THE PROTREPTIC STRUCTURE OF THE '*SUMMA CONTRA GENTILES*'

IN A TYPICAL ACADEMIC preface or *accessus,* the medieval exegete asked a number of questions about the work to be studied. These included questions about its intention, utility, order, authenticity, title, and position in the hierarchy of studies.[1] More succinctly, the exegete could give an account of the book's matter, intention, order, and mode.[2] Aquinas himself used exactly such abbreviated patterns to begin his commentaries on Isaiah,[3] Jeremiah,[4] and Lamentations.[5] A modified and expanded *accessus* opens each of the Aristotle commentaries. Because he was adept at teaching, Thomas did not find it necessary to provide such schematic introductions to his own major works, though echoes of an *accessus* may be heard in them.[6]

[1] See Richard William Hunt, "The Introductions to the 'Artes' in the Twelfth Century," in *Studia mediaevalia in honorem . . . R. J. Martin* (Bruges: "De Tempel" [1948]), 85-112; compare especially Hunt's "Type C," pp. 94-97. Greek antecedents to the medieval philosophic prefaces are considered in Edwin A. Quain, "The Medieval *accessus ad auctores*," *Traditio,* 3 (1945), 215-264, especially pp. 243-256, with a summary chart on p. 250.

[2] See Robert of Melun's pattern as in Hunt, "Introductions," p. 96.

[3] *Postilla super Isaiam,* prol., *EL* 28, p. 3, line 6; *EB* 5, 51, col. 1: *auctor, modus, material.* Except as noted, references to Thomas's works will be to the Leonine edition (*EL*), published by various houses in Rome since 1882 under the direction of the Leonine Commission, and to the edition compiled by Robert Busa (*EB*) as a supplement to the *Index Thomisticus,* that is, *Sancti Thomae Aquinatis Opera Omnia* (Stuttgart-Bad Canstatt: Fromman-Holzboog, 1980). Busa's edition contains the best texts available as of about 1972, including the texts prepared for the Leonine Commission to that date.

[4] *Postilla super Jeremiam,* prol., *EB* 5, p. 96, col. 1: *auctor, materia, modus, utilitas.*

[5] *Postilla super Threnos,* prol., *EB* 5, p. 122, col. 2: *auctor, modus, utilitas, materia.*

[6] See the discussion of prologue to the *Contra Gentiles* in section 2, below.

The absence of an explicit *accessus* has hampered the reading of more than one book by Thomas, but especially of the so-called *Summa contra Gentiles*. In what follows, I would like to put exegete's questions about that work's intention, order, mode, and disciplinary position; I will also touch on its utility and title. What makes it difficult to address these headings can be stated as a single question: How is the reader meant to be engaged by this avowedly persuasive work? By taking up this question about the *Contra Gentiles*, I hope both to prepare for further readings in it and to disclose something of Thomas's larger pedagogical project.[7]

1. The Circumstances

The circumstantial evidence concerning the *Contra Gentiles* seems to invite a fallacy of authorial intention. On the basis of this evidence, the work has come to be classified as a missionary manual and to be included in histories of missionary activity.[8] I would like to suggest that the evidence in no way

[7] The arguments that follow assume the usually accepted chronology for Thomas's writings, such as it is found in James Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas d'Aquino* (augmented ed., Washington: Catholic University, 1983). I thus reject the elaborate reasonings presented in Pierre Marc's richly annotated edition of the *Contra Gentiles*, I (Turin: Marietti, 1967), by which he would advance the time of composition to the second Parisian regency. For a specific but abbreviated rejoinder to Marc, see the review by Clemens Vansteenkiste in *Angelicum*, 45 (1968), 353-355, and fuller criticism in the unsigned review for *Rassegna di letteratura tomistica*, 2 (1970), #67, pp. 51-56. The proposal to re-date the *Contra Gentiles* to the second Parisian regency was not new; see the rejection of it in Pietro Castagnoli, "La data di composizione della *Summa c. Gentiles* di S. Tommaso," *Divus Thomas* [Piacenza], 31 (1928), 489-492, especially pp. 491-492. Marc's re-dating has not won general consent; consider the summary chart for works published ten years after Marc in *Rassegna di letteratura tomistica*, 14 (1981), p. 49. One favorable vote can be had in Thomas Murphy, "The Date and Purpose of the *Contra Gentiles*," *Heythrop Journal*, 10 (1969), 405-415.

[8] See, for example, Berthold Altaner, *Die Dominikanermissionen des 13. Jahrhunderts* . . . (Habelschwerdt: Frankes Buchg., 1924), p. 94, note 31; Martin Grabmann, "Die Missionsidee bei den Dominikanertheologen des 13. Jahrhunderts," *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft*, 1 (1911), 137-146, particularly pp. 140-142; Dionys Siedler, "Des hl. Thomas von Aquin und die Mohammedanermission . . .," *Pastor Bonus*, 42 (1931), 370-376, especially

decides the genre of the *Contra Gentiles*. Even if they are accurately reported, the circumstances do not make sense of obvious features in the work's structure and so require further qualification.

In a narration of the deeds of James I of Áragon, as part of a reminiscence of St. Raymond of Peñafort, the Dominican chronicler Peter Marsilius recounts a story about the composition of the *Contra Gentiles*.[9] Peter's text was finished on April 2, 1313; the frame for the story of St. Raymond is a narrative about Christmas, 1274, but the story itself lies even further back—that is, more than 40 years before the date of writing. At that time, Peter says, Raymond asked brother Thomas to compose a work "against the errors of unbelievers (*contra infidelium errores*)" as an aid in conversion. "That master did what the humble rogation (*deprecatio*) of such a father required; and he composed (*condidit*) a *summa* called '*contra Gentiles*,' which is believed not to have any equal for such material (*pro illa materia*)."[10] There have been some textual questions about this passage, but none is unanswerable.[11] Let the text stand as received. It is obvious from context that the story is introduced in order to give evidence of Raymond's zeal for conversions and to show his influence within the order. Since the story is not repeated in the contemporary lives of Raymond or in any of the canonization proceedings for Thomas, it is presumed that Peter was relying

pp. 370-371; Thomas Ohm, "Thomas von Aquin und die Heiden- and Mohammedanermission," in *Aus der Geisteswelt des Mittelalters*, ed. A. Lang *et al.* (Munster: Aschendorff, (1935), II, 735-748, especially pp. 738-739; Mathias Braun, "Missionary Problems in the Thirteenth Century . . .," *Catholic Historical Review*, 25 (1939), 146-159, especially p. 157; J. M. Coll, "San Raymundo de Peñafort y las missiones del norte Africano en la Edad Media," *Missionalia Hispanica*, 5 (1948), especially p. 423; Robert I. Burns, "Christian-Islamic Confrontation in the West: The Thirteenth-Century Dream of Conversion," *American Historical Review*, 76 (1971), 1386-1434, especially pp. 1408-1410.

[9] The text is discussed and quoted extensively in Marc, I, pp. 72-77 and 612-613.

[10] Barcelona, Bibl. centr. MS 1018, f. 179r, as quoted in Marc, I, p. 73.

[11] The issues are summarized in Marc, I, pp. 74-76.

on a local legend from the Dominican house in Barcelona, where he had worked with Raymond years before. We have, then, a unique attestation for what seems a bit of local hagiography. It has been argued that Peter would not have invented this story because there were many among his readers who would have had first-hand knowledge of the events mentioned.[12] This argument is weakened, it seems to me, by remembering that flattering inventions are less likely to be contested than scurrilous ones and by comparing this tale with the sorts of things being told, less than six years later, in the canonization proceedings for Thomas.

Let us assume, however, that we have here, not a pious invention, but a luckily preserved fact. The difficulties now begin in earnest. The first difficulty is simply to know what Peter means and, particularly, what he intends by the phrase "such material (*illa materia*)." What is the 'matter' or material of the *Contra Gentles?* To speak more practically, where exactly does it fit in the complicated organization of the Dominican missionary effort? Peter's story could be taken as saying at least three different things: that the *Contra Gentiles* is a book to be given to potential converts; that it is a manual for the field training of missionaries; and that it represents a reference work in which all the errors of unbelievers are treated compendiously. Of these three readings of *materia*, it seems to me that only the third has any plausibility and even it creates difficulties. But let me take them in order.

The *Contra Gentiles* is clearly not intended to be placed in the hands of potential converts. From the first line and then on every page thereafter, Thomas's rhetoric is the rhetoric of one Christian speaking to another. This is seen in Scriptural and magisterial quotations, in a presumption of acquaintance with Christian letters, and even in the use of the first person plural. More precisely, Thomas argues in the prologue that

[12] Burns, "Christian-Islamic Confrontation," p. 1410. See also Alvaro Huerga, "Hipótesis sobre la génesis de la 'Summa contra gentiles' y del 'Pugio fidei,'" *Angelicum* 51 (1974), 533-557, especially pp. 551-552 and 556.

the mysteries of Christian faith ought not to be presented argumentatively before non-believers for fear of making them think that faith depends only on such weak arguments.[13] But it is precisely these arguments that are presented as part of the plan of the fourth Book.[14] How could Thomas have intended, then, that the book be placed into the hands of non-believers, without giving them offense and exposing Christian faith to scandal?

It is no more likely, I think, that the *Contra Gentiles* was intended for field training of Dominican missionaries. This can be seen externally and internally. Externally, the *Contra Gentiles* would be an odd missionary manual precisely by Dominican standards of the thirteenth century. There are counter-examples enough in the life of St. Raymond himself. Raymond was not only engaged in founding schools for Oriental studies within the Dominican order, as Peter narrates, but he also figured prominently in public debates with non-Christians. In 1263, for example, Raymond helped to set the rules for a debate between the Dominican Paul 'the Christian' and Rabbi Moses ben Nachman of Gerona.[15] This Paul was a convert from Judaism and his strategy was to argue from a detailed knowledge of rabbinical writings that the messiah had already come, that he was prophesied to be both divine and human, and that his advent had destroyed the laws and ceremonials.[16] This same strategy of refutation from within the opposing tradition was used by Dominicans in cam-

[13] References to the *Contra Gentiles* will be given parenthetically as from Marc's edition, II-III (Turin: Marietti, 1961). The citations will list book, chapter, and unique section numbers. Marc's edition reproduces that of the *EL* vols. 13-15 (Rome: Commissio Leonina [Riccardus Garronus], 1918-1930), in which any defects of method (e.g., with regard to stemmatics and *eliminatio codicum*) are largely remedied by reliance on the autograph.

[14] As Thomas himself says, I.9.#56: "solventes rationes adversariorum, et rationibus probabilibus et auctoritatibus, quantum Deus dederit, veritatem fidei declarantes."

[15] Robert Chazan, "The Barcelona 'Disputation' of 1263: Christian Missionizing and Jewish Response," *Speculum*, 52 (1977), 824-842, especially p. 826.

[16] Chazan, "Barcelona 'Disputation,'" p. 826.

paigns of Jewish conversion through the 1250s and 1260s in Spain and France.[17] They dealt similarly with the Cathars and allied heretics.[18]

Very much the same devices and emphases figured in Dominican preaching to Islam. Here a central figure was another Raymond, Raymond Martí (Martinus, Martini).[19] As early as 1250, Martí appears in Tunis as founder of an Arabic school. In 1267, he published the *Capistrum Judaeorum*, a detailed attack on Judaism in the line of the internal criticism practiced by Paul 'the Christian'. In 1278, Martí presented the *Pugio Fidei*, an attack on both Islam and Judaism. This work has figured prominently in the history of the *Contra Gentiles* because it borrows directly from Thomas.[20] Far from

[17] See Robert Chazan, "Confrontation in the Synagogue at Narbonne . . .," *Harvard Theological Review*, 67 (1974), 437-457.

[18] See François Sanjek, "Raynerius Sacconi O.P., *Summa de Catharis*," *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, 44 (1974), 31-60; compare Thomas Kaeppeli, "Une somme contre les hérétiques de s. Pierre Martyr (?)," *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, 17 (1947), 295-335. In the prologues edited by Kaeppeli, it is interesting to note the remarks on recourse to *rationes naturales* in controversy with heretics (pp. 301-302); compare *Contra Gentiles*, I.2.#11b.

[19] See generally André Berthier, "Un maître orientaliste du XIIIe siècle . . .," *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, 6 (1936), 267-311, especially pp. 295-312 on Raymond's "method."

[20] These resemblances led Miguel Asín y Palacios to argue that Thomas had plagiarized portions of the *Pugio*; see his "El Averroismo teológico de Santo Tomás de Aquino," in *Homenaje a don Francisco Codera . . .*, ed. Eduardo Saavedra (Zaragoza: M. Escar, 1904), 271-331, especially pp. 320-323. The charge was refuted almost at once by Luis G. A. Getino on the basis of chronology; see Getino, *La "Summa contra gentes" y el Pugio fidei . . .* (Vergara: El Santísimo Rosario, 1905), pp. 8-19 generally, with replies to objections on pp. 19-27. The question of borrowings between Aquinas and Martí assumed a different form with Marc's re-dating of the *Contra Gentiles*. Marc asserts a dependence of *SCG* I cap. 6 on Martí's *Capistrum Judaeorum*; see Marc, I, pp. 65-72, and Burns, p. 1409, who adopts the thesis or re-dating apparently on the basis of Murphy's summary article. There is also the thesis of prior exchange between Aquinas and Martí in José María Casciaro, *El diálogo teológico de Santo Tomás con musulmanes y judios, el tema de la profecía y la revelación* (Madrid: CSIC/"Francisco Suarez," 1969), p. 44; J. I. Saranyana, "La creación 'ab aeterno.' Controversia de Santo Tomás y Raimundo Martí con San Bonaventura," *Scripta Theologica* [Pamplona], 5 (1973), 147-155. These hypo-

confirming Thomas's missionary intention, however, the borrowings show how little Thomas could be used in direct missionary activity. Martí's dependence on Thomas is confined almost entirely to the first Part of the *Pugio*. That part, which constitutes only ten percent of the whole, is intended to combat the errors "of the naturalists and the philosophers." [21] In it, Martí uses Thomas chiefly to combat errors arising from the reading of Aristotle and his followers. Thomas supplies most of Martí's argument on the eternity of the world, God's knowledge of singulars, and the resurrection of the dead.[22] When it comes to a detailed consideration of the claims and counter-claims of sacred writings, or to the intricacies of dogmatic theology, borrowings from Thomas almost disappear. For the expert missionary, then, Thomas's *Contra Gentiles* was useful in the philosophical criticism of Peripatetic or other philosophical controversies. In short, it was precisely the non-missionary parts of the *Pugio Fidei* which benefited most from a reading of the *Contra Gentiles*.

These comparisons *ad extra* may be confirmed internally by the very few explicit remarks Thomas makes in the *Contra Gentiles* about Islamic religion. In the 'prologue' to the work, which comprises the first nine chapters of book I, there are two pertinent passages. The first, in chapter 2, makes Thomas's excuses for not being able to deal with particular errors. He is not familiar with them, he says, nor can he proceed against all adversaries on the basis of common Scriptural authorities (I.2. #10-11a). Thomas mentions the "Mohammedans and pagans" as not sharing any Scriptural authority with Christians. The second passage, in chapter 6, contrasts the sober motives for accepting Christian revelation with the

theses become necessary only if one rejects the simpler explanation that Martí borrowed from Thomas in his *Capistrum* just as he would do later and at length in the *Pugio*.

[21] Raymundus Martinus, *Pugio Fidei adversus Mauros et Judaeos*, ed. Joseph de Voisin (Leipzig, 1587; rptd. Farnborough: Gregg, 1967), pp. 192-253.

[22] Marc provides an exhaustive summary of the textual relations in I, pp. 62-65.

improper persuasions to various erroneous opinions. Thomas describes the inducements offered by Mohammed, namely "carnal pleasures" and easy living, promised in colorful fables without the supporting evidence of miracles or previous prophecy, and to a credulous and isolated people (I.6. #41). It is obvious that this description depends on no very detailed knowledge of Islam. But that is because Thomas's source is not contemporary Dominican research; it is the century-old *Summula* of Peter the Venerable.[23] Some readers have seen here a "singular discretion" on Thomas's part as he reduces Koranic religion to the preaching of violence, perhaps in order to justify the Christians' crusades.[24] It seems much simpler to suppose, as Thomas has admitted, that he knew very little about Islamic belief, or, indeed, about the course of Islamic civilization.[25] How, then, could he write a paradigmatic missioner's manual for an order that prided itself on detailed acquaintance with the languages and beliefs of its adversaries?

It was not only the ideal of the order. We have from Thomas himself at least two short works that consider the possibilities for argument against those outside Latin Christendom. The first is the *Contra errores Graecorum,* written as Thomas was finishing the last book the *Contra Gentiles*; the second is the letter *De rationibus fidei contra Saracenos, Graecos, et Armenos.*[26] This letter seems to have been written perhaps a year later, just after completion of the *Contra*

[23] The *Summula* is edited in Migne, *PL* 189, cols. 651-658; for the parallels to Thomas, see especially cols. 653D-655C, and compare Peter's Letter IV.17 to Bernard (*PL* 189, cols. 321-345). For the composition of Peter's anthology of Islamic writings, see Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny, "Deux traductions latines du coran au moyen âge," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire au moyen âge,* 16 (1947-48), 69-131, especially pp. 69-71, 74-79.

[24] Simone Van Riet, "Le *Somme contre les Gentils* et la polémique islamo-chretienne," in *Aquinas and Problems of His Time,* ed. G. Verbeke and R. Verhelst (Louvain: Publications Universitaires, 1974), 150-160, especially p. 158.

[25] See the conclusions of Louis Gardet, "La connaissance que Thomas d'Aquin put avoir du monde islamique," in *Aquinas and Problems,* 139-149, esp. p. 140.

[26] See Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas,* p. 389, #63, and p. 394, #72.

Gentiles. In both of these pieces, Thomas is textually scrupulous within the limits of his knowledge and cautious about overstepping those limits. In the treatise against the Greeks, for example, Thomas explains that passages in the Fathers may appear doubtful either because of the development of doctrinal articulateness or because of the difficulties of translation.[27] In the *De rationibus,* he repeats charges against the infidels only as claims made by this correspondent; he also reminds him that no one ought to attempt a demonstration of the truths of the faith.[28]

The *Contra Gentiles* is not a manual for detailed training of missionaries—and so we are reduced to the third possibility, that it was intended to provide a reference book of philosophical arguments against the conceptual errors instanced in unbelievers, to be read by Christians who live in intellectual contact with them. But even here the story of St. Raymond's request must be re-understood, always assuming that it is true. Perhaps Thomas received such a request and wrote what he could, within the limits of his knowledge; that is, he wrote a foundational work that would undergird any detailed missionary attack. Perhaps he already had a work of comprehensive pedagogy in hand which he adapted for Raymond's sake, adding topical references in the prologue and elsewhere.[29] There is other evidence that Thomas struggled to find a pedagogical form that would provide an organic unity to the teaching of Christian truth; Raymond's request might easily have been subsumed in that larger pedagogical search.[30] In any event, a

[27] *Contra errores Graecorum,* prologue, *EL* 40, page A71, lines 16-71.

