the fact that its original imposition was to denote the generation of living things. The term "essence," however, is *taken from* being *(essendo)*.[51] Hence, problems of the kind raised above with respect to the Trinity arise because of the implications usually associated with the different terms due to their respective etymological origins. This merely concerns the suitability of each term in making the doctrine comprehensible; that is to say that for Aquinas this is a matter of pedagogy, not doctrine.

Further, these kinds of distinctions were entirely traditional. The distinction between essence and nature, for example, is put even more forcefully in redaction L of Alexander of Hales's *Glossa*. Alexander is replying to the claim that the two natures in Christ make him two. In response he argues:

> There are two natures in Christ, yet it does not follow that there are two essences, nor is there one essence, because an essence is that by which a thing is, but a nature is that which becomes; and, thus, there is no essence in Christ. For [in him] man is God and God is man, and thus he is one being.[52]

Here we find Alexander arguing that Christ assumed a nature, but not an essence. He seems to be trying to avoid positing two essences in Christ, as this would entail that Christ is two beings.[53] Consequently, Alexander goes much further than Aquinas ever does, denying that the term essence can be properly applied to Christ at all! A similar position, very compatible with Aquinas's own, is taken in the *Summa theologica* attributed to Alexander. In this text a similar objection is solved by noting that nature and essence are the same in reality, but differ in *ratio*; nature refers to things in relation to a process of becoming, while essence refers to things with respect to their being.[54]

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[51] *ST* I, q. 39, a. 2, ad 3 and I, q. 29, a. 1, ad 4.

[52] Alexander of Hales, *Glossa in Quatuor Libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi,* 4 vols. (Quaracchi, Florence: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1951–57), III, 6, 25d (L). "Ad secundum dicendum quod duae naturae sunt in Christo; non tamen sequitur quod duae essentiae; nec una, quia essentia est quo *res* est, natura autem ut quae fit; et non est in Christo essentia. Est enim homo Deus et Deus homo, et ideo unus ens."

[53] Walter H. Principe, CSB, *Alexander of Hales' Theology of the Hypostatic Union* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1967), 139.

[54] Ps. Alexandri de Hales, *Summa Theologica,* Vol. IV (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1948), III, tract. 1, q. 4, tit. 1, d. 2, cap. 1.2, sol. "Ad quod dicendum quod, quamvis sint idem re natura et essentia, tamen differunt ratione. Natura enim respicit rem in fieri, essentia vero respicit rem secundum *esse*. Quia ergo non

Upon closer consideration, there is no need to presume that there is any inconsistency in Aquinas's tendency to distinguish these terms in one place only to identify them in another. Like most medieval authors, St. Thomas rarely offers systematic expositions of his terminology. Rather, he articulates the various senses of his terms only when forced to do so by the dynamic of this or that specific problem. Thus, we find him emphasizing distinctions in one context that he ignores in another. This need not entail any inconsistency, for it may simply be the result of those distinctions being important to solve one problem, but not another. Moreover, the terms in question—that is, form, nature, quiddity, and so on—each have a plurality of senses that include analogous uses. The various senses of nature articulated by Aristotle and Boethius illustrate this point clearly. Consequently, it is in no way unusual that the sense of these terms will agree in some uses but differ in others.

Against a Union in Nature

Having set out St. Thomas's definition of nature and specified the sense in question here, it can now be shown how this is applied to his argument that the union could not take place in the nature. After setting out the problem Aquinas is trying to resolve, I will provide an account of the central texts, making relevant comparisons where needed. It is important to note that I intend to examine how these texts reveal Aquinas's use of philosophy within theological practice itself. In order to facilitate this, I will conclude with a summary highlighting the different ways in which properly philosophical notions and methods are applied to this issue.

The Problem of the Mode of Union

Aquinas's most direct application of his metaphysical account of nature to Christology occurs in his answer to the problem of the mode through which Christ's humanity and divinity are united. What is at stake here is nothing less than the unity of Christ as an individual and the fact that he is both man and God. The difficulty that presents itself is how to reconcile the tension implicit in the Chalcedonian decree outlined in the introduction. It will be recalled that Chalcedon requires two things. First, the integrity of the two natures has to be respected. This is to say that whatever account of the Incarnation we offer, Christ must be both truly human and truly divine. Second, the unity of the two natures has to be

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fuit in *esse res* assumpta ante assumptionem ideo non debet concedi 'assumpsit humanam essentiam,' sed debet concedi 'assumpsit humanam naturam,' quia assumebatur *res,* non quae erat, sed quae fiebat."

taken into account. This means that there must be some one thing or person that has both of these natures.

Medieval theologians generally began by presuming that there was some sort of union between the humanity and divinity in Christ and that the real question was to determine whether this union took place in the nature or in the person. St. Thomas's approach to the issue of the mode of union highlights this fact. In his *Commentary on the Sentences* he treats the problem in terms of three distinct aspects: (1) the mode of union itself; (2) the mode of union on the part of the one assuming; and (3) the mode of union on the part of the thing assumed.[55] This threefold structure is retained in the *Summa theologiae*.[56] While this division of the Lombard's text was not original with Aquinas, it was by no means followed by all commentators on the *Sentences*. St. Bonaventure, for example, comments upon Peter Lombard's text simply in terms of the one assuming and the thing assumed, omitting entirely the separate consideration of the mode of union itself.

Aquinas routinely uses the etymological considerations we discussed in the previous section to introduce his arguments for the claim that the hypostatic union did not occur in the divine nature.[57] Although the treatment in the *Summa theologiae* III, q. 2, a. 1 does not mention any specific author as holding the view that the union occurred in the nature rather than the person, parallel texts make it clear that St. Thomas intends his argument to be a refutation of Eutyches and the Monophysites. On that view, the Incarnation took place from (ex) two natures, but not in two natures. Accordingly, the the human and divine natures are both transformed through the union into some *tertium quid*.[58]

As we saw in the previous section, Aquinas identifies the specific difference as the sense of nature germane to the Incarnation. It should be noted that this view was not original. It was, in fact, pointed out by Boethius himself that Christological controversies made use of the term "nature" in this sense: "Thus although nature is predicated or defined in so many ways, both Catholics and Nestorius hold that there are in Christ two natures according to our last definition, but the same differences

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[55] *In* III *Sent.,* d. 5 prol.

[56] *ST* III, q. 2 prol.

[57] This issue and Aquinas's arguments will be discussed in detail below.

[58] On the position of Eutyches and the circumstances leading up to his condemnation cf. Aloys Grillmeier, SJ, *Christ in the Christian Tradition,* 2nd edition, trans. John Bowden, vol. 1 (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975), 523–26. It is also worth noting that St. Thomas's understanding of Eutyches's position seems to be relatively accurate, although this is not overly important given our present purpose.

cannot apply to God and man."[59] Consequently, this view became commonplace in medieval Christology.[60]

The Structure and Method of Aquinas's Approach

In the *Summa theologiae* article, the shift from the account of nature to the modes of union is very rapid.[61] While this text indicates that the definition of nature discussed in the previous section is central to what follows, it does not provide much guidance in determining St. Thomas's method.

Fortunately, the *Summa contra Gentiles* provides a clearer statement of Aquinas's general approach to this issue. In this work St. Thomas follows a more historical order than he does in the *Summa theologiae*. After having set out the position of Eutyches, the condemnation of Chalcedon and the meaning of nature, he states:

> If, therefore, as Eutyches posited, the human and the divine nature were two before the union, but one nature was produced in a union from them, *it is necessary that this be in one of the ways according to which one thing is apt to be brought about from many things*.[62]

In this passage St. Thomas's method is suggested. If one nature were brought about through a union of the human and divine natures, then this had to occur in one of the ways in which many things can be made one. This, of course, presumes that we can list fully the different ways in which this can take place, and this is what Aquinas proceeds to do. In fact, this is the strategy he follows in all treatments of this issue throughout his career.

From a methodological perspective, the important point to be made is that Thomas assumes that the first thing to do in discussing this theological problem is to establish the relevant metaphysical principles by seeking out a relevant natural analogue. To this end, he provides a catalogue of the various possibilities

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[59] *Contra Eutychen,* I, l.60 ff. "Cum igitur tot modis vel dicatur vel definiatur natura, tam catholici quam Nestorius secundum ultimam definitionem duas in Christo naturas *esse* constituent; neque enim easdem in deum atque hominem differentias convenire."

[60] E.g. S. Albertus Magnus, *De Incarnatione,* ed. Ignatius Backes (Aschendorff: Monasterii Westfalorum, 1958), tr. 3, q.3, a. 4 sol. It is not, however, universally accepted. Cf. Robert Kilwardby, *Quaestiones in librum tertium Sententiarum,* Teil 1, ed. Elisabeth Gössmann (München: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaft, 1982), III, d. 5.

[61] *ST* III, q. 2, a. 1 c. It is simply introduced by the statement: "Hoc autem modo accipiendo naturam, impossibile est unionem Verbi incarnati *esse* factam in natura."

[62] *SCG,* III, 35, 3730. "Si igitur, ut Eutyches posuit, humana natura et divina, fuerunt duae ante unionem, sed ex eis in unione conflata est una natura, oportet hoc *esse* aliquo modorum secundum quos ex multis natum est unum fieri."

for such an analogue in terms of the different kinds of natural unions found in experience. In this case, Aquinas determines that all possibilities for such an analogue are inappropriate. Nevertheless, his first move is to evaluate the possibilities for a natural analogue, and the fact that he moves from the lack of such an analogue for a union in the nature to the claim that the Incarnation cannot occur in that way points to the importance of philosophy within Thomas's account. This method is especially appropriate to the present case, since Christ's human nature *qua* nature is precisely the same as any other instance of a human nature.

Aquinas derives his catalogue of the different possibilities for a union of natures from Aristotle's *On Generation and Corruption*. Yet, in this work Aristotle has no intention of offering an exhaustive catalogue of the different modes of union. Rather, he is attempting to argue that Empedocles's atomistic notion of mixture as a juxaposition of undivided, but not indivisible, parts is not a genuine account of mixture.[63] In the course of his argument Aristotle lists three possibilities that figure prominently in Aquinas's anti-Monophysite arguments. The first possibility is the atomistic account in which mixture is simply a *sunthesis* or juxtaposition of undivided parts, as, for example, when a handful of barley and wheat are mixed together. According to Aristotle this is not a genuine mixture at all, because the constituent parts are not altered in any way.[64] A further alternative is a *mixis* which can be understood in terms of predominance. In this case, a smaller ingredient is corrupted by a greater one, as occurs when a few drops of wine are put in ten thousand gallons of water.[65] Finally, Aristotle's own alternative to the atomists is that there is a kind of *mixis* in which the ingredients cease to exist actually, but continue to exist potentially.[66] Although,

[63] A very useful account of Aristotle's arguments in their historical context can be found in Richard Sorabji, *Matter, Space and Motion* (London: Duckworth, 1988), 66–72.

[64] Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption,* 327a35–b6 and 328a1–5.

[65] Ibid., 328a22–28; also *Sense and Sensibilia,* 446a7–10, and Politics 1262b17.

[66] Ibid., 327b22–31. Note *ST* I, q. 76, a.4, ad 4: "Et ideo dicendum est, secundum Philosophum in I De generat., quod formae elementorum manent in mixto non actu, sed virtute. Manent enim qualitates propriae elementorum, licet remissae, in quibus est virtus formarum elementarium. Et huiusmodi qualitas mixtionis est propria dispositio ad formam substantialem corporis mixti, puta formam lapidis, vel animae cuiuscumque." There is considerable controversy over the meaning Aristotle's claim that the original ingredients "remain in" a compound. Alan Code and Richard Sharvey hold that Aristotle does not have the philosophical resources to distinguish between a compound and a mere aggregate. Alan Code, "Potentiality in Aristotle's Science and Metaphysics," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 76 (1995): 405–18; Richard Sharvey, "Aristotle on Mixtures," *The Journal of Philosophy* 80 (1983): 439–57. James Bogden maintains that the elements undergo a substantial

Aristotle is notoriously unclear about what this might mean, he appears to suggest that it is a case in which at least some powers and qualities of the original ingredients remain, while the ingredients themselves do not. At very least he indicates that a *mixis* of this kind results in a *tertium quid*, which has a nature distinct from any of its original components. The typical example is the mixture of the four elements in bringing about a corporeal substance. Aquinas's own reading of these kinds of mixtures emphasizes the fact that the ingredients serve as extremes, while the resulting mixture is a mean between the original ingredients that is distinct from any of them.[67]

In his arguments against the Monophysites, Aquinas follows Aristotle's threefold account of mixture quite closely. Nevertheless, there is a significant development when we look at the way in which Aquinas specifically formulates the distinctions he makes. The chart below allows for a

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change. In this way they are numerically distinct from the elements in the compound. Neither the element nor the elemental qualities are actually present, though the qualities are present in some potential or virtual fashion. See Bogden, "Fire in the Belly: Aristotelian Elements, Organisms, and Chemical Compounds," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 76 (1995): 570–604. Mary Louise Gill's reading seems to agree with Aquinas's understanding of the text. However, she argues that Aristotle's claim that the elements are not present, but their powers entail that the compound is a bundle of contradictory qualities. See Gill, *Aristotle on Substance: The Paradox of Unity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989). Kit Fine responds that the elements in a compound are neither true substances nor true powers, but some other kind of form. See Fine, "The Problem of Mixture," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 76 (1995): 266–69.

67 *De mixtione elementorum,* ll. 123 ff. The edition used here is: S. Thomae De Aquino, Opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII P. M. edita, t. 43: De mixtione elementorum ad magistrum Philippum de Castro Caeli (Editori di San Tommaso, Roma, 1976), 131–57. On the importance of the doctrine of the mean in Aristotle's account of mixture cf. Gad Freudenthal, *Aristotle's Theory of Material Substance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 11–12. Note that the medieval accounts in light of this position of Aristotle were considerably more complicated. Aquinas's own view seems to have undergone some change on this point. In II Sentences he seems to endorse Avicenna's suggestion that the substantial forms of the original ingredients remain in a mixture. (*In* II *Sent.*, d. 12, q. 1, a. 4. Cf. Avicenna, Sufficientia, tr. 1, ch. 6 in *Auicene perhypatetici philosophi: ac medicorum facile primi opera in luce redacta: ac nuper quantum ars niti potuit per canonicos emendata. Logyca, Sufficientia, De celo mundo, De anima, Da animalibus, De intelligentijs, Alpharabius de intelligentijs, Philosophia prima* [Frankfurt am Main: Minerva, 1961 (1508)]). Yet, this is explicitly denied in IV *Sentences* and later texts. Cf. *In* IV *Sent.* d. 44, q. 1, a. 1, qc. 1, ad 4; *Super Boet. De trin.,* q. 4, a. 3, ad 6; *Q.Q.* I, a.6, ad 3; *Q.D. De anima,* a. 9, ad 10. On Aquinas's development cf. Laura Landen, *Thomas Aquinas and the Dynamism of Natural Substances,* unpublished Ph.D. diss. (Catholic University of America, 1985); Steven Baldner, "St. Albert the Great and St. Thomas Aquinas on the Presence of Elements in Compounds," *Sapientia* 54 (1999): 41–57.

Sentences	*Summa contra Gentiles*	*Summa theologiae*
One nature results without the joining of one nature to another intervening.	By order alone.	Two things remain in perfect integrity.
One of the natures is changed into another.	By order and composition.	Something is made of many things perfect, but changed.
One nature is composed from two.	By a mixture.	A thing is constituted of things not mixed or changed but imperfect.[a]

[a] It should be noted that I have not included the treatment in the *Disputed Question Concerning the Nature of the Word Incarnate*. The divisions given in that work are fragmentary and do not parallel the categories in the works listed above; rather, they tend to fall within the sub-divisions of these different categories. This is partly a result of the fact that the relevant article of that work runs together issues which Aquinas is careful to treat separately elsewhere. The problem posed in *De Unione* a. 1, is "Whether this Union was brought about in the person or in the nature?" Elsewhere Aquinas devotes an article to the nature and the person separately. Further, Aquinas's discussion in this article focuses more explicitly on the various Christological heresies and their condemnations than the other works. The summary nature of the discussion, its tendency to run together issues that are treated separately elsewhere and its relatively poor organization lead me to believe that the *Disputed Question* may well be an early work. Torrell, on the basis of the as yet unpublished findings of the Leonine Commission concerning the ancient catalogues, tells us that its authenticity can no longer be questioned. He dates it as a late work (April or May, 1272) due to the "connection" between the discussions of the unity Christ's esse in a. 4 and *ST* III, q. 17, a. 2. In light of this relation Torrell says, "it is highly implausible that Thomas would have inserted this dispute in his teaching program, outside of any link with works underway or foreseen for the immediate future." Consequently, he sees it as almost contemporaneous with the beginning of the *Tertia Pars*. The problem with this is that it seems unlikely that St. Thomas would change his elsewhere firm position that Christ has one *esse* in writing a preparatory work for the *Summa*, only to revert to his original position in that work itself. Reading the *De unione* as an early work mitigates this concern as it is more believable that it was written at a stage where his views were not yet fixed than to claim that he wavered on the issue during the writing of the *Summa*. This view also fits with the fact that a. 1, as we have said, seems to be less developed than the parallel discussions. Jean-Pierre Torrell, OP, *Saint Thomas Aquinas,* vol. 1: *The Person and His Work,* trans. Robert Royal (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1996), 206 and 336–37. The edition of the *De unione* used here is: S. Thomae Aquinatis, *Quaestiones disputatae,* t. 2: *De unione Verbi incarnate,* ed. M. Calcaterra and T. S. Centi, 10th ed. (Rome: Marietti, 1965), 417–35. In the *Sentences* Aquinas also discusses different forms of union in determining whether the Incarnation is possible. See *In* III *Sent*., d.1, q.1, a.1 sol.

comparison of the different treatments of the ways in which many things can be made one as it is presented in Aquinas's works.

It is easy enough to recognize the influence of Aristotle's account of mixture in these divisions. Since the close parallel between the *Sentences Commentary* and the *Summa theologiae* is not found in the *Summa contra Gentiles*, I will deal with its account before proceeding to compare the other two works.

The Union of Natures in the *Summa contra Gentiles*

We have already seen that St. Thomas introduces the *Summa contra Gentiles* discussion with an account of his method. He is going to explain the ways in which one thing can come about from many, in order to show that none of them can apply to the Incarnation. The first way in which many things may become one is through order alone, as when a city comes about from many houses or an army from many soldiers.

The second way is by order and composition, as when a house results from its parts and its walls. Aquinas argues that neither of these is adequate to provide a *unitas naturae*, because a thing whose form is merely order or juxtaposition is not a natural thing. Consequently, one could not say that there was one nature as a result of the Incarnation, if the change came about in either of these ways.[68]

The third manner in which many things can become one is by way of a mixture. This notion had been applied by Eutyches to Christology.[69] St. Thomas considers this possibility in all his texts on this problem and the *Summa contra Gentiles* is his most detailed examination of it. Here Aquinas rejects its applicability to the Incarnation on the basis of three distinct arguments. The first reason is that there must be some common matter amongst things that are mixed and they must be capable of acting upon one another. This is impossible given the immateriality of the divine nature and the fact that it cannot be acted upon.[70]

Aquinas's second argument follows from the principle that there cannot be a mixture between things in which one greatly exceeds the other. This is derived from Aristotle's discussion of change in *De generatione et corruptione*. St. Thomas borrows Aristotle's example that to place one measure of wine in a thousand measures of water does not constitute a mixture, rather the wine would be destroyed. Similarly, Thomas notes, wood that is brought into contact with fire does not constitute a mixture, since the wood is

[68] *SCG,* III, 35, 3728.
[69] Boethius, *Contra Eutychen,* ch. 7.
[70] *SCG,* III, 35, 3728.

destroyed by the superior power of the fire.[71] This example nicely illustrates Aristotle's claim that, "when there is a certain equilibrium between their 'powers of action,' then each of them changes out of its own nature toward the dominant: yet neither becomes the other, but both become an intermediate with properties common to both."[72] Returning to the example, we can see how bringing wood into fire does not, ultimately, result in either wood or fire, but ashes since, as the passage from Aristotle just cited states, "both elements change out of their own nature." The water and wine example is similar to the fire and wood example insofar as neither provide instances of a genuine mixture; in both cases one element is destroyed by the superior quantity or power of the other element. Likewise in the case of the hypostatic union, since there is so great a difference between the human and divine natures, no mixture of the two is possible.

Finally, St. Thomas notes that if there were a mixture of the two natures in Christ neither nature would remain. This would entail that after the Incarnation, Christ would be neither human nor divine, but some third nature, which is contrary to the faith.[73]

On the basis of these arguments Aquinas rejects the position of Eutyches and notes that the only other ways to assert that the two natures become one in the union is to fall into either the heresy of the Manicheans, by claiming that what seems human in Christ is just a fantasy, or that of Apollinaris, by saying that the divine nature was converted into the human. In this passage these options are simply dismissed as having been refuted elsewhere in the text.[74] Finally, St. Thomas concludes by supplying a series of further considerations against the possibility of the two natures becoming one in the Incarnation. These points generally fall within the divisions set out in the *Sentences* and the *Summa theologiae*, so I will omit extended discussion of them here. Instead, I will turn to a direct comparison of the arguments from these other two texts.

The Union of Natures in the *Sentences Commentary* and the *Summa theologiae*

The problem under consideration is presented slightly differently in the two works under consideration. In the *Sentences Commentary*, Aquinas

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[71] Ibid., 3732.

[72] Aristotle, *De generatione et corruptione,* 328a25–30. The image of "power" is clearly closer to the issue of the Incarnation than the mixture of physical quantity. This is clarified in Thomas's conclusion that the divine nature infinitely excels the human, because the divine *power* is infinite.

[73] *SCG,* III, 35, 3732.

[74] Ibid.

asks "whether there is one nature in Christ or many?,"[75] whereas in the *Summa theologiae*, Aquinas assumes that there is a plurality of natures and proceeds to show that the Incarnation cannot be a union in these natures.

Given the question posed in the *Sentences Commentary*, Aquinas begins treating this problem by showing that the Incarnation cannot be a union of two natures resulting in one nature. The question itself presents two possible results of a natural union (i.e., there would be either one nature in Christ or many). Thomas's procedure is, therefore, to show that neither of these modes of union is applicable to the Incarnation. If the first were the case, it would require that the union result in either one of the natures alone or some other nature composed from both. He notes that the result of the union could be one nature in only two different ways. The first is "with no joining of one nature to another intervening." This could mean that either the human nature or the divine nature is present as a result of the union, but not both. But, if there were only the divine nature, the Incarnation would not involve anything new and it would, therefore, amount to nothing. However, if there were only the human nature, Christ would not be different from other men and, again, there would not really be an "Incarnation" in any meaningful sense.[76]

In the second way, one nature would "pass over" into the other. This is impossible, given the immateriality of the divine nature and the fact that it does not share a human nature in matter. If the divine nature passed over into the human nature, the immutability of the divine nature would be destroyed, while conversely, if the human were changed into the divine, the truth of the passion and of Christ's physical acts would be undermined.[77]

The account above has clear parallels with Aquinas's second series of arguments against the possibility of a mixture of natures in the *Summa contra Gentiles*. However, it is set out more systematically here. The divisions can be viewed as follows:

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[75] *In* III *Sent.*, d. 5, q. 1, a. 2c. "Relictis ergo omnibus aliis significationibus naturae, secundum hanc tantum significationem quaeritur, utrum in Christo sit una natura vel plures."

[76] Ibid. "Si altera earum tantum, hoc erit dupliciter. Uno modo nulla adjunctione interveniente unius ad alteram; et sic si sit divina tantum, nihil novum accidit in hoc quod Verbum caro factum est, et incarnatio nihil est. Si vero sit humana tantum, non differt Christus ab aliis hominibus, et perit incarnatio."

[77] Ibid. "Alio modo altera naturarum transeunte in alteram; quod non potest *esse*: quia quae non communicant in materia, non possunt in invicem transire; divina autem natura penitus est immaterialis, nedum ut communicet humanae in materia. Praeterea si divina natura transiret in humanam, tolleretur simplicitas et immutabilitas divinae naturae; si vero humana verteretur in divinam, tolleretur veritas passionis, et omnium quae corporaliter operatus est Christus."

If the union results in one nature alone this is either:

a. by the joining of one nature to the other and the result would be:
   i. Divine nature only; or
   ii. Human nature only.

Alternatively:

b. by one nature passing over to the other and, thus, either:
   i. Divine nature becomes human; or
   ii. Human nature becomes divine.

None of this appears in the discussion of this question in the *Summa theologiae*, where it is assumed that the Incarnation must result in two natures. However, the second set of divisions in the *Sentences* does parallel the *Summa*, although the order is slightly different. The *Sentences* treatment can be represented as follows:

One nature composed from two:

Sa. A third nature is composed from two without the originals remaining (e.g., mixture of elements); or

Sb. from two natures remaining:
   Sbi. by proportion (i.e., succession or contact); or
   Sbii. According to formation (e.g., one man from soul and body).

The *Summa* article, on the other hand, argues that one thing can result from a union of two or more in one of three ways:

ST1. from two complete things that remain in their perfection (e.g., nails and wood united in a house);

ST2. from several things that are perfect, but changed (e.g., a mixture of elements); or

ST3. from two imperfect things that are neither mixed or changed (e.g., the body and soul).

According to these divisions, Sa corresponds to ST2, while Sbi corresponds to ST1, and finally, Sbii corresponds to ST3. For convenience, I will compare the texts following the order of the *Sentences Commentary*, contrasting it with the *Summa* account at each step.

Sa and ST2: The Incarnation as a mixture

In the *Sentences Commentary* Aquinas considers the possibility that one nature may be composed from two. There are two ways in which this might be possible. First, a third nature could be composed from two natures that do not remain in the thing themselves after the union, as occurs in a mixture of the four material elements. Here we are back on the same ground covered in the *Summa contra Gentiles*. In the *Sentences* this position is rejected because it posits a divine nature that is material and changeable. This is argued on the basis of the principle that a mixture is only possible amongst things that share in matter and that can act upon each other.[78]

The *Sentences Commentary* is paralleled by the later text from the *Summa* where Aquinas considers the possibility of a natural union in which something comes about from things that are perfect but changed. Again the central example is a mixture of elements. Accordingly, if the Incarnation were brought about in this way, it would result in a kind of combination *(complexio)*.

All criticisms of this view in the *Summa theologiae* rest upon the fact that the elements in a mixture are changed in some way. St. Thomas provides three arguments against this kind of union. First, the divine nature is immutable, so it cannot be changed into something else. Further, nothing else can be changed into it, as it cannot be generated. Second, the mixed thing that results from a mixture is not the same species as any of the original elements. This entails that if the Incarnation were a kind of mixture, Christ would be neither human nor divine, but some other nature resulting from the combination of these two. Third, natures that differ greatly cannot be mixed, for the species of one will be absorbed by the other, as a drop of water is absorbed in a flagon of wine. This is even more obvious in the case of the Incarnation as the divine nature infinitely exceeds the human nature. Thus, "there cannot be any mixture, but only the divine nature will remain." Clearly, these considerations rule out the notion of "mixture" as applicable to the Incarnation.[79] Since these arguments have been discussed above, I will not discuss them further here.

[78] Ibid. "Si autem esset una natura composita ex duabus, hoc posset *esse* dupliciter. Uno modo quia tertia natura componeretur ex duabus naturis non manentibus, sicut ex quatuor elementis componitur mixtum; et secundum hoc poneretur divina natura passibilis et materialis, quia mixtio non est nisi eorum quae communicant in materia, et nata sunt agere et pati ad invicem; et tolleretur fides confitens Christum *esse* verum Deum et verum hominem."

[79] *ST* III, q. 2, a. 1 c. "Sed hoc non potest *esse*. Primo quidem quia natura divina est omnino immutabilis: ut in Prima Parte dictum est. Unde nec ipsa potest converti in aliud, cum sit incorruptibilis: nec aliud in ipsam cum ipsa sit ingenerabilis. Secundo, quia id quod est commixtum, nulli miscibilium est idem specie: differt

Sbi and ST1: The Incarnation as commensuration

Another possibility for a natural union is that something could be composed of two natures that remain in the thing after the union.[80] In the *Sentences* the possibility that two natures remain after the union is considered in two ways. The first is by commensuration. Here the two natures are said to become one either because there is an ordered succession of one after the other in time, as the various notes in a symphony are distinct sounds yet are one piece of music, or because there is a physical continuity between the two, as wood and nails make up a chair while retaining their own nature. However, if the Incarnation were a union by commensuration, it would entail that the divine nature is corporeal, since succession and contact are properties that belong only to physical things.

The first possibility considered in the *Summa theologiae* for a natural union is that one thing comes about out of two perfect (or complete) things remaining unchanged *(ex duobus perfectis integris remanentibus)*. Aquinas explains that this kind of change can only come about through composition, order, or figure. Composition is illustrated by the example of many stones that can be brought together without any order to form a heap or pile. A house, however, is constructed from stones and beams when they are arranged in an order fashioned to some figure.[81]

The impossibility of this kind of union is proved by means of three arguments. The first refutation follows from the fact that none of the modes of union mentioned (i.e., composition, order, or figure) are substantial forms. Rather, they are all accidental. Consequently, if the union took place

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enim caro a quolibet elementorum specie. Et sic Christus nec esset eiusdem naturae cum Patre, nec cum matre. Tertio, quia ex his quae plurimum distant non potest fieri commixtio: solvitur enim species unius eorum, puta si quis guttam aquae amphorae vini apponat. Et secundum hoc, cum natura divina in infinitum excedat humanam, non potest *esse* mixtio, sed remanebit sola natura divina."

[80] This consideration does not come up in the divisions of the *Summa contra Gentiles* set out above, though it is touched upon in the series of comments that follow the text we have examined.

[81] *ST* III, q. 2, a. 1 c. "Uno modo, ex duobus perfectis integris remanentibus. Quod quidem fieri non potest nisi in his quorum forma est compositio, vel ordo, vel figura: sicut ex multis lapidibus absque aliquo ordine adunatis per solam compositionem fit acervus; ex lapidibus autem et lignis secundum aliquem ordinem dispositis, et etiam ad aliquam figuram redactis, fit domus. Et secundum hoc, posuerunt aliqui unionem *esse* per modum confusionis, quae scilicet est sine ordine; vel commensurationis, quae est cum ordine." Some, including Sergius Grammaticus, applied such illustrations to the Incarnation in arguing that the union occurred either without order, i.e., by a confusion of natures, or with order, i.e., by commensuration. On Sergius Grammaticus, the Marietti editors refer us to M. Jugie, "Eutyches et Eutychianism" in *Dict. Théol. Cath.* V, 1605–606.

in this way, it could not be a per se union, but only an accidental one. Here we should note that Aquinas is deeply concerned to avoid saying that the assumed nature adds either a new substantial or a new accidental being to the Word.[82]

The second reason is that "unions of this kind do not make a thing one simply, but only in a certain respect; for they remain many things actually."[83] When things are united by composition, order, or figure they remain what they were originally. The stones when placed in a pile, for example, individually remain stones; the bricks and beams that make up a house remain bricks and beams even after the construction of the building. While they can be said to become one thing in a certain respect, nevertheless they remain many considered absolutely.

Finally, a form which is brought about by composition, order, or figure is not a "nature," but it is closer to a work of art. Aquinas's example is the form of a house. This is a result of the art of the craftsman, rather than a nature.[84]

Sbii and ST3: The Incarnation as Formation

The final possibility considered in the *Sentences Commentary* is a union by formation, as a single thing arises from a body and a soul. This is inadequate to account for the Incarnation because the union of body and the soul does not arise from two acts or two potencies, but from an act and a potency. However, the divine and human natures are each a being in act. This is not, of course, to say that there are two substantial beings in Christ, but rather that Christ is both God and a man; both of these terms signify the same being, though in a different way. Further, there is no potency in the divine nature and, thus, it cannot be composed with another thing or nature, as it is self-subsisting being by its very nature.[85]

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[82] *ST* III, q. 2, a. 1. On this point see my article cited above in note 16.

[83] Ibid., "Quia ex huiusmodi non fit unum simpliciter, sed secundum quid: remanent enim plura actu."

[84] Ibid., "Quia forma talium non est natura, sed magis ars: sicut forma domus. Et sic non constitueretur una natura in Christo, ut ipsi volunt."

[85] *In* III *Sent.* d. 5, q. 1, a. 2c. "Uno modo secundum commensurationem vel continuationis vel contiguationis; et secundum hoc poneretur divina natura corporea: quia continuatio et contactus corporum est. Alio modo secundum informationem, sicut ex anima et corpore fit unum; et hoc etiam non potest *esse*: quia per modum istum non fit unum ex duobus actibus nec ex duabus potentiis, sed ex actu et potentia, secundum Philosophum: divina autem natura et humana, utraque est ens actu. Praeterea divina natura non habet aliquid potentialitatis, nec potest *esse* actus veniens in compositionem alicuius, cum sit *esse* primum infinitum per se subsistens. Patet igitur quod quocumque modo ponatur una natura in Christo, sequitur error: et ideo Eutyches, qui hoc posuit, ut haereticus condemnatus est."

In the *Summa* this is also presented as the third and final possibility. In this later discussion such a union is described as being made up of things that are neither mixed, nor changed, but imperfect. It must be noted that the term "perfect" is used in the sense of complete.[86] Hence, in calling a nature imperfect Aquinas has in mind a part of a nature that is not sufficient to be a full-fledged nature on its own, but must enter into union with some other part or parts to form a perfect nature. The example of this is again, the union of the soul and the body. Neither the body nor the soul constitutes a perfect nature on its own; rather, it is only when they are united that there is a perfect human nature present. In the *Summa*, Aquinas's emphasis is clearly on the point that neither of these are perfect or complete on their own: rather it is when they are united that they form a perfect or complete nature. Against this possibility St. Thomas argues that the human and divine natures each have their own perfect character.[87] That is to say, each nature is complete in and of itself and, therefore, does not stand in need of anything beyond itself to perfect it as both the body and the soul, considered individually, do.

The second argument against this kind of union is from divine incorporeality. This entails that the human and divine natures cannot constitute a thing as its quantitative parts in the way that the hands, feet, legs, and arms make up a body. Neither is it possible for the relation to be one of form and matter, since the divine nature cannot be the form of anything. This would be particularly inappropriate in the case of a corporeal thing, which is multiplied in matter, as it would follow that the resulting species would be shared amongst a plurality of things and there would be several Christs.

Lastly, as we have seen elsewhere, Christ would neither be human nor divine if the union took place in this way. The argument for this is that difference varies the species of a thing. This is seen in the example of numbers where the addition of any unity varies the number. Where there is a new specific difference there is also a new species. Accordingly, if the union took place in this way we would have a new species which was neither man nor God.[88]

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[86] On this see the discussion of *perfectus* below.

[87] *ST* III, q. 2, a. 1c. "Utraque natura est secundum suam rationem perfecta, divina scilicet et humana."

[88] Ibid., "Sed hoc dici non potest de incarnationis mysterio. Primo quidem, quia utraque natura est secundum suam rationem perfecta, divina scilicet et humana. Secundo, quia divina et humana natura non possunt constituere aliquid per modum partium quantitativarum, sicut membra consitituunt corpus: quia natura divina est incorporea. Neque per modum formae et materiae: quia divina natura non potest *esse* forma alicuius, praesertim corporei. Sequeretur etiam quod species resultans esset communicabilis pluribus: et ita essent plures Christi. Tertio, quia

General Comparison of the Texts

In comparing the *Sentences* treatment with the account provided in the later *Summa contra Gentiles*, two points of development are worth noting. First, the later discussion gives greater attention to the possibility that one nature can arise from many through order alone or order with composition. Second, it also provides a more detailed analysis of union through mixture. Both of these areas may bear witness to a growing philosophical sophistication and a greater familiarity with the Aristotelian texts on the part of Aquinas. The *Sentences* discussion, however, does have its own merits. It organizes the material following a logical order of progression rather than the historical order adopted by the *Summa contra Gentiles*. Consequently, the issue of a union resulting in one nature is discussed before the possibility of a union in the person, whereas the later work treats the heresy of Nestorius before that of Eutyches. This strength of the *Sentences* is carried over to the *Summa theologiae*, where it is refined even further. Moreover, both the *Sentences* and the *Summa theologiae* have the merit of attempting to embrace all the ways in which one thing can become many within a series of fairly systematic divisions, while the *Summa contra Gentiles* simply completes its discussion with a more haphazard list of considerations. This is probably due to its ordering the discussion in historical terms.

In the *Summa theologiae*, St. Thomas uses much the same strategy as he did in the earlier works, while making subtle changes to his manner of presentation. His approach is, yet again, to categorize the various ways in which two or more things can become one and to show how none of these is appropriate to the union of the human and divine natures in Christ. In this late text he sets out three modes of union and gives three distinct arguments against the possibility of each kind.

However, there is one important way in which the *Summa* text is unique. This is in its focus upon the perfection or imperfection of the natures to be united. The terms St. Thomas is using are the adjectives *perfectus* and *imperfectus*. While there are advantages to retaining a straightforward translation of these terms as "perfect" and "imperfect," respectively, there is also a danger, insofar as this may, to some extent, mask the sense of the Latin to the contemporary reader. The most familiar English use of the term "perfect" has the sense of being exemplary or in a state of excellence. The Latin term, especially in the present context, primarily

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Christus neque esset humanae naturae, neque divinae: differentia enim addita variat speciem, sicut unitas in numeris, sicut dicitur in VIII *Metaphys*." See the comments on specific difference in the previous section.

connotes being "complete" or "finished." In fact, Aquinas uses the term as a synonym of *completus*, *omnis*, and *totus*.[89] Once again, Aquinas calls a nature imperfect in the sense that none of its parts constitute a complete nature on their own, but only in union with another part or parts.

This sense of the term is clarified by Aquinas in his *Commentary on the Divine Names*. Speaking of the application of the term "perfect" to God, he says that we should not understand it merely in the mode of signification of the word *(modum significationis vocabuli)*. In this sense "a thing is called perfect just as [it is] completely done, as we say that we *have walked* when we have completed walking." In this way things which are not finished or over with cannot be called perfect. "But since things that are done arrive at the end of their own perfection, when they attain the nature and power of their own species, from that [fact] *the name 'perfect' was taken for signifying everything which attains its own power and nature*. In this way God is called perfect, insofar as he maximally exists in his own power and nature."[90] Clearly, the use of the term *perfectus* as it applies to the natures that are united in the Incarnation is intended to signify completion in this latter sense.

Although Aquinas's introduction of the term "perfectus" is more of a terminological than a doctrinal development,[91] nevertheless it remains the most significant departure from the earlier works. Indeed, the notion of perfection becomes an important point of reference in the discussion, as Aquinas is concerned to compare the state of the things before and after the different kinds of union in terms of how they retain, or fail to retain, the perfection proper to their species. Clearly, this has important implications for the doctrine of the Incarnation, since it is crucial that both of the natures remain in the fullness of their perfection. Aquinas's strategy is to show that this is not possible given the ways in which two or more things

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[89] Deferrari, *A Latin-English Dictionary of St. Thomas Aquinas,* 779–80.

[90] S. Thomas Aquinatis, *In librum beati Dionysii De divinis nominibus expositio,* ed. Ceslai Pera, OP (Rome: Marietti, 1950), II, 1, 114. "Perfecta, non est accipiendum secundum modum significationis vocabuli, quo perfectum dicitur quasi complete factum, sicut perambulasse nos dicimus, quando ambulationem complevimus; unde quod non est factum, non potest secundum hanc rationem dici perfectum; sed quia *res* quae fiunt, tunc ad finem suae perfectionis perveniunt, quando consequuntur naturam et virtutem propriae speciei, inde est quod hoc nomen perfectum assumptum est ad significandum omnem rem quae attingit propriam virtutem et naturam. Et hoc modo Divinitas dicitur perfecta, inquantum maxime est in sua natura et virtute."

[91] In light of this, I have consistently retained the translation "perfect" in order to stay as close as possible to the original Latin. The reader should, however, be cautioned that in this context it is especially this latter sense of completeness or integrity that is meant.

can be made one. In each mode of change the true perfection of one or both of the natures is compromised. Another development, to which the introduction of the term "perfection" probably contributes, is the clearer presentation of the ways in which many things can become one.

Conclusion: The Role of Philosophy

It remains for us to step back from the details of the texts in order to examine how St. Thomas incorporates properly philosophical elements into his discussion and the role they play. In dealing with the question of whether the union of two natures in Christ took place in the nature, Aquinas makes use of philosophy in two ways. First, he uses it to articulate his understanding of the term "nature." The various senses he assigns to this term are philosophical. This is not only due to the fact that they are derived from the pagan authority of Aristotle, but more important because they are capable of being naturally known and are presented on that basis. This is the case even in the writings of Boethius, where the issue emerges in the context of a work that is both Christian and theological. Hence, within the science of theology philosophy has the important role of articulating the various senses of terms whose objects are capable of being naturally known.

In Thomas's discussion the function of revelation in this case is simply to determine which of the senses of nature might serve as a suitable analogue for the Incarnation. This determination is, obviously, made on the basis of theological considerations, not philosophical ones. Nevertheless, the explanation of that sense of nature is made by Aquinas in a philosophical, that is to say naturally knowable, manner. Nature is to be understood as the *quod quid erat esse*, the specific difference informing each and every thing. This account of nature is known *philosophically* and clearly not through revelation. Nevertheless, the claim that this sense is the one that should be used in discussions of the Incarnation is a *theological* claim made in light of revealed facts. It should be noted, however, that this account of nature is largely a preliminary sketch that Aquinas will refine in the process of resolving various concrete Christological problems.