[28] *De rationibus fidei . . .*, cap. 1, *EL* 40, p. B57, esp. ll. 25, 27, 41, 49; and cap. 2, *EL* 40, p. B58, ll. 1-22.

[29] Unfortunately, we lack those pages of the autograph which would allow one to see Thomas's re-writing of the first nine chapters. Such traces of the first redaction as are preserved in the 'pA' manuscript tradition provide only a few variants for chapters 1-4, none of which are substantive. See the critical apparatus in *EL* 13, pp. 3-23, and the summary remarks, p. xvi.

[30] Thomas is reported to have re-worked a commentary on the first Book of *Sentences*; he obviously abandoned that expository pattern for the more lucid structure of the *Summa theologiae.* See Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas,* p. 359, for Tolomeo of Lucca's report, and the prologue to the *prima pars* of the *Summa.*

fundamental work structured according to the needs of Christian pedagogy is difficult to call missionary, except in that sense in which every Christian reader is constantly being called to conversion. Any number of works, including the *Summa theologiae*, have been used as foundations for missionary activity. Such uses have not drawn them into the class of missionary manuals. Nor, indeed, does it help much that something be classed as 'missionary' unless one can give a very precise account of its place in missionary activity. So the suggestions of circumstantial evidence have run aground. We must turn from them to the work itself in order to find the proper entry into the *Contra Gentiles*.

2. The Prologue

On opening the *Contra Gentiles*, the careful exegete would want first to consider the meaning of its title. Unfortunately, here too there is some uncertainty, as is not unusual with medieval academic works. The title *Liber* or *Summa contra gentiles* appears in early lists from the Parisian stationers, in the first writings by 'Thomists,' and in the catalogues of Thomas's works.[31] In early copies of the work, however, there appears the title *Liber de veritate catholicae fidei contra errores infidelium* and variants of it.[32] Either title is easily derived from the text of the second chapter, where Thomas says "we propose as our intention to show, in whatever little way

[31] For catalogues from c. 1292 to 1375 with the title *Contra Gentiles* or some variation, see Anton Michelitsch, *Thomas-schriften*, I (Graz and Vienna: Styria, 1913), pp. 101 (#46), 102 (#82/251), 104 (#127/295), 105 (#131/299), 107 (#175/1372), 109 (#245/192), 110, (#254/200), 111 (#285/232), 112 (#311/1559), 115 (#75), 127 (#14), 134 (#4), 137 (#), 140 (#30), 143 (#6), 145 (#4), 149 (#4), 156 (#3). The title *Liber de veritate catholice fidei* appears in some of the later catalogues: see Michelitsch, pp. 104 (#117/286), 106 (165/1083), 110 (#268/214). Henry of Hereford, whose catalogue is dated 1292-1294, gives the conflated title *Summa contra gentiles de veritate catholice fidei*; see Michelitsch, p. 125 (#76). For a Parisian stationers' list of 1286, see Denifle and Chatelain, *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, I (Paris: Frs. Delalain, 1889), #530, pp. 644-649, especially p. 646 ("Summa fratris Thome contra Gentiles").

[32] See, for example, *EL* 13, p. xii.

we can, the truth offered by the catholic faith (*veritatem quam fides catholica profitetur*), eliminating contrary errors" (I.2. #9). He then goes on to speak of the "errors of the Gentiles (*errores gentilium*)" (I.2. #10). Whether the book is a *liber* or a *summa* is not decided by the text (as it is elsewhere). The title *summa*, even if authentic, would prove too equivocal for settling the issue of the work's purpose. In the thirteenth century, '*summa*' covers a number of very different works, beginning with the simplest of collections. The decision among the various titles must be set aside, then, except insofar as the catalogue title raises a question about the meaning of '*gentiles*.'

M. M. Gorce argued more than fifty years ago that the '*gentiles*' of Thomas's title referred immediately to the Parisian exponents of heterodox Aristotelianism.[33] His evidence for the claim came from a Parisian document of 1277, which speaks of the '*gentiles*' of the Arts faculty in this sense, and from the correspondences between heterodox views condemned in 1270 or 1277 and positions mentioned by Thomas. The arguments are unconvincing. Gorce cannot establish any direct connection between the coinage in the document and Thomas's use of the term, nor can he show that the correspondence of views is anything but the effect of a common philosophical problematic. Gorce does raise the issue, however, what Thomas might mean by speaking of '*gentiles*' in the prologue.

Elsewhere in the *Contra Gentiles* itself, the positions ascribed to the '*gentiles*' are those of ancient Greek philosophy. Thus, the "*gentiles*" are misled by the "first natural philosophers (*primi philosophi naturales*)" into holding a view that the heavens are animated by divinities (I.20. #189-193). They use this error to defend their idolatry (I.27. #258). The "*gentiles*"

[33] M. M. Gorce, "La lutte 'contre Gentiles' à Paris," in *Mélanges Mandonnet* . . . (Paris: J. Vrin, 1930), I, 223-243, particularly pp. 228-233; see also his retrospective remarks on the work in *Bulletin Thomiste*, t.3/an.7 (1930), ##1203-1206, pp. [179]-[187]. Gorce's argument was attacked on its characterization of a persistent 'Latin Averroism' by David Salman, "Sur la lutte *contra Gentiles* de S. Thomas," *Divus Thomas* [Piacenza], 40 (1937), 488-509.

were also those who held for some species of the world's eternity and, thus, for a circular time (II.38. #1150; IV.82. #4171). Thus, when Thomas says in the prologue that the "ancient teachers (*antiqui doctores*)" of Christendom could attack errors in detail because they had been "*gentiles*" or were in conversation with them, he is thinking of such writers as Augustine, Ambrose, and Jerome—men who lived as or among the Hellenized pagans of late antiquity.

The same usage is found in others of Thomas's works and in *reportationes* of his teaching. Thomas speaks of the gentiles as exponents of pre-Christian learning. He writes that 'the Greeks' is used metonymically for all *gentiles*, since all received worldly wisdom from the Greeks.[34] He singles out the Platonists as specially to be recognized among the *gentiles* for positing a providence, though he holds that the *gentiles* generally recognized the existence of God.[35] Most interestingly, however, Thomas is reported as speaking about "*gentiles*" in the present tense and distinguishing them both from the (Byzantine) schismatics and from the (Islamic) infidels: "in the North (*in Aquilonari*) there are still many *gentiles*, and in the East many schismatics and infidels (*schismatici et infideles*." [36] To summarize, '*gentiles*' means for Thomas, historically, pre- or extra-Christian man and, metaphorically, the human mind under the tutelage of nature. The highest moment of this tutelage comes in Greek philosophy. How, then, are we to understand an argument made by Thomas "*contra Gentiles*"? It is an argument that corrects the natural errors of mind (taking 'nature' most strictly) and that is particularly concerned to correct the errors of the philosophers. Is this suggestion borne out in the work's prologue?

[34] *Super I ad Cor.*, cap. 6 lect. 3, *EB* 5, 499, col. 2; *Super ad Rom.*, cap. 1 lect. 5, *EB* 5, 445, col. 3, and lect. 6, *EB* 5, 446, col. 1.

[35] *Sent. de Cael.*, lib. 1 lect. 4 no. 5, *EB* 4, 26, col. 1; *Sent. libri Ethic.*, lib. 9 lect. 10 no. 3, *EB* 4, 223, col. 3; *Postilla super Psalmos* ps. 21 no. 23, *EB* 6, 78, col. 3.,

[36] *Postilla super Psalmos*, ps. 48 no. 1, *EB* 6, 120, col. 2. On the reliability of this text, see Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, pp. 368-369, #26.

The prologue begins, in the first chapter, with an Aristotelian explication of a Scriptural verse in praise of wisdom. The explication connects this verse and other passages in Scripture with Aristotle's hortatory depiction of wisdom at the beginning of the *Metaphysics*. Thomas continues, in the second chapter, by arguing the utility of wisdom and by announcing his intention to set it forth, despite difficulties. This is a standard topic in philosophical prologues, as is the claim that wisdom demands expression.[37] But how is wisdom in fact to be set forth? The next chapters, 3 through 8, answer this question in general; the 9th chapter draws specific compositional divisions from the general remarks. The whole prologue constitutes an extended but implicit *accessus*, in which chapter 2 gives the statement of *intentio* while the remaining chapters describe the *modus* in relation to the *materia*. The understanding of the *materia* depends upon a distinction between two types of truth in regard to God, a distinction which has occasioned as much feuding as did the possibility of a missionary motivation.

The most recent round of the debate can be said to have begun in 1924 when Guy de Broglie argued from the "general economy" of the *Contra Gentiles*, as proposed in the prologue, to a formal distinction between philosophical and theological truths.[38] De Broglie's motive was not to comment on the *Contra Gentiles* so much as to extract a polemical conclusion from it in regard to the natural desire for God. But De Broglie takes Thomas as promising that the first three books of the work will deal only with "religious truths accessible to reason alone," thus constituting "a Christian philosophy which will have its own consistency."[39] De Broglie was answered in-

[37] See Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, tr. Willard R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton University, 1953), pp. 83-85 and 87-88.

[38] Guy de Broglie, "De la place du surnaturel dans la philosophie de saint Thomas," *Recherches de science religieuse*, 14 (1924), 193-246 and 481-496, 15 (1925) 5-53. The most pertinent remarks fall in the first two installments.

[39] De Broglie, p. 207; cf. pp. 206-209, 482.

stantly by M. Blanche, who argued that the *Contra Gentiles* was an apologetic, hence theological work, which treated of everything under the formality of the revealed.[40] But Blanche's brief comment was only the first round.[41]

In the next year, R. Mulard, while rebutting De Broglie's main thesis at length, agreed with Blanche on the apologetic character of the *Contra Gentiles* and added confirming evidence from its manner of citing Scripture.[42] Maurice Bouyges followed in the same year with a summary of the debate and a proposal that the *Contra Gentiles* be regarded as a missionary apologetic structured by reference to the sensitivities of a non-Christian readership.[43] All specifically Christian matter is transposed into the fourth book, while all matter common to Christians and non-Christians is arranged progressively in the first three books. For Bouyges, the distinction is not a formal division between two types of propositions logically characterized with regard to their demonstrability; it is an apologetic distinction between the " discussable and non-discussable " or between what is and is not " susceptible . . . of being established and defended, in different degrees, before non-Christian partisans of supposedly revealed religions." [44]

[40] M. Blanche, "Note" (appended to a report of a lecture by de Broglie), *Revue de Philosophie*, 24 (1924), 444-449.

[41] Indeed, there were really two debates, one concerning the natural possibility for beatitude (together with such related notions as ' obediential potency '), the other concerning the distinction of two truths in the *Contra Gentiles*. I will here notice only the second debate. For a bibliography of the first, see M. Matthys, " Quid ratio naturalis doceat de possibilitate visionis beatae secundum S. Thomam in Summa contra Gentiles," *Divus Thomas* [Piacenza], 39 (1936), 201-228, at p. 201, note 2. Matthys himself provides a rigorous but falsely schematic reconstruction of the argument for the two truths; see his pp. 203-213.

[42] R. Mulard, " Désir naturel de connaitre et vision béatifique," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, 14 (1925), 5-19. See also Mulard's review in the *Bulletin Thomiste*, t.1/an. 2 (1925), ##195-196, pp. [192]-[195], though Mulard there adds nothing further with regard to the structure of the *Contra Gentiles*.

[43] Maurice Bouyges, "Le plan du *Contra Gentiles* de S. Thomas," *Archives de Philosophie*, 3 (1925), 320-341 or 176-197 in the separate pagination of this special volume.

[44] Bouyges, " Le plan," p. 191 (of the separate pagination).

Bouyges's hypothesis was substantially accepted in a general review of the debate published in 1930 by Balthasar and Simonet.[45] Since then, the tendency has been to argue for a wider audience and a larger intention—to which points I will return below.[46]

It seems to me that none of the positions taken with regard to the two truths is entirely fair to the text, though Bouyges may come closest—not when he invokes the missionary character, but when he points to the rhetorical motivation of the division. Read in context, the famous division separates two possibilities for effective persuasion. The division is introduced, in chapter 3, with an allusion to Aristotle's doctrine about the different ways disciplines can produce conviction (I.3. #13). Since the wise man's teaching of truth is for the sake of its being apprehended, of its producing reasonable conviction, the question of the degree of conviction possible in any

[45] N. Balthasar and A. Simonet, "Le plan de la *Somme contre les Gentils* de saint Thomas d'Aquin," *Revue néo-scolastique de philosophie*, 32 (1930), 183-214, especially pp. 185 (note 1), 186-188, 203. Balthasar and Simonet consider as well the views of De Broglie, Blanche, and Mulard, as well as those of M. Berten in "A propos de la *Summa Contra Gentiles*," *Criterion* [Barcelona], 4 (1928), 175-183. Compare the reviews by H.-M. Feret in *Bulletin Thomiste*, t.3/an.7, ##86-87, pp. [105]-[112].

[46] With the 1950 edition of his *Introduction*, Chenu holds that the *Contra Gentiles* is a theological apologetic, but also a deeply historical work, engaged in the concrete reality of the confrontation between Christianity and Islam; compare *Introduction à l'étude de Saint Thomas d'Aquin* (3rd ed., Montreal: I. E. M., and Paris: J. Vrin, 1974), pp. 247-251. Gauthier argues, to the contrary, that the intention of the work is the supra-historical "intention of wisdom"; see his "Introduction historique," pp. 87-99. Michael B. Crowe seems to combine Gorce, Bouyges, and Chenu, saying that the work aims at two missionary fronts, the one foreign and the other domestic; see "St. Thomas Against the Gentiles," *Irish Theological Quarterly*, 29 (1962), 93-120, especially pp. 104, 106. In a persuasive essay, somewhat at odds with his introduction to the English translation of the *Contra Gentiles*, Anton Pegis sees Thomas as transforming the Aristotelian project by ordering it to the Incarnation; see "Qu'est-ce que la *Summa contra Gentiles*," *L'Homme devant Dieu: Mélanges. . . . de Lubac* (Paris: Aubier, 1964), especially pp. 172, 181-182. Quintin Turiela argues that the work is intended to show educated believers the truth of what they hold by faith; see his "La intención de santo Tomás en la 'Summa contra Gentiles,'" *Studium* [Madrid], 14 (1974), 371-401.

subject-matter is most important. The division is recalled again when Thomas says that there is a twofold mode of truth "in what we confess (*confitemur*) of God" (I.3. #14). The first truths "exceed every power of human reason"; the second truths are those to which "natural reason can also reach." These latter truths were "demonstratively proved" by the philosophers, "led by the light of natural reason" (I.3. #14). Note here that reason is said not to exhaust, but to touch these accessible truths—and so we must understand the demonstrative proofs of the philosophers not as Cartesian reductions, but as exemplary forms of rational instruction. To say that the philosophers proved them demonstratively is to say that they constructed fully rational pedagogies leading to these conclusions. Thomas stresses that some truths quite obviously exceed the power of human pedagogy because men do not now know God's essence and stand low in the hierarchy of created intelligences (I.3. #16-17). He adds that they have a daily experience of error about *sensible* things (I.3. #18).

This argument is amplified in the next chapter when Thomas concludes that truths of the second class are fittingly proposed to man for belief because of the weakness of human speculation. If even naturally accessible truths were left solely for philosophic demonstration, only a few would come to know God, and that after a long time and with much admixture of error (I.4. #23-25). These arguments, which are *ex convenientia*, are adapted by Thomas from several sources, but especially from a longer list in Maimonides's *Guide of the Perplexed*.[47] Here they are introduced to secure the point that the divine clemency acted well ("*salubriter*") in providing its human pupils with a revelation even of naturally accessible truths (I.4. #26). The converse argument is made in the next

[47] For a schematic analysis of the six texts in which Thomas treats this question, see P. Synave, "La révélation des vérités divines naturelles d'après saint Thomas d'Aquin," in *Mélanges Mandonnet* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1930), I, 327-370, particularly pp. 328-352. Synave concludes that the *Contra Gentiles* marks Thomas's mature re-formulation of Maimonides's five reasons (pp. 350-351). But the dependence on Maimonides is still unmistakable; compare the charts on pp. 333 and 344.

chapter, where Thomas defends God for having revealed truths that exceed human reason altogether. He argues, first, that nothing will be desired or sought unless it is known. His examples are the promises of the Christian religion and the moral persuasion of ancient philosophy. The philosophers had to persuade men to leave sensual pleasures for more estimable ones ("*honestatem*") by showing them that there were goods more powerful than the sensory; there are higher pleasures in the exercise of active or contemplative virtues. Thomas gives no specific illustration and there is none to be found in Maimonides's discussion of preparatory disciplines.[48] Indeed, the reference to ancient philosophy is added by Thomas himself. He here summarizes the project of 'Gentile' persuasion to the philosophic life and to striving towards participation in the divine. As if to emphasize that Greek origin, Thomas takes three *auctoritates* in this chapter from Aristotle—and then confirms them with two from Scripture.

The concern for justified persuasion is continued in the sixth chapter with its distinction between sober and frivolous conviction (I.6. #36-41); in the seventh chapter, with analogies between divine and human teaching (I.7. #43); and in the eighth, with its remarks on the usefulness and the delight of exercise in the pursuit of what exceeds present capacity (I.8. #49). But persuasion stands forth most clearly in the final chapter of the prologue, the ninth, where Thomas draws the compositional conclusion from the doctrine of the two modes of truth.

Those truths which can be reached by the labor of reason, he says, should be set forth by demonstrative reasons, "by which the adversary can be convinced" (I.9. #52). The higher

[48] Maimonides, *Dux seu director dubitantium aut perplexorum*, ed. A. Giustiani (Paris, 1520; rptd. Frankfurt: Minerva, 1964), I.33, f. 13r-v. On the peculiarites of this Latin version, which reproduces that used by Thomas, see Wolfgang Kluxen, "Literargeschichtliches zum lateinischen Moses Maimonides," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 21 (1954), 32-50, especially 32-35; and Kluxen, "Die Geschichte des Maimonides im lateinischen Abendland . . .," in *Judentum im Mittelalter*, ed. Paul Wilpert (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1966), 146-166, especially pp. 156-157.

truths cannot be reached by such demonstrative reasons and so one ought not to try to "convince the adversary" by their means, but only to address or resolve his difficulties (I.9. #52). Indeed, the only way of "convincing the adversary" in such cases is by the authority of Scripture, divinely confirmed by miracles (I.9. #53). In regard to such higher truths, one will only advance verisimilitudes for the exercise and comfort of the faithful, not "for convincing adversaries" (I.9. #54). Thomas proposes, then, first to show forth those truths which faith proffers and which reason can also investigate, using authorities from the Philosophers and the Saints—"so that these truths might be confirmed and the adversary convinced" (I.9. #55). He will then turn to the higher truths, in order to "resolve the reasons of the adversaries" and to declare the truth of the faith by probable arguments and Scriptural authority (I.9. #56).

I have here reproduced Thomas's language, even at the risk of illustrating faulty repetition, in order to show that the phrase 'to convince an adversary (or adversaries)' recurs five times in three short paragraphs. The structure of the *Contra Gentiles* as Thomas proposes it is phrased in terms of a rhetorical or pedagogical efficacy. But who is to be persuaded and about what? The audience is not the 'adversary' himself, not the prospective convert. Thomas wants to show rather how an adversary could be convinced. To whom will he show this? He will show it to believers who are concerned with the persuasion of unbelievers—that is, to all thinking believers whatever. The means by which he shows it to believers—this is a second order of persuasion, a higher rhetoric, by which he teaches those who would persuade. More exactly, it is an anthology of exemplary arguments divided by a distinction in persuasion. This is the conclusion of the prologue and, I think, of the debate over the two truths.

Still, in order to teach believers about what can and cannot be demonstrated, Thomas must undertake a persuasive clarification of the truth of faith. As it teaches believers how to persuade, the *Contra Gentiles* must also persuade believers to be-

come habituated in the whole of Christian wisdom. The work recognizes a distinction between the realm in which reason can be persuaded by demonstration or probable arguments and one in which reason can be addressed and exercised but not probatively persuaded. It offers this recognition to believers who accept and ought rightly to understand truths in both realms. How is such a general rhetoric for believers to be constructed? It would seem that answers to this question about structure can be had by comparing Thomas's proposed compositional pattern with its generic antecedents.

3. The Genre

Two suggestions towards generic antecedents are provided immediately in the sources used for the prologue itself. The first is the explicit *auctoritas* of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* the second is the implicit reliance on Maimonides's *Guide*. I will take them in order.

Since Jaeger, modern readers have known of the connection between the first two chapters of the *Metaphysics* and Aristotle's *Protreptikos*.[49] They have thus known, though they have not always appreciated, that the opening of the *Metaphysics* stands in a long line of similarly motivated philosophic writings. The genre of philosophic protreptic was used for a millenium after Isocrates.[50] Extant or partially extant members of the genre would include entire Platonic dialogues and sections in them (such as the conversation between Socrates

[49] Werner Jaeger, *Aristotle* (2nd ed., Oxford: Clarendon, 1948), pp. 68-71.

[50] For surveys of the history of protreptic in ancient philosophy, see Paul Hartlich, "De exhortatione a Graecis Romanisque scriptarum historia et indole," *Leipziger Studien für classischen Philologie*, 11 (1889), 207-336; Paul Wendland, *Anaximenes von Lampsakos. Studien zur ältesten Geschichte der Rhetorik* . . . (Berlin: Weidmann, 1905), pp. 71-101; Martinus Mesotten, "De wijsgerige protreptiek voor Aristoteles," *Philologische Studien* [Louvain], 4 (1932-33), 161-189; Michel Ruch, *L'Hortensius de Cicéron: Histoire et reconstitution* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1958), 15-27, but especially pp. 15-18, Ingemar Düring, *Aristotle's Protrepticus: An Attempt at Reconstruction*, Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia ([Copenhagen:] Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis [Almqvist & Wiksell], 1961), pp. 19-27.

and Clinias in the *Euthydemus*), the *Protreptikos* of Posidonius, Cicero's *Hortensius*, the 90th of Seneca's *Epistulae morales*, Iamblichus's *Protreptikos*, and the 24th oration of Themistius. The genre was so widely adopted that it invited reflection and systematization. The treatises by Posidonius and Iamblichus are not so much protreptics as anthologies of protreptic commonplaces. Moreover, the works so far mentioned are only those that would seem to fall under the strictest definition of philosophic protreptic. There are many other sorts of writing that could be taken as having a similar persuasive end. Among those would be the long line of works contrasting the other arts, especially rhetoric, with true wisdom. Another group of titles would be those surveys of learning that introduce a philosophic teleology into the *paideia* of the arts. Finally, one might want to consider as protreptics to philosophy the formal admonitions to contemplative piety, such as Porphyry's letter to his wife, the *Pros Markellan*.

It is difficult to state a precise definition of protreptic that would bind together these different works, whether of the strict or loose sense. The ancient authors themselves offer various definitions, but each expresses a prescription rather than a description. Nor can it be said that the end envisaged for protreptic persuasion was the same for all, since the notion of the end varied crucially with philosophic school and at least technically with author in a school. Still, one can specify the term 'protreptic' in this way. A protreptic was originally a persuasion to the study and practice of some art or skill; for philosophic writers, it became an exhortation to the practice of the philosophic art, which required virtues of inquiry and contemplation. The existence of a protreptic genre shows that beginning the practice of such virtues required persuasion, that this persuasion was undertaken against competing claims, and that the character of the persuasion was meant to secure the character of the virtues practiced after it.

Of the long list of ancient protreptics, only the smallest fraction was known to Thomas. He knew at first hand from Cicero

a number of works, but not, of course, the *Hortensius*.[51] He might have gathered some sense of Cicero's protreptic from the remarks on wisdom in *De officiis* [52] or from those on philosophy in the *Tusculan Disputations*.[53] Seneca enjoyed a wide reputation for moral teaching among Latin readers in the 12th century, but figures in Thomas chiefly as an authority on the wise man's conquest of passions.[54] It might seem more likely that Thomas would have learned of ancient philosophic protreptic through its appearances in Christian writers, from both their descriptions and their imitations. Thomas speaks no judgment about the *Confessions*' praise for Cicero and seems not to have noticed the protreptic structure of such early Augustinian works as the *Contra Academicos*. He did not have Clement of Alexandria, whose *Protreptikos* and *Paidagogos* are Christian revisions of philosophic exhortation. Thomas's reexample of Christian protreptic, is confined to logical and technically theological matters. References to the *Consolation* do not advert to its drama. These particular misses in the reading of protreptic are made easier, perhaps, by Thomas's generally harsh judgment on rhetoric.[55]

Still, Thomas may be said to understand the importance of

[51] Clemens Vansteenkiste, "Cicerone nell'opera di S. Tommaso," *Angelicum*, 36 (1959), 343-382, especially pp. 378-379.

[52] For example, *De officiis*, 1.4.13, 1.6.18-19, 1.44-155-156.

[53] For example, *Tusculanarum Quaestionum*, 1.4.7-8, 2.1.1-2.5.13, 3.1.1-3.3.7, 4.1.1-4.3.7, 5.1.1-5.5.11

[54] See, for example, *Super Sent.* I d.46 a.4 obj.1, II d.33 q.2 a.2 sc.2, III d.15 q.2 a.2 qc.1 obj.2 and d.35 q.2 a.1 sol.2. There are other references on moral matters (such as the naturalness of death) and on miscellaneous bits of ancient culture. Seneca is cited only once in *De veritate* and then for a definition of 'idea' (q.2 a.10 sc.1). He is never cited explicitly in the *Contra Gentiles*. I leave aside the question, how far this decrease might signify a different judgment on Seneca and how far it is the result of Thomas's tendency to simplify his handling of *auctoritates* after the *Sentences*-commentary. On Seneca's wider importance for the twelfth century, see Klaus-Dieter Nothdurft, *Studien zum Einflüss Senecas auf die Philosophie und Theologie des zwölften Jahrhunderts* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1963).

[55] There is an interesting exception in the *Contra impugnantes Dei cultum*, ps.3 c.5, where Thomas defends the utility of rhetoric in the setting forth of divine teaching.

beginning philosophic practice rightly. For example, he applies the Ciceronian model of the *exordium* to the opening of Aristotle's *De Anima* and its remarks on delight in learning.[56] There is no such explicitly rhetorical approach to the *Metaphysics,* but there is a sense of its persuasive purposes. In his commentary on the *Metaphysics,* finished some ten years after the *Contra Gentiles,* Thomas paraphrases at length Aristotle's remarks on the desirability of wisdom.[57] More summarily, Thomas says that the purpose of Aristotle's prologue is to show the dignity and end of metaphysics.[58] In works prior to the *Contra Gentiles,* Thomas frequently appeals to these same chapters to secure the lofty characterization of wisdom.[59] Thomas sees that Aristotle begins the *Metaphysics* not just with a designation of the study, but with its praise.

Even so, the problem of persuasion in Thomas requires a thoroughgoing transformation of ancient protreptic. Most philosophic protreptics presume citizenship and move from it to the call of philosophy, variously conceived. In Thomas's protreptic, what is presumed is Christian baptism, membership in the Church. His call is not to conversion, but to progress in the practice of Christian wisdom. This means that his persuasion, as compared to the philosophic, has a delayed beginning and no presently attainable end. The protreptic of Christian wisdom is internal to faith but thus co-extensive with the *status viae.*

Of course, the Christian transformation of persuasion to wisdom Thomas could see in many places—and he practices it not only in the *Contra Gentiles.* There are what might be called sapiential exhortations in a number of Latin academic

[56] *Super De an.,* lib. 1 lect. 1 n. 2, *EB* 6, 6, col. 1.

[57] *Super Met.,* lib. 1 lect. 1, nn. 1-4 and 23-24, *EB* 4, 391, cols. 1-2, and nn. 23-24, *EB* 4, 392, col. 2; lib. 1 lect. 2 nn. 1-8, *EB* 4, 393, cols. 1-2; lib. 1 lect. 3 nn. 2-14, *EB* 4, 394, cols. 1-3.

[58] *Super Met.,* lib. 1 lect. 4 n. 4, *EB* 4, 394, col. 3.

[59] See, for example, the commentary on Boethius's *De Trinitate,* q. 2 a. 2 ad 1m (ed. Decker [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960], p. 88, line 1); q. 5 a. 1 ad 2m (Decker 167.13); q. 5 a. 4 sc 3 (Decker 192.17); q. 6 a. 4 obj. 3 (Decker 224.13-14).

works familiar in the Parisian schools—consider Hugh of St-Victor's *Didascalicon*,[60] Gundissalinus's *De divisione philosophiae*,[61] and in William of Auvergne's *De universo*.[62] Among works of mendicant authors prior to 1260, such prologues can be found in Robert Kilwardby's *De ortu scientiarum*[63] and in Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De proprietatibus rerum*.[64] What is perhaps most interesting, Thomas himself uses such a prologue based on the fourfold division of wisdom for his *scriptum* on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard;[65] a very similar topic is treated in his inaugural lecture as regent master of theology.[66]

Still, these Latin antecedents are no more helpful than allusions to the *Metaphysics* in specifying the structure of persuasion to be undertaken in the *Contra Gentiles*. While Thomas may share with them the faith in a revealed wisdom, he construes differently the consequences for teaching that faith. What is still required is to see how a specific notion of persuasion to revealed wisdom is connected to a specific compositional structure.

[60] Hugh of St-Victor, *Didascalicon*, I.1, ed. C. H. Buttimer (Washington: Catholic University, 1939), p. 4.

[61] Dominicus Gundissalinus, *De divisione philosophiae*, prol., ed. Ludwig Baur (Munster: Aschendorff, 1903), pp. 1-19.

[62] William of Auvergne, *De universo*, I prol. & cap. 1, as in *Opera omnia* (Paris, 1674; rptd. Frankfurt, Minerva, 1963), I, pp. 593-594.

[63] Robert Kilwardby, *De ortu scientiarum*, cap. 1, ed. Albert Judy ([London:] British Academy, and Toronto: P. I. M. S., 1976), pp. 9-10.

[64] Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De proprietatibus rerum*, *praef.* (Frankfurt, 1601; rptd. Frankfurt: Minerva, 1964), pp. 1-2. Examples of such prefaces after the *Contra Gentiles* would include such diverse works as Gilbert of Tournai's *De modo addiscendi*, cap. 2, where it has a specifically pedagogical purpose, and the anonymous *Compendium philosophiae* edited by Michel de Bouard (Paris: Broccard, 1936), pp. 121-122.

[65] *Scriptum super Sent.*, I prol., ed. P. Mandonnet, I (Paris: Lethielleux, 1929), pp. 1-5.

[66] See the *Breve principium*, *EB* 3, 648, col. 2, to 649, col. 3. Grabmann approaches the prologue to the *Summa theologiae* by comparison with other prologues in the genre, especially that of Robert of Melun; see his *Introduction to the Theological Summa of St. Thomas*, tr. J. S. Zybura (St. Louis and London: B. Herder, 1930), pp. 60-63; and the *Geschichte der scholastischen Methode* (rptd. Graz: Akad. Druck- u. Verlaganstalt, 1957), II, 340-358, for the text from Robert and Grabmann's comments on it.

I turn to the second source in Thomas's prologue, namely, Maimonides, with whom Thomas would seem to share both acceptance of revelation and familiarity with the Aristotelian tradition of wisdom. Are there structural parallels here? The suggestion gains plausibility because Maimonides seems most to have affected Latin academic circles through Albert and Albert's students, including Thomas.[67] Of course, Thomas disagreed with Maimonides on a number of issues having to do with the transparency of human knowledge about God, Maimonides usually taking the more negative view.[68] But how did Thomas stand with regard to Maimonides's persuasive project in the *Guide?*

The *Guide* begins, in Thomas's Latin version, with a blessing on a nameless student and a dedicatory epistle to him. The student is beloved because he so earnestly desires wisdom, though his prior training had not adequately prepared him for its study.[69] Maimonides is writing the *Guide* to complete the hierarchy of learning which has again been interrupted. There follows an invocation compounded from one verse of Psalm 143 and two verses from Proverbs.[70] Maimonides then begins his proemium with a plain statement of intention: the *Guide* is meant to explain the difficult locutions of the prophets.[71] After stressing that he does not write for all, Maimonides says more fully: "the intention of this whole book is that the law be understood by the way of truth (*per viam*

[67] See Kluxen, "Maimonides und die Hochscholastik," *Philosophisches Jahrbuch*, 63 (1955), 151-165, especially pp. 157-165.

[68] See Kluxen, "Maimonides and die Hochscholastik," pp. 163-164; and Leo J. V. Elders, "Les rapports entre la doctrine de la prophétie en S. Thomas et le 'Guide des égarés' de Maimonide," *Divus Thomas* [Piacenza], 78 (1975), 449-456, and in *Actas del Quinto Congreso Internacional de Filosofía Medieval* (Madrid: Ed. Nacional, 1979), I, 677-684.

[69] Maimonides, *Dux*, f. 2r: "Anima tua preciosa fuit in oculis meis propter vehemens desiderium tuum in acquirendo sapientiam. . . . Et dixi in corde meo: fortassis amor illius erga sapientiam amor major est quam apprehensio intellectus ipsius."

[70] *Psalms* 143:8; *Proverbs* 8:4 and 22:17.

[71] Maimonides, *Dux*, f. 2r: "Istius libri prima intentio est explanare diversitates nominum quae inveniuntur in libris prophetarum . . ."

veritatis). For the intention of this book is to purge (*expergefacere*) the mind of the just man . . ." (f. 2r). Maimonides follows with remarks on the appearance of truth in Scripture, which shows forth its secrets briefly and through the veil of symbols. Any teacher wishing to expound such matters must replace Scriptural symbolism with deliberate brevity and obscurity. Maimonides ends with specific instructions to the reader, including remarks on seven reasons for the semblance of self-contradiction in a work.

The prologue of the *Contra Gentiles* may be said to agree with the opening of the *Guide* in its emphasis on wisdom, in its desire to complete a hierarchy of knowledge, and in its subjection of philosophical study to Scripture. The *Contra Gentiles* disagrees with the *Guide* crucially on private and public in spiritual teaching. There is no device of dedication to a single student in Thomas, though this was a common topic in prefaces; nor is there any long analysis of esoteric writing. On the contrary, Thomas begins with a Scriptural quotation that emphasizes the public and disputatious character of wisdom. (Thomas's opening citation is also taken from Proverbs 8, though not from Maimonides's verse.) Moreover, Thomas's doctrine of the double mode of manifesting truth may be said to replace Maimonides's more elaborate and pessimistic hierarchy of minds in relation to divine radiance.[72] Maimonides writes obscurely for the just; Thomas writes publicly for the community of believers.

If Thomas's prelude seems at once to echo and to reverse the project of the *Guide,* a comparison of the two structures is even more ambiguous. It is possible to take the first seventy chapters of the *Guide,* to delete most of the short sections that gloss particular scriptural locutions or passages, and then to match the remaining chapters with some plausibility against the topics of *Contra Gentiles,* I. Thus, the use of remotion to establish negative truths about God's simplicity corresponds

[72] See Maimonides, *Dux, prol.* ff. 2v-3r. Maimonides offers something like the doctrine of two modes of truth in *Dux,* I.30, f. 11r.

to the reiterated emphasis in the *Guide* on God's incomparable incorporeality.[73] More particularly, Thomas's chapters on remotion (14), the metaphysics of divine simplicity (21-22), and divine incorporeality (20, 27) find direct correspondences in the *Guide* (respectively, 34 and 57; 56; 54 and 75). Again, Thomas's treatment of the divine names (30-36) corrects a similarly explicit treatment in the *Guide* (26, 51-52, 59-59, and 60-63 for the scriptural particulars). The main tenets of divine knowledge, divine causality, and divine life are also established in the *Guide's* first book (respectively 67, 68, and 45).

But these correspondences, which are explicable in many ways other than as direct imitation, also conceal great differences. First, as is clear in my choice of chapters, the Scriptural hermeneutic of the *Guide* is lacking in Thomas as a compositional motive. Thomas is not concerned in the *Contra Gentiles* to gloss the obscurities of Scripture, except incidentally.[74] Second, the order of the *Guide* is not followed by the *Contra Gentiles,* as regards either sequence or division of topics. To take the obvious example: Thomas begins the argument of the first book with a consideration of demonstrations for the existence of God; Maimonides treats of them only at the beginning of the second book and then in the context of divine creation. Again, Maimonides tends to treat attributes of life before those of intellect and causality or will. Thomas's order is just the reverse. Thomas may be interested in Maimonides on the divine names, or Maimonides against anthropomorphisms, or Maimonides on specific details of the Islamic Aristotle, but he does not seem to be following either Maimonides's structure or his general conclusions.

[73] Of course, Maimonides is not the only source of the insistence against anthropomorphism. Thomas knows of it from many patristic sources, such as Augustine, *De Trinitate,* I.1.1-3, ed. W. J. Mountain (Turnhout: Brepols, 1968), pp. 27-31; and John Damascene, *De fide orthodoxa,* cap. 1, tr. Burgundio of Pisa, ed. E. M. Buytaert (Louvain and Paderborn: F. Schonigh, 1955), pp. 1-2.

[74] For example, I. 42. #353b: "Quae quidem consuetudo loquendi etiam in Sacra Scriptura invenitur, dum sancti angeli, aut etiam homines vel iudices, *dii nominantur* . . ."