Second, philosophy not only gives the meanings or, more properly, significations of such terms, it also draws out the implications of those terms, and of the philosophical theories of which they are a part, for the resolution of the theological issue under discussion. This aspect is seen in Aquinas's attempts to explain the various ways in which two or more things can be made one. Here St. Thomas is setting out *purely philosophical positions* in showing how two things can be made one. The articulation of these different modes of union is a properly philosophical task pertaining

to the metaphysician or the natural philosopher. Only once this has been done is a properly theological element introduced into the discussion.

The aim of this classification is to determine the suitability of each kind of union as a natural analogue for the Incarnation. St. Thomas judges that each of the three ways in which two things can become one are inappropriate to account for the Incarnation. As a theologian Aquinas has to hold that two natures, human and divine, are to be found in Christ. This is a commitment of faith, which is, of course, made on the basis of scriptural and ecclesiastical authority. Hence, it is only in judging that none of the ways two things can become one in a nature are appropriate to the Incarnation that a properly theological function is being carried out in the articles under discussion here. What is interesting about this is that it shows the need for a natural analogue as a point of reference in the theological argument. All of St. Thomas's treatments of this issue are concerned with assessing the suitability of the various forms of natural union for this explanatory function. This procedure is utterly characteristic of St. Thomas's manner of explaining revealed mysteries. It is true that in this case his conclusion is purely negative. Yet, what is important *methodologically* is the way in which he arrives at this claim.

In conclusion, philosophy enters into the present discussion insofar as it articulates senses of the concept of nature and spells out the implications of this concept and the theories of union. Theology's tasks, in contrast, are to specify the sense of nature appropriate to the discussion of Christ's human and divine natures and to determine whether any of the various modes by means of which the human and divine in Christ could be united in one nature are in accord with scriptural revelation and sacred tradition.[92]

[92] I would like to thank E. J. Ashworth, Joseph A. Novak and the reader for *Nova et Vetera* for comments that have helped to improve this article considerably.

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On Reshaping Skulls and Unintelligible Intentions

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SOMETIMES, human actions can lead both to good and to bad effects. The classic example at the end-of-life is the action of the physician who administers a narcotic analgesic in order to relieve the pain of a dying patient. However, his medical treatment could also hasten the death of the patient by leading to respiratory arrest. In the Catholic moral tradition, the adjectives "direct" and "indirect" have been used to distinguish those outcomes that are directly intended by the agent and those outcomes that are only indirectly intended by the agent, and as such, are accepted only as foreseen side effects of the agent's action. Moral reflection within the tradition has reasoned that the effect that is directly intended by the agent, the end that is chosen and done by the agent here and now, also called the direct object of a human act, tells us what an act is and what it is not.[1] It is not surprising, therefore that the direct object of an act has a primary role in determining the moral goodness or badness of that act.[2] Thus, in its

[1] *Catechism of the Catholic Church,* no. 1751: "The *object* chosen is a good toward which the will deliberately directs itself. It is the matter of a human act. The object chosen morally specifies the act of the will, insofar as reason recognizes and judges it to be or not to be in conformity with the true good. Objective norms of morality express the rational order of good and evil, attested to by conscience."

[2] As St. Thomas Aquinas noted, the good or evil of an action depends on its fullness of being or its lack of that fullness. Since the first thing that belongs to the fullness of being of a thing is that which specifies it, the primary goodness of a moral action is derived from its suitable object. (see *ST* II, q. 18, a. 2). For discussion, see the two historical commentaries on Aquinas on the object of the moral act published in the January 2003 issue of *The Thomist*: Tobias Hoffmann, "Moral Action As Human Action: End and Object in Aquinas in Comparison with Abelard, Lombard, Albert and Duns Scotus," *The Thomist* 67 (2003): 73–94; and

Declaration on Euthanasia, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in making the distinction between aggressive palliative care and euthanasia, concludes that in the former case "death is no way intended or sought even if the risk of it is reasonably taken; the intention is simply to relieve pain effectively, using for this purpose painkillers available for medicine."[3] Hence, the action of our physician, if he only intended the relief of the patient's pain in administering the narcotic, is a good one because in this case, the hastening of the death of the patient, if it occurs, is only an indirect outcome, a side effect, of his act.

But how is one properly to distinguish the direct and indirect objects of a particular human agent's actions? In other words, how are we to evaluate the intention of a human agent if it includes both an intended and an unintended but foreseen effect? Germain Grisez, John Finnis, and Joseph Boyle (hereafter, GFB) have argued that the human agent and the human agent alone can properly specify the objects of his act.[4] To put it another way, according to these New Natural Law theorists, in order to properly grasp the object of the act that specifies an act morally, it is necessary that one place oneself in the perspective of the acting person. It is the agent's self-description that is paramount in specifying his intentions because this is the only perspective that can take into consideration the complex interior acts that specify and qualify human action. For instance, Boyle has argued that the fetal craniotomy, a medical procedure that involves evacuating an unborn baby's brain and crushing its skull in order to remove him from his mother's body, can be described as *indirect* killing as long as the doctor does not directly intend the death of the child.[5]

Kevin L. Flannery, SJ, "The Multifarious Moral Object of Thomas Aquinas," *The Thomist* 67 (2003): 95–118. Also see Martin Rhonheimer, "The Perspective of the Acting Person and the Nature of Practical Reason: The 'Object of the Human Act' in Thomistic Anthropology in Action," *Nova et Vetera,* English Edition 2(2004): 461–516.

[3] CDF, *Declaration on Euthanasia,* May 5, 1980, no. III.

[4] See especially John Finnis, Germain Grisez, and Joseph Boyle, " 'Direct' and 'Indirect': A Reply to Critics of our Action Theory," *The Thomist* 65 (2001): 1–44. Other works that defend their theory of action include John Finnis, Joseph Boyle, and Germain Grisez, *Nuclear Deterrence, Morality and Realism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 292–93; Joseph Boyle, "Who is Entitled to Double Effect?" *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* 16 (1991): 486–92; and John Finnis, "Intention and Side Effects," in *Liability and Responsibility: Essays in Law and Morals*, ed. R. G. Frey and Christopher W. Morris (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 32–64.

[5] Joseph M. Boyle, Jr., "Double-effect and a Certain Type of Embryotomy," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 44 (1977): 303–18. Boyle defines a craniotomy this way: "In a craniotomy, the skull is perforated; its contents emptied and the skull collapsed."

Here, according to Boyle, the physician who performs the craniotomy intends not the death of the unborn child but the reshaping of its skull. Thus, the death of the child is only a foreseen side effect of his action.[6]

In recent years, the action theory used by GFB to defend the morality of fetal craniotomies has been criticized as being too subjective. As Jean Porter has suggested, Does the account of intention proposed by GFB not open up the possibility that every action, even evil ones, could be redescribed by the agent in terms of some good which he is voluntarily seeking? She writes: "Does Grisez's interpretation of the direct/indirect distinction similarly provide an objective criterion for determining what the agent's intention is? Or does it leave open the possibility of describing the agent's intention in terms of whatever good purposes motivate the act in question?"[7] In other words, for Porter, it becomes impossible morally to evaluate any human action if the human agent is radically free to redescribe his intention after the fact such that his intention is always directed toward some good end, thus relegating the harms that he brings about to foreseen but not chosen aspects of the act. For Porter, GFB make a fundamental mistake when they reject the importance of the relationship between the agent's intention and the causal structure of the act, a relationship that according to Porter "play[ed] a crucial role in traditional moral theology, because it provided an objective basis for assessing the intention of the agent."[8] In the same vein, Kevin Flannery, SJ, claims that "in order [for GFB] to separate off from the compass of the means the killing of the fetus, it is necessary to redescribe the act of craniotomy, calling it a cranium-narrowing operation."[9] Such redescription, according to

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The craniotomy, now obsolete in the developed world, was often used in situations where the large size of the baby was threatening the life of his mother. For details on the use of craniotomies in current medical practice, see Tasneem Aslam Tariq and Razia Korejo, "Evaluation of the Role of Craniotomy in Developing Countries," *Journal of the Pakistan Medical Association* 43 (1993): 30–32.

[6] Note that it is generally agreed that Boyle's position in defense of fetal craniotomies is not significantly different from the positions held by either Germain Grisez or John Finnis. For instance, Grisez writes: "Therefore, according to the analysis of action employed in this book, even craniotomy . . . need not be direct killing . . . provided the death of the baby is not intended." Germain Grisez, *Living a Christian Life* (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 1993), 502–3. Finnis associates himself with both Boyle and Grisez's position in Finnis, Grisez, and Boyle, " 'Direct' and 'Indirect.' "

[7] Jean Porter, " 'Direct' and 'Indirect' in Grisez's Moral Theory," *Theological Studies* 57 (1996): 611–32, at 620.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Kevin Flannery, SJ, "What is Included in a Means to an End?" *Gregorianum* 74 (1993): 499–513, at 511.

Flannery, is "artificial." Thus, one cannot justifiably conclude that the death of the fetus is not an evil means to a good end. Finally, Stephen Brock contends that the basic problem with GFB's position regarding fetal craniotomies is that "in distinguishing an action from its side effects, it is not plausible to go so far as to reduce the action to a merely abstract description expressing only what its conduciveness to one's purpose formally consists in."[10] He argues that one cannot differentiate, as GFB do, "narrowing the fetal cranium" from "crushing the fetal cranium" because "in fact, narrowing a cranium, in the way that the surgeon intends in such a case, is crushing it. It is narrowing *because* it is a crushing; he narrows the cranium by crushing it."[11] In sum, for these critics, GFB's position on fetal craniotomies suggests that the human agent can arbitrarily or, using Flannery's term, "artificially," redescribe his act to evade an action description that is morally bad: "Crushing the skull" would be redescribed as "reshaping the skull." This subjective redescription would not be justifiable.

In their published response to their critics, GFB, using numerous examples, persuasively show that moral analysis that takes the perspective of the acting person is the only account of human action that does justice to the richness of human experience.[12] It is the only perspective that can properly take into account the interior acts that specify human action. Thus, the agent's perspective has a privileged place in moral analysis, though as we shall see below, there are criteria that others can use to verify the accuracy of this perspective. GFB also point out that in the Catholic moral tradition the agent's "subjective" perspective has privileged status because each human act is a freely chosen kind of behavior and should be treated as such.[13] Finally, GFB argue that the "subjective" stance of the acting person does not undermine the "objectivity" of moral reasoning because "each clear-headed and honest person knows what he or she is truly or objectively doing. Such persons know what end(s) they have in view, and what means they have reason, in view of such end(s), to choose, and are actually choosing in preference to alternatives."[14] In other words, the

[10] Stephen Brock, *Action and Conduct: Thomas Aquinas and the Theory of Action* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 204, n. 17.

[11] Ibid., 205, n. 17.

[12] Finnis, Grisez, and Boyle, " 'Direct' and 'Indirect.' "

[13] Pope John Paul has reiterated this teaching by writing that "by the object of a given moral act, then, one cannot mean a process or an event of the merely physical order, to be assessed on the basis of its ability to bring about a given state of affairs in the outside world. Rather, that object is the proximate end of a deliberate decision which determines the act of willing on the part of the acting person." See *Veritatis Splendor*, no. 78.

[14] Finnis, Grisez, and Boyle, " 'Direct' and 'Indirect,' " 34.

agent may mislead others in describing his actions—he may even mislead himself when he reflects upon his actions—but the objective reality of his action at the time it was performed—what he chose to do there and then—remains unchanged and as such can specify the moral nature of that act. Thus, GFB claim that the argument of their critics who suggest that they unjustifiably redescribe human acts to defend fetal craniotomies "amounts to no more than a rhetorical means of asserting, without argument, that the description of the act for which Grisez and Boyle have argued, [. . .] is unacceptable."[15]

Though I agree with GFB's proper emphasis on the perspective of the acting person, their response raises two interesting questions: How are we to know when an agent is either misleading himself or lying to others? How are we morally to evaluate such a situation? In this essay, I propose that the answers to these questions and the solution to the larger problem of evaluating the intention of a human agent if it includes both an intended and an unintended effect lie not in focusing upon what is subjective or objective, but in discerning what is intelligible both to the agent and to other reasonable acting persons. I borrow this insight from Alasdair MacIntyre who has cogently shown that human actions can be either intelligible or unintelligible.[16] The intelligibility of an agent's actions and, I would add, of his intentions is an important criterion in moral analysis that protects the objective nature of the subjective perspective of the acting person. Thus, as moralists, we first need to understand the actions and intentions of the acting person before we can morally evaluate them. We need to make them intelligible. Furthermore, our moral judgments would depend upon the intelligibility or unintelligibility of those actions and intentions. I argue that GFB's defense of fetal craniotomies is flawed because they fail to acknowledge this crucial step in moral reasoning.

I present my argument in three steps. First, I propose that the intelligibility of human intentions depends on at least two things, the narrative of the human agent and the narrative of the human act. Next, to illustrate this, I examine the intelligibility of the human intentions typically associated with three classic cases in Catholic moral theology. Finally, I show that GFB's defense of the fetal craniotomy is unreasonable and thus unacceptable because the intention it attributes to the surgeon performing the craniotomy is unintelligible.

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[15] Ibid., 29, n. 29.

[16] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue,* 2nd ed. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), 209–10. For insightful discussion on how the intelligibility of human acts depends on their context, see Charles R. Pinches, *Theology and Action* (Grand Rapids, MI; Eerdmans Publishing, 2002), 11–33.

The Intelligibility of Human Intentions

As Alasdair MacIntyre has pointed out, the intelligibility of human actions depends upon their context. His classic example is his story of the young man who suddenly tells you at the bus stop: "The name of the common wild duck is *Histrionicus histrionicus histrionicus*."[17] One can understand the sentence but it is unintelligible. What was he doing in uttering it? As MacIntyre points out, this utterance, this human action, will only become intelligible when it is situated within a narrative. In like manner, I propose that the intelligibility of human intentions also depends on context. Here, I focus on two elements that contextualize intentions, the narrative of the agent and the narrative of the action. Also, in light of G. E. M. Anscombe's argument that numerous descriptions of any one act are always possible,[18] I look at the intelligibility of intentions that involve actions with multiple legitimate action descriptions.

First, the intelligibility of human intentions depends on the narrative of the human agent. Consider the following case: At a birthday party, Tom, a twelve-year old takes a pin and quickly stabs the balloon that Lisa, his sister, had received from her best friend. It explodes. When confronted by their parents, Tom argues that he simply wanted to prick the balloon but did not intend on destroying it. Lisa bursts into tears. "What were you thinking?" she screams as she runs out the room.

Was Lisa justly angry with Tom for the loss of her balloon? Our moral intuitions and common sense would probably assert—correctly in my opinion—that the proper response to this question is yes. All reasonable persons recognize the teleological structure of certain human acts—stabbing a fully inflated balloon with a pin always and necessarily leads to its destruction. Thus, Tom's defense is unintelligible. His intention does not make sense. We cannot imagine how anyone could prick a balloon without intending its destruction. In other words, we cannot understand how he could say that the destruction of the balloon was only a side effect of his pricking it. In fact, most people would immediately conclude that he is lying. As we will see below, this arises from the immediate causal relationship between the pricking and the destroying of the balloon. Note however that our response would be different if we learned that Tom had never seen or pricked a balloon before. We would suddenly understand his intention. We would see that his self-description of his action was a

[17] Ibid., 210.

[18] For details, see G. E. M. Anscombe, "Under a Description," *Nous* 13 (1979): 219–33; reprinted in *Metaphysics and the Philosophy of Mind: The Collected Philosophical Papers of G. E. M. Anscombe*, vol. 2 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), 208–19.

reasonable one. We would conclude that, in this particular context, Tom could directly intend the pricking of the balloon without intending its destruction. The narrative of the acting person does make a difference. It helps us to make sense of the objects that he specifies in his actions and includes in his action descriptions.

Next, the intelligibility of human intentions depends upon the narrative of the action. It does so in two ways. First, the particular details of an act help us to understand the intention of the agent. For example, as we will discuss below, the exact dosage of a narcotic analgesic administered by an ICU nurse at the end-of-life will make her intention either intelligible or unintelligible. If she administered a dosage greater than the minimum amount to alleviate pain, we would properly question her intention if she claimed that she only intended to relieve the pain of the patient. Second, the causal structure of the human act helps us to understand the intention of the agent. Here, I describe three narratives of human action: illusory, immediate, and contingent causal chains of events. Each type of act narrative constrains the intentions that an acting person can have and still remain intelligible.

First, there are what I call illusory causal chains of events. To illustrate this type of act narrative, take the following case: Mr. Solomon, a thirty-two year old man, enters the confessional and tells the priest that he is a murderer. He reports that he has discovered that he can kill people simply by clapping his hands three times. When asked to explain himself, the penitent says that a few months ago he noticed that every time he clapped his hands in a particular way, someone would die—their obituaries would appear in the local newspaper several days later. He goes on to confess that the previous Thursday at 4:30 P.M., he decided that he would kill someone, and he clapped his hands. This morning, he read that Mrs. Jones, mother of eight, had died suddenly at 4:30 P.M., Thursday last. The penitent now admits that he is remorseful that he left the eight little ones motherless and comes to ask for forgiveness.

Is our thirty-two year old penitent a murderer? Note that he describes his act as intentional homicide. The death of another was the proximate end of his hand clapping—the direct object of his act. (Parenthetically, it is irrelevant that he did not know the identity of his victim—a terrorist who leaves a bomb to explode in an airport lounge is a murderer even if he does not know the names of his seven victims.) The correct response supported by our moral intuitions is clear: Mr. Solomon is not a murderer. Though he intended to kill someone, he in fact did not kill anyone. To insist that Mr. Solomon had indeed ended the life of another simply by clapping his hands would be an unintelligible and therefore an unreasonable conclusion

because the causal relationship between the clapping of Mr. Solomon's hands and the death of a person is only an illusory one. In other words, it is a causal relationship that exists only in the agent's mind without any correspondence to reality. All things being equal, the death of Mrs. Jones, or anyone else for that matter, can never be the reasonably intended end or side effect of Mr. Solomon's hand clapping. This leads us to an important conclusion: No reasonable agent can posit as a direct or indirect object an end that results from his action if that end is linked to his action by an illusory causal chain of events. To do so would be unintelligible.

Incidentally, how should the confessor judge Mr. Solomon's action? Some may suggest that though he did not kill Mrs. Jones, he certainly intended her death. He really believed that he could kill with his hand clapping and then willed to kill her. Thus he is guilty of attempted murder. In reply, I would argue that the proper response to Mr. Solomon is not to judge his actions but to first question his sanity. Only individuals who are out of touch with reality could think that they could kill an individual simply by clapping their hands. We judge intelligibility before we judge morality.

Note that this only applies to ignorance of the real structure of causal chains and not to other types of ignorance. For instance, take this different scenario: Mr. Solomon takes a gun and shoots Mrs. Jones thinking that the gun was loaded with bullets. Fortunately for her, the gun was loaded with blanks and she survives the attack. Here, despite his ignorance of the blanks, Mr. Solomon is guilty of attempted murder simply because he had already willingly performed an interior act in his heart that is murderous. Successfully completing the exterior act of actually killing Mrs. Jones would have been worse, since he would have been guilty not only of the interior act performed but also the exterior act's bad effects such as making her children motherless.

Second, there are what I call immediate causal chains of events. The example of Tom and the balloon-pricking described above illustrates this type of act narrative. All reasonable persons recognize the teleological structure of certain human acts—stabbing a fully inflated balloon with a pin always leads to its destruction. Another example would be bolting a closed door and locking it. Bolting a closed door locks it. It would be unintelligible if an agent said that he had intended to bolt the door without intending to lock it. Bolting the door *is* locking the door just like stabbing a fully inflated balloon with a pin *is* destroying the balloon. In effect, with immediate causal chains, the two action descriptions are descriptions of the same act. However, the nature of immediate causal chains is learned from experience. Thus, as noted above, the narrative of the agent can influence the intelligibility of his action even if his action

involves an immediate causal chain of events. Nevertheless, once learned, the real structure of causal chains is expected to guide the moral judgment of reasonable agents. To ignore the necessity of the causal relationships involved would make one's intention unintelligible. This leads us to another important conclusion: No reasonable agent can posit as an indirect object an end that results from his action if that end is linked to his action by an immediate causal chain of events. All such ends can only be, properly and reasonably, direct objects of human acts. Again, to claim otherwise would be unintelligible.

Finally, there are what I call contingent causal chains of events. We take another example to illustrate this act narrative: Ten-year-old, Bobby Walker tickles his younger brother, Jordan, who backs into a nearby vase knocking it over and breaking it. When their mother confronts the boys, Bobby claims innocence. He did not intend to break the vase. It just happened.

How are we to understand Bobby's defense? Bobby's action of tickling his brother did not necessarily lead to the destruction of the vase. This was not a necessary causal chain of events because we could easily imagine a situation where his tickling of Jordan would not lead to a broken vase. Rather it was a contingent chain of causes: Bobby's action coincidentally led to the destruction of the glassware. To put it another way, in this scenario tickling Jordan and breaking the vase are two separate acts. The first act did not have to lead to the second act and thus both are separable. He caused Jordan to move. Jordan's moving caused the destruction of the vase. As such, our moral intuitions would be correct in concluding that it would be reasonable for Bobby to call the broken vase an unintended effect of his act. In this case, the unintended effect was not foreseen. However, it could have been otherwise—for instance, Bobby's mother may have told her sons that playing in the living room would result in broken vases—but Bobby's knowledge of this possibility still does not take away from the reality that in this case, the broken vase remains an unintended effect because he did not intend its destruction.

Note, however, that Bobby could also have directly intended the destruction of the vase. In our altered scenario, he could have tickled his brother knowing that this would move him in the direction of the vase causing it to come crashing down. In this case, it would also be reasonable for Bobby to conclude that he directly intended the vase's destruction thus seeing his act as a deliberate attempt to wreck his mother's decor. With contingent chains of causes, the specification of objects is more flexible than that with the two types of act narrative described immediately above. Thus, we come to our third conclusion: A reasonable agent can posit either as a direct or an indirect object an end that results

from his action if that end is linked to his action by a contingent chain of causes. Note again that what would be important here is that we need to quiz the human agent to discern his intentions. We seek intelligibility. We ask questions of the human agent and those around him until his intentions become intelligible. In this case, we would continue talking to Bobby and his brother until we understand what happened. For instance, if it became clear that Jordan had noticed that Bobby was consistently nudging him on in only one direction, the direction of the vase, it would become much harder for Bobby to continue to say that he did not intend for his brother to knock the vase over. To do so would be unintelligible.

In sum, the narratives of the human agent and of human actions help us to understand the intentions of acting persons. Hence, GFB are correct—the perspective of the moral agent is crucial in moral analysis. However, this perspective involves more than just his intentions. It also includes his narrative and the narrative of his action because these narratives make his intentions intelligible. Most of the time, we take these narratives for granted. We presume that all things being equal, a human agent would behave like every other reasonable human person. We presume that he has a generic narrative and that he is an individual who understands the causal structures of human acts. Our moral judgments would then be based upon the perspective of the acting person as he describes his actions. However, this would change if we did not understand his intentions. If the acting person's intention were unintelligible to us—like Tom's self-description of his action in the balloon-pricking example—we would start asking questions about the agent and his action. We seek the intelligibility that we need even before we can morally evaluate his deeds. And if we are unable to attain this intelligibility, we reasonably conclude that the human agent is either crazy, misleading himself or lying. This conclusion would then influence the moral judgments we would make about that agent's behavior. In this case, our moral judgments would not be based upon the perspective of the acting person as he describes it but upon the perspective we conclude he should have had or even did have in spite of his self-description. For instance, in the balloon-pricking example, it would be reasonable for Tom's parents to conclude that since he was familiar with pins and balloons, he must have intended the destruction of the balloon. In other words, Tom is lying.

Finally, regarding human acts that can be described in several legitimate ways, I propose that human agents are expected to intend the action description that is the most morally significant in order to remain intelligible. Take the following example: A man is walking across a field surrounded by a fence with large "No Trespassing" signs on it. When the man is stopped by the owner of the property, he argues that he only intended to walk

across the field. He did not intend to trespass. "But did you see the signs?" asks the farmer. "Yes, I did" the man replies, "but I did not intend to trespass." Here our walker is unintelligible. He is unintelligible because we cannot understand how he could choose not to intend trespassing when he was aware that he was walking across private property surrounded by signs warning against trespassers. Note that "walking across the field" and "trespassing" are both legitimate and alternative descriptions of our walker's actions. The acting person could choose either one of these descriptions to describe his action. He could also choose both. However, barring some particular circumstances that would excuse the walker, reasonable agents would expect our walker to include in his intention the most morally significant description of an action—here, trespassing is more morally significant than walking because it involves the virtue of justice. To do otherwise would make our walker's intention unintelligible.[19] It is unintelligible because we live in a moral universe and we expect other agents to be morally accountable for all their actions.

The Intelligibility of Three Classic Moral Cases in the Catholic Tradition

I have argued that the objects of human actions must first be made intelligible before they can be morally evaluated. This assertion is nothing new for it systematizes the prereflective moral intuitions that are already acknowledged by all reasonable moral agents. They articulate our convictions that the reasonable description of moral acts is constrained by the reality of our lives and of our actions. If accurate, the argument should be in accord with moral conclusions considered classic and well established by the Catholic moral tradition, a tradition that is often based upon a careful reflection of our common sense, everyday moral intuitions. Here we examine three standard test cases often thought to be morally problematic: the removal of a diseased uterus from a pregnant woman, the administration of opioids to relieve the pain of a dying patient, and the killing of an assailant in self-defense. The tradition defends the moral legitimacy of these actions using the principle of double effect (PDE) by arguing that the deaths involved are only unintended—though foreseen—side

[19] Charles R. Pinches, following St. Thomas Aquinas, makes a similar point when he argues that contemporary moral agents presuppose a hierarchy of moral descriptions that often remains inarticulate. He proposes the following imagined conversation as an example of how such a hierarchy functions: "I'm feeling kind of guilty." "Why?" "I broke a promise." "Oh? What did you do?" "Well, I promised Jim I wouldn't kill him, but I broke my promise." "What?! You killed Jim?!" See his *Theology and Action*, 134–36.

effects that do not specify the moral nature of these acts. If my argument is correct, then these cases must all involve intelligible intentions.

In the first scenario involving the gravid uterus, the surgeon removes the uterus containing a ten-week old fetus. The fetus dies. Can he reasonably argue that the baby's death was an unintended but foreseen side effect? The Catholic moral tradition says that he can. But is this an intelligible intention? To determine this, we would have to talk to the surgeon to determine how he understands his actions. He could claim that upon careful reflection, he has come to see that the removal of a gravid uterus does not necessarily lead to the death of the baby. Rather, it gives rise to a particular state of affairs—the exposure of the fetus to a hostile environment—that may or may not lead to its death. In fact, he could point out that he has done the exact same procedure with fetuses who are at least twenty–four weeks old and with these babies, there is a real possibility that neonatal intensive care could help them survive. In other words, in the surgeon's eyes, the surgery in itself does not cause death. The ten-week old fetus dies because of its developmental immaturity. Basically, here the surgeon justifies his intention by claiming that his actions involve a contingent causal chain of events. Thus, he is able to distinguish between the act of removing the uterus and the event of the baby dying. He causes the first while the immaturity of the baby causes the second. Thus, he can intend the first act without directly intending the second act.

At this point, we should re-emphasize that the causal structure of the act does not determine the moral quality of the act. It simply constrains the reasonability of the agent's intention and makes it intelligible or unintelligible to other acting persons. For instance, in this case, in performing the procedure of extracting the gravid uterus, the surgeon may either be an abortionist or a healer. It all depends upon what he desires through his actions, and we would have to ascertain this by questioning him about his intention until it is intelligible. Furthermore, intelligible intentions are manifested in intelligible actions. Did the surgeon try all other remedies before surgery? If the cancer was not very aggressive, did he suggest that the woman wait as long as possible before undergoing the hysterectomy? All of these actions would buttress the surgeon's claim that he only intended the healing of the patient. His intention would be intelligible, and in this case, he would be morally justified in performing the procedure because the principle of double effect would apply.[20]

[20] Incidentally, this argument can also be used in the moral debate over salpingostomy where the surgeon slits open the affected fallopian tube to scrape out the ectopic embryo. Some have argued that here the death of the embryo is only a side effect because what was directly intended was the preservation of the mother's life and

In our second classic scenario involving the administration of a narcotic analgesic by an ICU nurse who intends to alleviate the pain of a dying patient without intending to hasten his death, the act is justified in the tradition by the claim that the death of the individual is a foreseen but unintended side effect. Again, is this intelligible? I would suggest that a first-level causal analysis reveals that the act is part of a contingent chain of causes. Administration of the drug—usually morphine—leads to pain relief by modulating the activity of neurons in the pain centers of the central nervous system. However, this also leads to a state of affairs—the presence of the drug in the respiratory center of the brain stem—that may or may not lead to the death of the patient by terminally sedating him and depressing his breathing rate. One could easily imagine another drug that specifically inhibits morphine's action in those parts of the brain that regulate respiration without affecting its analgesic, or pain-controlling, efficacy. Thus the ICU nurse could make a case for the intelligibility of her intention. She intended to alleviate the pain of her patient. Yes, she knew that he could enter terminal sedation but this was something she did not directly intend. Note that again an intelligible intention would be manifested in intelligible action. Did the nurse administer the minimum dose of narcotic to alleviate pain? Did she use the opioid as a treatment of last resort? All of these actions would indicate that the nurse was acting reasonably. The nurse's intentions would be intelligible, and again, in this case, her action would be morally justified because the principle of double effect would apply. (Incidentally, this conclusion is supported by recent data that suggest that levels

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the fertility of one of her fallopian tubes. However, in light of the argument presented in this essay, I would argue that this is unintelligible. Scraping out the ectopic embryo is the same thing as dismembering the embryo and is therefore the same thing as killing the embryo. One could not intelligibly intend the dismembering of an embryo without also intending its death. Contrast this with a salpingectomy where the surgeon removes the portion of the fallopian tube that is affected by the ectopic pregnancy. Here, the surgeon intends only the removal of the affected tube. This procedure then exposes the embryo to a hostile environment where it is unable to survive. Therefore, like in the hysterectomy of the gravid uterus case, there are two separate events. There is the removal of the affected fallopian tube and then the death of the ectopic embryo. The surgeon causes the first. The immaturity of the embryo causes the second. Like the hysterectomy described in the text, it is therefore intelligible for the surgeon to intend the first act without intending the second act since he is only the direct cause of the first and not of the second. Note that the Magisterium has not yet ruled on the question of salpingostomies and orthodox Catholic theologians have argued for and against this procedure. For a summary of the debate, see the two essays by William E. May and Albert S. Moraczewski, OP, in "The Ethics of Treating Ectopic Pregnancy," *Ethics and Medics* 23 (1998): 3–4.

of morphine and other opioids that alleviate pain, contrary to much anecdotal information, do not hasten death.[21] In fact, some studies show that terminal sedation may even prolong life slightly.)[22]

Finally, we have the paradigmatic case of self-defense, where one shoots and kills an attacker. First, it should be obvious that one's act of shooting another does not necessarily lead to the assailant's death. There have been many instances where wounding the individual is enough to stop the attack. Thus, acts of shooting in self-defense generically considered involve a contingent chain of causes where the agent may legitimately and reasonably claim that the death of the attacker was an unintended side effect of his act of self-defense. However, the intelligibility of a human action has to be taken in a case by case basis because it depends upon a dynamic interplay of the agent's intention, his narrative, and the narrative of his action. Every act is a particular act with its own particular narrative. Consider four different scenarios.

First, take the case of a woman jogging in Central Park who shoots her would-be rapist and kills him. Recently the media had been reporting the story that there is a serial rapist who has raped several women in Central Park. When questioned, the woman admits that she was extremely frightened when her assailant jumped her, and in self-defense, she shot him. "Did you intend to shoot him in the head?" "No," she claims. "He jumped me and I just shot him. I was so nervous, I didn't think. I just shot him." Here, I think, it is intelligible for this woman to claim that she did not intend the assailant's death. She simply shot him. The principle of double effect would apply.

Contrast this with our second case. Here, the woman belongs to the National Rifle Association and is a crack-shot. The media has not reported

[21] In a personal communication, Dr. Susan B. LeGrand of the Harry R. Horvitz Center for Palliative Medicine in Cleveland, OH, notes that this comment is not only well documented but also observational. It is well established that patients who are not opioid-naive develop significant tolerance to respiratory depression and will manifest sedation first. Second, pain is a potent stimulus to respiration and antagonizes the depressant effects of morphine. Third, a study evaluated the effect of high-dose morphine in hospice patients and found no effect on life expectancy. For details, see the following papers: K. Foley, "Changing concepts of tolerance to opioids," in *Current and Emerging Issues in Cancer Pain: Research and Practice* (New York: Raven Press, 1993); F. M. Borgbjerg, et al. "Experimental Pain stimulates respiration and attenuates morphine-induced respiratory depression: a controlled study in human volunteers," *Pain* 64 (1996): 123–28; and M. Bercovitch, et al. "High dose morphine use in the hospice setting. A database survey of patient characteristics and effect on life-expectancy," *Cancer* 86 (1999): 871–77. I thank Dr. LeGrand for her response.

[22] See J. Lynn, "Letter to the Editor," *New England Journal of Medicine* 338 (1998): 1230.

on a serial rapist. In this scenario, the assailant does not surprise her. He confronts her with a gun and threatens her. In response, she grabs the gun and shoots him in the head. When queried, she admits that she wanted to blow his head off. Here, it would be unintelligible for this woman to claim that she only intended to stop the assailant and did not intend his death. "But why didn't you shoot him in the leg, or in the arm? Wouldn't that have stopped him?" we would ask. Without reasonable responses to these questions, this woman's intention would not be intelligible. We would conclude that it is not reasonable for her to claim either that she did not intend the death of her assailant or that the death of her assailant was only a foreseen consequence of her action. Thus, the principle of double effect would not apply. We may even suspect that she was lying and that she directly intended to kill him as an end in itself. Further questioning would be needed to verify or to disprove this suspicion.[23]

Third, there is the case of a woman who has been kidnapped by a rapist. He torments her and slowly tortures her. He tells her that he will kill her. As part of his tormenting and taunting, he dares her to shoot him in the head with a rifle he has secured to the middle of his forehead. She shoots him and he dies.[24] Question: Can this woman claim that the death of her assailant was an unintended but foreseen consequence of her action? All things being equal, I would say no. Because of the act narrative involved, it would be unintelligible for this woman to claim that his death was only a side effect. Here, "shooting the man to disarm him" and "killing the man" are descriptions of the same act because these two events involve an immediate causal chain of events and are related in the same way that "pricking a balloon" and "destroying the balloon" are related. Thus, because of the act narrative involved, it would be reasonable for us to conclude that the victim had chosen the killing of the assailant as a means of defending herself. Thus, the PDE would not apply.

Steven A. Long has recently argued that for St. Thomas, one can knowingly choose to kill another as long as this killing is a means toward self-defense and not an end in itself.[25] He suggests that when the private citizen deliberately deploys a lethal means when this is the only reasonable

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[23] Christopher Kaczor proposes four criteria that may be used to distinguish intention from simple foresight. These could be used to ascertain if the woman intended to kill her assailant as an end in itself. See his essay, "Distinguishing Intention from Foresight: What is Included in a Means to an End?" *International Philosophical Quarterly* 41 (2001): 77–89.

[24] I thank John Berkman for proposing this scenario.

[25] Steven A. Long, "A Brief Disquisition Regarding the Nature of the Object of the Moral Act According to St. Thomas Aquinas," *The Thomist* 67 (2003): 45–71.

recourse in a just defense, the act for St. Thomas is still only an act of self-defense because "in the case of just lethal defense by a private party, the lethal act of defense is naturally ordered to the end of just defense such that there is only one defining and formally containing species, and that is the species of defense derived from the end."[26] To further illustrate his position, Long asks us to consider the heart surgeon cutting open a patient on the operating table. Were he to choose to cut open the chest as an end *simpliciter*—as though it were good in itself—then Long correctly concludes that the act would not be justifiable. However, here the surgeon's action is justifiable because it is ordered to the end of health. The laying open of the chest is a medical act rather than merely an act of carnage that can be intended as a means because it lies within the genus of medical acts. Its species is medicinal. In a footnote, Long adds that the surgical procedure is medicinal because it is "an act required by and ordered to those medicinal acts in heart surgery which cure rather than harm."[27] But if this is the case, does this argument not also justify fetal craniotomies? Clearly, fetal craniotomies are acts required by and ordered to those medicinal acts in obstetrics and gynecological practice that cure rather than harm a mother whose child is stuck in her birth canal. In light of Long's argument, could the ob-gyn not justify his use of a craniotomy by proposing that in the particular clinical emergency where a fetal craniotomy is required, he cracks open the fetal skull as a lethal means that is ordered to the medicinal end of saving the life of a mother whose child is stuck in her birth canal? Using Long's argument, I think he can. Thus, I find Long's position problematic because his notion of acts being ordered to particular ends is not clearly defined. In contradiction to St. Paul's prohibition (cf. Rom 3:8), it appears to justify therapeutic abortions as long as they are ordered to or proportioned toward good medicinal ends by conventional medical practice.

Finally, we move to our fourth and last self-defense case. Let us suppose that a woman's life is threatened by a rapist. The person whose life is threatened shoots the assailant in the body but the assailant is wearing a bullet proof vest and in fact can be stopped from continuing his attack only by shooting him in the head.[28] Can the victim shoot the rapist in the head and claim that his death is only a side effect? It depends.

For instance, the woman who shot the assailant could say, "I just kept on shooting him. I shot him in the chest. Nothing happened. So I kept shooting. I shot him in the arm and I shot him in the head." "Did you want to

[26] Ibid., 58.

[27] Ibid., 66, n. 30.

[28] I thank Professor William E. May for proposing this scenario.

kill him?" we ask. "No, I just kept on shooting to stop him." Here, the woman's intention would be intelligible. The shooter did not intend the death of the assailant. She just kept shooting and it was incidental that she shot him in the head. This is similar to the first self-defense scenario described above. Contrast this with this another dialogue from the woman: "I knew that he was wearing a bullet proof vest so I aimed for his head." "Did you know that your shooting him would kill him?" we ask. "Actually, I didn't think about it. I just shot him where I could." Here, again, I think this is intelligible. She just shot him in the head. Again, she did not intend his death. It was a side effect. Now take a third dialogue from the woman: "I knew that he was wearing a bullet proof vest so I aimed for his head." "Did you know that your shooting him would kill him?" "Yes, but it was only an unintended but foreseen side effect." In this case, the woman's last response makes her intention unintelligible. We would ask: "How could she not have intended the death of the person if she knew that she was killing him by shooting him in the head?" Like the case described above of the woman who shoots her assailant with a rifle secured to his head, we would reasonably suspect that this woman had chosen the death of her attacker as a means to defending her life.[29] Thus, it could not be a side effect and the PDE would not apply. Again, the intelligibility of human intentions depends upon context. It depends upon the narrative.

The Fetal Craniotomy is *Not* Indirect Killing: The Unintelligibility of GFB's Argument

In light of our discussion so far, I submit that the description of the craniotomy for which GFB have argued is unacceptable because the intention it attributes to the surgeon is unintelligible. It is an abstraction that

[29] As Martin Rhonheimer observes, the decisive characteristic of the structure of action that is *praeter intentionem* seems to be the fact that the agent in acting never even comes to the question, "May I or may I not?" and thus never even comes to the choosing of a means. Consider the classic example taken from Cajetan. Here you have a rider who is fleeing for his life on horseback across a narrow bridge and finds his way blocked by a child. He runs over the child. Is this action morally permissible? It depends. Rhonheimer argues that the rider cannot ask himself, "May I, or may I not, ride over the child?" As soon as he does so, he would be choosing the killing of the child as a means for his own survival. This would be morally reprehensible. However, in a real-life situation, Rhonheimer points out that the rider would not even have a chance to ask this question. Everything happens within seconds. He simply wants to escape over the bridge. Thus, the killing of the child whom he sees and whom he tries by reflex to avoid remains outside the intentional structure of the action. For discussion, see Rhonheimer's *Natural Law and Practical Reason*, trans. Gerald Malsbary (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), 467–70.

does not appreciate the context of the surgeon's actions. Imagine a conversation with the surgeon who is attempting to justify his intention in the way that GFB suggest. When asked to describe his action, he claims that he was reshaping the skull of the baby to save the mother's life and did not directly intend the death of the fetus:

> "I am sorry but the child died," the surgeon says.
> "What happened?" we ask him.
> "Well, the fetus got stuck in the birth canal during delivery, I had to reshape its head, and he died."
> "What exactly does this 'reshaping its head' involve?" we ask him.
> "Well, it involves the evacuation of the baby's head and the crushing of its skull." "Would this procedure kill the child?"
> "Oh, absolutely," he replies, "evacuating anyone's head and crushing his skull kills him."
> "But you claim that the baby's death was only a side effect?"
> "Yes," the surgeon asserts.

I would submit that this conversation is unintelligible. It is unintelligible because the act narrative of a fetal craniotomy involves an immediate causal chain of events—evacuating a person's brain and crushing his skull is causing the death of the person—and we expect reasonable agents to intend certain things about these types of actions. We just don't understand this surgeon and his intention. "What was he thinking?" we would wonder. "How can he say that the death of the child was only a side effect when he sucked out its brain and crushed its skull?" We may even try to see if there are any other facets of his narrative that may explain his actions. Was he ignorant of the effects of crushing a fetal skull? We would continue asking him questions seeking intelligibility. Ultimately, however, I claim that we simply would not understand. We would conclude that he either is crazy—and we could determine this in other ways independent of the craniotomy—or we would claim that he is either misleading himself or lying and intentionally redescribing his action to avoid its moral implications.