There is one peculiarity in the structure of the *Guide,* however, that points towards the central feature in the structure of the *Contra Gentiles.* Maimonides ends with the following sequence of topics: providence, prophecy, the rationality of the Torah, and the implications of God's law for human life. So, too, the *Contra Gentiles,* in all of its divisions, ends with depictions of the human good. The structure of the *Contra Gentiles,* as of the *Guide,* is not so much a descending deduction as an ascending exhortation. Here, indeed, the Maimonidean *auctoritas* helps to disclose Thomas's pedagogical structure. The end of the wisdom promised in the prologue of the *Contra Gentiles* is an act, an exercise of life. The structure for offering such a wisdom is not that of deduction to the last particular, but rather the tracing of a route by which one can be led to the highest end. The highest purpose of the work is not apodictic but epideictic, not demonstrative but hortatory. In short, it is a protreptic to the contemplation of God; it is an ascent to God through the world and law which culminates in the 'practice,' that is, the possession of the wisdom of a vision. The protreptic of the *Contra Gentiles* shares with ancient protreptics the use of persuasive devices as an introduction to the practice of contemplative virtues; it shares with Maimonides the structural suggestion that such virtues are completed beyond the simply natural by means of divine exhortation. This hypothesis of protreptic structure must now be connected, however briefly, to features in the work beyond the prologue.

4. Protreptic Structure

If the *Contra Gentiles* is a protreptic work, it ought to be possible to find in it the structures and devices of persuasion to an end.[75] Now the most obvious persuasive structure is the

[75] This claim has already been made by Guy H. Allard in his "Le 'Contra Gentiles' et le modèle rhétorique," *Laval Théologique et Philosophique,* 30 (1974), 237-250. Allard compares the structure in Thomas with the Ciceronian paradigms for deliberative discourse. I differ from Allard both in regard to the importance of any particular rhetorical paradigm and in his emphasis on the political.

ascent to the human good in the first 63 chapters of the third Book. The argument rises from a general assertion of teleological order (chapters 1-16), through the thesis that God is the end of all and of intellectual substances particularly (17-26), to a comparison of contemplation with all other possible claimants to human happiness (27-47). Thomas ends with a technical analysis of the contemplation of God in beatitude, but reminds the reader that this fulfills the philosophic longing for highest contemplation (48-63; compare 41-44 on the opinion of the philosophers about contemplation).

This ascent contains several features of classical and Christian protreptic. There is, first, the *synkrisis* or comparison with alternate goods, in which contemplative wisdom emerges as most valuable (27-36). Thomas has already remarked that this weaning away from the seduction of alternative pleasures is the important persuasive work of the philosophers. (I.5. #29c). More specifically, Thomas must rule out the possibility that happiness consists in the exercise of the political virtues or of the arts—just as Greek philosophic protreptic had to keep its hearers from accepting as final the rival pedagogies of the sophists and the poets. Thomas also offers, in second place, a criticism of alternative descriptions of wisdom (41-44). This, too, is a kind of *synkrisis*, a comparison of alternative claims to the possession of philosophic wisdom. The Greek equivalent would be an examination of the rival schools. But Thomas adds, in third place, an evocation of the good to be attained in beatitude; he writes three lyrical chapters in which he shows how the vision of God makes men eternal participants in divine life (61-62), even as it fulfills every human desire for knowledge, virtue, honor, fame, wealth, pleasure, immortality, and community (III.63. #2378-2383). Thomas ends this peroration by juxtaposing the Aristotelian and Scriptural praises of wisdom, so that the reader might see the one perfected in the other (III.63. #2383).

But the third Book does not stop with that evocation—and it is important that it not do so. Thomas turns with the briefest of connecting passages to a long consideration of provid-

ence. The treatment of providence is required precisely to assure the reader that the distant end of contemplation, which so little resembles our life here, is within the power of the ruler of this cosmos. God the end is also God the 'governor' or 'ruler' of the means.[76] But His providence is not coercive. The second thesis of the treatment of providence is that human agents are free from the coercion of celestial bodies (84-87) and separate substances (88-89); they may follow God without fearing fortune or fate (91-92). At much greater length, Thomas analyzes the divine providence over intellectual creatures (111-113) in order to show the necessity of God's teaching them (114-129) and the usefulness of God's counsels for them (130-139). The culmination of the treatment of providence comes in the argument for man's need of divine grace in attaining the end already proposed (147-163). The book ends with a chapter on election and reprobation that emphasizes man's freedom under or within God's glory. The last line of the book is a doxology from *Romans* (11:35-36). This doxology is the seal on the doctrine that the human end cannot be obtained without God's help.

Now it seems to me that this hortatory structure of the third Book finds echoes both earlier and later in the *Contra Gentiles*. I have not attempted to establish it in any detail for the third Book, and will not to do so for the others. I would like, nonetheless, to point out a few of the most salient structural devices. The transitions in the *Contra Gentiles* are by no means as explicit or as detailed as those of the later *Summa*, where the most striking beauty is a comprehensive series of pedagogical connections. But there are moments of transition in the *Contra Gentiles* which disclose something of its underlying structure. I begin with those in the first Book.

At the end of the prologue, Thomas writes that the first

[76] Thomas says exactly this in his prologue to exposition of Job, which is contemporary with *Contra Gentiles*, II-III; see Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p. 368, #25. Thomas writes that the denial of providence is the destruction of all virtue and the fostering of vice; see *Expositio in Job*, prol., *EL* 26, 11. 41-48, *EB* 5, 1, col. 1.

thing to be demonstrated is God's existence, " without which every consideration of divine things is removed " (I.9. #58). The last of the demonstrative arguments concludes that there is someone " by whose providence the world is governed " (I.13. #115). The existence of God is not a fact only, but a force over human life. There follows the *via remotionis*, which establishes the negative properties about God, especially his simplicity (14-28). It is in turning to God's perfection that Thomas must treat again of the divine names, in order to secure resemblance between God and creatures (28-36). More specifically, he must show that his protreptic speaking about God is not " in vain " (I.36. #301). The protreptic motivation makes it appropriate that the center of the first book should describe God's understanding, willing, and living. God's understanding makes him the final end for intellectual creatures; God's willing grounds providence; God's life is that to which men are called. The last section of the first Book concerns the divine life (97-102); the last chapter argues that God's beatitude exceeds every other beatitude (I.102). There is both a rejection of false happiness (I.102. #849) and a doxology here, too: " Ipsi igitur qui singulariter beatus est, honor sit et gloria in saecula saeculorum " (I.102. #850).

The second Book aids the protreptic by establishing God's causality over creation and man's essential place in the hierarchy of intelligences. The preface promises as much. In justifying the consideration of creatures as part of Christian wisdom, Thomas offers four arguments. The first is that creatures imitate divine wisdom and so produce wonder and reflection (II.2. #859). The second argument holds that the consideration of creatures leads to fear and reverence of God (II.2. #860); the third, that it kindles in man the divine love (II.2. #861). The fourth argument shows that meditation on creatures gives a certain similitude of divine wisdom (II.2. #862). The consideration of creatures is also useful in destroying those errors about God which prevent contemplative ascent to him—by deifying matter, by exaggerating creatures, by exalting necessity, by debasing human teleology (II.3. #865-868).

Each of these eight reasons is directly connected to the protreptic. Each supposes that the purpose of the work is to bring about a right ordering in the active pursuit of the divine. The considerations proposed hasten pursuit; the errors rejected are those that would prevent it. This is confirmed in the second Book's last section, which treats of the highest created intellects, the separated substances; the last lines here are another doxology to the divine mind (II.101. #1860). In the Books leading up to the third, then, Thomas frequently points towards the persuasion towards the highest good as a gracious gift from its possessor.

The structure of the fourth Book is usually set out rather prosaically as follows: the Trinity (2-26), the Incarnation (27-55), the sacraments (56-78), and the final resurrection together with the last judgment (79-97). But notice these structural peculiarities. The discussion of the Trinity is introduced under the rubric of 'generation' in God; it is meant to show how far God's life is like that of other living things (IV.2. #3354c; compare IV.26. #3629, "in living things (*viventibus*)"). The discussion ends with a reiteration of the similitude which links human thought to the Trinitarian processions (IV. 26. #3631-2). The treatment of the Incarnation ends with the question of *convenientia* (IV.53-55).[77] The positive arguments for its appropriateness begin with the assertion that God's incarnation is the most efficacious help for man's attainment of beatitude (IV.54. #3923). The same reasoning appears in other arguments and in the replies to the objections. The sacraments are introduced and treated as the application and manifestation of Christ's role in human healing (IV.56. #3962). The last of the sacraments to be treated is matrimony, which is justified as extending through time man's search for the good (IV.78. #4119, 4124). It goes without saying that the resurrection and the last judgment are concerned quite literally with the end of human life—indeed, of the whole

[77] See the opposite order in *Summa theol.* III, where the treatment of *convenientia* (q. 1) precedes the treatment of the manner of the Incarnation (qq. 2-19).

of human history. Although such topics frequently appear at the end of comprehensive theological works, Thomas here provides not only a designation of human life after resurrection, but a description of it (82-88). Some of the hypotheses may seem extraordinary, but their point is to convince the reader that all human desire will be fulfilled in the city of the glorified (see especially IV.86). The last chapter of the entire work begins with these words, "Thus when the last judgment has taken place, human nature will be constituted completely in its end" (IV.97. #4285). The chapter ends with the divine proclamation of eternal joy and exultation (IV.97. #4292).

It would be possible—indeed, necessary for a complete argument—to carry out such structural analyses in much greater detail and to show how far other reasons, such as traditional arrangement, might account for the features mentioned. But let me simply enunciate that large task and then suggest that the protreptic character of the *Contra Gentiles* can also be discerned at closer range—for example, in the locutions by which *auctoritates* are introduced, in the arrangement of multiple arguments for a single point, and in the choice of those particular topics to be treated at length. I will be able to give only a few examples under each heading, in order.

Thomas's consistent locutions for introducing Scriptural authorities were already mentioned by Mulard in the debate over De Broglie. Mulard's point was that the locutions showed a separation between philosophical argument and theological authority.[78] It seems to me that the use of the locutions is more complicated, at least before the fourth Book, where they begin to sound more like rubrics for proof-texts on controverted doctrinal issues. In the first three Books, the locutions are clearly not meant to adduce Scriptural texts as syllogistic premisses in a philosophic demonstration. The repetition of "also (*etiam*)" shows that the citations which they introduce are supplements to the arguments.[79] More interesting, I think,

[78] Mulard, "Désir naturel," p. 8.

[79] See I. 14. #119, 39. #323, 44. #380, 50. #428, 67. #566.

are the verbs which are used in these locutions: the authority of Scripture or of the faith is said to "confirm" a truth,[80] to "give testimony" to it,[81] to "agree" with it,[82] to "harmonize" with it,[83] to "profess" it,[84] to "confess" it,[85] to teach it,[86] to "commemorate" it,[87] to "attest" it,[88] to "show" it,[89] to "proffer" it,[90] and to "protest" it.[91] These verbs suggest that the citations are meant to add both evidence and emphasis. They add more evidence, because the Scripture already counts as true for the Christian reader. They add emphasis, because the Scripture is supremely authoritative and beautifully moving. But the most interesting locutions are those which use a causal connective: Scripture says something or faith holds something *because* of the reasons enunciated in the chapter.[92] Here we see the protreptic connection between rational and authoritative persuasion. The reader has been led through a series of arguments; he has also been reminded that the same doctrine is found in the authorities of his faith. The

[80] "Quod etiam auctoritas Sacrae Scripturae confirmat" (I. 14. #119; compare 39. #323, 47. #402, 60. #505, 65. #539 ["firmatur"], 68. #574, 75. #646, 78. #666, 91. #764, 97. #815).

[81] "Huic autem veritati Divina Auctoritas testimonium perhibet" (I. 15. #126; compare I. 43 #370, 57. #484, 66. #554); "testimonium affert" (I. 55. #464).

[82] "Huic autem veritati demonstratae concordat Divina Auctoritas" (I. 20. #188).

[83] "His autem Sacrae Scripturae auctoritas consonat" (I. 58. #493; compare 70. #610).

[84] "Hanc etiam veritatem Catholici Doctores professi sunt" (I. 22. #212).

[85] "Hanc autem veritatem etiam fides catholica confitetur" (I. 44. #380; compare 72. #626).

[86] "Hoc etiam auctoritate Scripturae canonicae edocemur" (I. 50. #428).

[87] "Sacra Scriptura aliquando similitudinem inter enum et creaturam commemorat" (I. 29. #271; compare 91. #765).

[88] "Cui etiam sententiae attestari videtur Scripturae Sacrae auctoritas" (I. 49. #417).

[89] "Quod autem Deus futura contingentia sciat, etiam auctoritate Scripturae Sacrae ostenditur" (I. 67. #566).

[90] "Quam Scriptura Sacra profitetur" (I. 82. #698).

[91] "Eius etiam beatitudinem Sacra Scriptura protestatur" (I. 100. #835).

[92] "Et inde est quod . . ." (I. 29. #271); "hinc est quod . . ." (I. 37. #308, 40. #328, 41. #334, 56. #472, 61. #514, 99. #827); "propter quod dicitur . . ." (I. 38. #315).

complete persuasion to wisdom is accomplished when the reader sees that the intelligibility of argument leads into the intelligibility of Scripture. The reasons of the rational pedagogy pass over into the motives of Scriptural teaching.

It is in the sequence of arguments that the second sort of microscopic evidence for a protreptic structure can be found. In general, the *Contra Gentiles* is remarkable for not following the patterns of an academic dispute or an academic commentary. There are some sections, especially technical ones, in which Thomas falls back on the devices of the *quaestio*;[93] much more rarely does he carry out a proper *lectio*.[94] The typical chapter in the *Contra Gentiles* has a short introduction or enunciation followed by a series of arguments that ends with confirming *auctoritates* or historical specifications or both. The arguments are not interdependent in any obvious way. It is possible to reduce them by clustering them around certain basic premisses, but this is a static classification. Much more interesting is to notice that the arguments are variously cumulative in persuasive effect. First, to show that the same conclusion can be derived from very different premisses is to make it more plausible. Second, readers who are not convinced by one argument may be convinced by another. Thomas sometimes varies his starting points in the hope of casting a wider argumentative net. Third, more obviously, there is sometimes a progression in the arguments such that the last are more comprehensive or penetrating than the first. A single passage will have to serve as illustration. In II.16, Thomas offers twelve arguments for creation *ex nihilo*, that is, with no preexisting matter. The first argument depends on a rule against regression in natural causes (#933); the second through the fifth invoke some principle of universality in effect and cause

[93] See especially I.10-11, II.61/69, II.74-75, II.80-81, II.88-89, III.5-6, III.8-9, III.54, III.69, III.108-109, III.131/134, III.132/135, III.136-137, IV.4.9, IV.10, IV.16/23, IV.25, IV.40/49, IV.51-52, IV.53-55, IV.62-68, IV.80-81. Note the preponderance of such sections in the fourth Book. This is due to the procedural limitation of answering objections against the mysteries of faith, as in I.9. #56.

[94] See especially II.61, 78.

(#934-937); the sixth through the ninth stress disanalogies or disproportions between matter and divine creation (#938-941); the tenth and eleventh argue from God as first being (#942-943). Or one might say that the principles are: no regression (#933), universality of causation (#934-935), peculiarities in the causation of being (#936-937), peculiarities in the reception of effects by matter (#938-940), and asymmetrical relationships (#941-943). On either account, there is a movement in the chapter from physical causality through its expansions and distensions to basic ontological relations. Note too that the arguments will appeal to readers of the *Physics*, the *Metaphysics* of both Aristotle and Avicenna, and the *Liber de causis*.

The third and last level at which to look for evidence of the protreptic structure comes with the selection of topics to be treated at length. One can see principles of selection at work on the surface of other Thomist works. Thus, in the *Sentences*, the selection is determined remotely by the Lombard's text and directly by the tradition of commentary on it. In the large *Summa*, by contrast, Thomas says explicitly that the principle of selection is pedagogical concern for beginners. What is the equivalent principle of economy in the *Contra Gentiles*? The missionary hypothesis would explain the selection of topics here on the basis of the confrontation with Islam. Gorce would explain it as a reaction to the 'Latin Averroists.' It seems, in fact, that the selection is made in relation to the aim of persuasion to the practice of Christian wisdom, i.e., in relation to a protreptic. Those topics are treated extensively and most technically which have a direct bearing on persuasion to the highest good. This can be verified by looking to points of apparent distension in the text.

One of the most obvious of these is the lengthy refutation in Book II of false views about the human intellect (for example, II.59-62, 73-78). Thomas treats these views extensively not out of a technician's delight in detail, or from love of correction, but because man's possession of the highest good depends on the individuality of intellects. The fashionable denial of

that individuality requires extensive correction if the readers are not to be prevented in advance from accepting the protreptic's persuasion. Thus, the conclusion of the arguments against separation or unicity of intellects serves as a premiss in the first, syllogistic proof for human immortality (II.70. #1598). A similar reading can be given to the technical analysis of the beatific vision (III.51-60). Coming at the end of the ascent to the highest good, these chapters carry great weight. They must show that God can be contemplated directly, but only by his gift—otherwise the rest of the third Book will be otiose. If there is no direct contemplation, the protreptic has no end; if there is no need for grace, the protreptic is in no way Christian. Similar reasoning directs Thomas's technical emphasis on divine cognition of singulars (I.63-71), on human freedom from creaturely determination (III.84-88), and so on. It would not be difficult, in a complete reading, to explain the seemingly distended sections on grounds of likely error in the readers and of importance in the persuasion to the highest good.

At three more microscopic levels, then, the *Contra Gentiles* shows signs of a protreptic motivation. It uses authorities, arranges arguments, and chooses technical disputes with an eye on persuasion towards the practice of complete Christian wisdom. There are, of course, many other texts and several other levels at which the same reading could be applied. Indeed, the extent of its application would be limited just by Thomas's success in ordering the composition around his highest purpose.

This *accessus* to the *Contra Gentiles* has argued that its structure is protreptic. The work is concerned to persuade its readers to the practice of the virtues of Christian wisdom, both acquired and infused. Now persuasion to the practice of a virtue will be sterile unless it can offer the opportunity for that practice. It is a distinguishing principle in Aristotle that virtues, including intellectual ones, are acquired by practice. The best Aristotelian protreptic, then, would not only exhort but engage; it would speak about the virtues to be acquired even as it provided exemplary occasions on which to imitate

those virtues. Here, too, Thomas succeeds in constructing the *Contra Gentiles*. The work presents the virtues of Christian wisdom above all by requiring that its readers practice them—in following its structures, in learning its locutions, in discovering the order of its arguments, in understanding its technical digressions. Perhaps most helpfully, the *Contra Gentiles* applies in hundreds of particular arguments the intelligible *principia* which are the seeds of speculative virtue. In this way, the protreptic structure is not only an exordium to wisdom, but a school for it.