The problem with GFB's argument is that it simply does not work in real life. It is difficult—if not impossible—to imagine an intelligible conversation with this surgeon that could justify his intention in the way that GFB suggest. In other words, we could not imagine a context where the surgeon could claim that the death of the fetus was a side effect, an unintended consequence of his actions, after he admits that he sucked out its brain and crushed its skull. We cannot do this because of our common-sense notion that we are morally responsible for the physical acts that are the foundation of our acts described in the moral order. Or, as Steven A. Long has put it in scholastic terminology, "the essential

matter of the act must always be included in the moral object, and is one—albeit only one—causal element in determining the moral species. The object is formal with respect to the individual act but this does not mean that its essential matter is or may be excluded from its definition."[30] Thus, the fetal craniotomy is *not* indirect killing because to claim this would make no sense to any reasonable acting person. The intention involved is unintelligible and thus cannot be used as the basis for moral reasoning as GFB would have us want to do.

Conclusion

In this essay, I have argued that reasonable action descriptions and reasonable intentions need to be intelligible. Reasonable descriptions of moral acts, like the products of all virtuous acts, arise from a dynamic interaction between the acting person and the external reality of his acts. Therefore they consist of both subjective and objective elements involving the narrative of the human agent and the narrative of the human act. In light of this, GFB's argument in defense of fetal craniotomies is flawed because the intention it attributes to the surgeon performing the craniotomy is unintelligible. It is based on an abstract conceptual analysis of human actions that divorces the action from its human context. Yes, the perspective of the acting person is crucial in moral analysis, but this perspective involves more than just his formulated intention. The acting person lives in a community of other acting persons and his actions and intentions have to be made intelligible to himself and to his neighbors. It is an unintelligible intention to claim that the death of the fetus is only a side effect in a fetal craniotomy involving the evacuation and crushing of the baby's skull because this could not be defended in an ordinary conversation that is intelligible to reasonable acting persons.[31] NOV

[30] Long, "Brief Disquisition," 49.

[31] I would like to thank John Berkman, William E. May, Austin G. Murphy, OSB, two anonymous reviewers, and my Dominican brothers, Thomas Joseph White, Romanus Cessario, OP, Basil Cole, OP, and Robert Plich, OP for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of the manuscript.

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Response to Jensen on the Moral Object

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STEVEN JENSEN'S recent criticism of my treatment of the nature of moral species and object in the October 2003 issue of *The Thomist* is instructive and helpful in raising certain foundational queries. However, there are definitory points whose character—owing both to the native complexity of the question and to certain logicist presuppositions—he fails to render sufficiently. I should like to focus attention on the controverted proposition of St. Thomas that "what is outside intention does not give species." In doing so, the root difficulties with the analysis proferred by Jensen—and with the common logicist interpretation of Aquinas's teaching—become clearer. Further, these points distinctively illumine important aspects of the nature of and distinction between defense and the death penalty.

About this proposition of Aquinas that the moral act does not receive species from what is outside intention,[1] there are three salient and definitory points to make. *The first point* cuts to the heart of moral action theory, because it establishes the primary sense of the human act. It is quite clear that for Thomas, the unit of currency of his analysis of human acts is the case wherein the moral object is naturally ordered to the end. Cases where the moral object *is not* naturally ordered to the end—complex acts—are, in fact, cases in which the putative moral object is actually a separate act with its own distinct moral species. For example, the thief who pursues illicit sexual intimacies with a woman primarily to get free access to her rooms, her safe, her jewels, papers, and other valuables, can be viewed as performing one complex act in which adultery is

[1] *ST* II-II, q. 64, a. 7, resp. "*Morales autem actus recipiunt speciem secundum id quod intenditur,* non autem ab eo quod est praeter intentionem, cum sit per accidens."

further ordered to theft. Aquinas would say of such an instance[2] that this individual is more thief than adulterer. Nonetheless, it is accidental to adultery that it should be ordered to theft, as adultery is in no way definitively related to theft. So, in the complex act there are really two different acts with two different moral species. One act is more formal than the other (in this case, theft), but the point is that the unit of analysis is the case in which the object is naturally ordered to the end. If we do not understand acts in which the object is naturally ordered to the end, then we cannot hope to understand the nature of a complex act. This emphasis of Thomas upon the natural ordering of object to end establishes the necessary role of natural teleology with respect to the determination of the moral species.[3] Hence it is a point about Thomas's writing that all proponents of a logicist reading of the moral act have tended to underemphasize or depreciate. So, to repeat the first point: The primary sense of the human act for Thomas is unequivocally that of a human act in which the moral object is naturally ordered to the end.

This leads to *the second point*. In saying that "what is outside intention does not give the species," the species referred to by Thomas is the definitive and containing species, which is—in all cases wherein the object is naturally ordered to the end—*derived from the end*. Assuredly this does not mean that the species derived from the object is not contained within the species derived from the end, but rather it does mean that the species derived from the object is *essentially defined* by the species derived from the end, *and not the other way around*. To stress the definitive moral species is not to be an Abelardian, or to refuse to acknowledge that there is, in the primary sense of the human act, a species derived from the object. Rather, it is to stress that which is definitorily primary and originative rather than that which is secondary and derivative. And, where the object is naturally ordered to the end, the species that is primary and definitive—which is most formal, and containing[4]—is that derived from the end. One notes that Thomas expressly argues that "The end is last in execution, but first in the intention of the reason, *according to which moral actions receive their species*" (my emphasis) in responding to the objection that the difference that derives from the end seems to come after the difference derived from the

[2] Thomas's example is of one who steals so as to commit adultery. Thomas clearly describes as "more adulterer than thief" the very same logic as applies here, where the individual is more thief than adulterer.

[3] For this whole analysis, see *ST* I–II, q. 18 a. 7. Note also *ST* I–II, q. 18, a. 4, ad 2, where Thomas notes that a due proportion and relation to the end are inherent in action.

[4] Again, cf. *ST* I–II, q. 18, a. 7.

object.[5] To reiterate: *In cases wherein the object is naturally ordered to the end, the defining and containing species is derived from the end*. This is not a mere ad hoc point, to be conglomerated with other texts, but rather a foundational teaching without which the other texts will be misunderstood. It fits the first point above (about the natural unit of the human act) like a glove: because if one does not know what, properly speaking, the natural unit of the human action is, one will be lost in considering species, complex acts, and so on. *Not to know the natural unit of the human act is to fail to know what a human act is; and not to know the second point is not to know how the moral species of this natural unit of the human act is determined*. Complex acts are, as it were, per accidens unities, inasmuch as in their case the object is not naturally ordered to the end. But the per se is prior to the per accidens. Thus the natural unit of the human act—the case wherein the object is naturally ordered to the end—is prior to the case of complex acts that conjoin disparate actions such that one is per accidens ordered to the other.

The third point is that "intention" is primarily used by St. Thomas, throughout his corpus, to refer to the end, whereas "choice" is used by St. Thomas to refer to the means. When intention is used by Thomas of the means, as of an intermediate term, this is clearly not the primary sense of "intention" but rather a secondary and analogical sense. How is this clear? It is clear because the intermediate term is only an intermediate term vis-à-vis the finality that defines it. Indeed, the means as intermediate term is "intended" in a secondary sense precisely *because* and *insofar as* the means *is chosen; and the means is chosen at all only because of its order to the end, which is the primary object of intention*. One may, as Thomas points out, intend the end even prior to any deliberation of the means—whereas, clearly, this is impossible with regard to the means, which are defined as means vis-à-vis the intended *end*. It follows that *intention* is used of the means only secondarily and derivatively, and that primarily and most formally it pertains to the end that is the proper object of intention, as Thomas everywhere states.[6] That there is a secondary and analogous use of "intention" hardly undercuts this point.

Jensen stresses that one act may be further ordered to an ultimate end as though this established that intention is not primarily of the end. But

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[5] *ST* I–II, q. 18, a. 7, ad 2. "Dicendum quod finis est postremum in executione, sed est primum in intentione raqtionis, secundum quam accipiuntur moralium actuum species".

[6] E.g., *ST* I–II, q. 13, a. 4, resp., which clearly teaches that "Just as intention regards the end, so choice regards the means." That in complex acts one act is a "means" toward the end of a further and morally distinct act, *is only intelligible at all insofar as the individual acts are first defined and placed in moral species by their ends*.

the fact that one *act* may be further ordered to *another act* and so on, all the way to the ultimate end, *does not alter the natural and proper unit of human action: Namely, the case wherein the object is naturally ordered to the end*. Jensen is thus taking the case of a complex act (where one whole act may be ordered to another) as establishing that intention is not primarily of the end. Whereas, complex acts are only intelligible at all insofar as their *separate component individual acts* are first defined and placed in their separate moral species derived in relation to *their separate ends*. In treating complex act and act properly speaking indiscriminately, Jensen fails to see that no complex act is properly understood apart from prior understanding of the separate acts with their own ends and moral species. *It is not merely rhetoric to point out that this exhibits a failure to understand what a human act properly is.* The fact that one act can be further ordered to another *does not relativize what a human act is, nor alter the datum that intention properly regards the end of a moral object naturally ordered thereto, and that it is extended to complex acts by analogy with the proper instance of human action*. Hence it is pure hocus pocus to use complex acts to wave away Thomas's teaching about the primary and proper natural structure of the human act.

Now, the fact is that with these three strategic points in firm possession, the text of *Summa theologiae* II–II, q. 64, a. 7 is clearly coherent and consistent.[7] And at this point I will make only a few references to Jensen's argument. He points out that St. Thomas's line regarding "the act of defense, from which sometimes homicide follows"[8] treats homicide as different

[7] *ST* II–II, q. 64, a. 7 Of course, strictly speaking, there is a fourth: The proposition that the moral object always includes not only its most formal component, but the integral matter of the act, in a manner analogous to the fashion in which the *abstractio totius* while formal with respect to the individual nonetheless always must contain the common matter of the definition. This is to say that the moral object is not purely a proposal or logical entity, but necessarily contains a natural element—the integral matter of the act—which cannot be neglected. So, e.g., we are free to give morphine in pain relief even knowing it will significantly attrite life, because such attrition is not a *malum in se*. But we are not free, merely because we seek pain relief, to give any quantum of morphine whatsoever—e.g., we are not free to administer a ten-gallon drum of morphine knowably sufficient in its nature directly to stop the heart. For this, by reason of its nature and not merely by reason of that aspect of the act (pain relief) that is attractive, renders the moral object of the act (wrongfully) homicidal. I do not go further into this aspect of the issue, because Jensen does not seem directly to challenge it, and also because there is growing awareness that logicist accounts of the moral object treat seem, in a certain respect, to derealize the object.

[8] *ST* II–II, q. 64, a. 7, ad 4: "Dicendum quod actus fornicationis vel adulterii non ordinatur ad conservationem propriae vitae ex necessitate, sicut actus ex quo quandoque sequitur homicidium."

from an act of defense. But the completed act of defense that one *intends* is prior to the means *whereby* that completed act shall occur. And it is wholly intelligible that we commonly speak about action in this way, contrasting the sort of completed act we wish to perform with the means *whereby* this sort of act may be attainable. In the weave of the particular action, of course, these are conjoined: But it makes perfect sense to contrast the end (*which is not essentially defined by the means* when the object is naturally ordered to it) with the means (*which will be essentially defined by the end* when the object is naturally ordered to the end). Although moderate defense may require killing in some instance, the end of moderate defense is not essentially defined by killing. So we may speak of the act of defense from which killing sometimes follows, even intending thereby to cover distinct cases: The case where killing follows from its proportion to the end of defense *as means*, and the case where killing follows from the end of defense by way of *consequence*. But even where some act of defense requires lethal means, defense as such is not defined by this reliance, and so we speak of the end of defense as sometimes requiring lethal means, or as Thomas says, "the act of defense from which sometimes homicide follows."

This reading clearly also explicates the lines of Thomas, "Nor is it necessary for salvation that a man omit the act of moderate self-defense in order to avoid killing the other man" ("Nec est necessarium ad salutem ut hunc actum moderatae tutelae praetermittat ad evitandam occisionem alterius").[9] For one might fear to undertake moderate self-defense because one feared that homicide might occur by way of consequence; or one might fear to undertake moderate self-defense because, in a given case, it was apparent that only lethal means would be proportionate to the end of defense. There is no particular reason to suppose that Thomas does not mean the line to cover both cases, unless of course we trifle with the constant and clear sense of his text that the primary object of intention is the end, or lose sight of what the proper sense of a human act is (both of which are common afflictions amongst logicist interpreters: for the end is an extrinsic cause, and the proper sense of a human act establishes the necessity of considering natural teleology in determining the moral species).[10]

[9] Ibid.

[10] Of course, there are two senses of "natural teleology"—the sense in which certain acts "by their nature" are defective vis-à-vis the end, and the sense in which natural teleology is ethically normative. But, of course, the first presupposes the second both absolutely speaking and epistemically. Thus, for example, we say that deliberately to "blow up" an innocent person is naturally ordered to harming or killing the person (so that this moral object shares the moral species of action against the innocent to which it is naturally ordered), while of course we also say that this act is contrary to the normative teleological order of nature, to the natural moral law.

This leads to my final point, regarding the distinction between "killing as means" and "killing as end." It is a point that has been made by a number of scholars that killing is never rightly pursued as an end—even in the case of capital punishment—because it is justified in relation to justice for whose sake it is done. That is well and good, but the issue here is simply whether the completed act that the headsman intends does or does not essentially include killing in its definition. That is, the headsman intends a particular act of justice whose very essential definition includes a homicide. It follows that the headsman who seeks to perform this act of justice intends to kill as a definitory *part* of the end of performing an act of justice. The headsman is not delivering a parking ticket, or arraigning a criminal for trial, or any one of a number of other acts of justice, *but is imposing an act of justice whose very definition entails killing*. Killing is not accidental to capital punishment. How does the headsman know the act of justice prescribed by the court is fulfilled? It is fulfilled when the criminal has been executed.

Nonetheless, nowhere do I suggest that killing is apart from the defining moral species of that killing as some sort of end in itself. Rather, I point out that capital punishment is by its nature ordered to an imposition of justice—an imposition of a particular nature that includes homicide. Whether such killing is, as advocates of the incommensurability of goods wish to argue, intrinsically evil or—as *Evangelium vitae* makes clear by not listing it among intrinsic evils, and by treating it prudentially, and by according with doctrinal tradition—otherwise, there is simply no doubt that capital punishment is an act of justice whose definition entails killing. Since the executioner intends a just punishment of execution, and his acts are naturally ordered to that end, the datum that this lethal act of justice is further ordered to the wider system of justice in no way alters the clear fact that the executioner intends the death of the sentenced criminal as an essential definitory part of the act of justice the executioner seeks to perform.

By contrast with the executioner's *intention* of an act of justice that by its very nature includes a homicide, the private citizen who *intends* as an end to defend an innocent does not intend something whose very definition includes a homicide. It may be that circumstances are such that other means of defense are not availing, and that the defender finds that the only proportionate means to achieve the end of defense is a lethal means. *Unlike capital punishment, the end of defense is not one that essentially requires homicide, or else every defense would be deliberately homicidal just as every execution is deliberately homicidal*. But this is not the case. To say that the executioner merely intends justice "in general" misses what he intends, which is a very partic-

ular act of justice that requires homicide not merely by circumstantial necessity but by its very nature.

As regards defense, there is always or for the most part a natural relation between the slaying of an assailant and the end of an assault.[11] Thus, when the only proportionate means for a just defense (for there are unjust defenses, as Thomas expressly identifies in speaking of the sin of strife)[12] is lethal, *then*—precisely because the object is naturally ordered to the end—the defining moral species is from the end. And that end is defensive. Professor Jensen avers puzzlement over the distinction between performative innocence and moral innocence, but the distinction goes to the heart of the difference between capital punishment and justified lethal defense. One who has the care of another, and who defends that other from unjust assault, is not *judging* the moral responsibility of the assailant, *but protecting the one assailed from the assault*. By contrast, capital punishment requires prior judgment of guilt, and—like all felony penalties—cannot justly abstract from the question of *moral responsibility*.

In sum, a serious speculative reading of Thomas will discover that the intuitions present in his account are those that any serious consideration of justified defense by private parties must consider. The reason is that those considerations, rooted as they are in the structure of human action and the nature of the moral law, *have not significantly changed*. St. Thomas makes clear that *intention* pertains to the end, and *choice* to the means, and that any use of *intention* for the object as an intermediate term is a secondary and implicitly analogous usage. He also makes clear that the primary sense of the human act is that wherein the object is *naturally ordered* to the end, and that when the object is naturally ordered to the end that the defining moral

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[11] Of course, an exception can be conceived. Suppose the case of an assailant who arranges that a signal he is emitting cease when his heart stops beating, and further arranges that should this signal cease that a nuclear bomb explode in an urban area. In such a case, to use lethal means to stop the assailant would paradoxically stop one assault by catalyzing a more harmful one. But this is the stuff of fiction and does not alter the general proposition that, apart from such contorted circumstances, to slay the assailant is always or for the most part to suppress that individual's assault. Only the mechanical means used in the example alters the case, by rendering the assault to be mechanically rather than humanly implemented and not to depend on the life of the one who sets the process in motion. And, even here, the first assault is ended by slaying the assailant, albeit this catalyzes another even worse.

[12] Self-preservation is not simply in itself a sufficient ground for deliberate killing. For example, in *ST* II–II, q. 41, a. 1, ad 3, St. Thomas points out that those who defend themselves against public authority are guilty of strife—clearly the mere idea of self-defense is not a normative one necessarily entailing justice or by itself sufficient.

species is derived from the end. Hence natural teleology is unequivocally implicit in the determination of the moral species.

Any effort to understand the moral species must sooner or later cope with *Summa theologiae* II–II, q. 64, a. 7. Coping with the counterintuitive effects of a bad reading of this text by brushing aside "merely contemporary" intuitions about self-defense (i.e., the kind that almost all human beings naturally enjoy, but which it is suggested we must deny of Thomas even when his text articulates them) and refusing to weight texts according to their speculative content, fails to pay Aquinas the compliment that his account may in fact be coherent, consistent with natural moral intuitions, and indeed true. Surely Thomas knew what the practice in the courts of his day was when he wrote in *Summa theologiae* I–II, q. 100, a. 8, ad 3: "The slaying of a man is forbidden in the decalogue, in so far as it bears the character of something undue: for in this sense the precept contains the very essence of justice. Human law cannot make it lawful for a man to be slain unduly. But it is not undue for evil-doers or foes of the common weal to be slain: hence this is not contrary to the precept of the decalogue; and such a killing is no murder as forbidden by that precept, as Augustine observes (*De Lib. Arb.* i, 4)." The merely contemporary philosopher, like the merely contemporary moral theologian or pastor, cannot help but note that Thomas refers to "lawful slaying"—not only to the judicial penalty of execution, but to the kind of slaying in justified defense that courts have always accepted as lawful. The private citizen may not *intend*, as clearly the executioner *does* intend, an end whose very essential definition (as with the judicial penalty of death) includes homicide. But the private citizen may *intend* defense, and undertake those measures proportionate thereto, even should this require the deliberate use of lethal means. Defense is not an end whose essential definition requires homicide. When the means are objectively ordered to the end of defense, the defining moral species of the act derives from the end and so is defensive even should it be the case that in this instance the means need be lethal. NV

Book Symposium

Culture and the Thomist Tradition: After Vatican II
by Tracey Rowland *(London: Routledge, 2003)*

Cardinal Cajetan and His Critics

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I

A LARGE NUMBER of Catholic students who are about to commence graduate studies in theology were born sometime after 1976. This means that these men and women enjoy only a brief living acquaintance with the practice of Catholic theology in the postconciliar period. It is difficult to imagine what meaning they have drawn from the experiences of the mid-1990s. The theological waters into which these aspiring students are about to set sail remain unchartered. How will they interpret the variety of outlooks that characterize today's Catholic theologians? At the same time, few of these young scholars will advance much in the study of theology without absorbing the confusions spawned by the diversity of theological emphases that have emerged since the close of the last ecumenical Council of the Church.

There is no easy way out of the predicament that faces today's young theologians. Even if new students of theology follow carefully the conferences and publications that both illustrate and record the state of their chosen discipline, there is no guarantee that they will be able easily to discover where abides the heart of Catholic theology, especially as the discipline is practiced in the English-speaking world. The national professional societies, as Father Matthew Lamb has observed on many occasions, embrace a wide spectrum of positions and outlooks, and these include many dissenting views from what is taught by the Magisterium of the Church's Pastors. Furthermore, the political organization of these learned societies frequently falls into the hands of persons who consider

it a prerogative, perhaps even a duty, of the theologian to challenge or tinker with what is taught by the Roman Magisterium. Annual meetings of these societies and their published proceedings reveal what is being said by theologians who may be Catholic and who may teach in Catholic universities, but these events and their write-ups offer no assurance that what is being expounded uniformly matches the measure of divine truth as the Church safeguards it.

Many consider it a fair generalization to say that the public exercise of theology, at least in the English-speaking world, affords few examples of the discussions that should occupy authentic Catholic theologians. What is an authentic Catholic theologian? One who exercises the discipline of Catholic theology within the horizons established by the Church's authoritative Magisterium. Such a person understands and observes the ecclesial vocation of the theologian, as the Church herself has described it. Would that there were more ecclesial theologians. Because there are not, several paradoxes emerge. The one worth noting for the purposes of this present exercise is that young theologians endowed with keen analytical (and political) abilities may achieve standing in the professional guilds only at the price of retreating from what makes doing Catholic theology worthwhile, namely, the faithful exposition of divine and Catholic truth.

Reading broadly may not always keep the beginner in theology from making this retreat. Those who enjoy influence in the national societies that address philosophical and theological issues, whether within a Catholic, non-denominational, or even inter-religious context, also referee articles for scientific journals and review books for publication by major university presses. The one starting out in the study of Catholic theology finds no easy-to-obtain guide that enables him or her to distinguish even in Catholic publications what is sound and authentic from what is speculative and ersatz. Much like the student of the thirteenth century that Aquinas had in mind when he began his *Summa*, students of the twenty-first century encounter so many and different positions that they are more likely to become confused than illuminated as they undertake the arduous process of absorbing the existing body of theological print.

No one should mistake these present circumstances as providing an ideal time for fresh starts or new beginnings. The scarcity of reliable accounts of the work done by Catholic theologians since the end of the Second Vatican Council means that new students of theology lack something that is essential to their professional development as theologians. They lack a comprehensive awareness of the past, of the authorities *(auctoritates)* who have shaped the past, and of the authoritative resolutions or at least of the clarifications of the difficulties that sometimes emerged

when approved authors have disagreed on how to put together the big picture of Catholic theology. The late Renaissance *De auxiliis* controversy is one such instance; the history of moral theology from the mid-sixteenth century to the start of the Council illustrates another.

There was a time not so long ago when basic information about the past would have been available to every first-year student of theology. In short, there flourished what was called *rationes studiorum*—programs of study developed to supply comprehensive accounts of the discipline. Among other advantages, these programs afforded students immediate and reliable access both to the sources or *fontes* of Catholic theology and to its more or less universally recognized landscape, which, it should be recalled, exhibited its own forms of legitimate diversity.

A well-developed *ratio studiorum* provided students with a great deal of introductory instruction. A typical one, such as governed instruction in Jesuit seminaries, contained the main theses that comprised what was considered required learning—*scientia debita*—for ecclesial theologians. These theses together formed an *elenchus*, ignorance of which was considered a sign of ineptitude. The theses also came with succinct accounts of the historical debates and subsequent magisterial resolutions out of which the conclusions emerged, and included some indication about the weight of theological authority that attached to each thesis. Today in most academic settings, one would be hard-pressed to enforce a *ratio studiorum*. Thus, the question emerges: Where will our new students, our hopes for the future, learn to evaluate critically the evolution of theology after the close of the Second Vatican Council and, especially, what has occurred during the pontificate of Pope John Paul II?

Without a trustworthy account of today's theology to guide them, present-day theological students are imperiled. Some may find themselves drawn to reactionary positions, and take a dim view of what happened in Rome between 1962–1965; the majority, however, will espouse a romantic evolutionary vision that considers the mid-1960s as the bright dawn of a new era. Both groups, however, miss out on something more important than a reliable account of Catholic theology's recent history. Young Catholic theologians, liberal and conservative alike, remain ignorant of both the classical theses that have been developed within the long tradition of Catholic theology, especially since the sixteenth-century, and the principle of unity that related these theses one to another within the theological science. They fail in other words to receive adequate introduction into the *sacra doctrina*, the grace from God that both establishes the truth and constitutes the unity of any Christian theology worthy of the name.

II

The book that this symposium considers does offer some help for the perplexed students of theology whose parlous situation I have sketched above. Professor Tracey Rowland, who currently serves as Dean of the Melbourne campus of the John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family, constructs an account of theological and philosophical conversations that occupy a prominent place among Catholic theologians. She concentrates her energies on those theologians who are active in the ecclesiastical institute that the Holy Father himself inaugurated after the 1980 Synod of Bishops, which was devoted to the family. The postsynodal exhortation, *Familiaris consortio,* contains the fruits of this Synod's discussions. The international John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family remains the living legacy of the Holy Father's pastoral initiative to provide a permanent source of research and education in what has become the locus for one of the major challenges in our period to Catholic teaching: the family. Pope John Paul II is rightly recognized for many accomplishments, but his defense of the institution foundational to all culture ranks among the most significant of his achievements.

Tracey Rowland surrounds herself with good company. The authors who are featured in her book embrace wholeheartedly the Pope's views on marriage and family, on what it means to be male and female, on how sexual activity should conform to the full reality of the human body, and on other important issues. Of course, the Pope's achievement does not fit neatly into narrowly ethical confines; those who have been inspired by his theological style exhibit competency in many areas of scholarship. His reflections on the Book of Genesis continue to generate wide-ranging theological considerations such as Christology, theological anthropology, ecclesiology, and eschatology, and also prompt investigation into the "reasonableness" of these revealed teachings.[1] In short, the Pope's teaching on marriage and family is comprehensive. Rowland's book provides a ready resource for students who want to identify many of the theologians who have taken seriously the task of doing Catholic theology during the period that future Church historians may refer to as that of the "New Evangelization." I consider the list of authors—however she may categorize them—that Rowland draws up one of the most useful features of her book. Theological beginners may read with profit each of them.

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[1] See *Fides et Ratio*, no. 43: "Although he made much of the supernatural character of faith, the Angelic Doctor did not overlook the importance of its reasonableness; indeed he was able to plumb the depths and explain the meaning of this reasonableness."

Shortly after the establishment of its Roman campus at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome, the John Paul II Institute came in 1988 to the United States. It was first housed in the Dominican House of Studies in the Brookland section of Washington, DC, and later moved to The Catholic University of America, which is located in the same neighborhood of the nation's capitol city. Many of the theologians that the author mentions in the eight chapters that make up her book are or have been associated with the American campus of the John Paul II Institute. The current dean of this session of the Institute is Professor David Schindler, who—to borrow a metaphor from the Holy Father—serves as the lodestar of the American *Communio* school of theology. In many ways, *Culture* is an account of David Schindler's personal research, his project for theology, and his exchanges with colleagues. It also must be said that the book reflects his particular preferences.

The *Communio* school of theology, taken globally, and not as it plays out under the influence of the American edition, is more difficult to define than Thomism. Thomists are those who read Aquinas, and so may be distinguished from those who read and adhere to other major Christian thinkers such as Scotus or St. Bonaventure or Ockham. Partisans of the *Communio* school, on the other hand, study many authors; their return to the sources embraces a wide range of both ancient and recent theologians and philosophers, and even includes consulting social scientists.[2] Rowland identifies many of these figures in her chapters. Suffice it to remark that a common feature of Communio school theology is that its adherents subscribe without hesitation to a viewpoint that lately has been set forth by Nicholas M. Healy in his *Thomas Aquinas: Theologian of the Christian Life*: "In his commentary on the *Summa theologiae*, Cajetan so separates nature from grace that humanity now has *two* ends, natural and supernatural. . . ."[3] Healy of course repeats an assertion that was set forth with remarkable success in the twentieth century by Jesuit Father Henri de Lubac, later Cardinal of the Roman Church.

It has always struck me as odd that so many good-willed theologians accept the view that a twentieth-century French Jesuit whose intellectual interests were wide-ranging occupied a better position to understand what St. Thomas Aquinas taught about the finalities of the human person than did a sixteenth-century Italian humanist, who had represented Catholic doctrine in person to no less imposing a figure than Martin Luther and

[2] Rowland's publisher, London's Routledge, advertises her book under the headings of "Theology/Philosophy/Sociology."

[3] Nicholas M. Healy, *Thomas Aquinas: Theologian of the Christian Life* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 13 (emphasis in the original).

whose commentary on the entire *Summa theologiae* appears by order of Pope Leo XIII in the critical edition of Aquinas's *opera omnia* that bears that Pope's name, the still incomplete Leonine edition. But they do. Many sincere people, including Tracey Rowland, accept the proposition that de Lubac laid bare a huge historical mistake about how to construe the relationship between nature and grace, and they seemingly consider his critique of Cardinal Cajetan and the Thomists who follow him a non-gainsayable principle of all future Catholic theology. What Cajetan obscured, de Lubac grasped with clarté. Nicholas Healy illustrates this conviction: "[T]he influence of the two-tier conception of reality became widespread and was understood by many theologians as a reasonable development of Thomas's thought."[4] One could infer from remarks such as these that Tommaso De Vio, Cardinal Cajetan (1469–1534) should be known as the great betrayer of Aquinas instead of his papal approved interpreter. Prima facie, the proposition seems primitive.[5]

Those who want to understand more about this golden apple of twentieth-century theological discord should consult the work of Professor Steven A. Long. His essays on topics such as the obediential potency and other related theological theses repay careful study.[6] Long's articles reveal the way that theologians have attempted to handle the difficult question of describing adequately the differentiation of finalities that the gratuitous bestowal of divine friendship on the members of the human race introduces into Catholic theology. Because of the centrality that this issue

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[4] Ibid., p. 14.

[5] I will leave it to others to elaborate on the difficulties that emerge when Catholic theologians engage other theologians on this issue. See for instance, Tracey Rowland's review article on John Milbank's *Being Reconciled: Ontology and Pardon* titled "Divine Gifts to the Secular Desert" in Religion and Theology 2 (2004): 182–87: This book "will be of particular interest," she writes, "to Catholic scholars in *Communio* study circles who, like Milbank, owe much to de Lubac's reading of the causes of secularization" (187).

[6] Regarding the correct understanding of obediential potency and the natural desire for God in relation to the right understanding of nature and grace, Steven A. Long has undertaken both a project of recovery of the authentic Thomistic tradition and its further articulation. See the following works: "On the Possibility of a Purely Natural End for Man: A Response to Denis Bradley," *The Thomist* 64 (2000): 211–37; "Obediential Potency, Human Knowledge, and the Natural Desire for God," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 37 (1997): 45–63; and, forthcoming in *Nova et Vetera*, "On the Loss, and the Recovery, of Nature as a Theonomic Principle: Reflections on the Grand Confusion of *La Nouvelle Theologie*." Long has provided an excellent simile for the obediential potency of the human creature to be uplifted with the aid of divine grace, namely a stained-glass window illumined by the sun's rays.

holds in the thought of many of the theologians that Rowland presents to her readers, I think it is important to alert those who will read her book, especially beginners in the discipline, that they should make up their own minds about de Lubac's critique, and not assume that one eminent French Jesuit and 100,000 *Communio* followers can't be wrong. The fact of the matter is that the differentiation of finalities that a Catholic theologian must consider in the human person remains a topic that has been ill served during the period after the Second Vatican Council. Let me conclude this section with a word of advice to beginners: You can embrace *Gaudium et Spes 22* and still follow Cardinal Cajetan.

III

It is unfortunate that Rowland's editor chose the title *Culture and the Thomist Tradition. After Vatican II*. In a certain sense, the author herself illustrates the predicament that young students of theology face. They lack a comprehensive knowledge of what the great tradition of Catholic theology includes. I cannot speak for John Duns Scotus, or for St. Bonaventure, or still less for William of Ockham, but I am in a position to comment on the school that develops from St. Thomas Aquinas. *Culture and the Thomist Tradition*, I regret to say, has very little to say about the Thomist tradition. The author refers to Dominicans (including the present reviewer) and to authors who are not reluctant to cite the texts of St. Thomas Aquinas. She does not, however, offer a completely credible account of the Thomist tradition or, again regrettably, give much evidence that she is aware that Thomism continues to flourish in many quarters of the Catholic intellectual world, that is, after Vatican II.

Allow me to mention two noticeable omissions: The first is the absence of any reference to the work of the Pontifical Academy of St. Thomas Aquinas. Surely the initiatives of Father Abelardo Lobato, OP, current president of the Academy, and of the international society that he has encouraged (SITA) merit some mention in a book that tries to make sense today out of "the Thomist Tradition." There is another obvious lacuna: Nothing is made of the extensive historical and systematic work of Jean-Pierre Torrell, OP, even though his contributions represent one of the great contemporary centers of Thomist theology and philosophy, the University of Fribourg (Switzerland). I would be able to develop the list of omissions that Rowland commits as she tries to grapple with the complexities of theological discussions at the start of the twenty-first century. I mention these glaring omissions in order to illustrate what I said at the beginning of this essay. It is difficult for young theologians to get a start nowadays.

There is the question of how Rowland treats historical Thomism, Thomism *before* Vatican II. It may be true that the word "culture" does not appear in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* (see p. 14), but this standard reference work does include an entry for "Thomisme." One should never criticize an author for the book that she did not write. My concern, however, is that an aspiring student of theology may come away from reading *Culture* and think that he or she has mastered all there is to know about Thomism. As far as I can determine, Thomism, as the term is deployed in *Culture*, serves mainly as a cipher for those figures in contemporary Catholic intellectual life that the leaders of the American *Communio* school, especially David Schindler, have chosen to engage. Rowland discusses "Whig Thomism" at least thirteen times! Thomism has been reduced to the status of a camp.

Besides her references to the works of Professor MacIntyre, there is very little in the book that helps the searching student discover the potentialities of the real Thomist tradition. The truth of the matter is that Thomism has survived more cultural shifts and has flourished in more diverse settings than is likely to be the case for the high-end European intellectualism that drives many of the authors that Rowland and others suggest possess some special purchase on cultural critiques of modernity. (My mentor, Father Coleman O'Neill,OP, used to wonder about those theologians whose spiritual home is Paris.) Recently a Japanese scholar wrote me to request biographical information about Robert Edward Brennan, OP (whom Rowland dismisses on the first page of her book). Father Brennan wrote a popular neo-scholastic manual on human psychology, which had been translated in the 1960s into Japanese. What sort of study, one may ask, could be more culturally déclassé? Not in the Orient. Now this American Thomist, who was a master of the tradition, and his book, will have an entry in a new, twenty-first century Japanese encyclopedia. There are other less incidental indications that Thomism, like metaphysics, will always survive those who offer themselves as its pall-bearers. Thomism, defined in a strict sense, continues to inspire the work of Catholic theology.

If my presentation of Thomism is correct, there is reason to believe that Thomism exhibits more resilience to cultural evolutions than many of its critics, including those who wear the same religious habit as Thomas Aquinas, are prepared to recognize.[7] Thomism flourished in the century following the death of Aquinas, although he left no circle of disci-

[7] See my *A Short History of Thomism* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2005).

ples, and then showed itself strong in the mid-fifteenth century when schism and plague affected the cultural landscape. Later, Thomism accompanied missionaries to the Orient, where two Chinese translations of the *Summa* became available in Peking. Thomism was implanted in the new world. Catholic priests, religious, and laity who took up the work of instructing the ignorant transported Thomist manuals and primary texts from Europe to the American continent. Dominicans in the early nineteenth century even imported Aquinas to the backwoods of Kentucky. Everyone acknowledges that Thomism was a dominant force in the Catholic culture of the United States before 1962.

I recognize that the history of theology and the history of Thomism are more complex than I now have the space available to recount. Moreover, it is not my intention to defend the view that the Thomist tradition contains the answer to every difficulty that faces those engaged in the work of evangelization. It is my conviction, however, that the contributions of St. Thomas and of the tradition that grows out of his thought will continue to form part of the Church's cultural outreach. It may also happen that more Catholics will come to see that Cardinal Cajetan enjoyed a deeper penetration into the mystery of divine grace and its transformation of human nature than Professor Rowland and those upon whom she relies imagine.

Thomists of Cajetan's period generally understood the immensely important place that transformation holds in the Christian life. Thus their insistence on nature. Two-tier is not a dirty word for Catholic theologians: "Just as grace builds on nature and brings it to fulfillment, so faith builds upon and perfects reason."[8] If future evangelists announce to a non-Christian culture the greatness of the mystery of Christian transformation, but are unable to speak about what is transformed—scholastics would have referred to a *terminus a quo*—they may not find themselves in a very strong position.

It would be helpful to know what Radical Orthodoxy and the members of the *Communio* "study circles" think about original sin. Not David Schindler's "structures of sin" (see p. 103), but the personal disorder of sin that arises in every human being on account of the sin of nature. Catholic doctrine recognizes that the sin of nature is a privation that infects every person born into whatever culture. The baptismal consecration that removes mankind's ancient curse makes possible a new way of life. We call it Christian life. The effects of original sin remain, however, even in the baptized. Aquinas referred to these as the "penalties

[8] *Fides et Ratio*, no. 43.

of the present life." As long as these penalties dominate the psychology of a human person, it matters little whether or not one achieves a successful Christian critique of culture.

Cardinal Cajetan's treatment of nature and grace respects the anthropological givens that enable preachers of grace to explain how it is that the Eucharistic conversion extends in a transformative and highly personal way to each communicant. Gallup polls now indicate that for the first time on record fewer Catholics than Protestants regularly attend Church on Sunday. Rowland's narrative makes it plain that the hegemony of Thomism in Catholic studies has waned since 1965. One thing is sure, then: We can't blame Cardinal Cajetan for the noticeable decline in Sunday Mass observance that has occurred during the same period.

The New Evangelization will proceed with success to the extent that students of theology discover "the enduring originality of the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas."[9] As they do, there is every reason to believe that they will also discover that Pope Leo XIII was on to something when he ordained that Cardinal Cajetan's commentary on the *Summa* find a permanent place in the modern critical edition of the Angelic Doctor's works. In short, Cajetan supplies some helpful distinctions. Like his teacher, the Dominican Cardinal "recognized that nature, philosophy's proper concern, could contribute to the understanding of divine Revelation."[10] NV

The Retrieval of *Gaudium et Spes*: A Comparison of Rowland and Balthasar

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TRACEY ROWLAND'S new text on the relationship between Thomism and modern culture raises several provocative issues that deserve careful analysis. It is beyond the scope of a single short essay to deal with all of these issues adequately. Accordingly, in what follows I will narrow my focus to a comparison of her analysis and retrieval of *Gaudium et Spes* with that of the late Swiss Catholic theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar. This analysis is justified for several reasons. First, Rowland makes a point of aligning her project with that of the "continental Balthasarians" as she calls them and thereby implies that her work is an organic development of the theological project known as *ressourcement* theology—a project that

[9] Ibid., nos. 43–44.
[10] Ibid., no. 43.

claims Balthasar as one of its chief theological exponents.[1] Second, her critique of *Gaudium et Spes* is paradigmatic of her critique of the Church in general for lacking a coherent theological framework for dealing with modern culture. Thus, an analysis of her approach to Vatican II allows us to explore issues raised in her broader project. Finally, despite the cogency of her analysis, it suffers in my view from certain defects that undercut the aims of this broader project. Through a comparison of her approach with that of Balthasar I hope to offer some constructive criticisms that could strengthen her thesis rather than weaken it. My reading of Rowland's overall text is largely sympathetic. Therefore, I offer what follows in a spirit of admiration and support for her provocative, and I might add, courageous, theological vision.

I will develop my analysis along two lines. The first theme involves her treatment of Vatican II and of *Gaudium et Spes* in particular. While careful not to call the overall legitimacy of the Council into question, Rowland has harsh words for what she considers to be the theological and sociological naiveté embodied in the Council's analysis of modern culture and the project that came to be known as *aggiornamento*. Balthasar seems to have shared somewhat similar misgivings about certain post-conciliar developments but is far more irenic toward the stated goals of the Council itself. Thus, the bulk of my analysis will concentrate on a comparison of her more negative assessment of the Council with that of Balthasar's more positive one. Second, I will attempt to formulate some constructive suggestions for Rowland's project based on this comparison with Balthasar's theology.

Rowland's Analysis of *Gaudium et Spes*

Central to Rowland's thesis is the claim that "culture" is not a neutral social phenomenon but a collection of shared values and the institutions that embody those values. In short, every culture has a "mythos" and this mythos seeps into the very fabric of our lives and becomes the constitutive factor in the development of the linguistic and symbolic structure of

[1] Tracey Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition After Vatican II* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 4–5. Rowland contrasts the Balthasarian Thomism of the continentals with their concern for a more synthetic treatment of the "whole" and the historically situated nature of all concepts, with the Anglo-American "analytical Thomists" who emphasize the universality of the concept and the need for detailed analytical study of the internal logic of specific positions. As her text unfolds it becomes clear that Rowland, leaning heavily on Alasdair MacIntyre, prefers what she perceives as the more "narrative" approach of the Balthasarians over the analytical approach of the Anglo-American school.

our rationality. Her analysis here is heavily dependent on the philosophical analysis of rationality offered by Alasdair MacIntyre who emphasizes that cultures create "narrative traditions" within which our rationality is structured and contextualized. Neither MacIntyre nor Rowland are perspectival relativists since they hold that it is possible for a person to transcend the culturally constituted structures of his or her rationality. However, and this is the central point for our purposes here, Rowland uses this analysis of the relationship between culture and rationality as the centerpiece of her claim that the Church constitutes its own "narrative tradition" and unique form of "rationality." Furthermore, and building on this affirmation, she contends that the cultural construct that has come to be known as "modern liberalism" constitutes a narrative tradition of its own and that this tradition is incommensurate with the Catholic one. Unfortunately, according to Rowland, it has only been recently that the Church herself has come to recognize something akin to this kind of analysis. Rowland holds that for most of the modern period the Church has ignored the anti-Christian ethos of secular liberalism and has sought instead to criticize certain aspects of modernity while seeking a *rapprochement* with others under the false assumption that the Church could "cherry pick" her way to a coherent approach to the modern world. What was needed, says Rowland, was a coherent theology of culture that could have provided the Church with the proper criteria she needed for judging the inner ethos of modernity. Instead, we have witnessed the pastoral disaster of the past fifty years as the price we have had to pay for such theological naiveté.

Therefore, Rowland situates her treatment of the Council within the broader context of what she perceives to be the theological failures of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—and here I am using the word "failure" guardedly and narrowly to mean only her contention that the theology of the period "failed" to develop a coherent theological response to modernity. This might seem an odd assertion given the Church's heated and pitched battle with various forms of "modernism" as well as the related problem of "Americanism." However, she points out that the Church during this period was more intent on attacking rather specific erroneous positions rather than dealing with the problem of modernity as a whole. Therefore, as she states, "these decrees . . . fell short of a systematic critique of 'modern culture.' "[2] Rowland does not mention, but it is worth noting in support of her argument, that the Church during this period, in order to combat the rising tide of relativism and subjectivism,

[2] Ibid., 12.

felt it necessary to emphasize the universality of the structures of human reason and, therefore, a vision of natural law that was tailored to counteract the growing historicist critique of the immutable moral law. Therefore, theologians during this period were understandably ill-at-ease to explore the full theological ramifications of human temporality—a discomfort that extended to any theological analysis of culture that might be perceived as veering too far in the direction of a perspectivalist approach.[3] It would seem, therefore, that Rowland is essentially correct to point out that the Church's condemnation of modernism was not so much a wholesale critique of modernity from within a proper theology of culture as an invalid social construction, as it was the condemnation of certain specific intellectual propositions put forward by certain contemporary philosophers. She supports her position here with an incisive quote from Kenneth Schmitz:

> Had we been more perceptive we might have guessed that the foundations of modernity were beginning to crack under an increasingly incisive attack. But we had no such cultural concept as "Modernity"; all we had instead was the historical category: modern philosophy.[4]

The result of this lacuna in Catholic theology was that the fathers of Vatican II were not theologically equipped to deal properly with the question of the relationship between faith and modern culture. Specifically,

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[3] Yves Congar adds the further point that, beginning in German universities in the nineteenth century, theology was called into question as a legitimate science, thereby challenging its status as a true discipline in the academy. This was caused by the balkanization of theological schools along confessional lines and the subsequent squabbles among Christian theologians that seemed irresolvable. Theology was thus viewed as a fideistic enterprise lacking proper critical foundation. In response, therefore, many theologians sought to establish the scientific credentials of theology, which in turn led to the scholastic rationalism and ahistoricism of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Catholic theology. See Yves Congar, *A History of Theology* (New York: Doubleday, 1968), 195–99.

[4] Kenneth Schmitz, "Postmodernism and the Catholic Tradition," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 73 (1969): 233–53, at 235. Quoted in Rowland, 13. It is also interesting to note here that Rowland contrasts the notion of modernity as a specific cultural formation with mere contemporaneity. The latter denotes a simple correspondence in historical time bearing little theological or philosophical significance, while the former denotes an entire spiritual project at odds with that of the Church. Thus, insofar as the Church lacked a nuanced theology of culture it tended to treat all historical phenomena univocally and ahistorically, with historical events merely listed as ancient, medieval, or contemporary-modern with little regard to the temporally "situated" character of all events. See Rowland, 18.

Rowland contends that the Council fathers lacked an awareness that modernity was a highly particular social construction that had at its root a set of anti-Christian first principles. The attitude of many within the Church seemed to be that even though there were specific issues within modern culture that needed addressing, modern culture as a whole is either a spiritually "neutral" reality wide open to a positive acceptance of the Church's evangelizing or, even worse in Rowland's view, a spiritually positive development in human history waiting in breathless anticipation for a "leavening" from the Gospel. Given such a level of sociological naiveté it is no wonder that, in Rowland's view, "there was no consideration, at least not at a philosophical and/or theological level, of the question of what is, in essence, the *culture* of modernity, and how such a culture affects the spiritual and intellectual formation of persons."[5]

At this juncture we can also detect a clear note of censure in her analysis insofar as she makes it quite clear that there were important theological voices who had begun to develop a more sophisticated theology of culture, but whose voices, according to Rowland, were for the most part ignored (at least as pertained to their theology of culture). She makes special mention of the theologically informed cultural analysis of Guardini, Balthasar, and Przywara—none of whom could be confused with the old guard conservatives of the manualist tradition—with their Christocentric reappraisal of the proper relationship between nature and grace. It is noteworthy, she states, that "neither Guardini nor Przywara nor von Balthasar had been chosen as conciliar *periti*."[6]

In their place, according to Rowland, we find a clear conciliar preference for the language and thought forms of Maritain and Rahner, both of whom, according to Rowland, were far more stoic in their acceptance of modernity as a *fait accompli* and whose Christian intellectual projects therefore can be construed, at least partially, as an attempt to find common

[5] Rowland, 13.

[6] Ibid., 21–22. In a private correspondence I had with Edward Oakes, SJ, he pointed out that by the time of Vatican II, Przywara was already a very old man and that Guardini was no longer a leading theological light and could have been easily overlooked as a potentital *peritus*. Thus, it would appear that in reality it was probably only Balthasar who was deliberately passed over as a *peritus* by the Swiss bishops. It should also be noted at this juncture that during the preconciliar period Balthasar was probably more distrusted by the conservatives in the Vatican curia than he was by the liberal faction in the episcopacy. Rowland's analysis of the significance of his omission as a peritus appears therefore as somewhat anachronistic insofar as she seems to assume that he was distrusted before the Council by the same people and for the same reasons that he was distrusted after the Council.

ground between the Church and modernity.[7] It is precisely this quest for "common ground" that Rowland sees as one of the primary aims of *Gaudium et Spes*—an aim that she considers to be pastorally flawed. Thus does Rahner, presumably because of his influence on this putative pastoral strategy of the Council, come in for special censure. Rowland notes that for Rahner secular liberalism presents itself to the Christian as a "must be" situation that cannot be ignored or rejected.[8] It presses in upon us and the Christian must adopt an inward attitude of spiritual abandonment that is akin to a kind of crucifixion, wherein, out of love for our neighbor, we willingly greet the modern world in dialogue in order to reach a common ground for the sake of humanity. Rowland, however, rejects this analysis and sees in Rahner's attitude toward modernity the paradigmatic expression of the flawed project of cultural accommodation to liberalism:

> Rahner recognised that the culture of modernity is hostile to Christianity, and that in such a culture the truths of Christianity will no longer appear to plain persons as "self-evident"; but these facts notwithstanding, Rahner asserted that any kind of Christian counter-cultural offensive is futile, because the culture of modernity is a "must be.". . . Rahner did not, however, offer any criteria for discerning when a state of affairs should be judged, from a theological perspective, a "must be," to be endured, rather than a challenge to be met.[9]

The rejection of Balthasar, Przywara, and Guardini by the Council as periti and the adoption instead of the thought forms of Maritain and Rahner leads Rowland to conclude that the Council did not simply stumble into a particular pastoral strategy, but that significant members of the hierarchy deliberately chose the path of theological *rapprochement* with liberalism as the chief pastoral aim of the Council and of *Gaudium et Spes* in particular. For example, she makes special note of the very

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[7] Ibid., 30–31. With regard to Maritain, while it is certainly true that his 1937 work *Humanisme integral* (a work that sought a *rapprochement* with liberalism from within Thomistic categories) was certainly influential at the Council, it is nevertheless also true that Maritain complained bitterly after the Council that its true message had been distorted by a false notion of *aggiornamento*. Rowland notes that Maritain's thought was nuanced and that he could in no way be construed as embracing a false notion of the autonomy of culture. Nevertheless, she faults his language for lending itself, all too easily, to misunderstanding by "plain persons" as endorsing just such a false notion of autonomy. Whether this is a fair charge is open for debate and should be examined in more detail.

[8] Ibid, 31.

[9] Ibid.

important intervention by Cardinal Lercaro on the floor of the Council during the deliberations on the direction of *Gaudium et Spes*. She views his intervention as but one important example among many of an important prelate helping to steer the text into a more conciliatory attitude toward modernity. She quotes Lercaro at length:

> Above all, the Church must acknowledge itself to be culturally "poor"; it must therefore wish to be more and more poor. I am not speaking here of material poverty but of a particular consequence of evangelical poverty precisely in the domain of ecclesiastical culture. In this field too . . . the Church preserves riches of a glorious but perhaps anachronistic past. . . . The Church must have the courage, if need be, to renounce these riches . . . and to be more and more cautious of trusting them. . . . They may prevent the Church from opening itself to the true values of modern culture. . . . Such renunciation of the cultural patrimony is not an end in itself but a way to acquire new riches.[10]

But perhaps most damning is her critique of the statements made by both of the conciliar Popes—statements that in Rowland's view could lead one to conclude that they too shared in this project of ecclesiastical cultural divestment in order to put on the garment of modernity. She cites both Pope John XXIII and Paul VI to the effect that modern culture seems to embody in a secular way many of the same truths held by the Church in a more theological modality, thus opening the door to a new level of cooperation between the secular and ecclesiological realms, as well as implying a general approval for the manner in which modern secularism had developed culturally.[11] For example, she states: "This belief in the latently Christian orientation of the social trends of the 1950s may also be found in John XXIII's encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, wherein he described the 'mutual acknowledgment of rights and duties in society' as a 'kind of *preparatio evangelii*.' "[12] Rowland goes on to criticize this attitude as an example of how the lack of an adequate theology of culture can lead to a dangerous naiveté. She notes, for example, that even though the modern language of universal human rights, singled out by Pope John as an example of convergence between secular and Christian values, may sound Christian in orientation if not in origin, nevertheless, one would be wrong to think this way since in modern liberalism "rights language" is more often than not Hobbesian and/or utilitarian in orientation. This might seem like a fine hair to split until one realizes that the modern

[10] Ibid., 27–28.
[11] Ibid., 14–15.
[12] Ibid., 14.

approach to rights is not based on the notion of an objective moral order rooted in the transcendental properties of being, but rather in the notion of a social contract and a largely procedural notion of justice. Thus, if the Church adopts as a pastoral strategy the adoption of the liberal "rights language" tradition without a concomitant critical appraisal of the cultural apparatus that is its medium of exchange, then it implies to the "plain person" that the liberal rights tradition is a valid cultural construction for the Christian to adopt. Thus, to the extent that the language of Pope John XXIII implied an endorsement of this tradition, he more than likely wielded a considerable rhetorical influence on the direction and tone of the Council's deliberations on modernity and helps to explain why *Gaudium et Spes* speaks in an optimistic vein about the compatibility between modern social advances and the values of the Gospel.

Many of Rowland's contentions to this point are rather commonplace knowledge in the historiography of the Council (such as the influence of Rahner) while others are more provocative and open to debate (such as her claim that *Gaudium et Spes* has no overarching theological framework). However, there is little doubt, as Rowland notes, that it was the accommodationist sense of *aggiornamento* that won out over the more nuanced and theologically sophisticated approach offered by the *Ressourcement* school of theology. Instead of an organic notion of "reform" rooted in the best spiritual traditions of the Church—traditions that had proven themselves worthy time and again as engines of reform during periods of Church crisis in the past—most theologians preferred to interpret the Council through the rather anemic metaphor offered by Pope John himself, namely that the Council represented an "opening of the windows" of the Church in order to let in fresh air.[13] All of this was done, says Rowland, with a strange and naïve insouciance toward the gravity of the situation. It is hard to understand now, but at the time there did not seem to be much concern on official levels that what was being let in through those windows was an anti-Christian breeze that was about to become a hurricane—a fact, as Rowland notes, that drove Karl Barth to ask Paul VI and his theological advisors concerning the pastoral aim of the Council: "Accommodation to what?"[14]

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[13] Ibid., 19. Rowland is quick to point out that this statement by Pope John was never intended by him to be taken as an official pronouncement on any level. Rather, the statement came out of a comment the Pope made to an ambassador but was picked up by the press and reported widely.

[14] Ibid., 19. Rowland goes on to describe such modern theologians as George Weigel, Richard John Neuhaus, and the "new natural law theorists," e.g., Finnis and Grisez, as "Whig Thomists" who are continuing the task of reconciling the

I do not mean to imply here that Rowland is accusing any of the Catholic proponents of the dialogue with modernity as being "accommodationist" in the apostate and syncretistic connotations of that word (as perhaps the comment by Barth may imply). For example, she notes that both Paul VI and Maritain complained bitterly after the Council that too many Catholic intellectuals were misinterpreting the Council due to the influence of secular liberalism in their thinking.[15] Her complaint rather is that *Gaudium et Spes* is reflective of the theological naiveté of the time and of the optimism, born of that cultural naiveté, that liberalism could be engaged in fruitful dialogue. Rowland points to the ecclesiological carnage that followed in the Council's wake as evidence of the folly of this approach. For Rowland, it is precisely the anti-Christian ethos of modernity that makes *aggiornamento* an impossible, and therefore pastorally dangerous, project setting the Church up for failure. That is why, to the extent that *Gaudium et Spes* does lend aid and comfort to the liberal theological project, it helps to create, as Rowland points out in the words of John O'Malley, an "explosive problematic" at the heart of the Church's self understanding.[16] It is an "explosive problematic" because the power of Liberalism as a cultural construct and as a "narrative tradition" is precisely in its ability to assimilate previously Christian thought forms into a new secular matrix, thereby corroding and undermining the Christian narrative tradition through a coopting of its language. Put simply, to understand liberalism is to understand that it cannot peacefully coexist with Christianity and still be liberalism. Not to realize this and to seek instead to create avenues of open exchange between Christianity and liberalism is like hiring an international art thief to be the head of security at the Louvre.

However, all of this is but a kind of historical–critical preamble to the main thrust of Rowland's theological critique of *Gaudium et Spes*. Rowland criticizes the theological content of *Gaudium et Spes* in two ways. First, she

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Thomist and liberal traditions. It would require another study in its own right to analyze in depth the validity of her claims. I mention it in passing here only to underscore Rowland's claim that this project is not dead and continues to exert a powerful influence in modern Catholic thought.

15 Ibid., 35. She notes: "Within 2 years of the conclusion of the Council, Maritain wrote of the tendency of Catholic scholars to 'kneel before the world,' and the problem of secularism within the Church was acknowledged prior to the conclusion of the Council by Paul VI. In the Encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam*, Paul VI criticised those who 'think that the reform of the Church should consist principally in adapting its way of thinking and acting to the customs and temper of the modern secular world.' "

16 Ibid., 13.

speaks of an extreme ambiguity and "looseness" in much of the document's theological terminology. Second she criticizes the text's understanding of the relationship between nature and grace and the consequences of this misunderstanding for its treatment of culture. We will deal with each of these issues in turn.

Let us start then with the issue of terminological ambiguity. For Rowland, the most crippling of the terminological problems besetting *Gaudium et Spes* centers on its use of the terms "culture" and "modern man" or "modernity." None of these terms is ever defined with adequate precision in the conciliar documents. Rowland states flatly:

> In particular, there was no theological examination of concepts such as "modern man" and "modern world." Just as Francis George has observed that the concept "Church" in Conciliar documents is characterized by a certain "terminological looseness," so too are the concepts "modern man" and the "modern world."[17]

However, for Rowland, the ambiguity of *Gaudium et Spes* does not reside simply in the use of vague terminology. She notes, quoting Aidan Nichols, that the *style* of the document is a novelty in the history of conciliar documents having neither a dogmatic nor a truly "constitutional" character. Furthermore this novel "pastoral" style vacillates haphazardly and without explanation between truly pastoral language and a more dogmatic tone, leaving the reader unclear, in Rowland's view, as to the normative status of its statements. She notes that this confusion of language and style is most likely the result of compromises that had to be made between the conflicting theologies that arose out of the various preparatory committees. In other words, the document bears the imprint of "design by committee" and lacks the clear direction or *telos* required to give the document a coherent theological gestalt of its own. She states: "In effect this means that *Gaudium et Spes* cannot be read without an overarching theological framework in which the contrasts can be reconciled. However, no such framework was offered by the Council fathers and as a consequence the document became the subject of a riot of interpretations."[18]

As evidence of this lack of overall theological framework and the confusion it created, she points to difficulties in the approach of *Gaudium et Spes* to theological anthropology. Citing Walter Kasper's analysis she points out that in one part of *Gaudium et Spes* (*GS* no. 12) we see an emphasis upon humanity as the *imago Dei* with a reliance upon the creation narrative in

[17] Ibid., 18.
[18] Ibid.

Genesis, but in another part of the document we see a much more Christocentric anthropology, with Colossians 1:15 cited for support (*GS* no. 22). The problem with this is that without any explicit attempt by the fathers to create an overarching theological framework to reconcile these two approaches, postconciliar theologians could claim either one as a theological starting point.

This criticism of *Gaudium et Spes* is a very important one and is more than a matter of mere theological esoterica. For as Walter Kasper points out, one of the noteworthy aspects of *Gaudium et Spes* is precisely the fact that it is the first conciliar document in history ever to attempt a systematic elaboration of a theological anthropology.[19] Thus, the question of whether or not the Council's anthropology is flawed by the necessity of compromise cuts right to the heart of the document's enduring value. Furthermore, David Schindler correctly points out in his own analysis of the tensions between *Gaudium et Spes* no. 12 and no. 22, that if one develops a more general theistic anthropology devoid of an ontological Christological orientation, then the emphasis will be placed on the individual as an autonomously free creative agent since we primarily image God in such a scheme by sharing in his creative activity in our role as steward of creation. The emphasis will be on human doing and can lead, ironically, to an almost Promethean spirituality that views it as our theological imperative to take on duties that have been traditionally ascribed to the agency of God—as seen for example in the instrumentalization of human life in abortion and embryo research—all justified by liberal Christians on the grounds that God has blessed us with rationality and it is now our task to creatively subdue the world by bringing everything, including human life itself, under the umbrella of the technological imperative. However, if one adopts a more Christologically oriented anthropology, then the primary constitutive act of human agency shifts from one of active creativity to one of an active receptivity of the sheer "gift" of creation. This awareness of the "giftedness" of existence extends beyond mere gratitude for my own existence into an appreciation of the giftedness of the existence of the "other." This latter anthropology will, therefore, grant a priority to adoration and contemplation over "having" and

[19] Walter Kasper, "The Theological Anthropology of *Gaudium et Spes*," *Communio* 23 (1996), 129–40. He states: "*Gaudium et Spes* signals the first time that a council has consciously endeavored to set forth a systematic account of Christian anthropology in an independent thematic context. . . . Prior to Vatican II no council had produced a 'general outline' of Christian anthropology. The Pastoral Constitution was the first attempt to do so" (129).

"doing" and will issue forth in an ethic of love rather than one of manipulative domination.[20]

However, even more damning than this "tension" between the two aspects of the document is the fact that for Rowland, *Gaudium et Spes* seems to grant a positive priority toward the more generically theistic anthropology through its use of Pelagian-sounding language in its descriptions of the importance of human social progress, the "autonomy of culture" and the "autonomy of freedom." Rowland states: "This danger was recognised by Joseph Ratzinger as early as 1969 when . . . he described sections of it embodying . . . 'a downright Pelagian terminology.' "[21] Rowland clearly does not hold that the Council fathers intended any endorsement of the Pelagian heresy. But she does view such language as typifying what she sees as a fuzzy approach to the whole issue of the relationship between nature and grace. When *Gaudium et Spes* speaks of the "autonomy" of culture and of human freedom and then couples this with a vague endorsement of the social achievements of "modern man" (whatever that is), one could be left with the impression that the Council is endorsing the theological liberalism of the "social gospel" school of thought wherein there is a close interconnection between human social "progress" and the coming of the kingdom of God. It is but a short step from this kind of thinking to the marginalizing of God's grace as an extrinsic "add-on" to the autonomous realm of the *humanum*.

Certainly, *Gaudium et Spes* does not have to be read in this fashion since the text does provide us with countervailing Christocentric statements to the contrary. However, for Rowland, the lack of a coherent theological framework for the text leaves the door open for those who wish to view the more theocentric statements of *Gaudium et Spes* as the proper hermeneutical principle for conciliar exegesis and who therefore view the countervailing Christocentric language as mere lip-service to the more conservative theological voices at the Council—voices that can now be ignored as not truly representing the "spirit of the Council." Sadly, says Rowland, the door was not only left open to such an interpretation but that in point of historical fact most postconciliar theologians went through it and succeeded in gaining the upper hand in the life of the Church. She states:

> The idea that *aggiornamento* might mean an updating or development of theological resources to provide a coherent critique of the culture of

[20] David L. Schindler, "Christology and the *imago Dei*: Interpreting *Gaudium et Spes*," *Communio* 23 (1996): 156–84.

[21] Rowland, 24.

> modernity, rather than a simple accommodation to it—that is, an interpretation which coupled the concept of *aggiornamento* to the pre-Conciliar *Ressourcement* project . . . never succeeded in influencing the *Zeitgeist* of the Council as the accommodationist interpretation did.[22]

All of this leads Rowland to conclude by way of summary:

> When taken together, the fact of compromise, the multiple contrasts, the unprecedented form, the absence of a clearly defined theological framework for its interpretation, the alteration between dogma and pastoral appeals and the terminological looseness all contributed to the complexity of the "explosive problematic."[23]

In fairness to the Council, Rowland does note that the Council fathers had to deal with the theological legacy of the movement known as "integralism" that posited both a sharp distinction between the realms of nature and grace, yet maintained, strangely, that the Church still had a rather direct Magisterial authority over all of the secular sciences as well as the secular realm in general. It is in this hermeneutical light, she agrees, that many of the confusing statements in *Gaudium et Spes* concerning the "autonomy" of human freedom, culture, and the secular sciences are to be read. The Church fathers were painfully aware of the popular image of the Church in the mythological historiography of modernity as an obstructionist force aligned against the forward march of the experimental sciences and as an opponent of legitimate human social progress in general. Therefore, the goal of the Council was not to affirm a false notion of secular autonomy but to emphasize the legitimate autonomy of the realm of the secular from an overbearing ecclesiastical regime. Furthermore, as we have seen, the Council in general, and *Gaudium et Spes* as well, contain Christocentric counterbalances that give further evidence of the true conciliar agenda: the creation of a new Christologically centered theological anthropology. Rowland notes that it is precisely this approach to the Council that has characterized the pontificate of John Paul II with his repeated references to the Christocentric statements made in *GS* 22 as well as his efforts, culminating in the Extraordinary Synod of 1985, to place the theology of the Council within the ambit of *Ressourcement* theology.[24]

However, this does not excuse the Council, says Rowland, nor does it make the Council documents immune from critique. Knowing the proper

[22] Ibid., 19.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.

hermeneutical filter to be used in interpreting the Council is not the same as agreeing with the final product produced. She seems to imply that one could just as easily say that the Council fathers overreacted to the threat of integralism because they had already grown weary of the baggage of the Church's tradition in general and desired to throw off some of the weight and ballast of the past in order to embrace a liberal order for which many of them had deep sympathies.

In conclusion, we can state that for Rowland *Gaudium et Spes* is a deeply flawed document that contributed to the "explosive problematic" that has caused massive conflict in the Church over the past four decades since it called for an "opening to the world" without articulating a theology of culture that alone could make such an adventure pastorally successful. Her analysis implies that had the Council drank more deeply from the well of *Ressourcement* theologians such as Balthasar or Guardini, rather than the humanism of Rahner and Maritain, we would have ended up with a far more theologically coherent text. Therefore, it is to Balthasar's assessment of the Council to which we must now turn in order to see if his theological project can be properly used to endorse Rowland's conclusions.

Balthasar's Analysis of *Gaudium et Spes*

Balthasar, surprisingly, did not write extensively on the Council as such. Balthasar was not invited to the Council and devoted his energies instead to the articulation of a renewed theology in the *Ressourcement* mode of thought. Therefore, it is somewhat difficult to reach any final and definitive conclusions concerning Balthasar's full view of the conciliar documents. However, what little we do have shows that Balthasar appears to have had a far more positive view of the Council in general—and *Gaudium et Spes* in particular—than Rowland. That does not mean that he did not share some of the same concerns regarding the ascendancy of liberal theology in Catholic circles that Rowland outlines, as we shall see. However, his rather positive comments concerning *Gaudium et Spes* stand in contrast with Rowland's more negative assessment and calls for a closer look at the differences between their respective approaches.

Before we turn directly to Balthasar's treatment of the Council, I want to emphasize, as stated above, that Balthasar shares Rowland's concern that theological liberalism has led to a false "worldliness" in the Church that has in turn led to a pastorally disastrous misinterpretation of the aims of the Council. Balthasar states:

> Theological liberalism has also penetrated deeply into the Catholic Church. One realizes this best in the open and ever more vehement

> contesting of the magisterium's rights concerning doctrine, while the contesting of the truths of revelation is usually camouflaged diplomatically. This game of hide and seek with seemingly "orthodox" formulations in which a liberal (i.e., enlightened rationalist) meaning is hidden is a new phenomenon and highly confusing to the layman. Confronted with single assertions of a theologian, the decision whether one is dealing with a truly faithful or a liberal assertion can become almost impossible.[25]

The interesting thing in this rather simple and straightforward quote is the manner in which Balthasar contrasts a "faithful" with a "liberal" theological assertion, directly implying that the latter constitutes a heterodox distortion of the truths of revelation. What this shows is that Balthasar shares Rowland's view that liberal theology constitutes a false accommodation with modernity and that it therefore is not the simple flowering of a new "theological school" within the Church's plurality of legitimate theologies, for example, as in the complementary schools of the Augustinian/Franciscans and the Thomistic/Dominicans. Balthasar is clear that there is a legitimate plurality of theologies within the Church, but he resolutely rejects the modern liberal notion of "pluralism" whose chief project seems to be the legitimation of contradictory rather than complementary forms of theology within the very heart of the Church's message. Balthasar warns, therefore, that liberal theology in this form is simply un-Christian and is incommensurate with the Gospel: "The word pluralism has been invented specifically to make even contradictions between theological opinions legitimate. For one theologian Christ is the Son of God, one in being with the Father; for the other he is not. . . . [B]ut everybody will understand that the opinion of the New Testament about Christ cannot be contradictory in itself."[26]

So numerous are Balthasar's statements concerning the un-Christian character of liberal theology that one could go on quoting them forever. But Balthasar's harshest words for the liberal project, deeply reminiscent of Rowland's own trenchant critique of the same, can be found in his now infamous work "The Moment of Christian Witness" (*Cordula oder der Ernstfall,* original German title).[27] Originally published in 1966 in Switzerland, its appearance in the English-speaking world in the post-*Humanae Vitae* turmoil of 1969 came as something of a shock to most Anglo-American theologians, who, due to a lack of Balthasar's works in

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[25] Balthasar, *A Short Primer for Unsettled Laymen* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1980), 41.

[26] Ibid., 43–44.

[27] Balthasar, *The Moment of Christian Witness* (New York: Newman Press, 1969).

English, were not familiar with his thought.[28] Depending on one's antecedent theological commitments, the text will appear as either a polemical and reckless diatribe or as a prophetic call from the wilderness. However, whatever one's theological opinions, there can be no doubt that in this text Balthasar spells out quite clearly that theological liberalism constitutes a dangerous Trojan horse in the Church for three fundamental reasons. First, as its name implies, theological liberalism is an attempted reconciliation with secular liberalism's assertion of the autonomy of human freedom and its concomitant emphasis upon the self-creating nature of human personhood. Balthasar refers to this type of Promethean secular liberalism as "the system"—an expression that implies the totalizing goal of modern liberalism to replace the Christian Gospel with a new secular soteriology. The attempt by liberal theologians to locate this version of secularization within the biblical teaching that man is the *imago Dei* precisely in his free and autonomous creative agency robs Christian anthropology of its proper Christological focus and replaces the notion of salvation as "grace" or "gift"—the only properly biblical categories for salvation—with a more Pelagian orientation coupled with vague notions of "social progress" and "human rights."[29]

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[28] It bears noting here that a good historical case could be made that the ecclesial dislocations that occurred after the Council did not really reach a crescendo until after the promulgation of *Humanae Vitae*. The whole debate over the morality of contraception created a need on the part of liberals who had sought a change in the teaching to develop new ecclesiological models that legitimated dissent from authoritative Church teaching. This thesis gains added weight when one realizes that in the years 1965–1968 one does not see the kind of massive dissent from creedal Catholicism that one sees after *Humanae Vitae*. Thus, one could make the case that it was the pastoral and theological ineffectiveness of *Humanae Vitae,* and not *Gaudium et Spes*, that created the "explosive problematic" of which Rowland speaks. Rowland could counter by pointing out that the new liberal theologies developed in the wake of *Humanae Vitae* all appealed to the so-called liberal "spirit of the Council" for justification. However, in order to make this historical claim she would need to show that this appeal to the conciliar spirit was a direct result of the Council's putative ambiguities rather than a deliberate and rather ad hoc misinterpretation of the Council for the sake of pushing the liberal agenda.

[29] Ibid., 35–44. In the section titled "The Philosophical System and its Alternative," Balthasar describes the essentially Promethean character of modern secular liberalism as well as the fact that this "system" is not a haphazard collection of various disparate philosophical positions, but a totalizing project that cannot be accepted "in part" in an effort to "Christianize" this or that element in its synthesis. Thus does Balthasar oppose liberal theology for precisely the same reason as Rowland: It is a naïve attempt at accommodation with a system that dissolves all of its "dialogue partners" in the corrosive acid of its cultural medium.

That brings us to Balthasar's second point. In order to pull this off, liberal theology has to "demythologize" the Bible and to transpose its unabashedly and thoroughly supernatural message and thought forms into an analogous form more palatable to the humanistic naturalism of modernity. However, as Balthasar is quick to point out: "The trouble is that if the content of our belief becomes analogous, the actions which arise from this belief are also bound to be analogous, and no one who adopted a belief based on the transposed terms just described could possibly claim to possess an unambiguous faith in Christ as it has been understood by the Church for nearly 2,000 years."[30]

Finally, this demythologizing project, whose chief aim is to render revelation an "analogous" thought project that needs "updating" in a modern naturalistic idiom, robs revelation of its kerygmatic and normative weight, making it one religious "thought form" among many and reducing it thereby to a mere anthropological category. Once this is accomplished the road is now open to vulgarized versions of Rahner's "anonymous Christianity" where there is no longer any specific reason to be publicly Christian rather than not. After all, God's grace is literally the same everywhere so it would be foolish for any person to die for the sake of the Gospel when there are so many other equally valid "paths to God." This denuding of the kerygmatic force of the Gospel, and of the central theological importance attached to being an explicit Christian in the world, leads inexorably to the total capitulation of the Christian community to the dominant *Zeitgeist* of whatever cultural form is dominant. Balthasar therefore concludes his analysis with a sharp rebuke to the liberal theological project:

> This would be the way in which a Christian would have to start a dialogue with the non-Christian if he does not want to show himself wholly unworthy of his name. He does not put the content of the faith in parentheses; he does not water it down to a bland and shallow humanism. . . . But this means in precise terms: Stop those barren transpositions of the mysteries of God into modern nursery rhymes; . . . Compose . . . no more basic theology for which God no longer provides the yardstick but rather the alleged partner in dialogue, and which really only springs from [an] anxiety about being on top of the times (and which unveils [a] role-conscious pride).[31]

I offer this brief *excursus* on Balthasar's approach to theological liberalism in order to underscore the fact that his theological project does

[30] Ibid., 58–59. For a broader context for these remarks by Balthasar, see: 53–60.
[31] Ibid., 75–76.

have a close affinity with that of Rowland. However, it is precisely the close agreement between these two thinkers on the baneful effects of liberalism that throws into sharp relief their differing assessments of the theological value of *Gaudium et Spes*. In Balthasar's view, the Council articulated a perfectly lucid theological picture that was in turn misinterpreted by those with a liberal theological agenda. Balthasar states that in postconciliar liberal theology "there remains de facto nothing more than a liberal–Christian humanism that appeals falsely to the Council and to its call for dialogue."[32] Thus, whereas Rowland seeks to locate the cause of many of the postconciliar dislocations in the weaknesses of *Gaudium et Spes* itself, Balthasar views it instead as a case of postconciliar manipulation of the texts.

Along these more positive lines, the first thing that one notices in Balthasar's approach is that he does not read *Gaudium et Spes* in isolation from the other documents of the Council. True to his overall theological style, Balthasar's analysis glides easily between one conciliar document after another, connecting the theological dots in an effort to discern the theological gestalt of the whole. Perhaps this causes him to miss some of the ambiguities and problems that Rowland outlines through her analytical focus on a single conciliar document. But a careful reading of Balthasar's essay shows clearly that his chief aim was not to critique the arguable shortcomings of the Council but rather to demonstrate that despite the putative tensions in its texts, the Council was truly a work of the Holy Spirit and constitutes a definitive contribution to the theology of our times. As Balthasar proceeds in this project one cannot help but be impressed by the positive theological synthesis that he develops in his brief exegesis of the main theological themes of the Council. Numerous conciliar statements from a wide variety of documents are stitched together into a coherent theological fabric. It is perhaps this more synthetic rather than analytical approach that gives his treatment of *Gaudium et Spes* a more favorable tone than that of Rowland, allowing Balthasar to blame the rise of theological liberalism on a misinterpretation and misappropriation of the Council's true message rather than seeing in the text an "explosive problematic" that contributed to the rise of liberalism, as Rowland contends. This reluctance to criticize the Council as a contributing factor in the turmoil that followed in its wake can be seen in the following quote that deserves to be cited in full:

[32] Balthasar, "The Council of the Holy Spirit," *Communio* 17 (1990): 609. This article also subsequently appeared in *Explorations in Theology III: Creator Spirit* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993), 245–67. I will be using the text from *Communio* in what follows.

> Since this Council did not aim to make dogmatic definitions, *the mystery of revelation as such is presupposed everywhere* . . . although it is not set forth explicitly and in detail. The many directives to priests, religious, and laity that they must draw on the fullness of revelation for their apostolate show clearly that the Council does not in the least proclaim a "new spirituality" that would have its own center in the "turning to the world." There exists today in the faithful—but especially among theologians and professors of theology—a deplorable "worldliness" that simply refuses to listen properly to the Council and presents itself falsely as sailing under the Council's colors. Against this, one must hold fast to the *principle of interpretation* of all the Council texts: the Council demands new *attitudes*, so that the original message may reach the destination at which it aims (and must aim), and therefore makes new, very far-reaching *demands*. . . . All Christians have the right and duty to keep in mind, as the background taken for granted for everything that is said in the Council texts, the elementary dogmatic truths which are not always explicitly invoked. . . . The Council says enough to confirm this principle (which basically can be taken for granted) everywhere in its statements.[33]

We can see from this statement that where Rowland sees "terminological looseness" in *Gaudium et Spes* and a dangerous lack of an explicit dogmatic orientation or even a coherent theological framework, Balthasar sees a document that speaks with clarity when viewed in the full light of the rest of the Council and with a genuine faith in the Church's overarching dogmatic tradition—a tradition that the vast majority of the Council fathers knew well and simply presumed as the proper theological backdrop for the texts they were debating. This would seem to imply further that for a theologian to see in their statements a "Herderian tone" or a "Hegelian sounding" view of history, as Rowland does, would require the imputation to the Council fathers, in an act of uncharitable exegesis, motives and ideas that most of them most certainly lacked. For example, Rowland states in speaking of the treatment of culture in *Gaudium et Spes*: "Without further reference to principles to be found within the corpus of Catholic thought, this subsection sounds like an endorsement of the ideas first propounded by the German Romantic Johann Gottfried Herder."[34] Rowland herself, sensing the possible unfairness of her imputation of such motives is quick to state: "This is not to argue that the conciliar fathers were consciously promoting a Herderian conception of *Kultur*, but rather that the language of the section is seemingly Herderian."[35] However, regardless of whether

[33] "The Council of the Holy Spirit," 603–4.
[34] Cf. Rowland, 23.
[35] Ibid.

or not the language of the text is "seemingly Herderian" or not, only a theologian bent on misrepresenting the Council's true theological orientation to the dogmatic tradition of the Church could read it in such a light. Therefore, by emphasizing that the Council fathers had simply presumed the history of the Catholic dogmatic tradition as the proper backdrop for the interpretation of their formulas, Balthasar, fully cognizant of the "conservative" criticism of the Council fathers that had already arisen in his time, implies that it is simply unfair to lay at the feet of the Council fathers the blame for the theological mendacity of those who would willfully misrepresent them. In short, the only "naiveté" of which they were guilty was the presumption that their pronouncements would be interpreted and read in the same light of the Church's tradition in which they were offered.

What then are we to make of all of the turmoil that came in the wake of the Council? Balthasar provides us with a moral/spiritual diagnosis of the postconciliar turmoil rather than a textual one: In his view it is the obstinate and "deplorable worldliness" of many of the Church's members that gave rise to the kind of accommodationist liberalism discussed earlier. And if Balthasar thought that weaknesses in the texts themselves contributed to this misappropriation by giving such "worldly" Catholics a pretext for claiming the Council for themselves, he does not say so. This stands in sharp contrast with Rowland's approach whose direct criticisms of the text of *Gaudium et Spes* itself stands as the central focus. It seems to be her view that it is precisely the theological laxity of *Gaudium et Spes* that gave "worldly" people in the Church (including perhaps members of the hierarchy and certain Council fathers), who were already predisposed to change the Church in liberal directions, the theological "ammunition" and confusion they needed in order to make their own agenda a reality. Once again, perhaps Balthasar held such views in private. Nevertheless, we cannot presume this in the face of his publicly positive evaluation of the conciliar texts. In my view it is not completely clear which of these two approaches is accurate, if either is. However, it is an important debate since it bears on the important question of whether *Gaudium et Spes* offers us a coherent theological framework. If it does then that framework must be made more explicit and put into practice (which seems to be one of the main pastoral aims of John Paul's pontificate). If not, it renders the text pointless at best and dangerous at worst.

It is interesting to ask at this juncture if we are not in fact witnessing, not just two differing analyses of the legacy of the Council—one more positive the other more negative—but also two differing interpretive "styles" for the exegesis of conciliar texts. I have no desire to engage in superficial generalizations, but we could say that Rowland is engaging in

a historical–critical analysis of *Gaudium et Spes*, judging the meaning of its final theological affirmations in the light of the historical personalities that shaped them, while Balthasar is judging the same text in a more synthetic fashion by analyzing its affirmations within the total horizon of the Church's faith. Put another way, we could say that Rowland is engaging in a "hermeneutic of suspicion" whereas Balthasar is engaging in a "hermeneutic of trust." That is not to say that Balthasar would reject a more historical–critical approach as lacking in purpose or foundation, nor does it imply that Rowland would reject a more synthetic treatment of *Gaudium et Spes* in the light of the other conciliar documents.

Allow me to expand on this point a little further by comparing Balthasar's exegesis of the Council to his exegesis of the Scriptures. Certainly, the Scriptures enjoy the special charism of "inspiration" whereas a Council simply has the more negative charism of being preserved from serious error in its dogmatic formulations. Nevertheless, an analogy can be drawn between Balthasar's approach to the Scriptures and his approach to conciliar exegesis.[36] Anyone who is familiar with Balthasar's approach to biblical exegesis knows that he accepts the historical–critical method as a thoroughly appropriate tool to aid us in deepening our understanding of the biblical texts, while at the same time insisting that this tool cannot be used to imply that the biblical text can be totally "explained" through a strict analysis of its historical antecedents and literary sources. The biblical text, according to Balthasar, is a work of the Holy Spirit and therefore has a total theological unity, discernible to the eyes of faith, that cannot be completely "contained" within an analysis of sources and forms. Indeed, if one misses this point, then one can engage in the most scientifically rigorous historical–critical deconstruction of a text, and yet, ironically, miss the entire theological significance of the text. Thus does Balthasar's own interpretation of biblical texts frustrate anyone with an overly critical eye as Balthasar glides effortlessly, based on a total theological vision of the whole, from one biblical text to another. It is this same aesthetic/synthetic interpretive style that he utilizes in his exegesis of the Council, fully convinced that this Council is more than the sum of its influences. It is not without reason that he titles his essay "The Council of the Holy Spirit"—an affirmation that includes both the subject matter of the Council as well as its Providential character.

Rowland's approach, by way of contrast, while certainly affirming the role of the Holy Spirit in guiding the Council, focuses primarily on a

[36] For a good summary of Balthasar's approach to biblical exegesis, see *The Glory of the Lord*, vol. 1: Seeing the Form (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1982), 527–66.

critique of the Council through an analysis of the historical players who shaped its form. Thus, as already mentioned, we see her lengthy discussion of the role of Maritain, Rahner, and Cardinal Lercaro, among others, on the direction of the Council's theology, as well as the influence on the Council's overall ethos exerted by the statements and pastoral styles of both Pope John and Pope Paul. This is most certainly a legitimate, necessary, and theologically indispensable analysis, adding to our historical understanding of the forces that were at work during that time. Such careful historical analysis cannot help but give context and texture to our theological understanding of the texts. How historically impoverished would our understanding of the Council be without the insight brought about by just such analysis? However, and here I will show my Balthasarian pedigree, such historical analysis, though a necessary component in any full view of the Council, is incomplete if it does not have as one of its chief aims the use of such knowledge to aid us in the more constructive project of ascertaining the full theological significance of the Council's decrees in their total synthetic orientation to one another and to the Church's broader tradition. Lacking such a final synthesis, it could be said that Rowland's critique of *Gaudium et Spes* is not so much incorrect as incomplete insofar as it lacks a constructive moment.