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THEISM: AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL DEFENSE

IT IS MY PURPOSE in this essay to articulate reasons which seem to me capable of convincing anyone for whom the question is an open one[1] that we are warranted in holding that there is a God, i.e., a Being, at least legitimately thought of as a person, who is the source of all being and value and hence capable of resolving all our moral and epistemic conflicts (which is not to say that he has in fact done so).[2] The strategy of this argument is to employ a version of the moral argument as a springboard from which to develop an analogous argument from the normative character of metaphysical and epistemological principles.

I.

I begin with a version of the moral argument for the existence of God. Ethics does not merely designate some states of affairs as good or bad; it designates some actions as obligatory or forbidden. To some forms of human activity, which otherwise would be regarded only as less than ideal, it annexes what Roger Casement called an " awful No." The interpretation of such imperatives is an important issue: religious believers tend to interpret them as the commands of God, and this way of interpreting them affects the way believers approach moral issues.

I now argue that this interpretation of moral imperatives, while not the only possible one (and in fact somewhat one-

[1] This restriction, of course, is more formidable than it appears.

[2] This argument has ancestors at least as far back as Pascal. The present formulation was suggested by Leszek Kolakowski, *Religion* (New York, 1982), esp. pp. 82-90, 188-197, where he discusses the maxim " If God does not exist, then everything is permitted." Kolakowski, however, reaches an agnostic conclusion.

sided), is at least as attractive as any alternative. If God does not exist,[3] some other interpretation of moral imperatives will have to be found: most probably, this interpretation will vary from context to context, and from moral requirement to moral requirement.[4] But, if God does exist, it is plausible to interpret moral requirements as divine in origin. And the plausibility of a religious interpretation of moral imperatives gives us at at least some reason for asserting that there is a God.

What is distinctive in religious ethics arises from the belief that union or communion with God is the highest good for a human being. Putting this claim at the center of the theistic case has a number of implications. Friendships, loves, and loyalties among human beings are at once sources of obligation, ways of coming to recognize obligations already present, and motives for doing what is right. The same may be said of a human being's relationship to God.

The good of God's friendship has a double aspect, as God is believed to be both the source of our existence and our Supreme Good. On the one hand, to stand in a proper relationship with God is to be at peace with oneself; one's relationship to God is in this respect parallel to, though more profound and intimate than, one's relationship with one's parents or one's country. On the other hand, union or communion with God can stand as our highest end—not as our only end, but as an end that, since it takes precedence over all other ends in cases of conflict, can establish an order among goods that would otherwise form a chaos of conflicting considerations. And since God is not only the Supreme Good but also the Creator of all lesser goods, the pursuit and enjoyment of such goods within the limits established by God can be brought into systematic harmony with the pursuit and enjoyment of a right relationship with God.

[3] If there is a God, the supposition of a world without him is an absurdity. But we can still explore the implications of a possibly absurd hypothesis, as is done in the construction of arguments by *reductio ad absurdum*. (I owe this point to Robert M. Adams in conversation.)

[4] For discussion relevant to this possibility, see my essay "Relativism." *Monist*, July, 1984.

The most persistent objection to a theistic interpretation of moral norms is that it represents a version of the doctrine that might makes right: hence the notion that, for the theist, moral norms are orders backed with the threat of Hell-fire. The only possible answer is that power and goodness are not separable in God as in human beings: in the words of Peter Geach, " all the divine attributes, if thought out, coincide; God's power and knowledge and will and truth are all one." [5]

II.

Other interpretations of moral imperatives run into difficulty. If moral requirements are self-imposed, it is hard to distinguish morality from inclination. Treating the demands of morality as universal in scope does not help matters. If I dislike the custom of putting ice in beer, I can wish that no one ever put ice in beer; the wish is both costless and pointless. To link moral imperatives to matters of human importance is to raise the issue, what makes a matter one of human importance? Human beings disagree about how much importance should be accorded human sexual behavior, for example. Those who hold that to insist on bizarre (or simply non-utilitarian) moral principles is to have failed to rise to the level of critical thinking raise the issue: What makes critical thinking morally or otherwise imperative? [6] And any stronger interpretation of morality as a set of universal imperatives, say one that requires that one do something to secure the observance of one's imperatives, fails to cover all cases: for example, my belief that Nero did wrong in having his mother killed.

Another interpretation of moral imperatives treats them as stating the will of society, expressed through such institutions as blame and punishment. We can formulate a conventionalist theory of the right as follows: *Actions are right or wrong as the relevant community approves or condemns them, having considered all appropriate facts and arguments.* What counts

[5] *Providence and Evil* (Cambridge, Eng., 1977), p. 81.

[6] This clause is directed at R. M. Hare, *Moral Thinking* (Oxford, 1981).

as the relevant community, and what the ethics of collective deliberation may be, are for the moment at least open questions.

But the social interpretation of moral imperatives neglects the two points at which appeals to individual conscience become inescapable: when the voice of society is divided, and an individual must decide for himself what version of society's requirements to accept; and when an individual, as has happened with persons conventionally regarded as very admirable, is moved to reject the dominant voice of society and insist instead on moral standards of his own. (Admiration for Socrates is conventional within our society.) In both these cases it is possible to appeal to conventionally recognized principles in support of one's position, but such principles can also be used to support positions one rejects. A changing society is therefore in constant risk of dividing into a multitude of subsocieties and sub-sub-societies, even apart from the divisions already created by such facts as social class. Hence to regard society as the author of morality is to risk a grim choice between immobilism and chaos.

Moral imperatives may also be thought of as immanent in the facts themselves. Since I do not believe in a metaphysical chasm between fact and value, I cannot exclude such a reading of moral imperatives as impossible. But while facts impose demands, these demands conflict, and the resolution of such conflicts requires some principle not itself immanent in those facts. Life is to be preserved and pain eased, but the moral problem of euthanasia cannot be resolved without invoking some higher-order principle establishing a relationship between these requirements.

Some find in history a pattern so clear and persuasive that only one morality remains tenable when that pattern has been seen. But anyone who retains the least moral sensitivity will sometimes find it necessary to affirm evaluations neglected by history, and there is no reason to believe that the moral standards of future society are necessarily to be preferred to those of our own. Trotsky could consign defeated opponents to the

trashcan of history, but when he himself was defeated and killed, different images came to the fore. Trotsky's widow said of her dead husband: "The arms fell just as the arms in Titian's 'Descent from the Cross.'"[7]

Another rival to theistic accounts of the nature of moral imperatives is the ideal observer theory: roughly the belief that moral imperatives express what a perfect Being would approve or condemn if such a Being existed. The question here is the force of the counterfactual "would." It is hard to see how it could be causal, and if it is logical the ideal observer theory reduces to some version of the claim that moral imperatives are immanent within the natural or social facts.

Kant provides the alternative to a theistic interpretation of moral imperatives most popular among philosophers, but he purchases ontological economy at the price of logical oddity. His Categorical Imperative is imposed by the agent upon himself, but in such a way that the differences of temperament, inclination, and social affiliation among agents do not produce a variety of codes. He views morality as a set of commands detached from any authority, hanging, so to speak, in metaphysical midair. Insofar as he bases his ethics on some aspect of human nature, such as autonomy or rationality, the problems of the naturalistic tradition recur, even apart from the special difficulties that arise from Kant's placing the root of morality in the noumenal realm.

I cannot claim to have exhausted all possible nontheistic explanations for the binding force of moral imperatives. But I have said enough to place the burden on the atheist either to develop a plausible account of ethics without God or to argue against the existence of God and then conclude that, since God does not exist and not everything is permitted, some other interpretation of moral imperatives is possible, even if a particular atheist is not able to provide it.

Thus theistic interpretation of ethical norms is the most

[7] Natalya Sedova, *Vie et Mort de Léon Trotsky*. Quoted in Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Outcast* (London, 1963), p. 508.

plausible. But this conclusion supposes that there is a God, and, more fundamentally, that the concept of God is coherent and intelligible. Doubt on the latter score does not arise only from application of external criteria, but also from within theism itself. For the whole thrust of theistic argument is so to stress the radical difference between God and other beings as to raise the issue how such a Being, if He existed, could be intelligibly talked about by human beings at all. If God exists, the peculiar character of religious language arises from the peculiar epistemic position of believers who must, in this life at least, approach the object of their belief, as St. Paul puts it, through " a dim reflection in a mirror."

III.

The crucial objection to the moral argument is that morality must find its place in the world as it is, and that, apart from a desire to make sense of morality, belief in God is irrational or at best groundless. But, when one considers the normative character of epistemic principles, including those which determine what utterances are held to be intelligible, the moral argument for the existence of God can be generalized to evade this problem. While norms governing our beliefs and claims to know are strictly speaking moral norms only in special circumstances, such as when the interests of others are involved, still a quasi-moral condemnation of those who nurse irrational beliefs is implied in such expressions as " superstitious " and " flaky."

An example of a rationality norm held by nearly everyone is that the simplest hypothesis consistent with the data should be accepted. But the interpretation and application of this norm varies from person to person and from group to group: an atheist will maintain that simplicity requires that the possibility of a causal agent outside the sequence of events governed by natural law be excluded, while an agnostic will simply decline to assert the existence of such an agent and a theist will maintain that simplicity either permits or requires the assertion of God's existence.

Now consider a metaphysical and epistemological perspective that excludes the existence of God. Adherents of that perspective may regard it as the merest common sense, derivable in unproblematic fashion from the natural sciences or from everyday experience. But in fact there is no experience without an a priori structure, and natural science and everyday experience exclude belief in God only when their a priori structures are so construed as to exclude it. The question has an irreducibly normative aspect: ought we so construe the norms of rational belief as to exclude, permit, or require belief in a Creator?

With the question of rationality cast in this normative mold, we are entitled to ask, as we are with moral norms strictly speaking, what is the source of requirements that, expressly or by implication, condemn belief in God as irrational. To condemn this question as a pseudo-question is to invite the inquiry, by what authority a philosopher or group of philosophers forbids a question that many human beings, not all of them professional philosophers, have asked.

For those who do not believe in God, the most plausible answer to such questions is that the norms of rational belief are taught and upheld by some individual or group, such as the scientific community, which has assumed that authority. This answer corresponds to conventionalist understanding of ethical imperatives, considered above. It follows that norms of rational belief serve only the members of the groups that uphold them. Those who belong to an intellectual community that affirms the existence of God, and who thus reject the legislation of the Vienna Circle or other such groups, can be stigmatized as deviants or condemned as rebels, but cannot be in any useful sense be regarded as intellectually wrong. A common rhetorical addition, that secularism is the wave of the future, does not help the atheist's case.

The strict atheistical position is not the conventionalist one just considered, but affirms the universality of rationality norms—grounded in human nature or hanging in metaphysical midair—that exclude belief in God. (An example is the read-

ing of the requirement of simplicity so as to exclude even the possibility of a transcendent agent.) But the source of such norms is as obscure as is God, and hence it is not plausible that the existence of such norms could be regarded as an intelligible possibility, and the existence of God not. Yet it is here that the consistent atheist—including the variety of atheist for whom "God" is a word without sense—must rest his case: that there are norms, whose source cannot be explored, that expressly or by implication preclude belief in God.

Those who regard the norms of rationality as having probative force independent of any further authority can take two different positions. One refers to the role of rationality norms in conversation; sometimes at least appeal to them persuades. But one needs to distinguish persuasion by appeal to the norms of rationality from other, often more effective, conversational tactics, such as scandal about opponents, implicit blackmail, or the use of professional authority to intimidate. Another claims that the norms of rationality carry their normative power within themselves, and need no further support. This move is plausible only insofar as the norm in question has not been seriously challenged, and particularly fails to carry conviction when a norm is invoked to dislodge deeply held beliefs such as the existence of God.

On the other side, believers appeal to an authority higher than themselves, i.e., God, who will judge between them and unbelievers. If they are right, they are right; if they are not right, they are not wrong either, except on standards that turn out to be as mysterious as their beliefs. Hence anyone for whom belief in God is a real possibility has every reason to believe in God.

IV.

The key issue, for any argument for the existence of God, is what attributes the God has whose existence is said to be established by it. Thus an advantage of St. Anselm's "ontological" argument is that there can be no serious doubt that, if sound, it establishes the existence of *God*, as understood by

Christian and other believers. (This is not to say that it provides an adequate basis for a Christian or other religious belief, or even that St. Anselm is entitled to assert, on his premises, that the concept of God makes sense.) [8]

The argument presented here implies the omnipotence and omniscience of God. These amount to the same thing: that a given proposition is true is equivalent to its being certified as such by God, who is the ultimate Source of all Being and the Judge of all disputed questions. Likewise, God is omnipotent and omniscient with respect to questions of value. That a given state of affairs is good, or a given action is right, and that it is commended by God, are equivalent propositions. God's perfect goodness follows from these premises, unless one can give an intelligible account of moral weakness in the absence of temptation, or of motiveless moral perversity.

A range of complex issues concerns the relationship between a proposition, *p*, and the (equivalent) position that God chooses or believes that *p*. One is the question of human free choice: are there states of affairs, such as these involving decisions, which, though infallibly known, are not decreed by God? Another concerns the relationship between the proposition that a given action is right, or a given state of affairs good, and the (equivalent) proposition that God commends that action or state of affairs.

Attention needs to be given to the nature of the claim that, of two logically equivalent propositions, one is nonetheless prior, in a sense other than that human beings reason from one to the other. Thus theists will reason from the taking place of an event, even one involving sin, to the conclusion that it was, in some sense, God's will that it should occur, while the doctrine that our sins are foreordained by God has been a source of much scandal. I am inclined to query the quasi-temporal relations suggested by priority claims and to assert that the truth of *p*, and God's certification of that truth, are not only logically equivalent but logically simultaneous. (This conclu-

[8] I discuss these issues in my essay, "The Religious Significance of the Ontological Argument," *Religious Studies*, 11 (1975), 97-116.

sion may require qualification for free agency, but I cannot explore this possibility here.)

In dealing with the issue of logical priority and logical simultaneity, we must be careful to distinguish it from the order in which a particular (or even a typical) reasoner will reach a given pair of conclusions: this order will vary with the circumstances of the person reasoning. And in dealing with a pair of logically equivalent propositions, there is no point in asking the truth of which is a condition of the possibility of the other: the relationship is mutual. Accordingly, the nature of the relationship of logical priority or simultaneity that may be held to exist between the propositions that p is true, and that God chooses or believes that p; and the propositions that p is obligatory, and that God commands that p, is a question for further reflection.

Another way of making clear what is meant by logical priority is in terms of concepts rather than of propositions. If the natural numbers are defined by repeated applications of the successor relation, then it is plausible that *zero* should be logically prior to *one*, *one* to *two*, and so forth. If God is defined as, among other things, a morally perfect being, then the concept of moral perfection (and thus also of moral goodness) is logically prior to that of God. But there is no reason to suppose that concepts need be defined in any particular order, nor that the most convenient order is necessarily the most intuitive. All truth-functional connectives can be defined in terms of *not-both* or *neither-nor*, but it is not intuitively plausible that these concepts are logically prior to negation or implication.

Thus, the label that some may attach to my account—"a divine command theory of ethics and epistemology"—fails to fit well. While moral and epistemic norms get their warrant from God, it does not follow that it is possible that, should God so decree, it would be right to torture babies, or that, should God so decree, self-contradictory propositions would be true. Still, the principles that exclude such putative possibilities get their warrant from God.

The warrant from God that attaches to moral and epistemic principles can be considered from two points of view. From our point of view adherence to such norms is an aspect of friendship with God. The pursuit of truth is thus a religious exercise even when the subject matter of such truth is in no way specifically theological. From God's point of view, it is an aspect of His creation of the universe. And God, in creating the universe, determines also what nonactual possibilities there are. As St. Thomas Aquinas puts it, Divine Providence arranges that what will come about necessarily will come about necessarily, and that what will come about contingently will come about contingently as well.[9]

Moral and epistemic norms may have the appearance of commands insofar as they address human beings who would prefer not to observe them. But if we consider them from God's standpoint they are neither independent of Him nor subject to His arbitrary will. What C. S. Lewis says of moral norms is true of epistemic and metaphysical standards as well: "God neither *obeys* nor *creates* the moral law."[10] The central feature of this conclusion is that there is in God no priority among wisdom, goodness, and power: God's perfection includes all of these without differentiation, though human beings may for their purposes emphasize one rather than another of them. Likewise God is the Creator both of the structural features of our world and of the particular things within it, although in a somewhat different mode.

Another way of formulating this conclusion is as an answer to Lewis Carroll's question in "What the Tortoise Said to Achilles." What requires us to move from p and *if* p, *then* q to q—what is sometimes called "the hardness of the logical must"—arises from God. Or more precisely it is God who supplies the imperative quality of logical and epistemological imperatives, and in so doing makes possible the distinction between truth and error.[11]

[9] *Summa Theologiae,* Ia, Q. 22, a. 4.

[10] *Christian Reflections*: Walter Hooper, ed. (Grand Rapids, 1967), p. 80.

[11] I am here indebted to Gary Gutting.

A further issue is whether my argument in fact establishes the existence of a personal God at all, or rather only of a Truth, both moral and metaphysical, transcending human purposes and conventions, which those philosophers broadly called "Platonists" have been concerned to affirm, and these called "pragmatists" to attack.[12] Friendship with God could be interpreted as knowledge of such Truth, and life in accordance with its requirements. The existence of such a Truth is an implication of my argument: God's version of the true and the good is normative for human beings, and can claim to provide an objective and universally binding resolution of all moral, metaphysical, and epistemological disputes. The issue is what further content the concept of God, as it issues from my argument, has beyond this.

A partial answer is that the existence of a Truth transcending human purposes and conventions has more than merely intellectual importance, at least for philosophers. To be a philosopher rather than a lawyer is to be concerned, not only with persuading others or even oneself, but with reaching a Truth that, in principle at least, is independent of what any human being believes. At least as a regulative ideal, belief in such a Truth is essential to the activity of attempting to discover arguments and doctrines that will command the assent of rational people generally, as distinct from persuading particular audiences at particular times and places. And something more than a regulative ideal may be necessary if a philosopher is to persevere in his efforts despite the formidable obstacles, both intellectual and material, to his efforts.

Beyond this the issue is in part one of picture preference. I find the picture of a Person whose determinations resolve questions of being and value more satisfactory than that of a Truth hanging in metaphysical midair; others no doubt will

[12] See Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton, 1980) and *Consequences of Pragmatism* (Minneapolis, 1982). For a pointed popular formulation, see his "The Fate of Philosophy," *New Republic*, Oct. 18, 1982, pp. 28-34. Rorty takes it for granted that religious belief is not an open possibility.

disagree. One consideration lies in my disbelief in a metaphysical chasm between fact and value. If one believes in truth as physical fact, on to which values must somehow be projected, it is easier to believe in truth independent of any mind (not only of any finite mind) than if one regards cognition in its every aspect as evaluative. The argument offered here can be briefly characterized as one from the normative character of rationality: because standards of truth and knowledge call upon us to hold beliefs we may prefer to reject, and to reject beliefs we may prefer to retain, it always makes sense to ask what stands behind such norms, besides the desires and attitudes of their adherents.

The most fundamental question is whether God will uphold or reject our purposes, hopes, and convictions, including the persons in whom these purposes, hopes, and convictions reside. Very little follows from my argument on this point. It is self-defeating to believe in total depravity, i.e., that every human thought, including this one, is hopelessly removed from truth. And it is within God's power to transform radically the conditions of existence, so that the life of human beings will greatly improve, and the truth only dimly glimpsed by us now can be more clearly known. But the question of the extent to which God will favor us is a matter outside the domain of philosophy, and within that of religion.

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WILFRED SELLARS: A THOMIST ESTIMATE

TWO SALIENT FEATURES of Sellars's philosophy are his conviction that, as he puts it, 'Science is the measure of all things, of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not';[1] and his opposition to what he calls 'the myth of the given'.[2] I shall argue that these features are in fundamental conflict with one another, and, further, that the philosophy of Aquinas provides resources for a resolution of the problems which give rise to the conflict. Sellars has himself given an estimate of Thomism, which he treats with some respect, as making common cause with him in its repudiation of 'idealism', but which he ultimately finds wanting.[3] A treatment of Sellars from the Thomist point of view may thus be not without interest. Sellars by no means capitulates to modern anti-metaphysical fashions; in fact his view of the role of philosophy has a refreshingly old-fashioned ring about it. 'The aim of philosophy, abstractly formulated', he says, 'is to understand how things in the broadest sense of the term hang together in the broadest sense of the term.'[4] This could of course be heartily endorsed by any recalcitrant metaphysician, including the Thomist.

What case is there for saying that a high veneration of science, as liable to tell us the truth about things, is in basic conflict with the view that 'the given' is a myth? That there is some *prima facie* case is clear enough, when one considers the reasons for supposing that science is apt to tell us the truth about the matters with which it deals. Scientific method

[1] W. C. Sellars, *Science, Perception and Reality* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), 173. All references not otherwise assigned will be to that work.

[2] 140, 161, etc.

[3] 41ff.

[4] 1.

is a matter of propounding and testing hypotheses; and to test a hypothesis is to appeal to facts or to phenomena which are as they are whether one maintains the hypothesis or not. That is to say, they are in some sense 'given', in that it is not up to the investigator whether they are so or not; he has to *look* and *see* whether they are so. Why do the oxygen theory of combustion, and Rutherford's theory of the atom, form a part of science, in a way that the phlogiston theory of combustion and Thomson's theory of the atom do not? The obvious answer is, that there is a substantial range of data or (merely to replace Latin with English) 'givens' which go to confirm the former pair of theories as likely to be true, the latter pair as likely to be false. It is not unfashionable at present to regard 'science' as merely a conglomerate of propositions stated as true by those prestigious persons called 'scientists' in their professional capacity. If this is so, it appears arbitrary to maintain that these propositions are liable to be true, let alone that 'science is the measure of all things'. One may, however, regard the propositions constitutive of science as essentially the result of the application of a method, and liable to be true of the matters with which it deals because and insofar as the method has been followed. But it seems impossible to characterize the method without reference to what is in some sense given. The investigator, insofar as he is scientific, cannot merely invent pointer-readings, or say that the marks left by recording-pencils are just what he would choose; he has to take such things as they are 'given'.

The considerations which I have just advanced suggest that this topic is of some importance—a point which seems worth making, since the topic of 'the given', and of the 'sense-data' in which it is often supposed to consist, has a very musty air about it, having been so much frequented by philosophers of a couple of generations ago. But short of some 'given', whatever it is held to consist in, in relation to which knowledge claims in science and elsewhere may be tested, I do not see how one is non-arbitrarily to adjudicate between real knowledge and knowledge falsely so called, or between science and

pseudo-science. 'Pragmatism' does not really provide a viable alternative here; that action a has result b, successful or otherwise, in circumstances c, is just one kind of 'given' of which those seeking knowledge have to take account.

Why then does Sellars object to 'the given', and how does he propose to dispense with it? As to the former point, there seems to be no valid strictly logical process, as any number of recent philosophers have pointed out, by which one can infer from the occurrence of any aggregate of private data to the existence of any real object in the public world. Consequently, it is argued, knowledge of such data cannot be the basis for knowledge of that world;[5] and one cannot 'analyze' any statement about the public world in terms of statements about such data. 'It just won't do to say that *x is red* is analyzable in terms of *x looks red to y*.'[6] Also, if such irreducibly private experiences existed, it is impossible to see how we could use our essentially public language to refer to them. How could anything *look* red unless in the first place something really *was* red, to supply some basis for the implicit comparison? Also, there is something offensive to the rational and scientific mind about the notion that certain statements, to the effect that one is enjoying particular sense-experiences, are indisputable and self-validating;[7] such claims are much too redolent of mysticism.

But Sellars's attention is mainly devoted to the latter question, of how we can dispense with such data in accounting for knowledge and for science, as I have already briefly argued that we cannot. His suggestion amounts to the following: (i) There is a hidden propositional claim involved in every report about sensation; (ii) This propositional claim is about the public world; (iii) Such a propositional claim never merely asserts the occurrence of a 'given' or datum; it is thus subject to public dispute like other propositional claims. One is inclined to say, Sellars concedes, that a remark like 'It looks

[5] Cf. 14.
[6] 142.
[7] Cf.

green' reports 'a minimal fact, on which it is safer to report because one might be mistaken' than if one roundly asserts that it *is* green; for example, 'the fact that the necktie looks green to John on a particular occasion'. But he rejects this account, as committing him to a 'given' in the form of sense-data. The heart of the matter, says Sellars, is that experiences always contain propositional claims, which one may or may not endorse.[8] '"X looks green to Jones' differs from "Jones sees that x is green" in that whereas the latter both ascribes a propositional claim to Jones *and endorses it,* the former ascribes the claim but does not endorse it . . . To say that "x looks green to S at t" is, in effect, to say that S has that kind of experience which, if one were prepared to endorse the proposition it involves, one would characterize as seeing x to be green at t.'[9]

What is envisaged here is Jones having an experience and making a judgment about the world in accordance with it, and someone else, say Smith, endorsing that judgment or not endorsing it. Jones, let us say, sees the necktie for the first time in a poor light, and says it is green, whereas Smith, who has seen it in a good light, and knows it to be blue, does not endorse his statement. However, there is a crucial possibility which Sellars neglects: that Jones *himself* may fail to endorse his experience, in the sense of committing himself on the basis of it to the statement about the public world which it would normally license. Suppose Jones has himself previously seen the tie in more favorable circumstances. He may then very well say something like, 'This tie looks green to me, though I know very well that it is blue'. What I believe has contributed to Sellars's misapprehension of the matter is that 'This tie looks green to me' very often implies, if only tentatively, that the thing concerned really *is* green, and so would *look* green in more favourable circumstances. But he neglects the other possible meaning of the sentence, where there is a mere report

[8] 144.
[9] 145-6.

of sensation, and no such implication about the public world, where, for example, the sufferer from jaundice complains, 'That chest of drawers looks yellow to me, though I know perfectly well that it is white'.

Sellars does imagine someone in the sort of situation which I have described, saying—'I don't know what to say. If I didn't know that the tie is blue . . . I would swear that I was seeing a green tie and seeing that it is green'.[10] If the subject of this example *doesn't* know what to say, then he *ought to* know; Sellars has an interest in his *not* knowing what to say, since admission that there could be a mere report of sensation which did not somehow include, even if tentatively, a claim about the public world, would involve him in acknowledgement of some kind of a 'given'. The conventions of language in fact provide the subject with several ways of expressing himself—'It looks green to me at the moment, though I know perfectly well that it's really blue'; or 'I have an experience *as though of* a green tie, though I have overwhelming reasons for thinking that the experience is deceptive'; and so on. In an extreme case, for example, when Jones's brain is being stimulated in the relevant areas by means of electrodes, and he knows this, he might say, 'I have a visual impression *as though of* a green necktie two feet before my eyes, though I know very well there is nothing really there but empty space'.[11]

Those who believe that experiences, or sense-data, provide foundations for knowledge, have to face the objection that (for example) if there were not green things, we would not be able to talk at all of—the expression is a somewhat bizarre one, for all its currency in philosophy a few decades ago—green sense-data. But granted that we *can* talk of real green objects in the public world, we can also, by more or less *ad hoc* modifications of the language which we employ for this, talk of experience *as of* green objects, of experience such as would

[10] 143.

[11] For ingenious discussion of examples of this kind, and convincing argument for the claim that there are sense-data, see J. R. Smythies, *The Analysis of Perception* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956), 70ff.

normally license talk of green objects but does not in this case owing to special circumstances, and so on. It is liable to be objected that, if talk about sense-data depends on talk about physical objects in the manner which I have just sketched, sense-data could not in any useful sense be the foundations of knowledge. But this, I think, would be a mistake. The fact is, I believe, that language about physical objects which one observes is foundational in one sense and that sense-data are foundational in another. We could not speak truly and with good reason about real physical objects, in other words gain knowledge of them, unless we enjoyed experience *as though of* physical objects. Such experience in general licences talk about real physical objects, enables us to make justified true judgments about them; but in special circumstances, as we discover, it does not. When asked to say what I see in an ordinary room which I have just entered, I may confidently state that I see a table; but having just the same experience in a psychology laboratory, I may warily declare that I enjoy visual experiences *as of* a table, suspecting that later experience may confirm the possibility that, this place having the reputation that it does, there will turn out to be no table there.

As Sellars says, 'if there is a logical dimension in which other empirical propositions rest on observational reports, there is another logical dimension in which the latter rest upon the former'.[12] So far as the metaphor of 'foundations' leads us to overlook this, it is certainly misleading. However, altogether to reject it seems to have the far more dangerous and paradoxical result which I mentioned at the beginning of this paper, that there remains no sufficient criterion for distinguishing between science and pseudo-science, or between legitimate claimants and mere pretenders to the title of knowledge.

It is a misleading way of expressing the manner in which sense-data may reasonably be said to be the foundations of knowledge, to say that knowledge that there are observable physical objects in one's immediate environment is founded on

[12] 170.

knowledge that one is undergoing certain sense-experiences. If knowledge is a matter of justified or grounded true judgment, *that* we are undergoing this or that experience seldom rises to the level of knowledge. Having the relevant set of experiences, we usually make a spontaneous judgment that the public state of affairs which we are apparently so justified in asserting is the case. The judgment merely *that* we are having certain experiences, and so knowledge of the matter on the definition just given, is a comparatively sophisticated achievement, which we learn as a result of reflection on the phenomena of error and illusion, or through a certain kind of philosophical training.[13]

It may be asked how sense-data could be in any sense the foundation of empirical knowledge, if there is no strictly logical route from any set of statements about sense-data to any set of statements about physical objects, or *vice versa.* The answer is, I believe, that statements about physical objects and events can be related to sense-experiences as their ultimate *grounds,* without the connection being in any strict sense *logical.* This is most obvious in the case of historical events, where it seems quite evident that it is one thing (say) to claim that George Washington was the first President of the United States, another thing to set out the grounds available in experience to persons in the twentieth century for this claim. Thomists and idealists have always emphasised the *active role* of the human intellect is coming to know the real world; this has tended to lead idealists, though not Thomists, to be doubtful or at least equivocal about the reality of that world prior to or independently of human thought about it. Thomists, in common with empiricists, emphasize that knowledge *starts with* experience; but they also maintain that, due to the functioning of what Aquinas called the *intellectus agens* (which amounts to the questioning and hypothesizing aspect of the mind), we can get to know of, or make justified true judgments about, states of affairs (like the existence of electrons,

[13] Cf. Hugo Meynell, 'Scepticism Revisited' (*Philosophy,* October 1984, 435-6), for a discussion of this point.

Julius Caesar and God) which cannot, at least now in the case of the second, be direct objects of experience.[14]

Bernard Lonergan has pointed out 'the isomorphism of Thomist and scientific thought',[15] with the scientist's observations related to his hypotheses as the 'matter' of the Thomist to his 'form' and the hypotheses of the scientist related to his verifications as the Thomist's 'essence' to his 'existence'.[16] There is furthermore an 'intentional' relation for the Thomist between the contents of the mind and the real world which the mind comes to know; in other words, the world is just what the mind *aims at* knowing so far as it strenuously applies itself to questioning the phenomena of experience.[17] A Thomist might thus well agree, on his own terms, with Sellars's dictum that 'science is the measure of all things', on the ground that when the presuppositions of science are clarified and generalised, they will be found to issue in a Thomist metaphysics or overall account of reality. Just as the '*intellectus agens*' 'abstracts' the 'quiddities' or 'essences' of things from the world of common experience, so the scientist gets at the real nature of things, or at least moves towards doing so, by the active propounding and testing of hypotheses. Though logic in a strict sense is an important *aspect of* this process, the process, as Hume, Popper and others have conclusively shown, cannot possibly be *reduced* to it. But once the nature of this process is clarified, it may easily be seen how our knowledge of the world might in an important sense be 'grounded' in the sense-data constitutive of experience, without being truth-conditionally related to statements regarding such experience. (The murder of Edward II of England in the fourteenth century

[14] See Aquinas, *Disputationes*, X *de Veritate*, 6: *Summa Theologiae* I, lxxix, 4; lxxxvii, 1. Thomas Gilby, *St. Thomas Aquinas. Philosophical Texts* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1951), 627, 645, 662.

[15] See B. Lonergan, *Collection* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1967), 142.

[16] *Ibid.*, 143-6.

[17] See Anthony Kenny, *Aquinas* (Oxford and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1980), 79-81.

could not conceivably be *a matter* of any experience which might be enjoyed by a historian in the twentieth century; but for all that, such experience may well be relevant to establishing that this event occurred, and of what nature it was.)

Sellars will have it that it is a false dilemma, that knowledge must either have 'foundations' which themselves need no support, or that it is just a set of mutually-reinforcing propositions. 'Empirical knowledge, like its sophisticated extension, science, is rational, not because it has a *foundation* but because it is a self-correcting enterprise which can put *any* claim in jeopardy, though not all at once.'[18] However, it is hard to see what the view that knowledge is self-correcting, or indeed that it is empirical, amounts to, unless a particular kind of 'given' is assumed in deference to which the corrections are made. Moreover, unless some restrictions are put on the criteria according to which science is to be 'self-correcting', the possibility is left open that the opinions of scientists will be just as scientific if they are 'corrected' due to bribery or career prospects. That no *individual* observation-claim ought to be sacrosanct must indeed be acknowledged; observations should not be taken seriously unless repeatable. But to acknowledge that individual fragments of 'the given' have very little weight in themselves by no means implies that appeal to 'the given' has no place in science or epistemology. To take a parallel case, that it may be rational to suspect the report of *any one* witness, in deference to a consensus of other witnesses, by no means entails that all appeal to witnesses is mistaken or a sham. In the long run, I believe, the dilemma which Sellars tries to stigmatize as false is a true one; short of a 'given' of some kind, no adequate justification of most knowledge-claims is possible.

It is a main task of philosophy, according to Sellars, to fuse the common-sense and the scientific conceptions of the world and humankind within it into a single coherent view.[19] The

[18] 170.
[19] 4-5.

Thomist is perfectly capable of doing this; reality or 'being' consists of existing essences, to be grasped as to *how* they are and *that* they are by the 'agent intellect' acting upon appearances. If 'essence' is the aspect of reality to be grasped by hypotheses, and 'existence' is that which corresponds to their verification, and 'potency' that which is equivalent to the experience which both suggests each hypothesis and provides the means of testing it, then Thomist metaphysics is at once presupposed and vindicated by a scientific method whose essence is progressively to discover reality by the *verification*[20] of *hypotheses* in *experience*.

How far do Sellars's own philosophical principles enable him to fulfill the task which he sets for philosophy? He finds the Thomist tradition wanting, notably in its view that the intellect, in order to reflect reality, must be immaterial.[21] He remarks on the temptation to maintain that speech reflects the world because the thought which it expresses does so; he will have it that the opposite is the case.[22] This leaves him with the problem of how speech might be explained as reflecting the world, without any appeal being made to thought. Let us suppose, he says, that a robot emits radiation which is reflected back from its environment in such a way as to correspond to the structure of that environment; and that it moves about 'recording its "observations", enriching its tape with deductive and inductive "inferences" from its "observations" and guiding its "conduct"' accordingly. We might then allow ourselves to talk about the robot in human terms as *finding out* more and more about the world.[23] What would be the analogue of our knowledge of, say, lightning, on the tape inside the robot? It would be 'the correspondence of the "place" of a certain pattern on the tape in the system of patterns on the

[20] Karl Popper would not like this way of talking; but I believe the disagreement between this position and his would be merely verbal. Instead of 'verification', he would speak of 'corroboration'.

[21] 41.

[22] 31; cf. 199-200.

[23] 53.

tape to the " place " of the flash of lightning in the robot's spatio-temporal environment '. At that rate there is no need to postulate ' the absolute nature *lightning* existing immaterially in the robot's electronic system ', in the manner of Thomism.[24] Only material entities are in question here; the relevant pattern on the tape *means* the same as our word ' lightning ' due to its similarity of role in the robot's behaviour to that of the word ' lightning ' in ours.[25]

Sellars draws from this what he regards as an important moral for our conception of the nature of our own inner states, and in particular of our thoughts. Descartes, among many others, considered that we had non-inferential knowledge of these inner states of ours, including our thoughts and sensations. But the upshot of these reflections is that to know our inner states *as* thoughts and sensations *of* things in the world is to know them *in a role,* rather than *in themselves.* This leaves open the possibility, which is the only one really compatible with science but that the Cartesian conception would exclude, that in themselves they are states of the human organism as investigated by neurology. As to the intellect itself, ' I submit that as belonging to the real order it is the central nervous system . . . There is no absurdity in the idea that what we know *directly* as *thoughts* in terms of *analogical* concepts may *in propria persona* be neurological states'.[26]

I believe this conception of human knowledge and its relation to the world, ingenious as it is, to be subject to the disadvantages of all consistently materialist accounts of knowledge. There is a conceptual crevasse, which Sellars has by no means managed to bridge, between an entity's *reaction to its environment* at a particular place and time, and its *knowledge of a world* vastly extended in space and time beyond that environment, and which exists and is as it is largely prior to and independently of the entity and its reactions. Admittedly, we are stimulated to get to know the world by the need to react

[24] 54.
[25] 57.
[26] 58-59.

adequately to our environment if we are to survive and prosper; but this does not imply that the knowledge is ultimately reducible to the reaction. Consequently, Sellars's ingenious and complex account of the building up of a pattern of *reactions* does not begin to explain that acquisition of *knowledge* which he set out to explain. Furthermore, Sellars will have it that the analogues in the robot's tape, brought about by interaction with its environment, to elements in that environment, may fairly be compared to a picture of it. But, it may fairly be asked, in virtue of what is a picture of something a picture of it? It seems to me, only by virtue of a subject's intended use of it as such. The simple fact is, I believe, that material object or complex *a means* material object or complex *b* only by virtue of being or having been intended to do so by some person or persons. Certainly, one can imagine limiting cases where one such object or complex can mean another, when not specifically made or formed to do so. Thus a chimpanzee might scrawl random pencil-marks on a sheet of paper, which turned out to be usable as a map of Medicine Hat, Alberta. But it would not *be* in any sense a map of that town, nor would its lines represent its streets or its blobs its buildings, until *someone* had hit on the idea of using them as such. (One way out of the difficulty might be to say that patterns in our brains and elements of our speech pictured the real world, when properly used by us, due to our being programmed for this purpose by our Creator; but I doubt whether Sellars himself would be much pleased by such a solution to his problem.) When one attends to these facts, Sellars's learned talk of ' projection ' and ' isomorphism ', and allusions to recent developments in the science of cybernetics,[27] are like so much whistling in the dark. The sequence of marks ' $713 ', appearing directly after you have pressed a series of buttons outside your bank, *means* that you have a balance of $713, by virtue of the fact that *someone* has programmed a computer in such a way that it should mean this. In fine, meaning presup-

[27] 52, 57, 59.

poses persons, and cannot be explained exhaustively in terms of structural analogies between sets of physical objects and events.