This discussion of the differing interpretive styles of Rowland and Balthasar is more than an exercise in academic hair-splitting. There are several important issues at stake here. First, and perhaps least important, is the fact that the reception of Balthasar's theology by the broader Catholic theological guild has been slowed in some circles through the perpetuation of a stereotype of Balthasar as a kind of cranky Romantic who was ill-at-ease with the reforms of the Council. Since Rowland, in some sense, lays claim to the Balthasarian mantle, it is important to note that his approach to *Gaudium et Spes* is far more positive and constructive than hers. Second, and more important, is the fact that her more critical approach to this Council is precisely the same tactic used by theological liberalism to critique many of the great Councils of the past. Could it not be said, and indeed has it not been said, that the first four ecumenical councils each created its own unique "explosive problematic"? Did they not bring in their wake confusion, strife, and even outright schism? Were not their deliberations marked by political pressure, both imperial and ecclesiastical? Were they not attempts at compromise between warring theological factions leaving all sides dissatisfied with the "terminological looseness" of the definitions—a looseness that gave both sides a claim to the conciliar legacy perpetuating the debates indefinitely? Furthermore, hagiography notwithstanding, were not the deliberations often marked by

bitter acrimony and even downright un-Christian and violent behavior? Was not the introduction of a philosophical term such as *homoousios* a novelty in style that provoked its own controversy? And finally, could it not be said that many of the Council fathers in the early Church were naïve since they did not anticipate the riot of controversy their decisions would create? It is not my purpose here to be sarcastic or mean-spirited at Tracey Rowland's expense, but simply to point out that it is a dangerous and slippery business indeed to judge a Council by the turmoil it leaves in its wake or the incompleteness of its formulations. As David Schindler points out with regard to the fact that *Gaudium et Spes* left us with some unfinished theological business: "All councils of the Church to some extent juxtapose apparently discrepant statements: the effort to harmonize different traditions is not unique to Vatican II, and in any case can rarely be entirely successful. . . . As in the case of every council, the theoretical mediation…is a task for the theology that comes afterwards."[37] We can add, by way of conclusion, Balthasar's statement concerning the proper reception of a Council (in this case, paradigmatically, Chalcedon):

> In all [conciliar] "definitions" one should remember above all that a segment is lifted out of a whole that belongs together and is examined, as it were, with the magnifying glass. For this reason a later view can order what has been "defined" in this way into a larger context that does not really relativize it but "relationalizes" it so to speak, by placing it into a frame of reference. This is obviously already the case in Chalcedon, which places the formula of Ephesus into a more comprehensive context; Vatican II did this also with Vatican I, which was broken off prematurely.[38]

This is precisely what Balthasar means, when, speaking of the hermeneutics of suspicion notes: "suspicion is an unprofitable attitude and the reverse of inclusive."[39] By this he does not mean, it seems to me, that we can never criticize a Council. Rowland is surely correct here when she notes, in response to those who would reject any criticism of a Council out of a false fideistic piety, that "this is a type of blind trust in the prudential judgment of pastors that has never been demanded by

[37] Schindler, *Imago Dei,* 157.

[38] Balthasar, *A Short Primer,* 67–68.

[39] Balthasar, *Explorations in Theology,* vol. 1: *The Word Made Flesh* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), 159. Balthasar goes on to state: "The theology of today must have such a certainty and fullness—derived from the eternal fullness of revelation, of the Spirit given at this time, and of the fullness of the tradition received—as to embrace the riches of past theology as a living thing, and to endow it with fresh vitality."

Catholic doctrine."[40] Therefore, Balthasar's remarks about the dangers of "suspicion" point instead, in my view, to a kind of critical exegesis—whether of the Scriptures or of authoritative Church documents—that deconstructs a text without a concomitant moment of positive theological retrieval in the light of the whole. In other words, Balthasar is appealing here to the idea that no conciliar text should be read outside of the "narrative tradition" that is its medium of discourse. Thus, there appears to be an ironic inconsistency in Rowland's approach here. On the one hand there is an emphasis throughout her text on the importance of "narrative traditions" and on the other hand there is an apparent disregard for that same principle when it comes to reading *Gaudium et Spes*. It is hard to see how she can reconcile this deep criticism of the Council with the view of most other *Ressourcement* theologians that the texts of the Council continue to have great validity as a positive theological construct. For as Walter Kasper states: "The reception of the Second Vatican Council is by no means behind us, but in many respects still before us. The texts . . . remain the 'Magna Charta' for the Church's path into the third millennium."[41] If Rowland wants to counter by claiming that *Gaudium et Spes* is somehow an anomalous mistake in an otherwise theologically coherent Council, then she needs to explain how the same Council fathers that produced such theological gems as *Lumen Gentium* and *Dei Verbum* suddenly lost their theological wits when constructing *Gaudium et Spes*.

However, most of what has been discussed up to this point has been largely a matter of methodology and historical analysis. What then of some of Rowland's specific theological complaints concerning the Council? Let us begin with one of the central points in Rowland's critique: that the language of *Gaudium et Spes* on the topic of the "autonomy" of human freedom—with its corollaries, the autonomy of culture and the realm of the secular—is dangerously dualistic as well as Pelagian in tone. In response we can point to what Balthasar perceives as the mutually conditioning theological themes of *Gaudium et Spes*: the universal call to holiness and the call for a new theology of the laity. Rowland notes that the Council was reacting against the threat of theological integralism in its statements about the autonomy of the secular realm. However, she does not elaborate on this point at any length. Balthasar, however, views this integralist and "clerocentric" historical background as the main threat that drove the conciliar deliberations on the role of the

[40] Rowland, 34.

[41] Kasper, "Theological Anthropology," 140.

laity. Thus, for Balthasar, the main point of this Council was not the refining of definitions or the formulation of new dogmas, but rather to act "as a spur to better action."[42] Here "action" is not to be interpreted in an "activist" sense at the expense of the primacy of contemplation. Rather, Balthasar is referring directly to the Council's call for all laypeople to understand the true depth of their unique Christian vocation "in the world" and for the Church to shake off the shackles of a kind of Manichean clericalism in order to facilitate this new awareness. Therefore, all of the statements by *Gaudium et Spes* that emphasize the dignity and autonomy of the secular realm should be interpreted, not as an attempt at "accommodation," but as a legitimate ennobling of the role of the laity in the world since the world is now viewed in a non-Manichean way as part of the "good" creation. Thus, says Balthasar, "the chief emphasis is transferred to the layperson, who stands at the point of conversion at which the message (transmitted by the clergy) is to be realized and inserted as seasoning into the matter of the world."[43]

This emphasis upon the role of the laity leads Balthasar to make some strikingly positive statements about the relationship between the Church's mission and that of the "world" in general. He quotes *Gaudium et Spes* (43): " 'The artificial contrast between professional and social activity on the one hand, and religious life on the other hand' is one of 'the gravest errors of the age.' "[44] This leads him to the following conclusion: "This may have been perceived too little in earlier ages, but the situation of today's world forces us unavoidably to see both activities in their convergence: *the unified planning of the earthly world and the universal ('Catholic') commission entrusted to the Church* are coextensive."[45] Thus, far from emphasizing a false autonomy of culture, Balthasar states flatly that with the rise of this new pastoral emphasis in the Council on the proper goodness of the world and of the responsibility of the Christian layperson to help shape it, we can lay to rest "once and for all . . . the mentality that holds that one can be Catholic too alongside of one's status as a good citizen, guaranteeing one's own private salvation by the keeping of some religious obligations while otherwise leaving the concern for Christianity to the specialists, the clergy."[46] Finally, despite his sharp rebuke

[42] Balthasar, "The Council of the Holy Spirit," 595.

[43] Ibid., 598.

[44] Ibid., 599.

[45] Ibid. Emphasis is in the original.

[46] Ibid., 595–96. It is interesting to note here that Rowland criticizes *Gaudium et Spes* for emphasizing the role of "experts" in modern culture. Once again, she views this as evidence of the Council's predilection for the bureaucratic structure

for the Promethean ethos of modernity, Balthasar does not simply reject modernity dialectically, but sees in its constructions certain positive developments that have led to this increased awareness on the part of the Church of her own mission to the "world": "Without a doubt, the unifying movement of the modern world was the occasion for the theological breakthrough and for this (re-)discovery of the true essence of the Church."[47] All of this leads Balthasar to the following conclusion concerning the attitude of *Gaudium et Spes* toward human social progress and the autonomy of the realm of the secular:

> The path along which these values are aimed at on the world scale is the path of socialization; the very great dangers of this are seen perfectly alongside its positive characteristics [*GS* 25; 37], above all the danger of a false self-satisfaction (and thereby atheism) on the part of the human person, who achieves mastery over nature [*GS* 19, 20; 57, 5]; ultimately, it is possible to aim effectively at true earthly justice and freedom, and to preserve these, only on the basis of a higher motive, that of selfless Christian love [*GS* 72, 2].[48]

His endorsement of the Council's approach to the modern world is made even stronger when we remember that Balthasar could hardly be accused of lacking a proper analysis of the relationship between nature and grace or faith and reason. A student and admirer of de Lubac, Balthasar continued his mentor's efforts to overcome the theological dualism latent within much of post-Tridentine Catholic theology. It

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of modern liberal society and a kind of false elitist elevation of "education" above grace as in the liberal aristocratic tradition. (Cf. Rowland, 26) However, it is probably more correct to view this emphasis upon the role of the expert in the broader context of the Council's attack upon the integralist's elevation of the "expertise" of the clergy in all things. The Council then, with a very insightful analysis of the problems associated with "mass culture" and the vulgarization of society that mass culture can engender, turns to the Christian layperson and asks the laity to understand that their professional "expertise" must be viewed as part of their Christian vocation to serve and love their neighbor and that they, and they alone, are capable of such expertise in light of the limited competence of the clergy in secular matters. Balthasar says that in *Gaudium et Spes* "an irreproachable professional competence is demanded of the laity, as well as personal initiative: 'They should not think that their pastors have so much competence that they can hand over to them the immediate, concrete solution to all problems.' [*GS* 43, 2]." "Council of the Holy Spirit," 600.

47 Balthasar, "The Council of the Holy Spirit," 597. It would be interesting to ask at this juncture if Balthasar's theology does not suffer somewhat from a tension in his own views concerning the legitimacy of the thought forms of modernity.

48 Ibid., 600.

would seem plausible to assume, therefore, that if Balthasar viewed the Council's statements about the autonomy of culture or the realm of the secular as in any way endorsing such dualism, he would have been the first to criticize them. The fact of the matter is that these are very complex theological problems requiring thick theological analysis. The Council had to avoid speaking in a manner that could be interpreted as either integralist/conservative or secularist/liberal while at the same time speaking in a plain language that avoided heavy theological jargon. That is why it makes mention of the various components of a proper Christian anthropology without necessarily tying these pieces together into a neat theological package—a task that is more proper to a later phase of theological mediation as David Schindler suggested in the quote above.

However, the picture may be rosier than even the above scenario suggests. For according to Balthasar, *Gaudium et Spes* does provide us with the skeleton of an overarching theological framework within which its call for a renewed emphasis on the laity is embedded. This framework also aids us in the proper theological understanding of the true "autonomy" of culture. That framework is a Christocentric theology of the person. We do not have the time to deal with this topic in any depth. Suffice it to say that Balthasar sees in *Gaudium et Spes* a clearer view of the purposes of culture than Rowland allows. With regard to the relationship between the Church and the world Balthasar states that the emphasis on their close interconnection by the Council is no accident: "The two areas do not lie alongside each other without any connection, nor is their convergence purely formal, because the true goal . . . 'is the construction of a more human world' [*GS* 57,1], adapting the conditions of life to the dignity of the human person, and as far as possible, for all persons."[49] Therefore, concludes Balthasar:

> It is the person who is the "author, center and goal of culture" [*GS* 63, 1], which is "totally at the service of the human person" [*GS* 64]. It is already much, if this is understood, and the development is steered accordingly (for this development does not run automatically) [*GS* 65, 2]; thus the "dignity of the person" is the central key concept of the entire argumentation.[50]

Balthasar immediately follows up on this insight by pointing out that this emphasis upon the "dignity of the person" is not simply a generic appeal to a vague humanism. Indeed, *Gaudium et Spes* explicitly lists a false

[49] Ibid., 599.
[50] Ibid., 599–600.

humanism as one of the causes of modern atheism as well as modern civilization's preoccupation with the "concerns of this world" [*GS* 19, 2]. Balthasar notes through numerous citations from *Gaudium et Spes* that the Council located the dignity and worth of the human person in an explicit Christocentric anthropology. He states that as far as *Gaudium et Spes* is concerned: "Christ alone is the solution to the problems of the world, and even of the most difficult tensions [*GS* 19, 2; 22, 1–6], because he is the 'center of the human race' [*GS* 45, 2]." In an era of totalitarianism, fascism, genocide, and reductionistic technologism, the Council fathers choose not to engage in a highly specific critique of one particular culture (e.g., liberalism), even if that one culture is the cause of most of these ills, but chooses instead to focus in laserlike fashion upon the liberating light that is the solution to all cultural problems anywhere and at all times. Had *Gaudium et Spes* engaged in a systematic deconstruction of modern liberalism, as Rowland seems to wish it had, it simply would have reinforced the already negative attitude toward the world that existed everywhere in the Church at that time, seriously undercutting its new theology of the laity. Given the genocidal catastrophes she had witnessed in the previous decades, and given the specter of the cold war, third world poverty, and the rising tide of violent tension in hot-spots all over the world, the Church could not hide her light "under a bushel basket." The pastoral project of *Gaudium et Spes* may have been poorly executed and filled with ambiguity. However, it was a risk the Church had to take out of her concern for human dignity and out of the consciousness of her mission from Christ to spread the good news to the entire world. That is why Balthasar couples his analysis of *Gaudium et Spes* on the subject of human dignity with his theological emphasis on the Church's mission to the world: "It would not be wrong to see the entire reform within the Church in the spirit of the Council as oriented to the great movement of the Church's mission."[51] It is this conciliar awareness of the mission of the Church as a mission to and for the world, a mission that flows from its center in the cross of Christ, that leads Balthasar to conclude:

> This means that the Christian is called to *cooperation* and "*dialogue*" with all men. The word "dialogue" which the Council uses so much seems to many people to have a note of something that does not commit one to anything and relativizes everything, and this is how they interpret it. In reality, dialogue is harder than a mere one-sided proclamation. It means: holding fast, taking up one's position against the inevitable opposition, as did the prophets over against the kings. . . . This is the

[51] Ibid., 602.

"dialogue of salvation" which must be characterized by the unity of truth and love.[52]

Conclusion

As we have seen, Balthasar clearly engages in a very positive retrieval of *Gaudium et Spes*. However, there are many theologians in the "Balthasarian" school of thought who agree with Rowland that there is a very real tension in *Gaudium et Spes* between the theocentric and Christocentric anthropological themes. As we have seen, Kasper, Ratzinger, and Schindler all agree with Rowland on this point. However, the thrust of the Magisterial retrieval of the Council in the pontificate of John Paul II has been equally clear: The anthropology of the Council is to be interpreted as a defense of the inviolable dignity of the human person in the light of the mystery of the Word made flesh—a message that shows a clear preference for a Christocentric retrieval of the text. This theme has been the centerpiece of the pontificate of John Paul II and he never tires of placing *Gaudium et Spes*—a document he worked on extensively—in the interpretive light of *Gaudium et Spes* 22: "In reality it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man truly becomes clear."[53] Despite their misgivings about the tensions in the Council, Kasper, Ratzinger, and Schindler all engage in a similar Christocentric retrieval of *Gaudium et Spes*. In other words, their critique of the Council is accompanied by a positive reconstructive moment that seeks the proper meaning of the Council in the light of the Church's overarching Tradition. Here it must be mentioned that in the determination of what constitutes the final legacy of any Council, one cannot ignore how that Council was received, interpreted, and implemented by the Magisterium. In an account such as Rowland's that places so much emphasis upon "narrative traditions" a great deal of weight must be given to the manner in which the conciliar texts have been interpreted by the Church's official teaching office. In other words, the Magisterial reception of the Council should be viewed as a constitutive aspect of the text itself—otherwise, Magisterial interpretation could be viewed as simply one opinion among many, even perhaps going so far as to insinuate that the Magisterial interpretation of the Council is an ad hoc attempt to simply prop up a dying ecclesiastical regime.

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[52] Ibid.

[53] Cf. Kasper, "Theological Anthropology." Kasper notes concerning the opening line of *GS* 22: "This sentence is, as it were, the standard and the short formula of the Pastoral Constitution. It entitles us to call the anthropology of the Second Vatican Council not only a Christian, but also a Christological anthropology" (137).

Finally, David Schindler notes, citing Walter Kasper, that there have been three phases in the reception of the Council. The first phase was characterized by a period of exuberance. The second phase was characterized by a period of disappointment on the part of progressives who felt they had been let down and betrayed by a "conservative" hierarchy. We are now in the third and crucial phase wherein the process of a genuine theological retrieval of the texts can at last begin.[54] And, as already noted, we are aided in this process by the amazing body of teaching created by John Paul. The task that is before us, therefore, is both important and difficult. In my analysis of Rowland's approach to the Council and in my comparison of her approach with that of Balthasar, I have attempted to show that for *Ressourcement* theology the path of positive retrieval is a far more "Catholic" hermeneutical approach than one of simple deconstruction. Thus, my chief criticism of Rowland is that her approach to *Gaudium et Spes* seems to have more in common with the new theological movement known as "Radical Orthodoxy" than it does with Ressourcement theology. She claims to be writing in the tradition of the latter, yet her approach seems more suited, at least with regard to her "root and branch" rejection of modernity and her wholly negative portrayal of the pastoral project of *Gaudium et Spes*, to the former. As someone who greatly admires her work, I would like to gently suggest that her great gifts as a theologian are sorely needed in the task of developing an enduring and positive hermeneutic for this great Council of the modern Church. NV

A Critique of Culture Showing How Faith And Reason Interact

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PERHAPS MISTITLED (for it envisages far more than "Thomist tradition"), this extended study in ecclesiology-cum-culture deserves a wide readership, though it may prove too demanding for those who would stand most to profit from it: Theologians who resist sustained analysis. The author is currently serving as dean of the John Paul II Institute in Melbourne, Australia, while her acknowledgments signal Cambridge roots. Her powers of elucidation and clarification of tangled issues are in full stride in this sustained and persuasive argument for trenchant cultural

[54] Schindler, *Imago Dei,* 156.

analysis to help us find our way as would-be followers of Christ in today's world. What should appeal to any intelligent reader is the canny way she lays to rest the tired couplet "liberal/conservative" in reference to Church matters, as well as her penetrating explanation of why the clarion call of Vatican II—*Gaudium et Spes*—sounds so naïve and optimistic to us today. Regarding the first, when most of us find ourselves unable to identify with a position dubbed either "liberal" or "conservative," the labels turn into useless stereotypes.

The culture-critics on whose work she especially relies (and who receive top billing in her extensive bibliography) are David Schindler and Alasdair MacIntyre, with Ken Schmitz in a supporting role. For their work helps her illuminate the gross lacuna in *Gaudium et Spes*: failing to assume a critical stance toward the culture it appears simply to embrace. Charles Taylor shadows the work, as his attempts to incorporate the Reformation-inspired attention to "ordinary life" provide a continuing foil to her unstinting critique of the cultural space of modernity (and postmodernity) to sustain authentic Christian life. Yet we are not treated to a jeremiad but to a sustained analysis with which we can grapple as we try to get our own bearings; that is the gift of this disturbing inquiry. She situates herself in "the 'Radical Orthodoxy' circle [which] includes both Anglican and Catholic scholars who seek to provide a coherent critique of the secular and re-envisage the realms of culture from a theological perspective. In this sense their work can be seen as a continuation of de Lubac's project which partially informed the theology of the Second Vatican Council. Far from being enthralled with 'secularity,' they observe that what secularity has most ruined and actually denied are the very things it apparently celebrated: embodied life, self-expression, sexuality, aesthetic experience, and human political community" (ix). An uncompromising charge, yet not easily gainsaid; one need only open Paul Griffiths's recent inquiry into *Lying* to hear the description take flesh and to feel one's flesh crawl. Her reference to Henri de Lubac triggers another concern about *Gaudium et Spes*: its implicit understanding of the relation of *natural* to *supernatural*; a thorny issue indeed. A neat baroque separation of the two was trenchantly criticized in de Lubac's famed *Surnaturel* (1947), yet his positive intent was hardly to eclipse the *supernatural* but rather to elide the "merely natural." As she summarizes her intent: "[A] theological framework was required which was sufficiently sophisticated to place the concept of culture within the context of the grace-nature relationship. This is essential if the conciliar documents are to be interpreted in a manner consistent with the Church's own tradition, broadly construed, and to engage intellectually proponents of the Genealogical and Ency-

clopedist traditions" (32–33). Naming these last two "traditions" signals her indebtedness to MacIntyre.

She executes this daunting constructive critique in a mode initially historical and then architectonic. After surveying the paucity of attention to *culture* in preconciliar thought, she briefly outlines the culture wars following Vatican II, often sustained by uncritically adopting Bernard Lonergan's programmatic contrast between "classicism" and "historical consciousness." She then proposes to "marshall the various critiques into a more systematic synthesis," which she labels "a postmodern Augustinian Thomism," an expression she adopts to "encapsulate the substance of the arguments that have been advanced by individual scholars against the presuppositions of Whig Thomism" (53). Hence the title of the book: She is concerned that "those Thomists who favour a more positive reading of modernity and who seek to synthesize elements of the liberal tradition to Thomism are marshalling their arguments behind the banner of Whig Thomism, [while] those who take the view that the relationship between the liberal tradition and Thomism is dialectical rather than complementary or genetic have not organized themselves into a particular school." To remind us that the perspectives of her inquiry are hardly limited by "Thomism," she proposes in these synthetic chapters to argue "that the culture of modernity is in fact hostile to the instantiation of the principles of the Thomist tradition," a phrase redolent of Alasdair MacIntyre's *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopedia, Genealogy, Tradition* (1990): A "tradition" can never be reduced to an "-ism." Each chapter will examine a distinct "aspect of the culture of modernity [which will then] be related back to aspects of the problematic created by the treatment of culture in *Gaudium et Spes*" (53). These aspects of culture are identified by the German triptych: *Geist* or *ethos*, *Bildung* or self-development, and *Kultur* or civilization (21), giving us three chapters: "the *ethos* of modern institutions, including the deference to the authority of 'experts' and to bureaucratic criteria" (ch. 3); " 'mass culture' and the 'right to culture' " (ch. 4), which details various modern programs of "self-formation or self-cultivation" (72); and the ostensibly theologically neutral "*logos* of the *Kultur* of modernity" (ch. 5).

Limiting herself to "the Thomist tradition," as elaborated by MacIntyre, allows her to focus her critical analysis of the presuppositions of modernity, as well as appeal to those who identify with Thomist principles, while critiquing those who pretend to do so ("Whig Thomists") as they celebrate modernity. Yet the details of her analysis are crucial here: Global terms like "Thomist tradition" or "modernity" are mercifully clarified as we enter into specific situations. The touted American achievement of the

"separation of Church and state" offers a prime example. For in practice it can return its practitioners to the "two orders" of *nature* and *grace* roundly criticized by de Lubac, who had "observed that one of the guiding ideas behind this construction of two orders was that it would help facilitate general agreement between theists and atheists about the natural order, [allowing] them to work together on the front of 'natural' or 'humanistic' projects, while the more socially contentious supernatural aspirations could be relegated to the privacy of the individual soul" (102, paraphrase by Schindler). Yet when humanistic projects are conceived within a "framework of liberty in the form of individual autonomy, economic, social and political liberalism, utility and modern progress, pragmatic morality and the work ethic" (103)—to cite Ken Schmitz, one may wonder (with Louis Dupré) whether "believers have become atheists in the original attitudinal sense, since their faith has been constrained to a frame of mind that allows no real transcendence" (103). A test case would be attempting to introduce Catholic social teaching into a liberal society. Those whom Rowand calls "Whig Thomists" responded to John XIII's *Mater et Magistra* with "mater, si; magistra, no." Such a response may help to locate the divide, though it takes an analysis as trenchant as Rowland's to move it beyond the unilluminating "liberal/conservative" standoff.

If chapters 3, 4, and 5 focus on criticizing the culture of modernity by showing how it can be "a hostile medium for the flourishing of Christian practices and beliefs" (159), chapters 6 and 7 examine "how the Thomist tradition is being developed by proponents of a postmodern Augustinian Thomism to incorporate within it an account of the significance of culture for moral and intellectual formation" (115)—a formidable task elegantly executed. The first step is crucial: to acknowledge how intimately rationality is tied to tradition, and tradition effectively constituted by narrative. The benchmarks here are Collingwood, Newman, and Blondel: the first to illuminate the social context of ideas, the second to highlight "the role of . . . the resolution of crises in handing on the theory and practices of a tradition," and the third to show how "the relationship between doctrine and practices" constitutes a tradition (119). What makes these themes "postmodern" is the way they interweave vital elements presupposed to thinking, precisely to assess the valence of thinking itself. Once we have excoriated the Cartesian pretension to think in a vacuum, we will no longer be able to demarcate reason clearly from faith, since we will have seen how fiduciary any inquiry must be. If we can trace this realization to Newman, it also constitutes an "Augustinian" dimension that MacIntyre identifies thus: "no substantive rationality, independent of faith, will be able to provide an adequate vindication of its claims" (130, citing *Three Rival Versions*, 101).

What makes Augustine (so construed) "postmodern" is the observation opening this inquiry that "1968 is now commonly held to mark the beginning of the period of postmodernity and a growing recognition of the internal contradictions within the liberal tradition and the tradition's tendency to compensate for any explicit connection to a theological framework by creating its own alternative soteriology" (16). So forthright a connection with history renders this inquiry internally consistent: We must undertake such an inquiry because we live in the times we do. Moreover, our attempt to illuminate these times must also be carried out in the face of those who replaced "the theorists of the Liberal 'Enlightenment' [in 1968]: Heidegger, Freud, and Nietzsche" (16). So the task is clear and redolent of patristic reflections: to show how "the human person only attains full self-knowledge through an understanding of Christ as the archetype of perfected humanity" (131).

Since that statement could easily take issue with the goals of those intent on promoting "natural law" (with Aquinas as its primary advocate), her final chapter addresses the "new natural law theorists," primarily John Finnis and Joseph Boyle. She notes how the way they relativize the "good of religion" as but one of the "goods of human flourishing" incorporates one of the negative dimensions of the liberal ethos: rejecting an inner ordering proper to self or to society. She cites Pamela Hall, whose work attempts to return "natural law" to what she argues is its original, if implicit, narrative tradition:

> The inclusive natural end is also hierarchical in the structure of its constituent goods. Thomas speaks of the "order" of precepts following the "order" of inclinations. Those goods to which we are inclined as rational creatures have greatest value. Among these, knowledge about God, even within the limited search of natural contemplation, is the highest and best goal. (146, *Narrative and the Natural Law* 32)

The "order of inclinations" reminds us of Aristotle, with evident lineaments of the *Republic*. When these are treated as a "matter of subjective choice," which the "infrastructural *logos* . . . of the culture of modernity" (147) demands, then any pattern for human flourishing will be as good as another, as each pursues the "rights" to which they feel themselves to be entitled. Then religious faith becomes an "option" among others, and we find ourselves set against deLubac's fresh recasting of the nature/grace relation, and returned to baroque extrinsicism, now as "private religion" (145). It is de Lubac who reminds us that "the good of religion must enjoy a special primary and infrastructural status" (158), and Tracey Rowland who translates that into the demand, first, for a trenchant critique

of the culture that surrounds and permeates us, and then for constructive proposals to help us create the countercultural communities indispensable to Church in our time.

The sober thinking that such a critique demands, with the discerning action that such constructive efforts calls for, both return us to *Gaudium et Spes*, this time armed to recognize what first struck us as naiveté. Of course, one cannot simply enlist the motivation of faith to assist in building a new world, when the image in which that "new world" is to be built requires that our efforts be considered as but another hand in the project, while the project rejects the very "rank ordering" of goods that structures our motivation. (One is reminded of the way Chinese bureaucrats have come to accommodate "religion": So long as all are committed to the development of China, let diverse motivations prevail—Christian or Marxist or whatever. Yet the shape that development takes will be decided by them, ideologically or pragmatically, or both.) So how should that reflection and discernment be structured? We have already traced the path to reconstituting our rich tradition in the face of "today's world"—an expression dear to *Gaudium et Spes*. Tracey Rowland's summary of her own analysis identifies "three requirements of any satisfactory response," which may be reduced to two: attention to "the sacramental dimension of practices in ostensibly Catholic institutions," and recognition that persons are always persons-in-relation "formed through an association with other persons within institutions," which themselves have a history (162). Incorporating these parameters into our self-understanding, as well as our reflective discernments regarding action, will demand attending to the surrounding culture as well as to our communal counter-cultures, and so always require us to attend to the analogous reaches of our daily language (157).

Rowland completes her summary with a culture critique of Erich Przywara, "published some two years before the promulgation of *Gaudium et Spes*" (166), which pinpoints the standing issues which this inquiry shows Vatican II to have left unexamined rather than thoughtfully probed. Those festering issues, undiagnosed, have issued in the intractable polarities currently bedeviling our continuing appropriation of that crucial council. So her valiant attempt to examine and diagnose the roots of these polarities represents a central and illuminating part of that effort, much as the very "pastoral constitution," *Gaudium et Spes*, which demanded this analysis invites us to continue it, employing as well as critiquing the tools she utilizes. Whether we question them or employ them to a different end, at least we have been shown how to lay to rest crude polarities like "liberal/conservative," recognizing that they only further obscure the real issues and exacerbate misleading polarities, since they serve no analytic

purpose. But that fact itself offers a challenge that we can now comprehend more clearly: A culture averse to seeking the truth of the matter will perforce content itself with "sound bites," which thrive on such crude polarities, so our subcommunities will need to be dedicated to conversation. How simple; how demanding! Strategies like these will inevitably emanate from a critique like this one. NV

Nature Is Normative for Culture

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TRACEY ROWLAND has undertaken an ambitious and needed study on developments after Vatican II in Catholic theology. In general she seeks to integrate generalized cultural and historical descriptions with certain theological developments after the Council. Many important and complex issues are raised in this reflective and highly recommended study. Because of its importance, my comments will highlight a few issues that may make her arguments even more cogent. My point will be that in the dialectic between the ancients (e.g., Greek and Latin philosophers, the Church Fathers, and the great Schoolmen) and the moderns, it seems to me that Rowland's book does not advert to certain modern inadequacies in the positions she advocates. I shall illustrate this in reference to her treatment of *Gaudium et Spes* and then in reference to her appeal to postmodern ideas and concepts.

Care is needed when speaking of "culture" without any reference to nature. Rowland is wary and critical of the use of "culture" in *Gaudium et Spes* since the references to it in the document are, in her judgment, not specifically Christian in content, and so are open to typically modern distortions (pp. 17–32). Curiously, she does not seem to make much of the references to nature, and specifically human nature, in *Gaudium et Spes* (e.g., nos. 12, 14, 15, 22, 23, 25, 29, 39, etc.). The document links culture and nature in most important ways. Because human nature is made in the image of God culture has the responsibility to educate human beings to be "those great-souled persons who are so desperately required by our times." (no. 31). Rowland faults *Gaudium et Spes* 53 for being "shallow" and not mentioning what she terms "the nature-grace problematic" (p. 20). But the document had already dealt with that in no. 41 where it reiterates the theology of creation and redemption. Only God is the "ultimate goal of man" and so the Church opens to humanity "the innermost truth" of his

nature. And "by his Incarnation, the Father's Word assumed and sanctified through his cross and resurrection the whole of man, body and soul, and through that totality the whole of nature created by God for man's use."

These specifically Christian doctrinal realities are the foundation and anchor of "the dignity of human nature" in defense of which the Church must oppose "all tides of opinion" that denigrate human beings. *Gaudium et Spes* (no. 42), as in *Lumen Gentium* (nos. 1, 13, and the role of the laity in transforming cultures nos. 30–38—strangely absent in Rowland's book) emphasizes how the nature and mission of the Church transcends particular cultural, social, political, and economic contexts. This transcultural reality of the Church emphasizes that culture is in the service of man's God-given nature: "The experience of past ages, the progress of the sciences and the treasures hidden in the various forms of human culture, by all of which the nature of man himself is more clearly revealed and new roads to truth are opened, benefiting the Church as well" (no. 44). Again, the document appeals to human nature in the context of human sexuality and marriage (nos. 48–51). All this is presupposed when the document takes up the issues of paragraphs 53–62 on the proper development of cultures. It seems to me that Rowland's criticisms spring from an inadequate presentation of the relation between nature and culture in *Gaudium et Spes* and in the Council documents generally.

Inattention to how the council documents relate nature and culture mirrors a neglect of nature in the rest of the book. Culture is a typically modern notion. Too often it is separated from "nature" and, if we are not careful, we can fail to notice how Cartesian or Kantian we are even as we criticize Descartes and Kant. Rowland criticizes, following MacIntyre, the scientistic and mechanistic distortions of contemporary cultures influenced by the Enlightenment, with references to Americanism and neo-Conservative Catholics (pp. 92–111). Rowland takes up de Lubac's criticism of the separation of nature and grace as "two separate orders" into which she weaves Schindler's reflections on contemporary American culture as a "culture of death" that is an atheistic consequence of the dualism of nature and grace. The separation of Church and state is also mentioned (pp. 100–104). Such passages mixing together very disparate quotations from many authors in order to weave brilliant patterns and contrasts are typical of "radical orthodox" writers. But the rhetorical brilliance of the juxtapositions often, it seems to me, fail to provide an adequate dialectical analysis.

By failing to attend sufficiently to conciliar and papal teachings on nature as normative for cultures, Rowland tends to fall into the typically modern way of viewing nature as a cultural product or project. Thus she writes that Part III of her book on postmodern development of the tradi-

tion that "the central postmodern element of postmodern Augustinian Thomism is the idea of a narrative tradition and its associated concept of a tradition-constituted rationality" (p. 115). Here she is taking MacIntyre's discussion "tradition dependent rationality" and his "tradition constituted forms of enquiry" to her notion "tradition-constituted rationality." She then sets up an alternative in those Neo-Thomists who, she states, "defend their tradition by reference to Enlightenment conceptions of rationality" (p. 115). Obviously there is an approach to the nature of rationality that is neither "tradition-constituted" nor "Enlightenment," namely, one that sees traditions as mediating a true knowledge of the nature of human reason with its operations.[1]

If the only options were "tradition-constituted" or "Enlightenment," then one would have capitulated to the moderns and postmoderns. The contributions of the ancients would be muted. They insisted upon the importance of speculative reason for the foundations of practical reason. Aquinas indicates that the practices of rationality draw upon reason's related and recurrent operations of the first and second acts of the mind. For Aquinas the light of active intelligence grasps the intelligible and so the universal in the particular. There is no antinomy between the universal and the particular, no contradiction between the singular and the species and genus to which it belongs. The concrete universality mediated in the patristic and Medieval traditions stressed wisdom, both metaphysical and theological, over power.[2] Nominalism and voluntarism first weakened and then silenced wisdom's voice. We need alternatives to the universality of Enlightenment modernity with its choice of either an arbitrary imposition of mechanistic order on monadic individuals (the Genealogists) or of surrendering any order to a disparate multiplicity through encyclopedic cataloguing. Rowland recognizes that MacIntyre draws upon the Genealogists in his notion of tradition dependent ration-

[1] It is beyond the scope of this review essay to explore the import of Aquinas's analysis of the nature of human reason and its operations. For a discussion of the contributions to this project by both MacIntyre and Lonergan, see Michael Maxwell, "A Dialectical Encounter between MacIntyre and Lonergan on the Thomistic Understanding of Rationality," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 33 (1993): 385–99.

[2] See Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics,* trans. C. Litzinger, OP (South Bend: Dumb Ox Books, 1993), no. 1132, and the references to *De Anima* there; no. 1249; the whole of book six on the intellectual virtues shows that Aquinas does not oppose universals and particulars. Hence he could insist upon the interplay of speculative and practical reason, for he noted that reason, by the light of active intellect, grasps the universal in the particular, see *ST* I, q. 84, a. 7 c; q. 85, a.1, ad 1.

ality, yet does not advert to the need, as Pope John Paul II does, of attention to speculative reason as grounding practical rationality (pp. 127–29).

Rowland's "*idea* of a narrative tradition" and her "*concept* of a tradition-constituted rationality" may illustrate how postmodernism is still captive to arbitrary modernist distortions of both narrative and reason. In the Fathers of both east and west, as well as the great Schoolmen, traditions *mediate* to us, more or less adequately, more or less truly, a knowledge of nature, including human nature with our reason and its acts or operations. Traditions do *not* constitute what only God can create. Rowland has not made the argument that "tradition dependent" means that rationality is constituted by traditions; mediation is also a form of dependence. The reality of human reason, the reality of the unity–identity–whole of embodied rational souls, *could never be constituted* by narrative traditions but only by the Triune God. One must be careful about invoking postmodernism; postmodernism can be ultramodernism insofar as it fails to break through the typically modern framework of *only* having words, narratives, propositions, ideas, and concepts. There are the activities or operations of human reason, understanding, and judging occurring in the light of active intellect. Aquinas shows how this light, which he says we experience in raising questions, is a created participation in the Divine Light. By revelation we know that this is the immaterial image of God in all human beings. This is not an Enlightenment exercise; quite the contrary. Hobbes, Hume, Descartes, Kant, Derrida, Lyotard, or Rorty have no copyright on the nature of human reason. Only God does.

The traditions that go back to Plato, Aristotle, and are taken up and transformed by the Fathers and Schoolmen do in fact mediate a self-knowledge of the nature of the rational human soul. Such self-knowledge is of the really existing and operating human mind and will. While traditions more or less adequately mediate genuine self-knowledge, the reality of both the nature of the rational soul and the nature of human reason transcend those mediations insofar as they are the reality (the *res*) signified *(signa)* in the mediations. Studying the reflections of an Augustine or an Aquinas on the nature of the human mind and its operations, if the study is sapiential, enables one to discover the related and recurrent operations of one's own rational soul and mind. This is precisely why concern for culture requires more, not less, attention to nature as normative. One is in continuity with those traditions insofar as the truth regarding nature, including the nature of the human mind, continues to be mediated authentically as one appropriates and identifies in one's own efforts at understanding, knowing, and loving the realities signified by these ongoing traditions.

Rowland recognizes an aspect of this in terms of "historical memories" without, in my judgment, sufficiently emphasizing that the "classical pedagogy" she praises was devoted to a true knowledge of natures and their operations whereby the knower knows realities that transcend the specific culture and tradition mediating the realities through words, narratives, concepts, and ideas. As Aquinas states "the human soul understands itself through its own act of understanding *[per suum intelligere]*, which is its proper act, perfectly demonstrating its power and its nature."[3]

The notion of traditions mediating knowledge of natures would enable Rowland to emphasize, as she does, the importance of traditional practices for philosophy and theology. At the same time, it would enable her to attend to those spiritual and intellectual exercises, mediated by the traditions that when duly learned give knowledge of the realities and natures. This is clearly articulated by Pope John Paul II's affirmations of this ancient practice in the opening paragraph of *Fides et Ratio* where he emphasizes the ancient *Nosce te ipsum*—"Know your very self." Rowland tries, unsuccessfully in my opinion, to fit the encyclical into her notion of "tradition-constituted rationality" (pp. 127–30). For the Holy Father pointedly calls attention to the desire to know that arises from the very nature of our human minds and how the wonder can then be mediated by knowledge of first principles:

> Driven by the desire to discover the ultimate truth of existence, human beings seek to acquire those universal elements of knowledge which enable them to understand themselves better and to advance in their own self-realization. These fundamental elements of knowledge spring from the wonder awakened in them by the contemplation of creation: human beings are astonished to discover themselves as part of the world, in a relationship with others like them, all sharing a common destiny. Here begins, then, the journey which will lead them to discover ever new frontiers of knowledge. Without wonder, men and women would lapse into deadening routine and little by little would become incapable of a life which is genuinely personal. . . .
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> Although times change and knowledge increases, it is possible to discern a core of philosophical notions which are ever present in the history of knowledge. Consider, for example, the principles of non-contradiction, finality and causality, as well as the notion of the person as a free and intelligent subject, with the capacity to know God, truth and goodness. Consider as well certain fundamental moral norms which are shared by all. These are among the indications that, beyond different

[3] *ST* I, q. 88, a. 2, ad 3: "anima humana intelligit se ipsum per suum intelligere, quod est actus proprius ejus, perfecte demonstrans virtutem ejus et naturam."