If the mental cannot be explained in terms of what is material, is it possible to explain the material in terms of what is mental, or do we simply have to put up with dualism? In the relevant sense, I believe that the material can be explained in terms of the mental; and that Thomism, at least when expanded to take into account the transcendental considerations which have tended to preoccupy philosophers since Kant, is able thus to explain it. As I have already said, reality, for the Thomist, consists of potency, form and act; which are the analogues in reality of the experience, the envisagement of possibilities, and the verification of some of these possibilities as so, by which the human mind comes to know reality. We spontaneously believe, and tend to confirm by rational investigation, that there are two overall types of being, that which is thus to be known as not itself knowing, and that which is to be known as itself knowing; these constitute the material and spiritual aspects of the world. Thus, briefly, matter and the material can be accounted for as an aspect of that which is to be known by mind or the spiritual, whereas mind cannot be accounted for as exhaustively constituted by matter, for all the ingenuity of Sellers and others who have tried to show that it can.

Sellars clearly thinks his own account of the manner in which thought and speech reflect the world to be commended as a means of laying the ghost of idealism.[28] This raises the questions, for what reason, and in what sense of the term, does Sellars object to idealism; and in what sense he is right in objecting to it. The reasons for which he is right to object to idealism, I believe, regard precisely those aspects of it in which it is opposed to Thomism. However, I think it can also be shown that his own account of knowledge and reality is defective so far as it fails to bring out the way in which the mind

[28] Cf. 42.

as it were constructs the reality which it comes to know, as emphasized in their different ways by both Thomists and idealists, who are at one in stressing the active role of the intellect in coming to know. In what sense, if at all, is Thomism as I have described it an 'idealist' doctrine? It *is* so, in the sense that it gives an account of what is real, including that which is material, as what is to be known by the human mind. But it is *not* so, in that it by no means denies, or implies the denial, that what is thus to be known exists largely prior to and independently of the human mind which thus comes to know it. Indeed, we have excellent reasons, as the result of the operations of our minds, to suppose that a world of things existed millions of years prior to the existence of human minds which could gain knowledge of it. Sellars is quite correct to object to any form of idealism which implies denial of this fact. However, it remains a question whether and how far such a world, which can be adequately characterized in general terms only as what a mind might discover, could exist prior to and independently of mind as such.[29] And, of course, it has been characteristic of Thomists to assert that at least one spiritual being exists prior to the material world, accounting for its existence and its overall nature and structure.[30] Let us distinguish between idealism (a) and idealism (b), the view that the material universe has no existence apart from the human mind, and the view that the universe has no existence apart from mind as such. Sellars would repudiate both idealism (a) and idealism (b), and is quite correct in seeing Thomists as united with himself in opposing idealism (a). But his own repudiation of idealism (b), which would be maintained by Thomists, seems to depend on an account of how mind might be exhaustively explicable in terms of matter in a certain state of complexity, which I have already argued to be inadequate.

[29] For an account of idealism which makes these distinctions with admirable clarity, see H. B. Acton, 'Idealism' (*Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* [New York: The Free Press, 1967], Vol. IV), 110f.

[30] Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, I, ii, 3.

That the Thomist account of knowledge is 'oversimplified' may well be true, insofar as it was originally formulated by a thinker innocent of our modern information on the actual complexities of the process of acquiring knowledge. But the important question is whether it is correct, and an improvement on rival theories, so far as it goes; no Thomist worth his salt would deny that it is subject to supplementation in the light of investigations which have occurred since the thirteenth century. The facts seem to be these: (1) By means of scientific investigation we come to know of an intelligible world, existing prior to and independently of ourselves, which explains what we observe in the 'world' of common experience; (2) The former seems to be the 'world' which is ultimately real; (3) This 'world' is to be known by active inquiry into the data of experience, in which inquiry grasps 'quiddities' or 'essences' (examples would be 'phlogiston', 'oxygen', 'aether', and 'electron'), some of which tend to be verified in experience as 'existent'; (4) This process through which by means of the 'active intellect' we come to grasp the real 'essences' of things is progressive and cumulative, and is not to be achieved all at once. (1) and (2) are propositions in support of which Thomism, Sellars and the scientific world-view all concur, though, as I argued earlier, Sellars's aspersions on 'the given' make it impossible to show *why* these propositions are true. The cumulative and progressive character of science, alluded to in (4), was certainly not fully grasped by Aquinas or by classical Thomism; in this sense and to this degree, Sellars is quite right in calling the Thomist theory of knowledge oversimplified. But this is by no means to impugn the central and essential Thomist insight expressed by (3), especially when the failure of Sellars and others to set out an adequate alternative is taken into account.

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MEISTER ECKHART AND THE "ETERNAL BIRTH": THE HEART OF THE PREACHER

WHEN ONE HEARS the name of Meister Johann Eckhart, one thinks immediately of the mystic. But Eckhart was more than that. The Rhine mystic was also a German Scholastic, Dominican priest and prior, teacher and preacher. If one imagines Eckhart only rapt in mystical trance and lost to the world, then one perhaps underestimates his involvement with the people who constituted his parish and who gathered together each week to hear his homilies.

Of the hundreds that Eckhart doubtless delivered in his lifetime, only a few of these sermons survive to our day.[1] At the heart of the sermons that we do have, however, there emerges a singular theme which utterly absorbs this mystical preacher—what he calls the "Eternal Birth." It is clearly the focus for his own experience with God, and it serves as well as the focal point for much of his homiletical work.

The "Eternal Birth" is an exciting and profound concept for virtually any modern reader, made more difficult perhaps due to the absence in Eckhart's sermons of any systematic or comprehensive statement about it. If one is to gain some insight into this mystical thesis, then, one must immerse oneself in the extant homiletical material, lifting out relevant references to the Eternal Birth as they occur, bringing together these related statements into a meaningful and organized whole. This is the starting challenge behind the written

[1] Only 28 of Eckhart's sermons are included in Raymond Blakney's classical translation of Eckhart's work (*Meister Eckhart*. New York: Harper and Row, 1941), which serves as the principal source for this article. All references that follow cite the number of the sermon per Blakney's arrangement, followed by the page number in the book.

work here, the result of which will hopefully be a clearer and more complete view of what Eckhart understood by this great, interior possibility.

ECKHART'S STARTING POINT—TWO " GIVENS "

Two fundamental facts, in Eckhart's view, constitute the background for understanding the occurrence of the Eternal Birth. The first has to do with the virtually insatiable hunger that human beings experience for God. Humans unavoidably, universally, find themselves in a lifelong search for the only food that will ultimately satisfy them, and that food is God. The second has to do with God's irresistible tendency, in turn, to give Himself freely and fully to His creatures. They that hunger for God will inevitably be fulfilled. And Eckhart is as certain of that as he is of the reality of his own firsthand experience of God. God gives Himself to human beings in a perfectly intimate manner. In the Eternal Birth, He bursts forth from within their inner life. Each of these two basic points merits some consideration.

To begin, Eckhart identifies the pronounced human penchant for God as "*irascibilis*", defining this quality as the " upsurging agent " in the soul.[2] *Irascibilis* inspires the human being on that perennial search for That Which will fill and fulfill. " As it is the property of the eye to see form and color and of the ear to hear sweet sounds and voices," Eckhart maintains, " it is the property of the soul ever to struggle upwards by means of this agent." [3] Once this *irascibilis* manifests itself within the personality, there is engendered within the self a driving restlessness, a restlessness that is concluded only when one has returned to the Origin of all. " So sweet is God's com-

[2] XIV, p. 163. Eckhart's choice of words is a bit baffling at first sight actually. The Latin word "*irascibilis*" has as its root the word "*ira*," denoting " wrath ". It seems incongruous to associate a heated wrathfulness with the soul's inherent drive to seek out God. But consistent with this meaning Eckhart later speaks of the soul's determined *struggling, crashing,* and even *storming* of heaven itself in search of its Source.

[3] *Ibid.*

fort," Eckhart preaches, " that every creature is looking for it, hunting it. . . . Their very existence and life depend on their search for it, their hunting it." [4]

The soul, in short, experiences God as the final answer to human existence, *the* matter of ultimate concern in one's life. There is a God-shaped vacuum at the center of things. The soul intuitively understands, if only subliminally, that nothing is more important than God. The whole of life is oriented in a God-ward direction. At greater length, Eckhart writes:

> Whether you like it or not, whether you know it or not, secretly all nature seeks God and works toward him. . . . Nature's intent is neither food nor drink, nor clothing, nor comfort, nor anything else in which God is left out. Covertly, nature seeks, hunts, tries to ferret out the track on which God may be found. . . . (The soul) can never rest until it gets to the core of the matter, crashing through to that which is beyond the idea of God and truth, until it reaches the *in principio,* the beginning of beginnings, the origin or source of all goodness and truth.[5]

Elsewhere, he adds:

> . . . The human spirit . . . can never be satisfied with what light it has, but storms the firmament and scales the heavens to discover the spirit by which the heavens are driven in revolutions and by which everything on the earth grows and flourishes.[6]

By their very basic nature, in other words, human beings are spirit in profound search of their spiritual Ground.

Eckhart's second basic premise is that the inner drive of humans to find God is matched by God's own passion to give Himself to them. Human *irascibilis* is met with Divine love and self-disclosure. It is in the very nature of God to make this gift of Himself. Indeed, Eckhart views God as being virtually powerless to do otherwise. God's love for the creature is so abundant and so complete that He freely gives the best that can possibly be given—the gift of Himself. It is a favor that is given in a moment of exquisite birth. " The supreme

[4] X, p. 145.
[5] XV, pp. 168-169.
[6] XXI, p. 192.

purpose of God is birth," Eckhart begins. " He will not be content until his Son is born in us. Neither will the soul be content until the Son is born of it ".[7] Elsewhere, he declares, " The Father can do nothing but beget and the Son nothing but be begotten." [8] Again, he adds, " All of God's efforts are directed to reproducing himself." [9]

Eckhart characterizes this mutual affinity that the soul and God experience for one another on the basis of the *imago Dei.* The human soul craves for its origin, for the Source out of which it was spawned. And God pours Himself into the soul because it is comprised of the very stuff of divinity itself. God gives Himself to that in the human being which is exactly like Himself. So, Eckhart teaches:

> The temple in which God wants to be master, strong to work his will, is the human soul, which he created and fashioned like himself. . . . He made the human soul so much like himself that nothing else in heaven or on earth resembles him so much.[10]

" God and the soul are so nearly (related) to each other that there is really no distinction between them," Eckhart instructs elsewhere.[11] The common denominator between the two is that in the creature which is the very image of the Creator. Eckhart suggests:

> By nature, the soul is patterned after God himself. This pattern must be adorned and fulfilled by divine conception, and no other creature except the soul is adapted to such a function. In fact, whatever the perfection that may come to the soul . . . it cannot come except by birth.[12]

Because of the *imago,* the soul, unless it chooses otherwise, is destined to break through to eternity. The human soul is tailored for no purpose other than the Eternal Birth at the

[7] XII, p. 151.
[8] XXI, p. 194.
[9] XX, p. 189.
[10] XIII, p. 156.
[11] XXV, p. 214.
[12] II p. 103.

hand of God. "It is the soul that is especially designed for the birth of God," Eckhart states confidently, "and so it occurs exclusively in the soul."[13] In the soul, God is generative, procreative.

This identity between soul and God leads Eckhart to affirm repeatedly that God is an immediate and intimate aspect of human experience. Some persons may assume that God is far away, a transcendent Lord distantly removed from the created order. But, for Meister Eckhart, nothing could be further from the truth of his own experience. This Lord, for him, is so incredibly in love with that created order that He personally invests Himself in it. In the human soul, by virtue of the *imago Dei*, God is already fundamentally present, and, through that *imago*, God in His totality is available to the creature.

Eckhart counsels:

> You need not look either here or there. He is no farther away than the door of the heart. He stands there, lingering, waiting for us to be ready and open the door and let him in. You need not call to him as if he were far away, for he waits more urgently than you for the door to be opened.[14]

Similarly, Eckhart adds:

> . . . God is very anxious at all times to be near to people, and to teach them how to come to him, if they are only willing to follow him. Nobody ever wanted anything as much as God wants to bring people to know him.[15]

A PROBLEM

There seems to be a dilemma of sorts here. If the human soul and God are so close in nature and essence, then why does not everyone already know this Eternal Birth for themselves? If God is indeed already so immediate, if God is already present in person within the human soul, then how can persons be

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 103-104.
[14] IV, p. 121-122.
[15] VI, p. 132.

so estranged from their Divine Ground? If God is already within us, then why must we search Him out? [16]

It is the paradox of the mystical path that, simultaneously, one is inches from the Divine goal and yet light-years away from it. Eckhart states, ". . . Nothing is as near to me as God is. God is nearer to me than I am to myself." [17] In this pair of statements, we have the entire conundrum set before us: God is immediate and present, but we are distant and lost. God is already awaiting our arrival at the ultimate goal, but we are still wandering around in desperate search of it. God and the soul are breathing as one, but we have forfeited the experience of this unity in favor of our egos. In short, because we are basically strangers to our own divinity-impregnated cores, we sense ourselves to be strangers as well to God. In reconnecting with our own inner depths, in rediscovering our authentic self, we arrive also at God, who has been there all the while. This spiritual issue constitutes the focus for another part of Eckhart's remarks, as follows:

> Nobody ever wanted anything as much as God wants to bring people to know him. God is always ready, but we are not ready. God is near to us, but we are far from him. God is within; we are without. God is at home; we are abroad.[18]

This problematical distance is resolved, then, as the person again sinks deeply back into himself, back to that bedrock of the self which yet bears the Divine imprint, back to the wellsprings of the personality itself. This requires, above all else, a radical inward orientation, an orientation away from the lure of external, empirical reality and in towards the rich darkness and fertile silence within. " Not to be accustomed to inward, spiritual things is never really to know what God is!" Eckhart exclaims. " To have wine in your cellar and never to drink it, is not to know whether it is good or bad." [19] He concludes ac-

[16] XXVII, p. 225.
[17] VI, p. 129.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 132.
[19] XXV, p. 216.

cordingly, "A person finds his goal in the divine nature, and it is within himself." [20] In another place, he explains graphically:

> The soul has two eyes—one looking inwards and the other outwards. It is the inner eye of the soul that looks into essence and takes being directly from God. That is its true function. The soul's outward eye is directed toward creatures and perceives their external forms, but when a person turns inward and knows God in terms of his own inner awareness of him, in the roots of his being, he is then freed from all creation and is secure in the castle of truth.[21]

The Eternal Birth is to be approached from within the inner life of a person. If one is to receive that birth into eternity, one, to the exclusion of all that is exterior, must remain attuned to the deeper life. Eckhart provides some detail relative to this spiritual psychology:

> It is the aim of all God does that the agents of the soul should be redirected inward, toward himself. . . . If the soul is scattered among its agents and spread out in externalities . . . then its inward action is feebler because scattered forces do not fulfill (their mission). Therefore if the inward work of the soul is to be efficient, it must recall its agents and gather them in from their dispersion to one inward effort.[22]

Elsewhere, he adds:

> If you are to experience this noble birth, you must depart from all crowds and go back to the starting point, the core (of the soul) out of which you came. . . . You must leave them all: sense perception, imagination, and all that you discover in self or intend to do. After that, you may experience this birth—but otherwise not—believe me![23]

The ability to experience God's new birth is related to the individual's determined ability to withdraw himself away from all that otherwise lures him out of himself. If he can reclaim

[20] *Ibid.*
[21] *Ibid.*
[22] II, p. 105.
[23] IV, p. 118.

that energy which ordinarily would be channelled externally, if he can integrate all that energy into a singular focus upon his inner Ground, then the ultimate and the eternal can come to birth in him. This emptying out of the lesser and the superficial, therefore, is critical to the mystical process.

MAKING ONESELF A DESERT

God's nature, it seems, is very simple. In fact, it is simplicity and irreducible unity itself. And in order for the individual to receive God's Eternal Birth, he must become as simple and unified as God is. The usual complicatedness, sophistication, and plurality must give way to an *emptiness,* an emptiness that God will find and fill with Himself. Anything other than this inner, expectant nothingness interferes with the spiritual process. Interior poverty precedes the birth into eternity. Eckhart asserts:

> As it is, we have to turn from one thing to the other and therefore we cannot pay attention to one without depriving the other. . . . If then the soul goes out to attend to external activities, it will necessarily be the weaker in its inward efforts, and for this birth in the soul God will and must have a pure, free, and unencumbered soul, in which there is nothing but him alone, a soul that waits for nothing and nobody but him.[24]

The state that the soul ordinarily finds itself in is typified by divided attentions and therefore divided affections. God, who is unity, calls the human soul from this interior fragmentation and flux to something superior—to Himself.

Stated differently, there is a positive correlation between the lack of inner distractedness and the capacity for singularity of focus upon God. The simpler, the emptier one's soul, the greater the energy and concentration that one can bring to God. The more that one exclusively centers in on God, the more one becomes God's. The more that one becomes God's, the more one becomes like God. And the more that one becomes like God, the greater the opportunity for the Divine

[24] II, pp. 106-107.