> schools of thought, there exists a body of knowledge which may be judged a kind of spiritual heritage of humanity. It is as if we had come upon an *implicit philosophy*, as a result of which all feel that they possess these principles, albeit in a general and unreflective way. Precisely because it is shared in some measure by all, this knowledge should serve as a kind of reference-point for the different philosophical schools. Once reason succeeds in perceiving and formulating the first universal principles of being and correctly draws from them conclusions which are coherent both logically and ethically, then it may be called right reason or, as the ancients called it, *orthos logos, recta ratio*.[4]

For the ancients, including Augustine and Aquinas, nature embraces both material natures and spiritual natures like human minds and angels. Most especially all of created nature depends ultimately upon the uncreated, infinite reality of the Triune God. The human mind as most divine in us, and the image of God in us, has a nature. There are patterns or natural ordered orientations of human understanding and judging and loving, which we do not make up ourselves or acquire from a culture or tradition. They are the very nature of our human mind and will, of our human being. We either act according to the natural order or pattern within our rational nature, or we fail to live as genuinely as human beings ought to live. As rational, human nature has a transcultural core. The human mind and soul transcend while being immanent in cultures; they are not just the sum of all the things humans have learned in a particular culture or tradition. Wisdom attends to these transcultural patterns and ordered orientations.

This is why any historicism or cultural relativism is simply wrong—a too typically modern eclipse of wisdom and the nature of human understanding, knowing, and loving. The mind is much more than a Cartesian "thinking thing." The more ancient approach to nature and mind is what leads John Paul II to refer to how "there is only one culture: that of man and for man."[5] This is precisely the sapiential universality so central to the traditions of Catholic universities, and so needed today precisely to overcome the empiricism of the Encyclopedists and the procedural power perspectives of the Genealogists—two dominant traditions, as Rowland following MacIntyre indicates (pp. 24, 33, 160–62).

Without a developed understanding of the sapiential traditions on created nature, there is a danger of inadequately developing the dialectic needed for the transformation and evangelization of cultures—the project at the heart of Rowland's book. Sapiential attention to nature was

[4] *Fides et Ratio,* no. 4.

[5] *Ex Corde Ecclesiae,* no. 3.

fundamental to the lives and works of a St. Augustine or St. Thomas Aquinas. Sapiential attention to nature involves an intellectual conversion, a humble purity of mind before truth. John Paul II holds this up by referring to how Augustine experienced the beginnings of the love of wisdom and truth when, as a nineteen year old, he read Cicero's *Hortensius*: "O Truth, O Truth, how deep was my yearning for you in the innermost depths of my mind."[6] As the Holy Father states: "The conversion of St. Augustine, an event totally dominated by the need to find the truth, has much to teach the men and women of today, who are so often mistaken about the greatest question of all life."[7] Books five through seven of his *Confessions* spell out how his God given questing for the truth finally, with Christ as guide and the aid of Platonic philosophy, he came to the realization of the reality of God as most real and, as purely spiritual, transcending all extension and duration.

In *Confessions* VII, 17 Augustine reflects on the nature of human intelligence as it judges something to be true and another thing false. "So, as I reflected on how it was that I came to make these judgments which I did make, I discovered above my changing mind an unchanging and true eternity of truth." He then recounts how he ascended from sensible and corporeal things to the faculty of reason and the intelligible and intelligent light by which he is led to prefer the true and eternal to the changeable. That this was neither Cartesian nor Kantian-Heideggerian is clear in Augustine's reference at the start to how Christ the Word Incarnate is his guide in this self-discovery, as well as at the end that state how intellectual conversion to truth is a discovery of Being: *"And in the flash of a trembling glance my mind came to That Which Is. I understood the invisible through those things that were created."* This intellectual aspect of his conversion leads to the Cassiciacum dialogues where he enters into dialogue with his own reason, explores beatitude and the character of wisdom, inculcates the intellectual and moral virtues needed by genuine discipleship of the Word Incarnate, and spells out, in his *De Ordine*, the various "orders" that wisdom discerns, from the *ordo divine providentiae*, the *ordo divinus*, and *ordo rerum omnium* to the *ordo naturae* and *ordo causarum*. Wisdom discerns how human fulfillment or beatitude depends on our lives and actions being patterned or ordered accordingly, and so Augustine discusses the *ordo eruditionis*, the *ordo vitae*, and the *ordo civitatis*. Augustine scholars point out how all the major themes of his later works are touched upon in these

[6] John Paul II, 1986 Apostolic Letter on *Augustine of Hippo*, no. 1; he is referring to the *Confessions*, III, 4 and 6.

[7] Ibid.

early dialogues.[8] Augustine differs from modern thinkers insofar as he was intent on preserving and restoring human wholeness by directing all human activity to the goal or goals to which human beings are intrinsically ordered by the Triune God's creating (nature) and redeeming (grace) intelligence and love.

St. Thomas Aquinas appropriated St. Augustine's penetrating reflections on the nature of human knowing and loving as the immaterial image of God in human nature. He grasped, by his own intellectual conversion, the difference between the intelligible and the sensible, and how the intelligible causes the sensible. So he saw clearly, as many moderns do not, the difference in Augustine between intellectual memories and sensible memories. Aquinas could relate the former to the light of active intelligence *(lumen intellectus agentis)* and so bring about the proper movement of theology as both a *sapientia* and a *scientia* thanks to his in depth appropriation of Aristotle. Rowland's laudable concern for discerning a harmony between Aristotelian and patristic traditions, along with coherence (pp. 130–35) would gain much, I believe, by attending to Aquinas's own philosophical and theological attention to the correspondence between true knowledge of nature, including human nature and the nature of reason, and the realities known. Pope John Paul II recognized this as a radical contribution of Aquinas:

> Thomas had the great merit of giving pride of place to the harmony which exists between faith and reason. Both the light of reason and the light of faith come from God, he argued; hence there can be no contradiction between them. More radically, Thomas recognized that nature, philosophy's proper concern, could contribute to the understanding of divine Revelation. Faith therefore has no fear of reason, but seeks it out and has trust in it. Just as grace builds on nature and brings it to fulfillment; so faith builds upon and perfects reason. Illumined by faith, reason is set free from the fragility and limitations deriving from the disobedience of sin and finds the strength required to rise to the knowledge of the Triune God. Although he made much of the supernatural character of faith, the Angelic Doctor did not overlook the importance of its reasonableness; indeed he was able to plumb the depths and explain the meaning of this reasonableness. Faith is in a sense a "cognitive exercise"; and human reason is neither annulled nor

[8] See Virgilio Pacioni, *L'unità teoretica del "De Ordine" di S. Agostino* (Rome: 1996); Michael P. Foley, "The Other Happy Life: The Political Dimensions to St. Augustine's Cassiciacum Dialogues," *Review of Politics* 65 (2003): 16583; and his *The De Ordine of St. Augustine: An Interpretative Essay* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, forthcoming).

> debased in assenting to the contents of faith, which are in any case attained by way of free and informed choice.[9]

This would require a rather different approach to natural law than that given in the final chapter of her book. Natural law is not constituted by human cultures or human traditions; it is constituted by the Eternal Law who is God, who alone can create. Since Rowland graciously refers to distinctions in my writings between genetic, complementary, and dialectical differences, I should point out that when I made those distinctions I footnoted that they come from Fr. Bernard Lonergan's *Method in Theology* (pp. 235–37).

At the end of these reflections I want again to call attention to the importance of the questions and concerns raised by Rowland in her book. The above reservations might hopefully be of some assistance in carrying forward a more adequately dialectical approach as we learn from both the ancients and the moderns/postmoderns. For no matter how wrongheaded and false any culture or tradition may be, it cannot totally extinguish the nature of the human souls and minds within it. This requires penetrating beyond sociological and cultural analysis to the depths. As I missed any extended attention to nature in Rowland's book, so I missed attention to metaphysics. This is another aspect of the tendency to treat of practical rationality with no attention to speculative rationality. Yet it is precisely attentiveness to metaphysics that is called for by any dialectical-foundational treatment of the ancients and the moderns that will serve the transformation and evangelization of contemporary cultures. *Fides et Ratio* strongly emphasized this in speaking of the challenges we face at the end of the second millennium:

> We face a great challenge at the end of this millennium to move from *phenomenon* to *foundation*, a step as necessary as it is urgent. We cannot stop short at experience alone; even if experience does reveal the human being's interiority and spirituality, speculative reflection must penetrate to the spiritual substance and the foundation on which it depends. Therefore, a notion of philosophy which denies any room for metaphysics would be radically unsuited to the task of mediation in the understanding of revelation (no. 83).

Without metaphysics there is a danger that theology will succumb to the voluntarism, fideism, and fundamentalism that fails to appreciate how the absolutely supernatural revelation of Christ Jesus redeems and perfects nature. Indeed, as Cardinal Ratzinger indicates:

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[9] *Fides et Ratio,* no. 43.

> The universality of faith, which is a basic presupposition of the missionary task, is both meaningful and morally defensible only if this faith really is oriented beyond the symbolism of the religions toward an answer meant for all, an answer which also appeals to the common reason of mankind. . . . Faith has the right to be missionary only if it truly transcends all traditions and constitutes an appeal to reason and an orientation to truth itself. However, if man is made to know reality and has to conduct his life, not merely as tradition dictates, but in conformity to the truth, faith also has the positive duty to be missionary.[10] NV

The Perils of Push-a-Button Weltanschauung

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SOME PEOPLE contend that the difference between yogurt and Australia is that the former has a culture. Dr. Tracey Rowland, Dean of the John Paul II Institute in Melbourne, may thus be well-placed to diagnose why institutions like hospitals and universities that once yielded Catholic cultures have lost their yeast. Conceiving the regenerative bacterial agents in terms of a renewed openness of Catholic institutions to grace and the theological virtues, her model of health is drawn theologically from the *Communio*/Radical Orthodox presentation of "intrinsicism" and politically from Anglo-American critiques of "Americanism" and capitalism. The authors of *Gaudium et Spes* failed to foresee that terms like "humanism" or "modern" would have different connotations for Christians and for the unconverted. *Culture and the Thomist Tradition* attributes this blindspot both to a certain rationalism in the Thomistic formation of the good bishops who promulgated it, and to St. Thomas's own relative lack of interest in culture or history. Hence its prescription is the addition of Augustinian and postmodern perspectives to Thomistic thought about culture, including an attention to experience, beauty, memory, and narrative. The publication of such a book perhaps enables others to form a prognosis on the likelihood that such institutions will soon regain a condition of flourishing.

A Good Diagnosis

Catholic institutions have become, not just unhealthy but positive exporters of contagion—witness the transmission by English Catholic

[10] Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Nature and Mission of Theology* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995), 25–26.

hospices to the National Health Service of an "anti-Cartesian," psychologistic model of medical practice better suited to Christian Scientists than to Roman Catholics. Since hospice managers advise doctors and nurses to concentrate on aspects of their patients' lives into whose causes medical knowledge offers no insight, the residents' best hope of pain remission is impetrative prayer, and daily Mass is devoutly attended. One could take this deformation of the hospice movement as an example of the educational problem identified by Etienne Gilson in 1936: Teachers forget that "piety does not dispense with technique."[1] Those who connect the demise of Catholic cultures in recent times to the attempt either to exercise pedagogical, medical, or intellectual techniques in separation from "piety," or to retain "piety," but prevent it from informing the techniques, will be sympathetic to Dr. Rowland's diagnosis. The first maneuver is more typical of "liberal" institutions, those that disavow "piety" in the shape of Catholic doctrinal and moral convictions, the second of "conservative" ones, where theological heresy is pruriently eschewed by devout persons who zealously guard their own intellectual techniques against theological influence.

Culture and the Thomist Tradition offers a two-tiered diagnosis, referring the "desacralization" of post-Vatican II institutions both to *Gaudium et Spes* having given unimaginative approval to terms like "modern" and "expert" (*CTTV,* 59), thereby undermining the status of prudential judgment within them, and to the failure to recognize that grace and the theological virtues are at the base of the cardinal ones. The value of this analysis is that it can explain, not only why institutions with a theologically liberal leadership have preserved as little of their Catholicity as the Cheshire cat retained of his body (the nice smile), but also why those blessed with religiously conservative leaders run on managerial or business models. I was surprised to learn the other day that an American Catholic university so "conservative" that the theologians are only permitted to teach out of the Catechism operates the junk paraphernalia of "student evaluations." Referring the un-Catholicity of their cultures to "extrinsicism" makes it possible to give a single explanation of the secularization of religiously liberal and conservative institutions alike: Neither the liberal nor the conservative leaders are able to conceptualize the need for a genuinely pervasive Catholicity. Few close observers of University Catholic chaplaincy "culture" are likely to

[1] Etienne Gilson, "L'Intelligence au Service du Christ-Roi," first published in *La vie intellectuelle* 1936, reprinted in *Christianisme et philosophie* (Paris: Vrin, 1936, 1949), 156; English translation as "The Intelligence in the Service of Christ the King," in *A Gilson Reader: Selected Writings of Etienne Gilson,* ed. A. C. Pegis (New York: Doubleday, 1957, 1962).

disagree with Rowland's comment that, when "the sacramental life" of educational institutions is "compartmentalized," it turns into a " 'a weird little subculture, like the bar in *Star Wars*' . . . the kinds of persons who are attracted to marginalized subcultures are frequently people with psychological disorders" (*CTTV,* 60). Observers can usually detect as many emotionally "disordered" young Latin Mass enthusiasts as Taizé fans.

Rowland's broad diagnosis of the post-Vatican II genuflection to secularity will strike the Gilson-type intrinsicist as on target, since Gilson took a number of direct hits at the conciliar buzzword of *aggiornamento*,[2] one of which depicts the Stendhalian atmosphere of Condillac's priestly ministry: "as 'Monsieur l'Abbé,' private tutor to . . . a princely house . . . he celebrated Mass at least once…he had taken his theology at the Sorbonne, as that is learned in times of *aggiornamento*."[3] The conviction that Christians could convert the world by being up-to-date with it emerged from an egg-headed notion that the activity of thought is universally more aboriginal to us than the practice of faith. On Rowland's analysis, what made Cardinal Lecaro a brain on legs was that the man behind *Gaudium et Spes* saw *aggiornamento* as a matter of a "simple accommodation" or bare, intellectual openness to the modern world, rather than of providing a faith-based "critique of the culture of modernity" (*CTTV,* 19). As a result, *Gaudium et Spes* did not uniformly interpret the relationship between the transcendentals of beauty, goodness and truth, and Catholic culture in a Christocentric way; the sections from which grace had inadvertently been omitted are smattered with what Joseph Ratzinger called "a downright Pelagian terminology" (*CTTV,* 24). This in turn allowed for the segregation of most human activities from a theological interpretation, permitting men like Walter Kasper to affirm that, with the conciliar acceptance of "the modern age," "secular matters are to be decided in a secular fashion, political matters in a political fashion, economic matters in an economic fashion," and with the implicit assumption that "secular," "political," and "economic" are each to be prefaced by the adjective "purely" (*CTTV,* 27). On Rowland's diagnosis, two ideas were lacking to the promulgators of *Gaudium et Spes*. In the first

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[2] Etienne Gilson, *Constantes philosophiques de l'être,* ed. Jean-Francoise Courtin (Paris: J. Vrin, 1983), 71; Gilson, "L'Esse du Verbe incarné selon saint Thomas D'Aquin," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et litteraire du moyen âge* 35 (1968): 23–37; reprinted in *Autour de Saint Thomas*, ed. Jean-Francois Courtine (Paris: J. Vrin, Paris, 1983), 81–95, at 84; Gilson, *Les tribulations de Sophie* (Paris: J.Vrin, 1967), 27.

[3] *Linguistics and Philosophy: An Essay on the Philosophical Constants of Language,* trans. John Lyon (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988 [French 1969]), 9–10.

place, that one's understanding of what any document means is rooted in one's lived experience, or in a body of "practices," and thus that what today's Catholics "presume the teaching of the Church to be has been acquired tacitly in the institutions and publications of liberal modernity" (*CTTV,* 121). They will thus take the meaning of words like "freedom" or "equality" out of the secular dictionary of their culture. And, in the second place, since a "motivating force behind" the conciliar document was the "rejection of integralism," the document's promoters failed to appreciate that the conservative, integralist dream of a Church that forcibly "dictates terms" to secular culture is just the other side of the coin of the liberal abandonment of "juridicial and intellectual authority" by the Church. Whether Church men fancy they can issue orders to the world over the tannoy of a "Star Wars" ship sailing above it, or, along with Cardinal Lecaro, give "priority to the social and natural sciences" in its self-understanding (*CTTV,* 27, 29), "piety and technique" or grace and nature are brought together by force, instead of undergoing the difficult process of growing together, incarnationally.

Does the Diagnosis Fit the Prescribed Outcome?

Before we look at her prescription, it is as well to consider Rowland's full-blown model of a healthy Catholic culture, and consider whether it is workably connected with Rowland's sure-footed diagnosis; that is, whether the model could operate as a regenerative agent. It is good Aristotelianism to imagine that an entity's causal efficacy is connected to whether it's a well-formed organism, or not: Rowland's model is at once "intrinsicist" and somewhat Marxist. A basic presupposition of her book is that an ethos must be viewed as an entire "constellation" of political, theological, aesthetic, and ethical attitudes (*CTTV,* 163), or that, in "any analysis of the question of whether the relationship between any two traditions is complementary, dialectical or genetic, this factor of the location of moral concepts within a wider architectonic tradition can be decisive" (*CTTV,* 140). So it seems congruent to ask whether her own social and political theory fits the shoe of its "intrinsicist" theology.

Rowland lists as likeminded, "anti-corporate capitalist" social theorists "Eric Gill, Hilaire Belloc, Gilbert Keith Chesterton, Dorothy Day, Bob Santamaria, Catherine Pickstock, John Milbank, and Werner Stark" (*CTTV,* 65).[4] She regards Alasdair MacIntyre as giving the best philosophical expression of these persons' attitudes, "since what unites each of these writers is an Aristotelian and Thomist conception of the nature of

[4] The list is repeated on page 67 minus Milbank, Pickstock, and Stark.

work as a 'good of human flourishing,' coupled with a Marxian style critique of the effects of certain kinds of capitalist practices on the welfare of workers" (*CTTV,* 66). As an English convert, I read extensively in Belloc, Gill, and Chesterton, and cannot recall in their writings any reference to the intrinsicist premise of the priority of grace over nature. Noel O'Donoughue once remarked in the *Chesterton Review* that there is nothing about grace in Chesterton's *Orthodoxy*. Chesterton's Distributism has clear counterparts in the liberal political speculation of his time—most English liberals between 1880 and 1920 favored a "back to the land" solution to the problem of the culturally and materially impoverished urban proletariat. The immediate provenance and proximate objects of Chesterton's politics were thoroughly "extrinsic" to his faith. Chesterton's (in my opinion, ill-considered) political theories were influenced by his Catholicism through his *imaginative theocentrism*, not via a conscious or even implicit assumption of the intrinsic supernatural orientation of the natural man. Imagining that European society has entered a period of decadence since the Reformation and that Catholicism is the only political alternative to individualistic capitalism is not enough to make one an "intrinsicist." All the French Catholic extrinsicists contemporary with Gill, Chesterton, and Belloc imagined thus, as did atheistical ones like Maurras; the founder of the Action Française, who turned the Thomistic "grace perfects nature" into a political slogan, was at some time admired by all three Englishmen, especially Belloc.

English converts of fogeyish disposition can come into the Church without ever hearing about the "grace-nature" debate because it was until recently a controversy internal to French Catholicism. For Gilson, it turned on the place of Pascal within Catholic thought: "That we know God only through the Person of Christ," he wrote, "is too evident; but the great discovery or rediscovery of Pascal is to have understood that the Incarnation, by profoundly changing the nature of man, has become the only means that there is for us to understand man. Such a truth gives a new meaning to our nature. 'Not only,' wrote Pascal, 'do we understand God only through Jesus Christ, but we understand ourselves only through Jesus Christ.' "[5] We need only consider Pascal's (in my opinion, well-considered) political pessimism to figure out what the father of modern "intrinsicism" would have made of the political schemes of Rowland's "anti-corporate capitalist" social theorists.

As one travels down Tracey Rowland's list, it is only when one comes to John Milbank that one finds a conscious connection of "intrinsicism"

[5] Gilson, "The Intelligence in the Service of Christ the King," in Pegis, 34.

with cultural theory. French Catholic intrinsicists like Gilson and de Lubac didn't concur with the political outlook of contemporary extrinsicists (Pedro Descoqs's defense of Maurras against Blondel's friend Lucien Laberthonnière and the Oratorian's silencing for his Pascalian critique of the Jesuit was a turning point in the intellectual development of French Catholics of their generation).[6] Dislike of the current political alliances of extrinsicist Thomists certainly played a negative role in shaping their perspective. And de Lubac's *Catholicisme* speaks of the "individualistic aberrations" of the mystical theology "of recent centuries," claiming that they "were due not so much . . . to the use of some special philosophical system . . . but to a general development of individualism. . . . We are dealing with a universal phenomenon which . . . defies definition in a single formula, just as it cannot be condemned without reservation."[7]

But de Lubac's *Surnaturel* defends a "graced nature" in purely apolitical terms.[8] That shouldn't be surprising, given that much of it is a record of the oscillations in scholastic opinion about the impeccability of angels. The reason we may find it so is that the current reception of de Lubac is conditioned by the contrast in John Milbank's *Theology and Social Theory* between a "de Lubacian" liberation theology, which would "supernaturalize the natural" and the Rahnerian versions, which naturalize the supernatural.[9] The comparison is so striking and in many ways theologically sound that it can make us forget that de Lubac was not, himself, a liberation theologian. Both *Surnaturel* and the later *Mystery of the Supernatural* speak of grace as a "gift totally interior to me," a gift of "me to myself."[10] When he remakes him as a social theorist, Milbank is thinking hypothetically, as to what would happen if one applied de Lubac's thought to politics, somewhat as, according to de Lubac, Baius and others hypothesized about what would have happened if Adam had not fallen. The idea of de Lubac as presenting a politics of the supernatural or a sociology of graced

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[6] The best book in English on the topic is Michael Sutton, *Nationalism, Positivism and Catholicism: The Politics of Charles Maurras and French Catholics: 1890–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

[7] Henri de Lubac, SJ, *Catholicism: Christ and the Common Destiny of Man,* trans. Lancelot Sheppard (London: Burns & Oates, 1950), 163.

[8] I found only one reference to a political issue in my notes on the text, which is a footnote correlating de Bonald's subordination of the Church to the State with his extrinsicism: de Lubac, *Surnaturel: études historiques,* ed. Michel Sales (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1946, 1991), 18.

[9] John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990, 1994), 218.

[10] Henri de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural,* trans. Rosemary Sheed (London: Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1962), 100.

nature seems to derive not so much from his own writings as from that of commentators such as Milbank and David Schindler.

Following in this commentarial tradition, Rowland states that, for "de Lubac, the idea of a pure nature contained dangerous Pelagian tendencies, since it meant that it would be possible to sever grace from nature and marginalize it under the category of the 'supernatural'. The supernatural could . . . be privatized and social life would then proceed on the basis of the common pursuit of goods associated solely with the 'natural' order" (*CTTV,* 94). But even in a 1942 lecture reflecting on the weakness of French Catholic response to "racism," published as "Internal Causes of the Disappearance of the Sense of the Sacred," de Lubac does not identify the relegation "of the supernatural to some far off spot where it can only remain sterile"[11] with what Tracey Rowland and other Baroque de Lubacians see as its "*privatization*." De Lubac's metaphor for the separation of nature and grace is not "privatization" or "individualization" (as in "individualist capitalism"), but simply *division*: He doesn't normally locate the "far off spot" *within individuals*.

His engagement with the idea of the "social solidarity" of human beings occurs in the context of the meditation on the Church, the mystical body of Christ, in Catholicisme. Von Balthasar reads his discussion there of extra-Christian humanity as indicating that "the religious efforts of man . . . must . . . give up their claims to be 'objective systems' offering something whole and complete. . . . In other words, there is no 'anonymous Christianity' but at best 'anonymous Christians' in virtue of the grace that can produce effects even in deficient systems."[12] De Lubac claimed that Augustine speculated about prelapsarian Adam on the basis of his own experience."[13] He pictures divine grace as calling and being experienced by individual persons—one doesn't have collective experiences any more than one can think a collective thought. On his view, as I take it, it is particular men and women who would give Catholic institutions a vision of Catholic culture; *Culture and the Thomist Tradition* refers very rarely to "leaders."

There seem, therefore, to be two ways in which Rowland's preferred political outcomes don't fit her "social intrinsicist" diagnosis of the moribund state of Catholic cultures. One is that if, for example, the political policies of Chesterton and Belloc were put into practice, mechanisms

[11] Henri de Lubac, "Causes internes de l'atténuation et de la disparition du sens du sacré," 1942; reprinted in De Lubac, *Théologie dans l'histoire II: Questions disputées et résistance au nazisme* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1990), 21.

[12] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Theology of Henri de Lubac: An Overview,* trans. by Roxanne Mei Lum (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991), 39.

[13] De Lubac, *Surnaturel,* 47 and 66.

would be constructed to prevent the redistribution of property back from the congenitally improvident to the provident, and Jews required to wear distinctive dress,[14] but this "Distributist" understanding of a pervasive Catholic atmosphere could be legitimated on extrinsicist, if radically "theocentric," grounds. Conversely, a Pascalian could equally defend a genuinely conservative polity on intrinsicist and Augustinian grounds. This implies that although there may in many cases be a materially causative connection between cultural extrinsicism and a "privatized" spirituality, the demonstration of a formal causal relation between the two has not been delivered.

Secondly, the absence of positive political engagement within de Lubac's own writings indicates that the theologian was no more interested in the topic than St. Thomas was in culture or history, and that, without ascribing the societal instrumentalization of *Surnaturel* to a "Catholicism that is politically rather than spiritually minded,"[15] one can wonder if constructing a social theory is what de Lubac's theory of a "ground up" presence of grace is made for. That it gives *theological* insight into human beings and their cultures is indicated by the success of Rowland's explanation of how our institutions lost their Catholicity; but it is no criticism of a theologian to say that he made little contribution to our knowledge of how things work on the *creaturely* level. That is the task of the Catholic cultural theorist. De Lubac no doubt hoped that once the corporate sense of the liturgy was recovered (for example, with the replacement of the priestly private mass by concelebration, as happened at Vatican II), social consequences would flow from this experience into the "creaturely" perspectives of the Catholic laity. But to view *Catholicisme* as a scheme for political improvement is precisely to reverse its significance.

A Four-Sided Prescription

Rowland's prescription is fourfold. First, the making of a Catholic culture begins from revealed theology: "an Augustinian Thomist conception of culture can be defined as one in which any given *ethos* is governed by the Christian virtues, the process of self-formation or *Bildung* is guided by the precepts of the Decalogue and revealed moral laws of the New Testament, and the logos or form is provided by the 'identities-in-relation' logic of the Trinitarian processions" (*CTTV,* 21). Rowland draws the idea of "identities-in-relation" from David Schindler, who apparently claims

[14] Michael Finch, *Chesterton: A Biography* (London: Weidenfield and Nicholson, 1985), 218.

[15] Von Balthasar, *The Theology of Henri de Lubac,* 31. Von Balthasar is not referring to the Radical Orthodoxy movement.

that human persons should be seen as having *substantial* "identity-in-relation, in a way "analogous" to that of the Persons of the Trinity (*CTTV,* 95). I don't know exactly what to make of this, since the author gives us no help in figuring how this pans out in practice in, for example, a school or hospital (I could not guess what to expect if I applied to work in an university whose mission statement said it saw its workers as having an "identity-in-relation": shared office?). Interdisciplinary teaching may be in the offing, since we do learn that this "orientation is the opposite of the Cartesian methodology, according to which . . . identities [are] perceived in isolation from their relationships. . . . This methodology explains in part the tension between the school of 'Analytical Thomism,' which method tends to follow the standard Cartesian approach, and the Balthasarians, who rely upon a conception of truth and rationality which is 'symphonic' " (*CTTV,* 97). A non-compartmentalized or "symphonic" vision is sound for an educational institution as a whole and the narrowness of analytic Thomists has not favored any apologetic potential they might otherwise have. But individual workers who have no precise role tend to find themselves asked to do anything or everything; "interdisciplinarity" is often a fine cover for the instrumentalization of workers who are not allowed to identify themselves with a substantial role, with its specific *telos*. The hospices, and now secular hospitals, who want their doctors to be grief counselors, would have done better to advise doctors, psychologists, nurses, and religious ministers to perform their individual operations "symphonically" (an orchestra is not one big instrument), than to reconceive the medical task itself as intrinsically including the psychological, the nurse's job as in itself substantially related to the minister's (and so on). In the former case, the individual is working for a symphonic good that transcends him or her; in the latter, the individual is itself in some way a "collaborational entity" (so I'd have to share). Schindler may well be promoting the former view, but since Rowland doesn't spell out what happens when human identity is relationally conceived, the first, methodological, step is no very precise prescription.

Whilst Rowland calls the second step "the central post-modern element" (*CTTV,* 115) in the Augustinian Thomism through which Catholic cultures are to be revivified, it strikes me as the most traditional. The prescription she offers leaders of Catholic institutions is that "in order to be transmitted the fundamental truths need to be embodied within a narrative tradition which in turn informs a culture and . . . the forms of such a culture need to be clearly visible to both plain persons and people of learning" (*CTTV,* 123). From the "orants" of the catacombs to the Norman Last Judgments, Gothic stained glass, and today's Cathedral, with

its Stations, pamphlet hagiographies, and statues, the central way the Church has made converts and retained them is by infusing them with her history, past, present, and to come, aurally, pictorially, and verbally. The formula is tried, tested, and seems to work more often than not: What Rowland does here is to justify a prescription that has occurred spontaneously in every Catholic milieu. The philosophy comes from MacIntyre. Siding with the "Genealogists" as against the "Encyclopedists" (I could have done with a definition of both of these concepts, but worked out eventually that the former are Nietzscheans, the latter Enlightenment philosophes), he argues that rationality operates, not in a neutral vacuum, but within a "narrative tradition," at the base of which is a *chosen mythology* rather than a logical demonstration. Lest this remind heresy hunters of nineteenth-century "Traditionalist" fideism, Rowland makes a detailed case that, as MacIntyre conceives it, a "narrative tradition" can be universal, and can be argued for to the extent that it can show itself superior to all other traditions. The "choice" of the tradition is not an act of pure volition, but a Newmanesque recognition that the "all the evidence . . . converges on one exclusive explanation" (*CTTV,* 130).

It can be argued, conversely (one will find the case in Eric Kuenhelt-Leddin's *The Timeless Christian*) that a Catholic milieu is not good for the faith. In the long history of Catholicism, the " 'religion of . . . the incarnate and living *Logos*' " (*CTTV,* 124) has often times degenerated into mimicry and then evaporated when it ceased to be clerically enforced; we have seen this in Ireland and Holland over the past half-century. It takes a hostile environment for Catholics not only to get the ticks, but to get bitten; and thus, in the modern west, the suffocation of faith in the imagery and rites of Catholicism is not a real danger.

It is in this part of the book that we find what I felt was lacking elsewhere, the appreciation of the contribution of individual saints, particularly when one is graced to know them. Rowland mentions here "the importance of 'masters,' or 'scholar-saints,' within such a narrative tradition, in whom there is found the 'perfect synthesis of thought and grace' " (*CTTV,* 123).

Culture and the Thomist Tradition adds one new note to the Macintyrean formula: what is needed is an *aesthetic* narrative tradition. The best evidence of the rightness of Rowland's prescription is, on the one hand, the achievement of the "story-telling apologists," Chesterton, C. S. Lewis, Evelyn Waugh, and Flannery O'Connor, in converting people to Catholicism, and, on the other, the dismal tale of the exodus of the faithful from postconciliar institutions that became bored with their history and lost their charisma.

The third aspect of the prescription is linked to this aesthetic dimension: that is, that the makers of Catholic cultures should recall "the role of memory" in the formation of the Christian personality. Rowland touches on the issue of "the relationships between knowledge, memory, tradition, and the transcendentals" (*CTTV,* 78–79) in order to reach the fourth step, which is that persons will be brought to acknowledge the value of the Christian "narrative tradition" by coming to see that it is this alone which can give them a meaningful sense of self. She sees this element as emerging "not . . . from the principles of Christian Revelation, but rather from an examination of the contradictions of the culture of modernity. . . . MacIntyre's strongest argument for the Thomist tradition is that the self that embodies the principles of any other tradition is destined to fragmentation and even vacuity" (*CTTV,* 132–33).

Rowland goes on to claim that MacIntyre's "solution to the predicament is quintessentially Augustinian" (*CTTV,* 134). And yet, Paula Fredriksen has argued that Augustine's shift away from the "triumphalist millennialism" of his early postconversion years, when it was easy for him to see an eschatological sign in Theodosius, coincided with his reading of Romans. That new awareness of the "opacity" of the fallen self brought with it a deeper, anti-millennarian sense of the unknowability of God's work in history. If God and the self are alike "inscrutable," then "history's time frame is known only to God; and if the hour of the End is unknowable in principle, it cannot serve to impose a plot on time—none, rather, that those living *in* time can discern."[16]

Granted that modern neo-paganism has little to contribute to a sense of coherent identity, and that even non-Catholic Christianities create coherent but "foot-bound" selves that cannot grow properly, the question is, "Can the human self know itself as a *story*?" With its breaks, contingencies, long stretches of boredom, and sudden awakenings, a human biography is more like an art-house movie than a "narrative." The more one refers it to a concrete, historical biography, the more oxymoronic the expression "life-story" becomes. To think of God or even the human self as a "story" is to reduce them to knowable *essentia*. Again, given the book's recourse to Ressourcement, the patristics, Nouvelle théologie, and de Lubac in particular, it seems not unjust to cite de Lubac against the idea that philosophy points us to a theological tradition in which a known self is achievable:

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[16] Paula Fredriksen, "Tyconius and Augustine on the Apocalypse," in *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, ed. Richard K. Emmerson and Bernard McGinn (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992), 34.

> People frequently reason as though all the mystery were on God's side, and there were nothing in man that eludes the grasp of common experience or natural reasoning. Our whole nature should . . . be comprehensible to us. . . . But this is somewhat illusory. . . . Not because the infinite fullness of the mystery which touches him is actually in himself, for it is strictly inexhaustible, but because he is fundamentally a *pour-soi* purely in reference to that fullness. When we have said . . . everything definable that is to be said about ourselves, we have as yet said nothing, unless we have included in every statement the fact of our reference to the incomprehensible God; and that reference, and therefore our nature itself . . . is not really understood at all unless we freely allow ourselves to be caught up in the incomprehensible God. No one can think that we can understand man other than by grasping him in his movement towards the blessed obscurity of God.[17]

The more the self is known *in relation* to God, the more mysterious it will be to itself. Von Balthasarians are not alone in developing from this a theological anthropology for which the self is attained in *kenosis* or self-giving: One of the best things that Catholic schools used to teach, and Catholic hospitals to practice, was self-sacrifice.

Dr. Rowland would probably agree with much of that in principle; but in practice her prescriptions for the regeneration of Catholic culture come with a knife-sharp "knowledge" of what a real Catholic self ought to be like, and thus of the one healthy culture in which it could flourish. She wants to offer not a limited prescription for an ailment in one bodily member but an unrestricted solution that will remake a total self. Her book is ill at ease with, for example, John Paul II's habit of making "antithetical affirmations" (*CTTV,* 44) concerning the values and drawbacks of modernity, and rises to anathema when speaking of Catholic cultural physicians who relate their own "solutions" to signs of health within the body.

The group for which *Culture and the Thomist Tradition* reserves a special odium are the "Whig Thomists," a term "first used" by Michael Novak, "whiggishly tracing a Whig trajectory from St. Thomas's Aristotelian correction of conservative Augustinianism, to the Spanish Jesuit political theorists and later Catholic thinkers open, in various ways, to certain achievements of liberalism, such as Lord Acton, John Courtney Murray, Jacques Maritain, and Yves Simon."[18] As an English Tory, I can see there is much to fault in neo-conservative intellectualism. But it seems to me merely an extension of such intellectualism, the rationalism endemic to the modern west, to imagine that there is such a thing as what Dr. Rowland

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[17] De Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural,* 274–75.

[18] Email from Fr. Derek Cross, a friend and former assistant of Novak's.

calls a "Whig Thomist self" (*CTTV,* 106). For the human self to consist so totally in one single component it would have to be simple, in the sense that God is simple. "Whig Thomist" names a recognizable Catholic social type, that is, an abstraction or *ens rationis*, which cannot accurately denote the interests, temperamental proclivities or devotional habits of any particular individual, let alone that individual as a unique self.

The same goes for Catholic cultures. The immediate effect of entering a decent church or Cathedral can be a certain "total" impact of the sacred. But are the traditions of the Church, the human monuments of Christian history, as distinct from her magisterial Tradition, monolithic? Should they be? Defining John Paul II's "project" as one "which seeks to transform one tradition (liberalism) from its roots . . . by transfusing a new Christocentric anthropology and eschatology into the constituent conceptual elements of the tradition," Rowland worries that the "merit of this strategy depends on how one understands the transmission of knowledge and meaning, particularly the role of a narrative tradition" (*CTTV,* 49). Even including the Magisterial Tradition, the Church's stories fit together with what could best be called "congruence" (Thomas's *convenientum*), rather than logical necessity, analogous to the actions of God within sacred history, for which there may be arguments which are *convenientiae* but which afford no a priori demonstration.[19] It would be a very "disordered," Frankenstein-type self that emerged from the influence of only one kind of narrative, because the non-simple polyvalence of the human self, starting from its status as "thinking reed,"[20] a conjoined body and soul, requires it to flourish by bringing discontinuities into harmony. Maritain captures the dividedness and opacity of the human self in history in Augustinian, eschatological terms when he writes in *Integral Humanism*, "For Christianity, the truth about the world and the earthly city is that they are the kingdom at once of man, of God, and of the devil. This is the cause of the essential ambiguity of the world and history: it is the common ground of these three together. The world belongs to God by right of creation; to the devil by right of conquest, because of sin; to Christ by right of victory. . . . The task of the Christian in this world is to dispute his domain with the devil and wrench it from him. The world is saved . . . *in hope*, it is on the march toward the kingdom of God; but it is *not holy*, it is the Church that *is holy*."[21]

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[19] I draw this distinction from Gilbert Narcisse, OP, *Les raisons de Dieu: Argument de convenance et esthétique théologique selon saint Thomas d'Aquin et Hans Urs von Balthasar* (Fribourg, Suisse: Éditions universitaires, 1997).

[20] Pascal, *Pensées,* no. 145.

[21] Jacques Maritain, *True Humanism,* trans. M. R. Adamson (London: Geoffrey Bles, London, 1938), 101.

And yet, of the twentieth-century efforts to reconceive Catholic political culture within a secular framework, Maritain's *Integral Humanism* takes a special drubbing in this book. The reason for the indictment of this particular work of Maritain's is perhaps its influence on *Gaudium et Spes* and on the social perspective of the framers of the second Vatican Council. But the choice is not otherwise felicitous. Maritain's thinking about politics began within the Action Française, swung against that movement with its condemnation, after which he published *Primauté du spirituel* (1927), achieved its best conjunction of nature, history, and grace in *Integral Humanism*, and, arguably, entered in the 1950s into a retrograde reunion with "Aristotelianism plus Christianity" in such works as *Man and the State*. The latter book substitutes Aristotelico-Liberalism for the Aristotelico-Monarchism of the French philosopher's youth, and is more indebted to Mortimer Adler than to St. Thomas. James Schall justly observes that "reading Maritain on rights requires a constant internal correction to recognize that what he means by these terms is something very different from what is generally meant by them in the culture" (*CTTV,* 150). But does the objection apply univocally to all of Maritain's political ideas, and especially the project of a "new Christendom" in *Integral Humanism*? Extrinsicism becomes a catch-all diagnosis when Rowland complains that the politics of *Integral Humanism* goes beyond maintaining that "practical judgments regarding the common good should be made by representative members of the laity" to indicating that "the realm of the political is unattached to, or autonomous from, the theological" (*CTTV,* 31). For it is in this book that Maritain most clearly rejects the "Dantean" political solution of separate "ends" for Empire and Church, describing the "Calvinist and Molinist,"[22] postmediaeval settlement as one in which the "conception of man . . . has been cut in twain: on one side there is the purely natural man, who has no other need than that of his reason to be perfect, wise and good and inherit the earth; and on the other, there is a celestial envelope, his *believing double*, who is assiduous at worship and who prays to the Christian God, who surrounds and upholsters with the soft down of grace this purely natural man and renders him capable of gaining heaven."[23]

Rowland's great objection to the idea of a "Christendom" in which secularity has an autonomy from the Church is that it is *illogical*. She poses the dilemma like this: "Maritain wished to retain some kind of link between the spiritual and the political that will qualify the notion of 'autonomy.' . . . his construction of the issue invites the question: What is

[22] Ibid., 67.
[23] Ibid., 14.

the logic of a Christian order with secular forms and conversely an autonomous secular state subordinate to the spiritual order? If he means by this a state governed by Christian laity according to the norms of the natural law, a proponent of the liberal tradition is entitled to ask: In what way is this different from a 'consecrational' order? . . . Conversely, a Thomist may well ask: How does a secular form differ from what von Balthasar called an *animal technica vacua*?" (*CTTV,* 31). *Integral Humanism* is in a way a devotional tract for prospective Christian politicians, urging them to reflect on human beings "with a *self-consciousness according to the Gospel*." Rowland's dilemma turns on the idea that what of the natural law "an evangelical self-consciousness"[24] can see *must*, in principle, that is, by the logical principle of Christocentricity or intrinsicism, be and remain invisible to non-Christians. But one task of the Christian philosopher is to spell out what is made vividly articulate to him or her by revelation, for the non-Christian (or "liberal"), who is capable of recognizing such truths. Because a huge number of gray areas remain on both sides of the "secular"/"consecrational" divide, including problems like the use of violent force, no political order as a whole is "logically" Christian or secular. As a Burkean conservative, I want to say no political order is *logical* at all. But as a von Balthasarian theologian, I have to add, with him, a Christian awareness that history has a "theological" logic: "[T]here is the order of the old aeon with its severe forms (including the state, which wields the sword in the name of a higher justice: Rom 13), and Christians still live within this old order, which, self-enclosed and inchoate as it is, cannot and must not be "theologized." The Christian politician and sociologist must have a realism that comes from a sober assessment of earthly power relationships. They are not simply justified by theology ("He who takes the sword will perish by the sword," Mt 26:52), but, in need, may have recourse to them in self-defense. Even in the parables of Jesus, we find cool-headed calculation as to what can be achieved by earthly power and what cannot (Lk 14:31). There is a remarkable parable (Lk 16:1–9) in which the steward of "unrighteous mammon" is praised, not because of his fraudulent actions, but because of his purely human shrewdness."[25] Readers will have to judge for themselves whether they find more "sober assessment of earthly power-relationships" in *Culture and the Thomist Tradition* or in *Integral Humanism*.

Even if, in later works like *Man and the State*, Maritain lost track of the role of power relations within the political order, this does not disqualify *Integral Humanism*'s insight into how a modern, as opposed to mediaeval,

[24] Ibid., 69.

[25] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama: Theological Dramatic Theory,* vol. 4: *The Action,* trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1994), 485.

"Christendom" could operate, and that is, by taking the "free man" rather than the "king," *"created liberty"* rather than monarchial power as a basic political analogue to the divine.[26] Maritain can thus hold that the "guiding star in the supernatural world of this new humanism . . . will not be that of God's *holy empire over all things*, but rather that of the *holy freedom* of the creature whom grace unites to God. Of this freedom liberalism is but a caricature."[27]

If human liberty is divinely created, and effects like their causes, our freedom is creative. Rowland is aware of Gilson's claim that, for moderns, a purely philosophical Aristotelianism, one that has not been remastered by a theologian's creative freedom, is simply a dead deism (*CTTV,* 115–16). But she does not apply it in her discussion of Finnis's (purely) philosophical conception of "rights," urging, rather, that it "is not . . . *any* of the treasures of the pagans that Thomists may wish to plunder, but rather those which already carry within them an openness to theism, and to created natures" (*CTTV,* 154). Without or anterior to the thinking of a theologian who knows all substances to be freely created by God, is *any* idea "already open to theism"? The first creative act of the theologian is to situate substantial essences within a freely given existence, and to redescribe them accordingly. Rowland feels that "the standard notion of a right" used by John Finnis is "tied to the idea of an autonomous self-fulfillment," but no one has ever enjoyed as much "autonomous" bliss as Aristotle's Unmoved Mover. Maritain and Gilson learned the value of creativity from Bergson, but one needn't start from there: "fictivity" is a positive value in *Theology and Social Theory*, where Milbank observes, for example, that, "to be human, or to be a cultural being is *necessarily* to inhabit a fiction."[28] Given that all human traditions are invented, why not invent one that *includes* rights on a theological axis: One could plant them *within* Rowland's excellent notion of religion as an "infrastructural principle of the narrative tradition and its culture" (*CTTV,* 145). Wouldn't it better, dare I say, to "baptize" Finnis, giving "rights" their flex within theology than, as happens in Rowland's discussion of the New Natural Law theory, to adopt an "*anti*-position," into which von Balthasar claimed Catholic thinkers maneuver themselves when they "abandon a total, catholic standpoint for the sake of a particular standpoint"?[29]

Rowland is skating onto thin ice when she claims that her absolute rejection of ad hoc accommodations with the modern, secular world is a straight prudential judgment: "The division between the Whig Thomists

[26] Maritain, *Integral Humanism,* 68.
[27] Ibid., 156.
[28] Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory,* 185.
[29] Von Balthasar, *The Theology of Henri de Lubac,* 29.

and the proponents of a postmodern Augustinian Thomism is in part a difference over the prudence of this gamble and the value of what Leo XIII called 'Americanism' " (*CTTV,* 165). Gilson, who caricatured the blanket "Americanist" assumptions of *Man and the State* in *The Metamorphoses of the City of God*, nonetheless offered American universities, funded by alumni rather than the state, as an example the French should follow,[30] and remarked in the midst of a controversy about the status of Catholic schools in France that, "I do not know a single Christian school, in the United States, over which the national flag does not float, the manifest symbol of its will to work, for the Church, in and through the nation."[31] Rowland's refusal to think discriminatively about modern non-Christian cultures, in which some features might be capable of becoming wholesome, others unremediable, makes the kind of Catholic body politic she wants to produce one which is, as de Lubac put it, "reason[ed] from a 'disexistentialized essence.' "[32] If Rowland is right to assign culpability for the postconciliar demise of Catholic cultures to "extrinsicism," one concomitant of this was a certain hypertrophy of the logical faculty, creating unbearably prescriptive notions of what Catholic fiction, Catholic politics, Catholic philosophy, and so on had to be like. If "extrinsicism" really was a negative factor, then so was a overly narrow notion of the sources on which a Christian philosopher, politician, or writer could rightly draw. When I came upon Dr. Rowland's horror-struck reaction to Novak's use of Adam Smith's economic theories, I was reminded of a cartoon in *The Timeless Christian*: A belligerent deacon was demanding of a hapless author, "You dare to call *this* a Catholic novel?" "No one has ever suggested that the Scottish Enlightenment was a great moment in Catholic thought and practice," we are told (*CTTV,* 103); perhaps not, but, through his Scottish university education, Smith acquired the idea of a "universal human nature" common to Dutch Reformed Orthodoxy and the "Baroque Thomism" of the time. Not an idea which Dr. Rowland and I share, but I dare call it "Catholic." It takes a Christological sense of analogy to see that, outside the Incarnation, all incarnations are more or less.

A Good Prognosis

It is arguable that the problem for contemporary Catholic cultures is not that none exist, but that many do, and there are few charitable efforts at

[30] Etienne Gilson, "Avon-nous des universités?" *Le Monde* (17 June 1947), 1

[31] Etienne Gilson, "Pour une éducation nationale," *La Vie Intellectuelle* 6 (1945): 116–32, at 131.

[32] De Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural,* 86.

alliance amongst them. Analytic Thomists, left-wing von Balthasarians, neo-conservatives, theological Thomists, *Wanderer* types, each have their own centers, conferences, journals, websites, and academic stockades. It is one of the paradoxes of Tracey Rowland's book that for all its aversion to "what Leo XIII called 'Americanism,' " it imitates this distinctively American fragmentation of diversely tempered persons into mutually inhospitable cultural islands.

Nonetheless, the appearance and some of the intrinsic features of her book offer a good prognosis for the regeneration of Catholic culture. Apart from poor old Cardinal Lecaro, none of the villains of the book are theological liberals. This is an indication that the whole discussion about how to remake Christian cultures is in the hands of believing Catholics. That the conversation might be less than acrimonious, and, could, indeed become symphonic, is attested by Rowland's well-spoken words about the possibility of a 'synthesis' between the thought of "Augustinian Balthasarians" on the transcendentals and properties of the soul with that of the Thomist tradition on the virtues (*CTTV,* 81). I should like to conclude by congratulating Dr. Rowland on referring to Hans Urs von Balthasar by his full name—she is evidently no Republican. NV

Response to Burrell, Cessario, Chapp, Lamb, and Murphy

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I WISH TO BEGIN by thanking the editors of *Nova et Vetera* for their interest in *Culture and the Thomist Tradition: After Vatican II*, and also the reviewers for their many kind, stimulating, and sometimes amusing comments. Larry S. Chapp's observation that I believe that creating avenues of open exchange between Christianity and liberalism is like hiring an international art thief to be head of security at the Louvre was my favorite. I would only qualify the statement slightly to say that I have nothing against open exchange where this means constructive academic discussion, but where it means a policy of accommodating Christianity to liberalism, or the presentation of the Christian message in liberal garb, then the art thief metaphor is a good one.

Since many of the criticisms seem to stem from different perceptions of what it is that I am trying to achieve, a major part of my response will take the form of a clarification of what I see as the central issues in the

work. In responding to the criticisms I have tried to marshal them under three headings: (I) my reading of the Thomist Tradition, (II) my reading of Vatican II, and (III) my political theology and understanding of a Catholic culture.

The Thomist Tradition

The principal criticisms of Romanus Cessario, OP, tend to be that I have naively accepted de Lubac's criticism of Cajetan's account of the relationship between nature and grace, that the work "has very little to say about the Thomist tradition," that students may come away from reading the work and think that they have mastered all there is to know about Thomism, and that Thomism is reduced to the status of a camp.

In relation to Cajetan, Fergus Kerr, OP, in his *After Aquinas: Versions of Thomism*, describes the publication of de Lubac's *Surnaturel* in 1946 as the most bitter controversy of twentieth-century Thomism. He suggests that de Lubac's mode of challenging the extrinsicist account was deliberately provocative—that at least some of the fireworks might have been avoided had de Lubac not drawn attention to the fact that Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange of the Angelicum and his fellow Dominican A.-D. Sertillanges of La Saulchoir, shared an understanding of the nature and grace relationship with George Tyrrell, SJ, the most notorious of the modernists. Kerr goes so far as to assert that de Lubac's criticisms were presented in the form of "calculated insults." Nonetheless, Kerr concludes that "few now doubt that when Thomas taught that human beings have a natural desire for the vision of God he meant what he said."[1]

While I have been persuaded that the "pure nature" extrinsicist account of the grace-nature relationship does foster secularization as de Lubac argued—a position consistent with my general preference for the Thomism of Etienne Gilson over that of Jacques Maritain—I am not blaming the whole process of secularization on Cajetan. I have absolutely no desire to dishonor the memory of a great Dominican who had the unenviable task of taking on Martin Luther. My understanding of the processes of secularization come from the genealogies of modernity to be found in the works of Alasdair MacIntyre, Louis Dupré, Joseph Ratzinger, Charles Taylor, Catherine Pickstock, James V. Schall, SJ, William T. Cavanaugh, John Milbank, and Michael Hanby, among others. My understanding of the culture of modernity is that it represents first the severance, then an heretical reconstruction, of the classical–theistic synthesis, and thus to appreciate its inner logic one needs to examine not only what happened

[1] Fergus Kerr, op, *After Aquinas: Versions of Thomism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 137.

to nature and grace, but also faith and reason, intellect and will, tradition and memory, creation, and a whole raft of other theological and philosophical concepts. In addition to the intellectual history and the cultural embodiment of mutated or heretically reconstructed concepts, there is also a psychological factor, which I think was particularly strong in the 1950s and 1960s—what E. Michael Jones identifies as the lust of Catholic professionals and intellectuals in predominantly Protestant cultures such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and other countries of the British Commonwealth, for modernity.[2] For this social class, one of the best educated in history, upward social mobility would be fostered by social attitudes and practices that played down the difference between the liberal and Catholic traditions. The manner in which John F. Kennedy sought to distinguish between his private and public self in the 1960 presidential campaign serves as an illustration of this social orientation. Thus my understanding of modernity and the processes of secularization are far more complex than a simple—"it all went off the rails because of Cajetan's tendency to present an extrinsicist account of nature and grace."

The title of the book, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition: After Vatican II*, means exactly that—the place of culture within the Thomist tradition after the Second Vatican Council. The book was never intended to offer a general overview of the Thomist tradition and no where purports to do so. In the introduction it is made quite clear that the book is about a crisis within the tradition, where "crisis" is understood to be some issue over which the masters of the tradition are in disagreement and whose resolution is required before the tradition can move on to a higher level of synthesis. Specifically, how is the Thomist tradition to relate to the rival tradition of liberalism and to contend with the cultures of modernity and postmodernity? Reference is made to individual Thomist scholars only insofar as they have something to say about the cause, effects, or resolution of the crisis. The fact that the leading scholars discussing these issues are almost all loyal to the papacy of John Paul II, but nonetheless in disagreement on the issue of the relationship between Thomism and liberalism, is indicative of the pastoral relevance of the problem. Where one stands on these issues is not an esoteric matter because it determines both how one reads the signs of the times, and the prescriptions one has for the project of new evangelization.

In *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*, MacIntyre suggests that such intellectual crises are resolved by three developments within the tradition: (1) an account of what has rendered the tradition sterile, incoherent, or both;

[2] E. Michael Jones, *Living Machines* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1995), 42.

(2) the provision of a conceptually enriched scheme to furnish a solution to the problems that had previously proved intractable; and (3) these new conceptual and theoretical structures must be in continuity with the shared beliefs in terms of which the tradition of inquiry has been defined up to this point.[3] These three elements determined the structure of the book.

My chief contention is that the Thomist tradition, especially classical and Leonine Thomism, did not have a theology of culture, and this meant in effect that it lacked the conceptual apparatus to deal with the challenges posed by Nietzsche, Heidegger, Sartre, et al. Without a development of the tradition to deal with the kinds of issues posed by the Romantic movement, issues like the effect of culture and history on the formation of the person, the Thomists could not deal with the kinds of questions that so-called modern man was asking. This does not mean that the tradition had to be thrown overboard, or that we all had to become nineteenth-century Romantics, but rather that Thomism needed to be developed in the direction of the provision of a theology of culture.

I certainly respect the work of scholars such as Jean-Pierre Torrell, OP, and other Dominicans cited by Romanus Cessario, but I have not encountered anywhere in their publications a treatment of the subject of this crisis. If they have written something about the liberal tradition and its relationship to the Thomist tradition, or about the importance of a narrative tradition in an understanding of the relationship between faith and reason, or the problem of Americanism, then I would like to see it, but from my searches through their bibliographies, I have not found any reference to these themes in their works. The closest one would come would be oblique connections in Lobato's articles on "Christian humanism," but even these are not addressing the issues that were central to my book. In Torrell's *Saint Thomas Aquinas* there are four pages under the heading "Nature and Culture: the Virtues" and here the material was almost entirely on the subject of virtue, not culture. I agree that virtue is the product of the interrelation of nature and culture, but there was nothing in these four pages that specifically dealt with the cultural component. After searching through editions of *The Thomist* the only article I encountered directly on point was Robert Brennan's, to which I referred, but again it did not seem to me to offer any kind of conceptual apparatus or insights into dealing with typically postmodern questions.[4] My judgment was that a Heideggarian reading Brennan would not be satisfied that Thomism could respond to Heideggerian questions.

[3] MacIntyre, A., *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (London: Duckworth, 1988), 362.

[4] Robert E. Brennan, "The Thomistic Concept of Culture," *The Thomist* 5, 1943, 111–36.

One approach to the problem of modernity, let us call it the "Leonine," was simply to present classical Thomism as the antidote to a poison. Another, which became popular after the Second World War, was to embrace modernity and try and present Thomism as *proto-moderne*. The subschool within the Thomist tradition associated with this approach is classified by Michael Novak, one of its leading proponents, as the Whig Thomist position. Many readers have assumed that I coined the term "Whig Thomist" as a pejorative label, but while I empathise with those who would not want to be associated with Whiggery, which began as the political outlook of Scottish Presbyterians, it is not my term. However, leaving aside this issue of the label, the position I sought to present in *Culture and the Thomist Tradition* is that both strategies, "Leonine" and "Whig," are flawed. Since postconciliar Catholic leaders tended to embrace the second strategy rather than the first, much of the book is devoted to an analysis and criticism of this second strategy.

My criticism of Whig Thomism is strongest in chapters 5 and 7 and it is these chapters that are most reliant upon the works of de Lubac and David L Schindler, as well as MacIntyre whose ideas pervade the work. These two chapters could be described as a synthesis of the philosophical and sociological critiques of the liberal tradition and its culture in the work of Alasdair MacIntyre with the theological critiques of Schindler and Kenneth L. Schmitz and others associated with the *Communio* journal. This non-Whig stream in contemporary Catholic thought is made up of the works of individual scholars who are not part of any particular network. Therefore there is no particular label used to describe this stream of Catholic thought, though Augustinian Thomist does seem to be gaining popularity. I drew together many of the arguments of those who do not find themselves in the camp of the Whigs and labeled my synthesis a "postmodern Augustinian Thomism" for the want of a more compact name. The general idea is that the Augustinian dimensions of Thomism are valorized in order to deal with postmodern themes. John L. Allen Jr. of the *National Catholic Reporter* has joked that this label would not fit well on a bumper sticker. I concede the point and I am open to alternative suggestions.

Thus the position the book takes is neither one of "let us accommodate Thomism to the liberal tradition" nor "let us juxtapose classical Thomism to the liberal tradition," but rather one that argues that the cultures of modernity and postmodernity began a long time before what Leo XIII described as modernism, and that in order to work out where the problems arose one needs to go back to the fourteenth century and look at what has happened to our understanding of the relationship

between nature and grace, faith and reason, history and culture, will and intellect, memory and tradition, nature and natural law, to mention but a few of the key concepts since then. Scholars who are doing this include Louis Dupré, William T. Cavanaugh, Alasdair MacIntyre, and Charles Taylor, as well as members of the Radical Orthodoxy circle, for example, Robert C. Miner, Michael Hanby, Catherine Pickstock, and John Milbank; and scholars associated with the *Communio* journal, for example, Joseph Ratzinger, David L. Schindler, and Kenneth L. Schmitz. I am intellectually indebted to all of these scholars in some way. I agree with MacIntyre that liberalism is a tradition, and that in order to determine the compatibility of traditions it is necessary not only to examine the content of their key concepts but the place occupied by the concepts within the architectonic framework of the tradition. As Nigel Biggar has observed, "it is not that the content of theistic and atheistic moralities is always entirely different," but rather that "the particular moral beliefs that they share are differently located in larger wholes that qualify—sometimes slightly, sometimes radically—the significance of each of their parts."[5] From the Radical Orthodoxy scholars I have taken the understanding of modernity as an heretical reconstruction and their critiques of the Kantian enterprise, and from Schindler, Ratzinger, Schmitz, and others associated with the *Communio* journal I have taken their general orientation to the work of the Second Vatican Council and their focus on anthropological issues.

Matthew Lamb's review was disappointing in this latter context in that I actually agree with his statements about the importance of a normative account of nature and of course with the whole anthropological thrust of the theology of John Paul II, Joseph Ratzinger, and Angelo Scola. The reason I did not dwell on this in the book is that I presumed that this was not an issue among Thomists, that is, not part of the crisis upon which the work was focused. It is certainly an issue between Thomists and proponents of rival traditions and thus an intellectual problem for Catholic scholars in general, but I did not see the necessity for spelling out what Ratzinger calls the dimensions of substantiality in a Thomist anthropology. The territory of culture or more specifically, the role of culture and the influence of history and institutional practices on the formation of the person, is part of what Ratzinger calls the dimension of relationality. If I write another work on general principles for a theology

[5] Nigel Biggar, "Karl Barth and Germain Grisez on the Human Good: An Ecumenical *Rapprochement*," *The Revival of Natural Law: Philosophical, Theological, and Ethical Responses to the Finis-Grisez School,* eds. N. Biggar and R. Black (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000) 188.

of culture then I would include chapters on metaphysics and the dimension of substantiality.

While I do not believe that nature is a product of culture, I do believe that cultures understood in the sense of institutional practices, educational formation (in the sense of the German notion of *Bildung*), and the fundamental dynamics of a given civilization, do affect one's potential for moral development, for the reception of grace, for the development of virtue; and precisely how this is so needs to be explained in a more developed Thomism. I have never said that natural law is constituted by human cultures or traditions and I have defended what Romanus Cessario in other places calls the Christocentric account of natural law as one finds it in the works of Angelo Scola and David L. Schindler. In the seventh chapter I was in fact arguing for almost the exact opposite positions as those criticized by Matthew Lamb. In it I endorse both Alasdair MacIntyre's description of the human person as a "culture-transcending dependent rational animal" and the notion of natural law in general. There would be no point in being a culture transcending animal, or a rational animal, if one was a cultural relativist.

In the introduction I cited Fr. Cessario's comment that the term "human experience" has been made to carry considerable theological weight in recent decades and that it would be unfortunate if a reaction to these schools of thought (Marxism and Modernism) resulted in a wholesale rejection of such an important element in Christian moral theology.[6] My reaction to reading Fr. Lamb's review is to say something similar about the concept of culture. It would be a pity if a reaction against the ethical relativism of many of the postmoderns would mean that we cannot even consider issues like the influence of narrative traditions upon one's receptivity to the natural law without fear of being declared a cultural relativist.

Among the *Communio* scholars there are often references to the "eclipse of the *humanum*" in contemporary thought and culture—to a loss of any sense of what it means to be a human. I agree entirely that this is a major problem and I am not a party to the eclipse. However I nonetheless agree with those scholars who argue that what one thinks is reasonable will depend on one's theological presuppositions, on the influence of narrative traditions, even ones that are fragmented, jumbled, and mutated. In this context one problem I see with the New Natural Law project is that it seems to completely miss this point and assume that there is such a thing

[6] Romanus Cessario, "Virtue Theory and the Present Evolution of Thomism," eds. D. Hudson and W. Moran, *The Future of Thomism* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992) 297.

as Kantian pure reason—that the rationality of the New Natural Law will be self-evident to anyone with the intellectual patience to follow the project. In other words it is a Kantian account of rationality of which I am critical, not the notion of rationality or reasonableness in general.

My further comments on Matthew Lamb's review are that any references I made to "tradition-constituted rationality" were not intended to in any way deny that we are created by God in His image and likeness, and thus have been made with a capacity to discern the truth, understood as something supra-historical and supra-cultural. I have never denied that and indeed in Chapter four I suggest that a framework for the development of a theology of culture would be to link the faculties of the soul (intellect, will, and memory) to the theological virtues (faith, hope, and love) and the transcendentals (truth, beauty, and goodness). My attempt to emphasize the importance of tradition, including narrative traditions, is not part of any project to undermine the objectivity of the true, the good, and the beautiful, but to undermine, if you like, the accommodation to modernity reading of *aggiornamento*, and more precisely, to explain why it is the case that the accommodation to modernity reading of *aggiornamento* has been a pastoral disaster. In my judgment those in the postconciliar era who wanted to throw the narrative tradition of the Church overboard, or at least sever the substance of the tradition from its form and repackage it in more fashionable-sounding liberal garb, have unwittingly impoverished the moral and intellectual horizons of some two generations of Catholics. Thus Chapter 7 was an attempted defense of narrative traditions against liberal/Kantian conceptions of rationality—not a defense of cultural or moral relativism against the notion of a universal natural law. To take the latter position would amount to an implicit denial of the *imago Dei*, which would be an absurd position for a Catholic scholar.

In relation to Fr. Lamb's statement that culture is a typically modern notion, I agree if modern is understood here to mean not medieval, but I would say that it is not a notion that was foreign to the classical era and that it surfaces again after the decline of Christendom and after the discovery of the Americas. Moreover, it is not a typically "modern" notion where modern is equated with the ideas of the Enlightenment philosophes. It is rather much more of an anti-Enlightenment Romantic movement concept, associated with Herder, Wilhelm von Humboldt, and Rousseau, rather than Kant. In arguing for the importance of this concept I am not endorsing the philosophical thought of Herder, von Humboldt, or Rousseau, but merely the idea that the questions they asked are important for the new evangelization.

Given that Paul VI in 1974 described the split between the gospel and culture as "the tragedy of our time," while more recently Rino Fisichella of the Lateran described the relationship between the gospel and cultures as "the oceanic problem of the day,"[7] and given that John Paul II makes constant references to our choice between the culture of death and a civilization of love, I tend to think that the concept of culture is significant for contemporary theological study. Even if its pedigree is not Thomist, in a roundabout way the fact that Fr. Lamb acknowledges that it is a "typically modern notion" tends to underscore my argument that the Thomist tradition does have a lacuna here, and it is one that represents something of a crisis for the tradition if it lacks the conceptual apparatus to examine one half of the tragic and oceanic problem of the day.

Just as John Henry Newman identified Anglicanism as a halfway house between Catholicism and liberalism, I agree with H. G. Schenk's judgment that the European Romantic movement represents a halfway house between Catholicism and Nihilism. I believe that themes and concepts in the Romantic movement, such as culture and individuality, can be developed in a Catholic way, or they can be developed in a nihilistic way, and my project in part is to try and develop them in a Catholic way.

In the third chapter I argued, using a railway metaphor, that there exists certain junctions along the Thomist and Marxist tracks in relation to their understanding of the good of work and the problems of liberal economics. I further argued that those ideas MacIntyre takes from Marxism are taken from the Romantic (rather than Enlightenment) dimension of the tradition. At places in her review Francesca Murphy gives the impression she thinks that I am sympathetic to Marxism. I have never been a Marxist. I simply suggest that there are points of convergence or junctions between the Marxist and Thomist traditions in relation to their critiques of liberal economic practices. This is also a point that has been made by Gregory Baum.[8] The Romantic Marxist concern about the subjective dimension of human labor is shared by many Thomists and is a central theme in John Paul II's *Laborem Exercens*.

In this context of the Church's social justice teaching I listed a number of scholars who have been critical of the liberal tradition in relation to its economic practices. One of my reasons for offering a list was to counter the tendency among those who remember the Cold War to regard all criticism of the contemporary liberal economic order as an endorsement

[7] Rino Fisichella Press Conference Statement, *National Catholic Reporter,* 1, 27 March, 2002.

[8] Gregory Baum, "The Impact of Marxism on the Thought of John Paul II," *Thought* 62 (1987).

of the Soviet experiments or something equally dysfunctional. In offering a list that was by no means exhaustive, I was attempting to highlight the fact that there is another non-Whig tradition in Christian social thought. I nowhere claimed or attempted to claim that any of these scholars were motivated in their criticisms of liberal economics by readings of de Lubac or other tomes on nature and grace.

Vatican II

Having argued that the Thomist tradition lacks a theology of culture, I link this lacuna to the postconciliar chaos. Without a theological understanding of culture it was theoretically impossible to provide guidelines for *aggiornamento*. As John O'Malley has said: "At the time of the Council we did not think to ask from it any consistent theoretical foundation for *aggiornamento*, because most of us were not aware of the importance of having one."[9] Similarly, Kenneth L. Schmitz recently reflected: "Had we been more perceptive we might have guessed that the foundations of modernity were beginning to crack under an increasingly incisive attack. But [in the conciliar era] we had no such cultural concept as 'Modernity'; all we had instead was the historical category: modern philosophy."[10]

I acknowledge that individual scholars, for example, Guardini, von Balthasar, Rahner, de Lubac, and Wojtyla, had an understanding of aspects of the problem, but Rahner, de Lubac, Kasper, and others have acknowledged that there were unresolved tensions and issues in the conciliar documents that would have to be dealt with later, and most commentators agreed that the call for a presentation of the Catholic faith in a style and idiom that would be attractive to so-called "modern man" was made with very little analysis of either modernity or modern man or the kinds of issues about the translatability of concepts from one tradition to another that are now commonplace in the discipline of linguistic philosophy. Cardinal Francis George's doctoral dissertation on culture in the thought of John Paul II is particularly insightful in its treatment of this last issue of the difficulty of translating concepts from one narrative tradition into another.[11] Fergus Kerr, OP, has also drawn attention to the instrumental theory of language underlying much of Karl Rahner's thought in this context. Against the tacit acquisition of meaning theory

[9] John O'Malley, *Tradition and Transition: Historical Perspectives on Vatican II* (Wilmington: M. Glazier, 1989) 45.

[10] Kenneth L Schmitz, "Postmodernism and the Catholic Tradition," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* LXXII, 2, 1969, 223–53 at 235.

[11] Francis Cardinal George, *Inculturation and Ecclesial Communion: Culture and Church in the Teaching of Pope John Paul II* (Rome: Urbaniana University Press, 1990).

of Michael Polanyi and other expressivist theories of language, Rahner's natural assumption was that communication comes after language and that language comes after having concepts and thus the meaning of concepts can be easily changed by a simple decision to do so.[12] If these assumptions are wrong, as the expressivist theories claim, then the project of transposing Catholic teachings into the idioms of the culture of modernity becomes highly problematic.

Larry S. Chapp notes that whereas Rowland seeks to locate the cause of many of the postconciliar dislocations in the weaknesses of *Gaudium et Spes* itself, Balthasar views the problems instead as a case of postconciliar manipulation of texts and the "deplorable worldliness" of many of the Church's members. I agree wholeheartedly that there was a deplorable worldliness abroad which gave rise to an accommodationist liberalism, but I also believe that the treatment of culture in *Gaudium et Spes* did leave itself open to this manipulation and I attempted to explain how. My reason for doing so was not to apply a hermeneutic of suspicion because of a methodological preference for this kind of academic work, but rather because of a judgment that it is the belief of many in leadership positions within the Church's educational institutions that *Gaudium et Spes* really is authority for the projects of accommodationist liberalism, and thus in order to deal with the problem, part of it is explaining how this interpretation could have become so popular. In MacIntyre's terms, this was necessary to provide an account of how the tradition became sterile and incoherent. Moreover, one question my book raises is: "What is the prudence of this enthusiasm for getting agreement on the wording of documents from committee members, in circumstances where those drafting the document do not agree on its interpretation?" It does not resolve any difficult issues, it simply transfers the venue of the intellectual battles to places where the document will be interpreted.

Chapp also observes that "historical analysis, though a necessary component in any full view of the Council, is incomplete if it does not have as one of its chief aims the use of such knowledge to aid us in the more constructive project of ascertaining the full theological significance of the Council's degrees in their total synthetic orientation to one another and to the Church's broader tradition." My response is that I agree with this if what one is attempting to do is to provide a hermeneutic or constructive retrieval of Vatican II in general. However my book was not attempting to do this—it had a much narrower focus.

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[12] Fergus Kerr, OP, Theology after Wittengenstein (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986) 11.

In another publication,[13] I contributed a chapter on John Paul II's interpretation of Vatican II as part of a tribute to celebrate the Pope's twenty-fifth anniversary in the chair of Peter. The editor published the chapter under the title: "Reclaiming the Tradition: John Paul II as the Authentic Interpreter of Vatican II." Had I seen the chapter title before publication I would have suggested changing "the" to "an" to indicate that I believe that John Paul II is one of a number of possible authentic interpreters, not the only one. In any event, in this chapter I pieced together a positive hermeneutic based on the works of John Paul II and Joseph Ratzinger. Eamon Duffy then described me in his *Tablet* review as a "court journalist," an apologist for the John Paul II "constructive retrieval."[14] Thus there is a tendency for some of those who read *Culture and the Thomist Tradition* to say, "but John Paul II has a solution to these problems" and for others who read "Reclaiming the Tradition" to say "but this is all too simplistic—John Paul II has not sorted it all out. It is far too complex a problem for any one individual to comprehensively resolve."

My position is that I acknowledge that many of the problems of the interpretation of conciliar documents have been addressed in this papacy, particularly at the Extraordinary Synod of 1985, and in "Reclaiming the Tradition" I try to explain this against those who would argue that the Council is only capable of an accommodationist interpretation. However I also believe that there are many unresolved problems and that a key to overcoming at least some of them is to start considering the whole territory of the theology of culture. Put in the most simple terms, Barth's question to Paul VI in 1966 was absolutely spot on, "What does *aggiornamento* mean, accommodation to what?"[15] It is all very well to be "relevant" to the needs of the modern world, and all very well to "read the signs of the times." But Catholic scholars differ over what it means to be relevant and what the signs of the times signify in theological terms. No sane person wants to live in a ghetto. No Catholic scholar wants to hoist the flag of retreat from intellectual engagement with one's non-Catholic contemporaries, but until we have a way of thinking about the realm of culture theologically, and until we have an understanding of what the rival traditions (particularly the liberal tradition) are exactly, we lack the necessary intellectual equipment for the engagement.

Thus, when Chapp says that I fail to treat *Gaudium et Spes* within the context of a narrative tradition and fail to acknowledge the view of most

[13] Tracey Rowland, *John Paul the Great: Maker of the Post-Conciliar Church* (London: CTS, 2003).

[14] Eamon Duffy, "A great pope ill served by his fans," *The Tablet,* 29 November, 2003.

[15] Karl Barth, *Ad Limina Apostolorum* (Edinburgh: St. Andrew's Press, 1969), 20.

Ressourcement theologians that the texts of the Council continue to have great validity as a positive theological construct, my response here is simply that my first chapter was not directed toward a criticism of *Gaudium et Spes* or Vatican II in general, but to those sections of it which deal specifically with the issue of culture; and further, there is nothing inconsistent with suggesting that the treatment of culture was full of ambiguities which fed into the accommodationists' agenda, at the same time as holding that there are texts of the Council which "continue to have great validity as a positive theological construct." Moreover while I did not present a detailed chapter on the attempted constructive retrieval, I did mention the key elements of it, such as the Christocentrism of paragraph 22.

Chapp further suggests that all of the statements in *Gaudium et Spes* that emphasize the dignity and autonomy of the secular realm should be interpreted not as an attempt at accommodation, but as a legitimate ennobling of the role of the laity in the world, since the world is now viewed in a non-Manichean way as part of the "good" of creation. My response here is to say that Chapp and I would probably be in agreement on the best constructive retrieval. I think however that for such a retrieval to take place there needs to be much more work undertaken on the intellectual history of the concept and its consideration alongside an understanding of the term "secular" in the thought of von Balthasar and de Lubac, among others. Moreover, in terms of the history of the interpretation of the concept thus far, my judgment here is that these sections of the document have largely been interpreted through the lens of Rahner and Maritain and that this has fostered the trend toward the privatization of faith. Again, it would seem to make a great deal of difference whether one approaches the text through the theological framework of Rahner on the one side, or de Lubac and von Balthasar on the other. I would support a Balthasarian reading.

Chapp also contends that had *Gaudium et Spes* engaged in a systematic deconstruction of modern liberalism, it simply would have reinforced the already negative attitude toward the world that existed everywhere in the Church at that time, seriously undercutting its new theology of the laity. He states: "the pastoral project of *Gaudium et Spes* may have been poorly executed and filled with ambiguity. However, it was a risk the Church had to take, out of her concern for human dignity and out of the consciousness of her mission from Christ to spread the good news to the entire world." This argument I find difficult to follow and this is perhaps due to a difference in background and experience. At a recent conference on *Gaudium et Spes* one delegate went on at length about how in the preconciliar era Catholics never talked to Protestants. They allegedly lived in

their own ghettos. He mentioned this in the context of *Gaudium et Spes*, which he read as a document that liberated Catholics to feel free to talk to Protestants and everyone else.

When I hear stories such as this I tend to think that such people needed to be liberated from something but I would characterize it as Jansenism and I would argue that it was a heresy that had a strong hold in Irish Catholic culture. I do not regard it as in any sense authentically Catholic, and I find it difficult to believe that the whole Church was in its grip. The widespread work of Catholic action groups before the Council and the establishment of secular institutes would seem to suggest that this mentality was not universal. Moreover, I think that one can critique Jansenism without having to take a soft line on liberalism. One does not need the liberal tradition to know that we are our brother's keeper, that we have responsibilities to other people, to the poor, to the sick, to refugees regardless of their religious backgrounds. The parable of the Good Samaritan covers all this rather well, while the Benedictine, Franciscan, and Dominican traditions have quite a lot to say about hospitality to strangers.

Political Theology and Catholic Culture

Francesca Murphy asks whether my social and political theory fits the shoe of its intrinsicist theology. My reaction to this was to think that I had not attempted to offer a social and political theory. All I had tried to do on the social and political theory front was argue that the project of synthesizing Thomism and Liberalism was not a good one. To reject one project is not the same as offering a comprehensive account of an alternative. In particular, I never said that de Lubac was offering a social and political theory, or that I had found one in his work, merely that he had some ideas about the processes of secularization which I found persuasive. Murphy says, "to view *Catholicisme* as a scheme for political improvement is precisely to reverse its significance." Nowhere in the book, however, do I make such a claim. A political theology will need to be architectonic and the mere fact that I believe that any such theology needs to rest on a non-extrinsicist account of nature and grace is not suggesting that I believe that de Lubac was seeking to offer a political theology.

Similarly, my response to Murphy's comment that readers will have to judge for themselves whether they find more sober assessment of earthly power-relationships in *Culture and the Thomist Tradition* or in Maritain's *Integral Humanism* is that again I was not aware of offering an assessment of earthly power-relationships beyond some sociological observations about how liberal institutions force those who work within them to wear different marks in different social contexts. However, I do believe that Maritain's

optimism about the kinds of values that would prevail in post-War Europe has proven to be mere wishful thinking and in this judgment I am not alone. It is becoming a commonplace observation. See, for example, James V Schall's *Jacques Maritain: The Philosopher in Society* (Rowman & Littlefield, 1998).[16] Nonetheless, in relation to both of these criticisms I do acknowledge the need for another work on a post-liberal political theology.

A second avenue of criticism from Murphy is that my prescriptions for the regeneration of Catholic culture come with a knife-sharp "knowledge" of what a real Catholic self ought to be like, and thus of the one healthy culture in which it could flourish. Murphy claims that I want to offer "not a limited prescription for an ailment in one bodily member, but an unrestricted solution which will remake a total self." My response here is that I never used the concept of a total self, but rather a self with integrity—one that is not divided against itself, not splintered into different pieces occupying different social realms. My reference to a "Whig Thomist self" was simply a reference to someone who holds a constellation of political, economic, and theological principles associated with Whig Thomism. In one of his essays Vaclav Havel observed a tendency in contemporary western culture for people to behave as if they are confused about their identity.[17] They play on different teams wearing different jerseys, kicking the ball in different directions, making more than the occasional home goal. Earlier in the twentieth century the German poet Gottfried Benn addressed the issue in his poem *Verlorenes Ich* ("The Lost Ego"). After several stanzas describing the fate of the individual within a "world thought to pieces," in which "the myth has lied," Benn concludes with a mournful reflection on the culture of Christendom as a "distant, compelling fulfilled hour, which once enfolded even the lost ego."[18] The point that MacIntyre and many others make, with which I agree, is that the ethos of liberal institutions actually encourages this multiple mask/jersey changing behavior for reasons of social survival and that ultimately the self or soul loses its integrity to a point where life becomes meaningless. The point that I was thus trying to make is that those who read *Gaudium et Spes* as a magisterial call to embrace the culture of modernity need to understand what institutions based on the liberal tradition do to the integrity of individuals.

One of the best essays I have encountered on this theme of the integrity and individuality of the self is by Victoria S. Harrison titled "*Homo Orans*:

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[16] James V Schall's *Jacques Maritain: The Philosopher in Society* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998), 95.

[17] Vaclav Havel, "Politics and Conscience," *Salisbury Review,* January, 1985.

[18] Gottfried Benn, *'Verlorenes Ich,' The Penguin Book of German Verse,* ed. Leonard Forster (London: Penguin, 1957), 425

Von Balthasar's Christocentric Philosophical Anthropology," *The Heythrop Journal* (1999).[19] In this article Harrison notes that von Balthasar does not deny that we have individual spiritualities—it is rather that he sees them as God-given, and only discoverable by those who are fulfilling their missions. As von Balthasar expresses it in his work on Thérèse of Lisieux:

> For each Christian, God has an Idea which fixes his place within the membership of the Church; this Idea is unique and personal, embodying for each his appropriate sanctity. . . . The Christian's supreme aim is to transform his life into this Idea of himself secreted in God, this "individual law" is freely promulgated for him by the pure grace of God.[20]

I find this Balthasarian way of holding together both integrity and individuality very appealing. I have never believed that there is only one valid spiritual tradition within the Church, or as Murphy claims, that the traditions of the Church, as distinct from her magisterial Tradition, are monolithic. What I have said is that some forms of the tradition have been lost and suppressed in the name of *aggiornamento* and that this was done without a theology of culture.

At a recent conference Richard Schenk, OP, suggested that it is often a good idea to ask of a scholar what is their moment of regret.[21] In this context I would say that my moment of regret is that many leaders of the postconciliar Church in the western world set about dumbing down the intellectual and liturgical life of the Church because it was thought that we can only engage with modern man if we dumb ourselves down. I have in other articles been accused of not wanting any engagement with modern man, but this is not my position. I want a kind of engagement that liberates modern man from his cultural impoverishment by offering him a higher, richer, and indeed more humane culture in which to participate. As Chesterton said, the Catholic Church is the only thing that stands between the human person and the indignity of being a child of one's times.[22] To argue that the Church should not "dumb down" for modern man or any other sociological abstraction is not to say that I think that the traditions of the Church are monolithic.

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[19] Victoria S Harrison "*Homo Orans*: Von Balthasar's Christocentric Philosophical Anthropology," *The Heythrop Journal* (1999), 280–300.

[20] Ibid, 288.

[21] Richard Schenk, OP, at the Expert Seminar "Scrutinising the Signs of the Times and Interpreting them in the Light of the Gospel," Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve, September 9–12, 2004.

[22] Gilbert Keith Chesterton, "The Catholic Church and Conversion," (London: MacMillan, 1927), 110.

In a recent address to the Knights of Columbus, Cardinal Stafford remarked that "every world religion is trembling before the advances of American pop culture" and that "nothing is more needful than a rediscovery of Catholic identity which is doxological, sacramental, incarnational, Trinitarian, relational, analogical and liturgical"—a list that he said could be summarized by saying that "the Catholic experience of faith in time is nuptial."[23] My regret is that for many members of the postconciliar generation it was like being in an arranged marriage to someone who only wore jeans, listened to rock, and drank beer straight from the tin, and, this was meant to be spiritually good for us—a real pastoral achievement!

In this context of the post-conciliar impoverishment of Catholic culture, Murphy raises the argument from Erik Kuenhnelt-Leddihn's *The Timeless Christian*[24] that a Catholic milieu is not good for the faith. Rather, "it takes a hostile environment for Catholics not only to get the ticks, but to get bitten; and thus, in the modern West, the suffocation of faith in the imagery and rites of Catholicism is not the real danger." My response to this is twofold. First, I would argue that at other times in history when the faith has been persecuted, the imagery and rites of Catholicism were not suffocated by the Church herself, or more specifically, by her expert scholars, her seminary professors. Her imagery and rites were suffocated in Elizabethan England, but not in the priest-holes of the great recusant families. No Jesuit priest in Elizabethan England ever suggested that it might be a good idea to protestantize the form of the Mass. Over a quarter of a million Catholics died in revolutionary France. The Jewish historian Simon Schama has described the suppression of Catholics in the Vendee as the first example of genocide in modern history.[25] Catholic men, women, and children were tied together and drowned in the Loire River, but they still marched into battle behind the standard of the Sacred Heart. What is distinctive about the present period is that the imagery and rites of Catholicism, the very form of the tradition, have being suffocated by members of the Church, not her enemies, in the name of "relevance," "pastoral sensitivity," the "spirit of the Council," and so on.

Second, my argument is that there is a link between memory, transcendence, and tradition, and that the "culture of forced forgetting," which followed the Council, according to which all traces of the preconciliar

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[23] James Cardinal Stafford, "States Dinner Keynote Address to the Knights of Columbus," August 3rd, 2004, Washington DC.

[24] Erik Kuenhnelt-Leddihn, *The Timeless Christian* (Franciscan Press, 1976).

[25] Simon Schama, *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1989).

Catholic culture, including the imagery and rites, required suppression, was a pastoral disaster. A tradition can be handed on in priest-holes, in hedge rows, even in prison camps. The catacombs of Rome had their symbols, their imagery, their rites. Meanings could be passed on. But if someone had decided to draw an elephant instead of a fish because elephants were "in," the meaning of the elephant would have been completely lost on other Christians taking refuge in the catacomb. Again this is not an argument against the idea that traditions develop and that there may be many different authentically Catholic traditions. It is rather an argument that one does not start baptizing elephants because elephants are "in." In another journal James V. Schall wrote that "one suspects, that for Rowland more danger to the Catholic understanding of the world can be found in the 'mass culturalization' of the liturgy than in the Gulags. The former so obscures the normal human soul's avenue to the transcendence that is provided in revelation that it cannot find an escape out of the culture."[26] Schall's reading on my position here is accurate.

In the context of legal and political philosophy Murphy asks that given that all human traditions are invented, why not invent one that includes rights on a theological axis: One could plant them within Rowland's excellent notion of religions as an "infrastructural principle of the narrative tradition and its culture." My comment here is that while not conceding the first premise, that all human traditions are invented (some might be divine gifts, for example), I concede that this is nonetheless a good question and one that requires another book in response. My comments here in are therefore only embryonic.

Above all, I think it needs to be emphasized that my comments on human rights in Chapter 7 should be read in the context of the whole chapter, which was about natural law and the culture of the tradition. This chapter followed on from one in which I emphasized the important role played by narrative traditions in how we perceive ideas to be either reasonable or unreasonable. My comments on rights thus relate very much to the project of transposing the principles of natural law into the idiom of natural right, and to issues in linguistic philosophy about the translatability of concepts from one tradition to another, and to MacIntyre's notion of the ideological use of certain concepts that abound in modern institutions.

Like MacIntyre I am not opposed to the substance of what Catholic proponents of human rights such as John Paul II are wanting to achieve, but rather I seek to make a number of related points:

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[26] James V. Schall, "The Culture of Modernity and Catholicism," *Touchstone Magazine,* forthcoming 2005.

- Catholic scholars should be very wary of using ideological language, that is, language that has been specifically designed to paper over contending philosophical differences, and it has been persuasively argued that the rights language is an ideological language *par excellence*.
- Some scholars within the Church are in favor of the substance of the liberal account of rights, while others only want to use the liberal tradition's concepts while giving them a different substance. This is very confusing for those 99 percent or so of Church members who are not professional scholars and who therefore do not appreciate these distinctions.
- Given that people who are not scholars of jurisprudence and political philosophy acquire their understanding of the meaning of terms tacitly from the culture in which they live and work, it is not surprising that many Catholics have adopted a liberal understanding of rights.
- This liberal understanding is inconsistent with Catholic social justice teaching, which is communitarian rather than individualistic in orientation.
- The use of more specifically theological expressions such as "the sanctity of human life" would be less ambiguous and would force proponents of the culture of death to fight on the ground that human life is not sacred.
- It remains to be demonstrated that the project of transposing the Church's social justice teaching into the idiom of liberal natural right has actually achieved any of its desired political ends.
- There is a difference between a right as it is understood in common law jurisprudence and a natural right of liberal jurisprudence and my preference is for the common law, which begins from a consideration of what is just given an ensemble of legal relationships.
- Finally, it is important to recognize that the intellectual history of natural rights is hotly contested terrain, and that scholars such as Ernest Fortin have demonstrated that the Catholic baptism of the natural rights discourse occurred without any thorough consideration of the complexity of this issue.[27] Fortin observed that Taparelli d'Azeglio remarked in a letter to his Jesuit Provincial "that he knew next to nothing about natural rights when he began to write on it at

[27] See for example, Fortin's articles: "Sacred and Inviolable: *Rerum Novarum* and Natural Rights" *Theological Studies* 53 (1992) and "From *Rerum Novarum* to Centesimus Annus: Continuity or Discontinuity?" *Faith and Reason* 17 (1991).

> the age of fifty, and, moreover, that whatever thoughts he did have came mainly from Locke and other modern authors."

At the very least it is my hope that this section of the book will draw the attention of Catholic scholars to the fact that liberals and Catholics mean something very different when they talk about human rights and unless the Catholic faithful themselves understand this, the Church's use of this rhetoric will continue to cause confusion. This is not the only issue, but I think of all the issues in this context it is the most readily understandable. The deeper issues are about whether we actually gain anything from intellectual engagements with the proponents of rival traditions when we fight using the language and concepts they have already defined in an atheistic manner and that have been designed to conceal points of theological and philosophical division.

Murphy is also critical of a statement in the conclusion of the work: the division between the Whig Thomists and the proponents of a post-modern Augustinian Thomism is in part a difference over the prudence of this gamble and the value of what Leo XIII called "Americanism." Murphy says: "Rowland is skating onto thin ice when she claims that her absolute rejection of ad hoc accommodations with the modern, secular world is a straight prudential judgment."

If one reads my sentence carefully it is clear that I am not saying that it is a "straight prudential judgment." But it was in part, as I said, a prudential judgment of a particular generation of Catholic intellectuals who thought that the Church could do business with liberalism. The mentality was well-portrayed in the book *The Cardinal* by Henry Morton Robinson.[28] A young Boston Irish cleric on the road to a cardinal's hat has a meeting in Rome with members of the curia in the preconciliar era. At the meeting he presents the Americanist argument for the liberal tradition and argues that if Rome could just be a bit more flexible, the Church in America could make some political mileage over the next decade. The response of the curial officials was a curt "the Church, Fr. Fermoyle, *thinks in centuries*, not decades." My point was that there was a lot of short-sighted thinking going on in the 1960s and 1970s and that a more farsighted judgment might have placed the Church in a stronger position to "fight the wars of love," to engage the proponents of the culture of death. If one is going to fight a war, one needs troops who at least know what side they are on. A younger generation of Catholic intellectuals is emerging that is having to defend the values of an alternative

[28] Henry Morton Robinson, *The Cardinal* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1949).

civilization of love while being attacked from two different fronts, and in circumstances where its conciliar generation leaders are often of the view that the best strategy is to form an alliance with the liberals. My experience is that younger Catholic scholars have a tendency to make a different prudential judgment about such an alliance. To say this, however, is not to say that it is all merely a prudential issue.

Murphy's final criticism is that "it is one of the paradoxes of Tracey Rowland's book, that for all its aversion to what Leo XIII called Americanism, it imitates this distinctively American fragmentation of diversely tempered persons into mutually inhospitable cultural islands." Here I would say that I do not know who the diversely tempered persons are to whom Murphy is referring. What I sought to examine were different traditions, not different spiritualities or temperaments, and I did so with reference to the works of quite a breadth of scholars from many different schools of thought. In another review by a Protestant scholar the book was actually praised for its ecumenical value. Moreover, a fragmentation into mutually inhospitable cultural islands is not something I would associate with Americanism. I would argue that Americanism has more of a melting-pot trajectory than a ghetto orientation. Perhaps here Murphy and I simply understand something different by the expression "Americanism."

Against these varied observations and criticisms Burrell praised the work for not being a jeremiad but rather "a sustained analysis with which we can grapple as we try to get our own bearings." He thought that the terms "Thomist tradition" and "modernity" were "mercifully clarified as we enter into specific situations." Of all the reviewers he seemed to me to come closest to the central point of the book when he wrote:

> One cannot simply enlist the motivation of faith to assist in building a new world, when the image in which that "new world" is to be built requires that our efforts be considered as but another hand in the project, while the project rejects the very "rank ordering" of goods that structures our motivation.

Book Reviews

"Modus et Forma": A New Approach to the Exegesis of Saint Thomas Aquinas with an Application to the Lectura super Epistolam ad Ephesios by Christopher T. Baglow *(Rome: Editrice Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 2002),* 290 pp.

THE SCOPE and aim of this volume by Christopher T. Baglow is neatly displayed in the subtitle: We are given here a new approach to the study of Aquinas's exegesis, and this new approach will tested by a thorough review of Thomas's lectures on Ephesians. Baglow engages his subject with vigor and confident argumentation. Noting that a great deal of attention has been given to Aquinas as an exegete *in theory*, he bemoans the fact that "the biblical commentaries of St. Thomas Aquinas remain largely unexamined even while existing in an atmosphere in which they are often recalled, extolled and recommended" (7). By examining the actual text of Thomas's commentary on Ephesians in some detail, Baglow hopes to exemplify a new approach to Aquinas's exegesis marked by attention to particular and local detail, rather than by broad, general theoretical conclusions. In his own words: "I propose to consider Thomas Aquinas not as a theoretical exegete primarily, but as a Pauline exegete; specifically as a Pauline exegete of the text of Ephesians" (9). The benefit of such an approach, Baglow tells us, is that we are able to see how Aquinas handles particular texts, which then supply us with new and fresh insights into Aquinas's overall thought. For Baglow, the unique value of the biblical commentaries lies just here: Due to the given contours of the biblical text, they afford "certain surprises" and novel points of departure that often do not appear in Thomas's systematic theological works.

Modus et Forma is in fact a study of two distinct but closely related topics. The first is a systematic and comprehensive approach to Thomas's biblical commentaries; the second is a study of Thomas's ecclesiology as found in his commentary on Ephesians. The marriage of these two in one study is directly to the author's purpose. For Baglow, if we are to read Thomas's commentaries profitably, we must attend both to the structure

of Thomas's exegesis and to the primary theological content within the commentary. This is precisely how Baglow orders his study. The Introduction very capably outlines the question and lays down the key arguments. In chapters 1 through 3, Baglow undertakes the systematic treatment of Thomas's biblical exegesis in three stages: (1) the foundations of Thomas's exegesis; (2) contemporary criticism of Thomas's exegesis; and (3) the author's own proposal for a systematic study of Thomas's biblical commentaries. In chapters 4 through 6, Baglow applies his own approach to the Commentary on Ephesians: (1) a pre-analysis of the Commentary; (2) a study of *In Eph.* 1–3; and (3) a study of *In Eph.* 46. In the closing chapter, the author sums up the contributions the study has made both to an understanding of Thomas's ecclesiology and to a better grasp of the value of his biblical commentaries for us today.

There is a vast amount of ground covered in this study, and it is perhaps best to identify and evaluate certain noteworthy conclusions that Baglow draws in the course of it. Concerning Thomas's exegesis, Baglow makes two primary arguments that call for our attention. The first is his claim that Thomas is better suited to expound biblical texts that are already theological and analytical in form (e.g., Job, John, and the Pauline epistles). Conversely, Thomas is less impressive when handling historical or narrative texts (e.g., the Synoptic Gospels). The difference here is not one of exegetical method, according to Baglow; rather, the difference lies within Thomas himself: He is an analytical thinker and is at his best when handling analytical texts that present theological arguments and conclusions. "This search reaffirmed the judgment that the commentaries on Job, John, and Paul are of a higher quality than the rest, revealing a certain presuppositional bias on Thomas's part for conceiving of Scripture in a non-narrative way" (51). Baglow's case is persuasive, though it would be well for scholars to test this conclusion by further attention to Thomas's commentaries, in order to evaluate how accurate and thoroughgoing this conclusion actually is.

The second key argument concerning Thomas's exegesis, stated in the Introduction, is that the unique contribution of Thomas's biblical commentaries resides not so much in general exegetical method but in the particular conclusions that arise because of the contours of biblical material. In other words, it is in the concrete details of the individual commentaries, rather than in the general principles abstracted from them all, that we grasp the true value of the commentaries. Baglow does not dismiss the value of identifying and appreciating Thomas's exegetical method in general—in fact he invests significant time in describing this—but he presses us to move from general theory to the specific text

to actual exegetical practice. This is, perhaps, the most significant contribution of the volume: the actual display of how one can go about a thorough exegetical study of one of Thomas's commentaries, and how one can draw from it potentially important theological insights that serve to complement Aquinas's wider corpus. Baglow accomplishes this goal with considerable skill.

When we turn to the subject of ecclesiology, Baglow draws out many and various insights from the pages of Thomas's *Commentary on Ephesians*, which confirm and expand what we know of Thomas's ecclesiology from the *Summae*. But Baglow identifies one insight in particular as the most novel and significant. Following the contours of Ephesians 2:14–16 closely, Thomas offers what Baglow calls an anthropocentric account of the unity of the Church, in which unity between Jew and Gentile is the prerequisite for unity with God:

> Once again we encounter the unexpected; Thomas not only posits that peace with God depends on peace with neighbor, but goes so far as to say that the action of God in uniting the two peoples is prior to (and necessary for) unity with God. There is no doubt that the text of Ephesians leads Thomas to a whole new conception of reconciliation in this case—because the text posits a unity in one body prior to a unity with God, Thomas does the same. (178)

For Baglow, this conclusion is immensely significant. What the text of Thomas's Commentary on Ephesians shows is that, for Thomas, the *origination of ecclesial unity*—which Thomas names as the theme of this commentary—is grounded in a "peace between fellows as the basis for the Church's witness, increase, and final destination." And this is true of the Church, "not just at its beginning but at every stage of its pilgrimage through history" (230–31).

While acknowledging the overall excellence of this volume and its contribution to the study of Thomas's exegesis and ecclesiology, I would raise four queries concerning the author's conclusions. The first, a minor point, concerns the ironic contrast between the simplicity Baglow recommends when handling Aquinas's exegesis and the actual complexity of his own account. Baglow very rightly counsels the contemporary commentator on Aquinas to avoid "a commentary on the commentary," and to simplify the often excessively ordered treatment by Aquinas (101). But the author's own method for studying Aquinas, developed in Chapter 3, is itself quite complex, and it left this reviewer paging back and forth in the attempt to follow the stages of his study (e.g., the outline of his treatment on 139). While such a complex method may be

justifiable, Baglow's own study of the text at times belies the simplicity that he recommends.

A second query concerns what Baglow calls Aquinas's "homogenizing exegesis." By this he means Thomas's tendency to treat the Bible as a monolithic source, and to link two or more passages together in a way that flattens the particular quality of each of them (62). While modifying the critique offered by C. Clifton Black, Baglow does concede that Aquinas succumbs to homogenizing exegesis, and that this is in fact a "dangerous practice in exegesis" (65). I wonder if this is conceding too much to the contemporary preoccupation with distinctiveness, to the detriment of what Aquinas (and in fact all the Fathers) can teach us about the fundamental unity of the biblical witness. Granted, Aquinas and his fellow medievals do not normally identify the particularity of a given passage in ways that modern criticism has enabled us to do—and here modern exegetical practice has something very valuable to offer. But I would suggest that reading one passage in the light of another, without always noting the distinctiveness, is not a dangerous exegetical practice. It is, rather, a right and proper theological reading by the Christian believer, a reading that recognizes and displays the fundamental unity of the biblical witness. If contemporary scholarship has equipped us to recognize the particularity and distinctiveness of the discrete biblical witnesses, perhaps Aquinas can show us how this distinctiveness serves a greater unity, and can teach us how to read the various scriptural witnesses as mutually illuminating.

My third query arises from Baglow's brief comment on the relationship between the biblical commentaries and other works of Aquinas, particular the *Summae*. While admitting that recourse to other works of Aquinas is often justified when trying to understand a given biblical commentary, he cautions against "the tendency to use the synthetic works (i.e., the *Summae*) as primary interpretive guides—these are not necessarily the best works for this activity, especially in the case of the Pauline commentaries" (107). It would have been helpful at this point for Baglow to offer further argumentation for this claim. He rightly insists that "the commentary itself must be given pride-of-place," but does this mean that the *Summae* cannot serve as important guides for understanding the biblical commentaries? I would suggest a somewhat different way of stating the relationship between Thomas's biblical commentaries and the *Summae*. While giving each its own proper interpretation, and recognizing the distinctive genre of each type of writing, they are best viewed as mutually illuminating and complementary. Each is *better* grasped by reading the other. As with the biblical texts mentioned above, the purpose

of recognizing distinctiveness in Thomas's works is most profitably ordered toward the good of grasping a greater and fuller unity of his thought as a whole. I doubt that Baglow would disagree with this in principle, but his brief comment on the relationship between the biblical commentaries and the *Summae* emphasizes distinction rather than complementary unity.

The final query concerns Baglow's primary conclusion on Thomas's ecclesiology, namely, that in his commentary on Ephesians 2:1–16, Thomas forges "a very new conception of the Church" (180) that contains "a preeminently anthropocentric refashioning of the process of salvation by Thomas. . . . In this sense it is in the hands of the Jewish and Gentile converts whether Church unity is instituted" (250). Drawing the implications of this, Baglow concludes that, "In the *lectura* Thomas is willing to 'go the distance' with Paul, even to the point that he reverses his usual order of theological priority so as to allow human reconciliation and unity pride-of-place, even over sanctification" (274). And he suggests that one implication of this is that "the soul must seek union with neighbor prior to seeking union with God" (268).

It is difficult to see how these conclusions can be drawn from Aquinas's text itself. Thomas does follow the plain order of the biblical account, "that he [Christ] might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross" (Eph 2:15–16). But Thomas is also very clear that this is all accomplished by Christ himself in his self-offering to the Father. As he says, "whatever peace we possess is caused by Christ himself" (2.5.103). In other words, the origination of ecclesial unity is found in the Person of Christ himself, in the one act by which he united us in himself and reconciled us in himself to the Father. It is a *Christological* origination of unity, not an anthropocentric one—except insofar as he is uniting divided *humanity* in himself. It is not as if unity originated in the reconciliation of peoples first, with ourselves as individuals somehow involved in this, and then we were reconciled to God. Christ accomplished all this in himself in his one sacrificial act. For Thomas, we as individuals were only brought into this reconciliation when it was already fully accomplished in Christ. Though we do play a definite role in maintaining "the unity in the bond of peace" (Eph 4:3), it is not within our capability to contribute to the *origination* of unity in the Church. Baglow's conclusion about the anthropocentric locus of the Church, in which human reconciliation in some sense precedes reconciliation with God—whatever its merits might be otherwise—does not easily square with Aquinas's commentary itself.

Notwithstanding these queries, Chris Baglow has given us a very fine and detailed study of Aquinas's exegesis and his teaching on the Church from the *lectura* on Ephesians, and it is warmly recommended as advancing our understanding of how The Angelic Doctor can enrich our understanding of the mystery of the faith. NV

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Kirche in der postmodernen Welt by Andreas Eckerstorfer *(Innsbruck-Vienna: Tyrolia Verlag, 2001),* 403 pp.

THIS IS THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION at the University of Salzburg of Andreas Eckerstorfer, now Frater Bernhard, OSB, of Kremuenster, Austria. The topic is postmodern ecclesiology as exemplified and articulated in the theology of the emeritus Pitkin Professor of Historical Theology at Yale Divinity School, George Lindbeck. Lindbeck is Lutheran, Eckerstorfer is Catholic, and one of those to whom the book is dedicated is Geoffrey Wainwright, who is Methodist. The book, quite rightly, has a very strong and informed ecumenical feel to it, and it is warmly recommended for advanced work in courses in ecclesiology or modern theological thought.

The first section of the book, pages 26 to 69, is taken up with the relationships between "Church" and "World," as a backdrop to Lindbeck's theology and ecclesiology. The line is traced from Schleiermacher to Lindbeck, but it is "eine kurze Problemgeschichte." Eckerstorfer carefully makes his way, but painting with broad brushstrokes, from Schleiermacher through Albrecht Ritschl to Karl Barth; and then from Paul Tillich through Dietrich Bonhoeffer and various secular/death of God theologians to the so-called "Yale School," associated in the main with the late Hans Frei and George Lindbeck. At the end of the book, pages 362 to 363, Eckerstorfer provides a sketch of the Yale School, reaching out to sympathetic theologians elsewhere. He deals with Schleiermacher's 1799 *Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*, admittedly a seminal text, but even though the treatment must necessarily be kurz, one misses something of the magnificent sweep of what Schleiermacher is up to in the later and comprehensive *The Christian Faith* (1821–22). This seems to me a not unimportant lacuna given the relationship between Schleiermacher and the ecclesiology of Johann A. Möhler, the Catholic Tübingen theologian. After all, ecclesiology is the subject, and in Schleiermacher-Möhler, though differently, we find the emergence of communion ecclesiology

that is omnipresent in contemporary treatments. The treatment of Barth is much better, though here also one does not read about the *Church Dogmatics*, but about a mediated version of Barth—though a very fine mediation—through such contemporary systematicians as the Scots Presbyterian, Alasdair Heron, and the American Lutheran, Robert Jenson.

The second section of the book, pages 70 to 236, is devoted to "George Lindbeck on the Church in Today's World," and here Eckerstorfer really comes into his element. The structure, the analysis, and the detail of this section easily make it the best part of the book. There are too many good things here to note, and so only a few that especially appealed to me will be picked out for comment. Eckerstorfer avoids the temptation immediately to attend to Lindbeck's very influential book of 1984, *The Nature of Doctrine*, but rather traces with great care his involvement as a Lutheran theologian in two phases of ecumenical dialogue: first, as an observer at Vatican II, and subsequently his role in the Lutheran-Catholic Dialogues in the United States. Lindbeck cannot be understood without this background in ecumenical conversation. Indeed, it was his very participation in ecumenism that propelled him into an exploration of the meaning of doctrine, and of the presuppositions different theologians brought to the enterprise. For one who is coming new to Lindbeck's theology this is an excellent analytical account. With the same care Eckerstorfer moves on to *The Nature of Doctrine*. He provides an equally excellent account of Lindbeck's three types of approach to Christian doctrine: the cognitive-propositional, the experiential-expressive, and the cultural linguistic models. In respect to the latter, he demonstrates his awareness of the foundations of Lindbeck's cultural-linguistic approach—a.k.a. "postliberal" approach—not only in the neo-orthodoxy of Karl Barth but also in the philosophy of the later Wittgenstein and the cultural anthropology of Clifford Geertz. His treatment of the regulative function of doctrine on pages 124 to 128 is a model of precision. For Lindbeck, Church doctrines are rules of speech, a second-order use of language, that regulate and direct the community's beliefs and practices. Appropriate connection is made with Hans Frei's postcritical approach to scriptural interpretation, from *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative* to the posthumously published *Theology and Narrative*. Not only is Eckerstorfer quite at home in the theology of Lindbeck and Frei, he is thoroughly immersed in and familiar with the secondary literature also.

In 1970 Lindbeck wrote of the Church: "There are good empirical reasons for believing that Christians will be a minority (a 'diaspora') of declining numbers and influence in the foreseeable future. The world will be served by their *diakonia* and witness, but many will be hostile and the

Church's income and membership may well decline. It is simply impossible to argue persuasively for the Church's secular mission, as the incarnationalist tends to do, on the grounds that this is a means of converting the world and making it explicitly Christian."[1] Here may be found the nucleus of Lindbeck's postliberal ecclesiology, in reaction to conciliar and postconciliar theologians such as Karl Rahner. This ecclesiology has become known, not entirely unfairly as *sectarian*, over against an incarnationalist or correlationalist perspective. It is finely outlined by Eckerstorfer on pages 283 to 298, along with the standard critiques of this ecclesiology. Further, he relates to such other so-called "sectarian" ecclesiologists as Stanley Hauerwas of Duke University. Having spent some time studying theology at Duke Divinity School, Eckerstorfer is well placed to comment with accuracy, and he does so.

In my judgment, Eckerstorfer establishes in his description of Lindbeck the weaknesses of second-rate incarnationalist or correlationist theologies and ecclesiologies, which tend down to downplay the rich Christian tradition in a reductionist fashion. However, whether Lindbeck's, and perhaps Eckerstorfer's, perspective stands up to Rahner himself (as incarnationalist) or David Tracy (as correlationalist) is another question. It seems to me that they have the upper philosophical hand without which theology and ecclesiology are impossible. Finally, one must choose between a postliberal theology and some form of correlationist theology, and their consequent ecclesiologies. My sympathies lie with the correlationists for the simple reason that postliberal theology necessarily rests, it seems to me, on a form of theological positivism. If a theology or ecclesiology is dependent on my recognition of its value, in however minimalist a fashion, then a move has been made toward correlationism from postliberalism. But to plot this further would take us from a review of an excellent expository book on George Lindbeck into the murkier realms of philosophical theology. NV

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Thomas Aquinas: Theologian of the Christian Life by Nicholas M. Healy *(Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2003)* xiii + 168 pp.

FERGUS KERR RECENTLY noted that the book market is flooded with new introductions to St. Thomas Aquinas. I wish to propose that Nicholas

[1] Lindbeck, *The Future of Roman Catholic Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 45. [See page 3 of review]

Healy's work has a number of virtues that make it well worth choosing from amongst the crowd. Healy uses a rather impressive power of synthesis and a lucidity of style to guide the student of Aquinas away from the still-common misconception of Thomas's thought as a dry Aristotelian philosophy detached from history. Instead, the author moves the reader toward the vision of a theology that has deep roots in Scripture, a biblical hermeneutics centered on the doctrines of the Trinity and Christ, and the sole aim of Christian discipleship and evangelization.

The book includes a brief overview of Thomas's life and a short history of Thomism (Chapter 1); a summary of St. Thomas's religious context and an interpretation of his doctrine of the nature of theology (Chapter 2); approaches to knowledge of God's existence, divine naming, the Trinity, and creation (Chapter 3); an overview of Thomas's Christology (Chapter 4); a summary of the doctrines of grace, merit, and the theological virtues (Chapter 5); and an overview of the key elements in the Christian response to the call to follow Christ, including the law, virtue, the nature of human action, the sacraments, and the Church (Chapter 6).

Healy's brief introduction to the life of St. Thomas in Chapter 1 focuses on the work of a *magister in sacra pagina*. He argues that Thomas's *Summae* must be read in light of his Scripture commentaries. These manifest the biblical roots of theological positions that the scholastic question format of the *Summa theologiae* or the organization of the *Summa contra Gentiles* may often obscure. Furthermore, the commentaries on philosophical works like Aristotle's *Metaphysics* must be read in the context of Aquinas's apostolic and theological aims (2–5). Healy also highlights the pastoral and evangelical aims of the *Summa theologiae.*

The author's opposition to neo-Thomistic approaches (i.e., late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Thomism) is present throughout the book. He also offers a critique of contemporary Thomists who continue to maintain a strict distinction between faith and reason, between theology and philosophy. The author is convinced that Thomas has no philosophy that is independent of Scripture (ix–x, 5). A short history of Thomism focuses on the tendency to separate theology and Scripture (Capreolus) or grace and nature (Cajetan, Suarez) (11–14).

Chapter two begins with a fine introduction to the Dominican Order and St. Thomas's defense thereof. This allows Healy to highlight the richly contemplative, liturgical, pastoral, evangelical, and biblical environment in which Thomas taught and wrote. Healy shows that critiques of Aquinas's thought as detached from history and daily Christian life are themselves ahistorical in their understanding of the Angelic Doctor. Thomas's theology explicates the way to lovingly follow and obey Jesus Christ.

The author then offers a marvelous synthesis of Aquinas's theological method. Instead of simply reviewing the major conclusions of the *Summa*'s first question, Healy takes a more sophisticated approach. First, the author points to Thomas's theological practice to argue that the most important conclusions in the science of theology are provided by Scripture and the Councils. Thus, one of Thomas's major tasks as a theologian will be to make these conclusions intelligible. Thomas's own conclusions do not attain the same level of certitude as those of Scripture or the Councils. This prevents any authentic Thomism from ever claiming to have arrived at the last word on a topic in theology and respects the legitimate plurality within theology. It also explains the significance of the argument from fittingness. Aquinas's sharp distinction between fittingness and necessity manifests his rather limited confidence in the power of theological reason, especially in comparison to other great scholastics like St. Anselm. Second, the author looks to the context of the *Summa*'s direct treatment of sacred doctrine to remind the reader that the knowledge *(scientia)* of God whose participation makes scientific theology possible is mediated by the Incarnate Word through the witness of Sacred Scripture. The "treatise on Christ" in the *tertia pars* is thus not an appendix added to the *Summa*'s other parts but essential to the whole work. The distinction between the Word and the witness of the Word also differentiates Aquinas from fundamentalism. Finally, the author presents an excellent introduction to Thomas's biblical hermeneutics. For Aquinas, the literal sense is above all the meaning intended by God, and only secondarily the one intended by the human author. Thomas is also quite comfortable with multiple and incompatible interpretations of Scripture that do not threaten the essentials of the faith.

Chapter three begins with an explanation of the famous five ways to God's existence, followed by an interpretation of the doctrine of transcendence. Here the author emphasizes Thomas's negative theology and his rejection of a human concept of divine being (a Scotistic doctrine that many theologians continue to attribute to Aquinas). Healy insists that Scripture and the Creed continually guide the narrative of the *Summa theologiae* on these issues (59). This is a crucial interpretive move that allows him to argue that Karl Rahner's critique of Aquinas's doctrine of the Trinity misses the mark, since Thomas's theology is never detached from salvation history (69–70).

Chapter four begins with a beautiful synthesis of the doctrines of the Trinity and creation. Following the lead of Gilles Emery, the author gives an exposition of the intimate connections between the life of the immanent Trinity, the nature of God's creative act, and the structures of creation

and salvation history. This provides the ideal background for an impressive introduction to Aquinas's Christology. Healy demonstrates the many delicate balances that Thomas strikes: between justice (recompense for sin) and the manifestation of divine love as the reason for the Incarnation, between an explication of Chalcedon and the narrative of salvation history in the *tertia pars*, between Christ's divinity and the real instrumentality of his humanity (especially in the later Aquinas), and between Christ as viator and Christ as *comprehensor*. Healy even follows the structure of the *tertia pars* in his own method of presentation by concluding with the major events in the life of Christ as seen by St. Thomas.

Chapter five offers a masterful introduction to Thomas's teaching on grace and merit. The integration of Christology and pneumatology, the careful balance between the gratuity of grace and the real merit of eternal life, and the distinction between habitual and actual grace are all very impressive. Healy concludes with "Life in the Body of Christ" (Chapter 6). He shows that law and freedom are not in competition. He then offers excellent summaries of Thomas's teaching on the sacraments and the cardinal virtues. Finally, the author emphasizes the importance of obedience to Christ and his Church.

Overall, Healy's work is an impressive accomplishment. It is this general evaluation with which I wish to frame the following critiques. First, Healy's claim that Thomas's theological method does not depend "upon philosophical principles that could stand apart from Scripture" (x) seems hard to reconcile with Aquinas's own conclusions about the ability of ungraced natural reason. Thomas clearly acknowledged that natural theology can have knowledge of God and some of his attributes (*ST* I, q. 1, a. 6; q. 12, a. 12). It seems that some of Thomas's foundational principles are attainable without supernatural revelation. Healy proposes that for Aquinas "the incarnate Word is the ground and norm of any analogy between God and creatures. Christ is the *analogia entis* in person." (83). But this sounds like Hans Urs von Balthasar or Karl Barth, and not at all like Aquinas. One has the sense that Healy is sometimes reading Aquinas as if he were Bonaventure. The emphasis on Scripture's central place in Aquinas's theology is a healthy corrective of neo-Thomism, but it seems that the author is sometimes overreacting to this outdated version of Thomism.

Second, Healy's interpretation of divine transcendence in Aquinas seems to go too far. The author states: "Although there is indeed some kind of analogy between divine cause and created effects, the analogy flows, so to speak, only one way, from God to creatures, but not at all the other way. One cannot establish any knowledge of God—even theological—by means of the *analogia entis* alone . . . the analogy of

being makes it possible to claim that only in knowing something of God can we really know *creatures* as they truly are, as created and thus as more than merely natural. Clearly that is a theological claim, one not grounded upon natural reason alone" (61). This is confusing at best. At worst, the statement tends toward a kind of agnosticism (which I do not think the author intended). If creaturely effects do not allow us to ascend toward an analogous knowledge of God, then we know nothing of God, and all theology is meaningless. But for Aquinas, "we know God insofar as he is represented in the perfections of creatures" (*ST* I, q. 13, a. 2, ad 3). The analogical knowledge of God that Thomas describes is precisely the kind that the author rejects. The phrase "God is only known from creatures" comes up so often in questions 12 and 13 of the *prima pars* that it is almost a kind of mantra. Healy's second claim, that the knowledge of things as created is strictly theological (he means theological in the strict sense of *sacra doctrina*), is also contradicted by St. Thomas, who was so firmly convinced that the existence of a Creator God could be proven by natural reason that he even attributed this teaching to Aristotle (*ST* I, q. 44, a. 1). Perhaps the root of the problem is Healy's virtual silence on St. Thomas's metaphysics. While he does discuss divine naming and some of the divine attributes, Healy virtually ignores the doctrines of act/potency, *esse/essentia*, participation, and the transcendentals. Yet, it is precisely his metaphysics that helped to make Thomas such a unique theologian. It was also an indispensable part of his biblical hermeneutics.

Finally, the author virtually skips Thomas's account of the soul in the *prima pars*, (questions 75–89). While he does devote some pages to Thomas's anthropology toward the end of the book, he never mentions the doctrine of the unicity of substantial form. Yet Thomas's first followers and critics recognized this to be one of his most unique contributions to theology, as is clear from the topic's dominance in the Correctory disputes of William de la Mare, Richard Knapwell, and other late thirteenth century friars. Healy also skips Thomas's controversial doctrines of Christ's body in the tomb, of the separated soul and its radically incomplete state, of the resurrection of the body, and other key theological issues that are intimately connected with the unicity of substantial form. Healy's overview of Aquinas's Christology thus remains somewhat unsatisfying, mainly because of what it is missing.

Still, Nicholas Healy deserves high praise for his engaging style and impressive synthetic abilities. He skillfully highlights many of the most important lessons in Thomas's rich theology and presents them in their historical context in a concise manner. This book is a delightful read that

takes many of Thomas's theological gems and weaves them into a beautiful tapestry. NV

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Women in Christ: Toward a New Feminism, edited by Michele M. Schumacher *(Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004)*, xvi + 342 pp.

IN HIS ENCYCLICAL *Evangelium Vitae*, Pope John Paul II calls on women to promote a "new feminism," one in which "a person is recognized and loved because of the dignity which comes from being a person and not from other considerations, such as usefulness, strength, intelligence, beauty, or health" (no. 99). Michele Schumacher has gathered in one collection an array of essays that will serve for years to come as a foundation on which to build the New Feminism. The contributors are competent and well-known scholars who seek to propose a viable alternative to patriarchy on one side, and mainstream feminism (in some ways, matriarchy) on the other, a feminism that will "forge a way through the impasse" that exists between the two competing ideologies by beginning with the concept of the dignity the human person, man and woman, made in the image and likeness of God.

In her Introduction, Schumacher warns the reader not to read too much into any author's use of the term "gender." Traditionally, mainstream feminists have used this term to describe that which is socially and culturally conditioned; the authors in this volume also use it to refer to metaphysical realities, or what is part of human nature itself. Schumacher admits it is "relatively impossible to draw a line between what, in sexual differences, is attributable to nature and what to education and culture." It is not surprising, then, that the majority of articles in the collection address anthropological issues. What exactly does it mean to be a woman, that is, a female person?

Part I contains essays on philosophical anthropology. Hanna-Barbara Gerl-Falkovitz's "Gender Difference: Critical Questions concerning Gender Studies" addresses the issue of the role of the physical body when considering gender, offering the phenomenology of Edith Stein as a method which she claims respects both "being" a woman (by nature) and "becoming" a woman (by nurture). Sibylle von Streng also writes on Stein in "Woman's Threefold Vocation according to Edith Stein," using the essentialist and personalist aspects of her thought to discuss the original unity of the human vocation (to be in God's image, to multiply, and

to be master of the earth), the effect of sin on this unity, and the possibility of living an authentic life as human, woman, and individual.

Schumacher's own contribution to this section, "The Nature of Nature in Feminism, Old and New: From Dualism to Complementary Unity," gets to the heart of the New Feminism. Rejecting both a social construction of nature that denies sexual difference, and an essentialist view that could isolate the sexes from each other, she proposes a relational model of human nature, wherein one's personal good is achieved through participation in the common good (not against or in spite of it), opening up the possibility of men and women working together toward personal fulfillment.

In "New Feminism: A Sex-Gender Reunion," Beatriz Vollmer Coles provides a helpful overview of the progression of feminist thought, with special attention to the use of the term "gender." Pointing out some problems that result from separating sex and gender, she proposes an analogy between the body/soul relationship and the sex/gender relationship, with gender being the transcendental dimension of sex. Her essay concludes with Pope John Paul II's thought on the acting person, a theme taken up by Sr. Prudence Allen, RSM, in her essay, "Philosophy of Relation in John Paul II's New Feminism," in which she sets forth the personalism of John Paul II as the underlying source for the New Feminism. Allen's work in this field is unparalleled, and her two-volume *The Concept of Woman* is required reading in new feminist research. Relying heavily on *Evangelium Vitae*, she offers a comparison between the old and new feminisms, giving special attention to the soul/body relation and interpersonal relation.

Part II turns to the area of theological anthropology. Francis Martin, author of *The Feminist Question*, an essential work in response to modern Christian feminist thought, contributes "The New Feminism: Biblical Foundations and Some Lines of Development," in which he offers an exegesis on Genesis 1–3 and Ephesians 5:21–33, followed by some thoughts on how these texts understand the concepts of identity and difference, and that of relationality. In "Feminist Experience and Faith Experience," Schumacher takes up the question of the relationship between experience and faith, challenging the way traditional feminist theology has made use of women's experience as a foil against the objective dimension of faith, which it has deemed patriarchal and, therefore, wrong, in light of women's experience. Her aim is to appreciate both the objective and subjective aspects of faith, the experience of God and the *experience* of God, as she puts it, in such a way that, rather than being at odds with each other, together form a fullness of faith. One can see the

influence here of Martin's work on interpretation of experience.

In "The Unity of the Two: Toward a Feminist Sacramentality of the Body," Schumacher responds to the feminist challenge to an all-male priesthood. While traditional feminists deny any theological significance of the masculinity of Christ, she offers a sacramental understanding of the human body in general, followed by a sacramentality of male and female bodies, at the heart of which is the Bride/Bridegroom relationship. She relies heavily here on the work of Hans Urs von Balthasar and John Paul II. This section concludes with a piece by Anne-Marie Pelletier, "The Teachers of Man, for the Church as Bride," in which she also explores the idea of nuptiality, especially from a biblical perspective.

Part III considers ethical and practical consequences of the New Feminism. Allen's second contribution to the volume, "Can Feminism be a Humanism?," explores Renaissance, Enlightenment, Marxist, existential, pragmatic secular, and personalist humanism, and their influences on modern feminism. "Ethical Equality in the New Feminism," by Jean Bethke Elshtain, gives a brief description of the three models of relation found in feminist thought (sex polarity, sex unity, and sex complementarity), concluding with the value of John Paul II's Theology of the Body for the third. It is, in essence, a summary of Allen's work on the subject.

The final essays address some practical issues. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, author of *Feminism Is Not the Story of My Life*, notes in "Equality, Difference, and the Practical Problems of a New Feminism" that the problem to be dealt with at the practical level is the reconciliation between equality and difference. Though the New Feminists can theoretically reconcile the two and be confident that men and women are equal in the eyes of God while maintaining legitimate differences, it still needs to be seen how that will look in real life, and how the New Feminists will avoid falling into the practice of stereotyping. In "A Creative Difference: Educating Women," Marguerite Léna considers the meaning of the education of women in a world of coeducation.

Shumacher's aim in this collection is a theoretical one, laying a foundation for praxis. The contributors do not dismiss mainstream feminism, but engage it, and are even sympathetic to it when possible. Patriarchy is not denied or played down, but is acknowledged as a reality in need of response. The response of the new feminism, however, is not one of reverse domination, but of mutual respect for the dignity of the human person, male and female. It is in this respect that the New Feminism differentiates itself from mainstream feminism, without ignoring the legitimate concerns for women it has brought to light.

Women in Christ is an excellent resource for those interested in feminist issues, both in and beyond the Church. It also serves as an introduction to various scholars in what is a relatively new field of research, the New Feminism. Schumacher's own contributions are among the best in the collection. Though some essays overlap in content and cited sources, this proves helpful to the reader in becoming acquainted with seminal works in the field and in seeing an integrated picture of the New Feminism. An appendix containing a new feminist bibliography is also valuable. NV

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