Birth. The mystic suggests, "Be like a desert as far as self and the things of this world are concerned." [25] "Where the creature ends," he counsels elsewhere, "there God begins to be. God asks only that you get out of his way . . . and let him be God in you."[26]

This image of the desert reappears at various places in Eckhart's sermons, always with the implication that, to the degree that one evacuates himself of all personal content, one is filled with the content of the Son. In finding that space within the human which is akin to the Divine nature—simple, uncluttered, unfettered, free—God fills it with Himself. Eckhart muses:

> In this likeness or identity God takes such delight that he pours his whole nature and being into it. . . . It is his pleasure and rapture to discover identity, because he can always put his whole nature into it—for he is this identity itself.[27]

Where God discovers emptiness, He fills it personally. Where God discovers the human desert, He sows it with Himself. "Remember that God may not leave anything empty or void," he preaches. "That is not God's nature. He could not bear it. . . . God, the master of nature, will not tolerate any empty place." [28]

Meister Eckhart coins a word to describe this radical emptiness, this stark desert of the self. He terms it "Unwizzen," literally "unknowledge," with translator Blakney preferring to render the German "unconsciousness" or "unself-consciousness." In either case, it signifies that state of personality which is devoid of all personal will, activity, and even thought and imagination. It is emptiness indeed, emptiness that is also clarity. It is like water allowed to set until it comes to a perfectly tranquil state, where all the particles suspended in it slowly, ineluctably, precipitate out. Eckhart exhorts,

[25] III, p. 115.
[26] V, p. 127.
[27] XXIII, p. 205.
[28] IV, p. 122.

"Yes, truly. You could not do better than to go where it is dark, that is, unconsciousness." [29] He adds:

God acts without instrumentality and without ideas. And the freer you are from ideas, the more sensitive you are to his inward action. You are nearer to it in proportion as you are introverted and unself-conscious.[30]

The relationship is clear, then—the more self-aware one is, the less conscious of God one can be. Hence, as Eckhart puts it tersely, "If God is to get in, the creature must get out." [31] Unself-consciousness, in other words, is synonymous with God-consciousness.

If the soul is to know God, it must forget itself and lose (consciousness of) itself, for as long as it is self-aware and self-conscious, it will not see or be conscious of God. But when, for God's sake, it becomes unself-conscious and lets go of everything, it finds itself again in God, for, knowing God, it therefore knows itself and everything else from which it has been cut asunder, in the divine perfection.[32]

To put one's ego-self behind one is to open oneself up afresh to God. To lose oneself is to find God. "If you really forsake your own knowledge and will, then surely and gladly will God enter with his knowledge shining clearly," Eckhart states elsewhere. "Where God achieves self-consciousness, your own knowledge is of no use . . ." [33] Providing an excellent summary of his notion of unself-consciousness, he submits:

Therefore, how profitable it is to pursue this potentiality, until empty and innocent, a man is alone in that darkness of unself-consciousness, tracking and tracing (every clue) and never retracing his steps! Thus you may win that (something) which is everything, and the more you make yourself like a desert, unconscious of everything, the nearer you come to that estate. . . . The genuine word of eternity is spoken only in that eternity of the man who is himself a wilderness, alienated from self and multiplicity.[34]

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 119.
[30] I, p. 100.
[31] II, p. 104.
[32] VI, p. 131.
[33] IV, p. 119.
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 120.

This unself-consciousness, this sacrificial journeying into the desert of the self, this willing abandonment of all that is individual is the necessary precondition for receiving the universal and the eternal into oneself. God can come in His fullness only when His room in one's soul is emptied, swept, and readied to welcome Him. Eckhart proposes, ". . . If you wish (to experience the Eternal Birth), you must drop all other activities and achieve unself-consciousness, in which you will find it." [35]

THE DESERT OF THE SELF—A TOUCHSTONE

In seeking God in the desert of the soul, one is oriented away from selfishness, away from narrower, self-centered concerns, needs, and preferences. The resultant state is one of passive obedience to God's will alone and of disinterestedness with regards to one's individual affairs or state. This state of disinterestedness (German, " Abgescheidenheit ") is the fruit that naturally emerges from the re-acquired simplicity of the soul. It is the very antithesis of the former multiplicity of the self, undisciplinedly torn in so many directions.

The whole of life ordinarily is directed at the avoidance of pain and the securing of personal pleasure and gain. Here in the simple ground of the soul, however, pain and personal profit inspire neither repulsion nor attraction. In fact, neither extreme holds any meaning at all. Only God shines within one's consciousness with pre-eminent significance. Eckhart describes:

> The soul itself is so simple that it cannot have more than one idea at a time of anything. When attention is directed to the idea of a stone, the idea of an angel cannot also be entertained. . . . To think of a thousand angels is no more than thinking of two—and even more, no more than thinking of one. Thus, a person cannot be more than single in attention.[36]

The more like a desert one becomes, the simpler, the singler, one grows.

[35] I, p. 106.
[36] XXV, p. 215.

The natural enemy of the Eternal Birth is interior duplicity—double-mindedness, double-heartedness. Such division within the self is incongruous with the nature of God, whose simplicity has been described earlier. But it is also incongruous with the mandate of monotheism, which implies that nothing else should rival God in importance within one's life. Singularity of personal focus, then, frees one from the problems created by duplicity. It liberates one instead to an existence of infinite simplicity.

Resting quietly in that simplicity, one manifests a natural disinterestedness towards all that otherwise-distracting and disorienting multiplicity. Human existence thus becomes as simple as the soul itself, as simple as God. " There in the inmost core of the soul, where God begets his Son," Eckhart declares, ". . . . it is one and unanalyzable. . . . To live by this pure essence of our nature, one must be dead to all that is personal." [37] From this simpler, inner core, all in life assumes absolutely equal value. Eckhart further explains:

> The soul that is to know God must be so firm and steady in God that nothing can penetrate it, neither hope nor fear, neither joy nor sorrow, neither love nor suffering, or any other thing that can come in it from without. . . . Likewise, the soul ought to be equidistant from every earthly thing, so that it is not nearer to one than to the other and behaves the same in love, or suffering, or having, or forbearance; toward whatever it may be, the soul should be as dead, or dispassionate, or superior to it.[38]

Individual will or choice is supplanted by the omniscient, gracious will of God, will that can be confidently trusted and obeyed. " If God is to be your Lord," Eckhart proposes, " you must really be his servant, but if you work only for your own ends, to secure your own bliss, then you are not his servant." [39] If God is one's Lord, then whatever that Lord gives to one—prosperity or adversity, ease or trial, smooth roads or rough roads—is to be accepted and embraced in the same even-

[37] V, pp. 125-126.
[38] VI, p. 130.
[39] XVII, p. 174.

spirited fashion. This is the dispassionate character of disinterestedness. Eckhart declares, "When you get rid of selfishness . . . then whatever your lot, whatever touches you, for better or worse, sour or sweet, none of it is yours, but it is all God's to whom you have left it." [40] Elsewhere, he takes up the same theme again:

> Be sure as God lives, that (whatever your lot in life) it is necessarily the best and that nothing could be better. Even if there is something that seems better to you, it should not; for, since God wills it this way and not otherwise, it must necessarily be best for you. Let it be sickness, or poverty, or hunger, or thirst, or whatever God ordains or denies, gives or withholds: it is best for you.[41]

To accept what God gives is far better than to struggle for something that one would choose for oneself. That personal choosing and struggling suggest an adversary relationship with God—the hyperactivity of the fragmenting human ego and the lack of inner trust in God's grace and wisdom.

Disinterestedness, then, implies a radical will-lessness on one's own part. One wills only what God wills for one, whatever that may specifically be. Eckhart insists:

> He who gives up to God his own will, captures God and binds him, so that God can do nothing but what that person wills! Give your will over to God, and he will give you his own in return, so fully and without reserve, that the will of God shall be your own human will.[42]

In emptying out one's own desires and anxieties, in becoming that desert in which God will burst forth, the absence of one's individual will means nothing less than the *presence* of God's. Eckhart therefore exhorts:

> Above all, claim nothing for yourself. Relax and let God operate in you and do what he will with you. The deed is his; the word is his; this birth is his, and all you are is his, for you have surrendered

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[40] III, p. 114.
[41] XIX, p. 183.
[42] XVII, p. 175.

self to him. . . . Then at once, God comes into your being and faculties, for you are like a desert, despoiled of all that was peculiarly your own.[43]

When the soul becomes pliable, God, through the Eternal Birth, works it into a new form. Adam is refashioned into Christ.

Where the self-center perishes, the God-center flourishes in birth. One dies to oneself, and the Son bursts forth from within. This is possible only for them who have both eyes focused singularly on God and on nothing else. " The person who has denied himself and all else, who seeks his advantage in nothing, and who lives without assigned reasons, acting solely from loving-kindness," this mystic concludes, " is one who is dead to the world and alive in God, and God is alive in him." [44]

EMPTINESS AND THE WORD

When the person abandons the disrupting pursuit of ego's every whim and fancy, the physical senses can be withdrawn from their preoccupation with and attachment to externals. When the faculties of the personality are reintegrated into a fine point of focus upon God, the common identity between the soul and God can be re-established. And when one becomes an unself-conscious desert, devoid of personal will or desire, when the fruits of disinterestedness are consequently manifested, the spirit of the individual is characterized by a great stillness, an unperturbable silence. And in this profound quiet, beyond the ordinary cacophony of one's conflicting and competing passions, the Eternal Birth transpires within one.

Since the interior state of the soul is depicted as one of quietude, the movement of God within this silence is said to be a Divine " speaking " and a human " hearing." Eckhart asks his audience what a person should do in order to obtain this Birth from above. Should one exercise one's imaginative capacities and think strenuously about God? Or should one

[43] III, p. 115.
[44] XXI, p. 193.

simply rest in this darkness and this stillness, devoid of all thought and reflection? He answers himself by stating that "the best life and the loftiest is to be silent and to let God speak and act through one."[45] Elsewhere, he maintains, "Therefore, if God is to speak his word to the soul, it must be still and at peace, and then he *will* speak his word and give himself to the soul. . . ."[46]

The sustained silence, of course, is the means of leaving undisturbed the fundamental simplicity of the soul. Any effort on one's own part breaks this interior peace and calm. Such effort is actually rather pretentious, to say the least. One cannot do anything consciously to aid in God's process. The Birth is God's initiative, God's effort, and God's final accomplishment. The human being, therefore, can do no better than to remain passively receptive to what God is achieving in His own way and His own time. "If anyone is speaking in the temple of the soul, Jesus keeps still, as if he were not at home. . . ." Eckhart visualizes, adding, "If Jesus is to speak in the soul and be heard, then the soul must be alone and quiet."[47] In that perfect emptiness of the self's core, then, God speaks, and, in speaking, assimilates the human self into Himself.

In Eckhart's opinion, the Eternal Birth is best characterized as hearing, because hearing, even on the physical level, is essentially a passive process. In seeing, by contrast, one is very active, eyes darting from object to object, noting, observing, surveying, scrutinizing. But in hearing, rather than initiating or managing any such active process, the individual simply sits quietly and receives whatever is available. In seeing, I go outside myself in search of objects. I am filled with externalities. But in hearing, I withdraw from the external world, settle deep within myself, and give attention to the subtle Voice that lovingly whispers there. In hearing, I am the receiver. "Hearing brings more into a man. . . ." Eckhart concludes. "For the

[45] I, p. 99.
[46] *Ibid.*
[47] XIII, p. 159.

power to hear the eternal word is within me, and the power to see will leave me; for hearing I am passive, and seeing I am active." [48]

That which is heard in the silence of one's interior chamber is the Logos, the Word of God, the Son who is that eternal Word. In the desert of this radical quietude, this Word is received, and, in the very act of being received, transforms the human being into something wondrously new. Eckhart indicates, " It is in the stillness, in the silence, that the word of God is to be heard." [49] Again, he adds, " In that core (of the soul) is the central silence, the pure peace, the abode of the heavenly birth, the place for this event: this utterance of God. . . . Here God enters the soul with all he has and not in part." [50] The hearing and the birth are simultaneous occurrences. In the act of hearing God's eternal Word from deep within the labyrinth of the soul, the individual inherits this Eternal Birth. " He who hears and that which is heard are identical constituents of the eternal Word," Eckhart suggests.[51] And the person who is graced to receive this birth professes, along with this mystic, that " the same One, who is begotten and born of God the Father, without ceasing in eternity, is born today, within time, in human nature. . . ." [52]

CHRIST AS ARCHETYPE

While not specifically well-developed in any of his extant sermons, Eckhart's Christology includes some fascinating insights. In alluding to the Eternal Birth as the blossoming forth of the Divine Word from within, Eckhart is obviously thinking of Christ as that Word. But in what precise sense is that Christ *within?* What relationship does that "Christ within " bear to the Jesus of history? And in what sense are the desert-

[48] II, p. 108.
[49] I, p. 107.
[50] *Ibid.*, p. 97.
[51] XXIII, p. 203.
[52] I, p. 95.

core of the human soul and the divinity of Christ to be identified with each other?

In the course of his homiletical materials, Eckhart skillfully works his way through these difficult issues, not by reducing the divinity of Christ, but by elevating the humanity of people. In short, our human nature is not as poor and degrading as we might ordinarily think. Our authentic human-ness, in Eckhart's opinion, shares the very essence of that Christ. As the Word emanates from within, we are awakened, as it were, from our artificial self to our genuine self, selfhood which we have in common with Christ. Eckhart's point is "not only that God became man," as he says, "but that he has taken human nature upon himself." [53]

This is not to say, of course, that God is anthropomorphic, but that man is "theo-morphic" or "Christo-morphic," so to speak. Humans in their essential, inner nature are bearers of this primordial, pristine stuff of God. All that Christ was, in his full humanity, is mine as well in my own fullness. Christ's divinity, then, represents, not a departure from his humanity, but rather a climactic fulfillment of that humanity. Divinity and the fullness of being human are one and the same. And this fullness is both my birthright and my calling, both my point of origin in life and my final destiny. The Eternal Birth, then, is nothing less than the re-discovering, the recovering, the re-releasing of this given, inner potentiality. "I say emphatically," Eckhart argues, "that all the worth of the humanity of the saints, of Mary, the mother of God, or even Christ himself, is mine too in my human nature." [54]

Another way of presenting this mystical intuition is to understand Christ as a sort of spiritual archetype, a prototype of that which I am fundamentally already and of that which I am being called to become completely through the love of God. "Why did God become man?" Eckhart asks his audience, answering himself, "So that I might be born to be God—yes—

[53] V, p. 125.
[54] *Ibid.*

identically God." What Christ did was to show me the route to my own goal and to show me what that goal is—namely, to be one again with my Source, just as Christ was and is. Eckhart concludes this line of thought by adding, " And God died so that I, too, might die to the whole world and all created things." [55]

The life and death of Jesus, then, are poignantly illustrative for human beings—evocative, universal symbols for the route that all of us must individually travel on our way back to God, on our path to wholeness and holiness. Christ's lot is my lot. Christ and we are more than just Lord and servants. We are intimate associates on the same journey. We are brothers. The final message is that " we should be identical Sons. All the Son has he has from his Father, being and nature, so that we, too, might be Sons in the same sense." [56] In another of his sermons, Eckhart declares, " When the Father begets his Son in me, I am that Son and no other. . . . Thus we are all in the Son and are the Son." [57] He summarizes his Christocentric anthropology with these words:

> Essentially, humanity ranks so high that, at its best, it is like angelic Being and is related to the Godhead. The ultimate union that Christ had with the Father is something to which I am eligible—if I can put off the ' this and that ' and be human.[58]

Our problem, in short, is not that we're " only human," but that we're not *fully* human, that we're not human *enough*.

ETERNAL BIRTH AS THE OMEGA POINT

The Eternal Birth is the actualization of the *imago Dei* resident within the human personality. It is the coming to birth of the Divine Son within the human soul. Each one of these final words here is important to Eckhart's meaning—*within* the *human soul*. This birth is achieved deep within the interior

[55] XXI, p. 194.
[56] *Ibid.*
[57] XIX, p. 186.
[58] XVII, p. 177.

life of persons, at the very roots of the self, where in the wilderness of the soul, personal self and Universal Self are one, where humanity attains its consummate goal in perfection and divinity. "The Father begets his only begotten Son and the soul is reborn in God," Eckhart preaches. "Whenever this birth occurs, it is the soul giving birth to the only begotten Son."[59] The human soul, then, is forever pregnant with the possibility of the Eternal Birth, for

> the eternal Father is ceaselessly begetting his eternal Son, and the agent (in the soul responsible for this event) is parturient with God's offspring and is itself the Son, by the Father's unique power.[60]

While Eckhart's preaching on this point sounds radical and even shocking, it follows logically from what he has already set forth. Since there is that in the human soul which already possesses the nature of God and since, in hearing that Divine voice within, the human being assumes the fuller nature of the Son, there is perfect identity that is discovered to exist between the person and Christ. Eckhart's experience leads him to assert boldly: Christ and I, we are one; God and I, we are one! In the sterile desert of self-forgetfulness, in the barren wilderness of unself-consciousness, this is the ultimate realization. Speaking for himself, Eckhart states:

> God has begotten (the Son) in my soul. Not only is the soul like him and he like it, but he is in it, for the Father begets his Son in the soul exactly as he does in eternity and not otherwise. . . . The Father ceaselessly begets his Son and, what is more, he begets me as his Son—the self-same Son![61]

He elaborates:

> Therefore the heavenly Father is my true Father, and I am his Son and have all that I have from him. I am identically his Son and no other, because the Father does only one kind of thing, making no distinctions. Thus it is that I am his only begotten

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[59] XXV, p. 212.
[60] XXIV, p. 209.
[61] XVIII, p. 181.

Son. . . . If, therefore, I am changed into God and he makes me one with himself, then, by the living God, there is no distinction between us.[62]

In being remade in God, we receive and are received into that being which is the very antithesis of distinctions, dichotomy, and plurality. The soul in its very core is opposed to nothing else and includes all else. It is not a " this, here " opposed to any " something, over there." It is simultaneously at-one with all that is, including God, and it is therefore identifiable with all, including God. Thus, Eckhart's conclusions are inevitable—if I am born into the One, I am one with the One, and I become the One. " Some simple people imagine that they are going to see God as if he were standing yonder and they here," he begins, " but it is not to be so. God and I: we are one."[63] In another sermon, he picks up again on the same theme, suggesting that, " in bursting forth I discover that God and I are one. Now I am what I was and neither add to nor subtract from anything, for I am the unmoved Mover, that moves all things." [64]

Eckhart, of course, is not claiming any special divinity for himself. In speaking of his own experience and of the conclusions that he has derived from those mystical breakthroughs, he is implying that what is true for him is the same for all people. At the heart of hearts of every man and woman, there is that fertile desert in which God awaits and into which God lovingly woos us. The Eternal Birth is the ultimate step in our growth, therefore, the existential goal for all humans, the omega point towards which the *irascibilis* yearns and in which it finally secures its rest. Eckhart summarizes this point, " To this end I was born, and by virtue of my birth being eternal, I shall never die. It is of the nature of this eternal birth that I *have been* eternally, that I *am* now, and *shall be* forever." [65]

[62] *Ibid.*
[63] *Ibid.*, p. 182.
[64] XVIII, p. 232.
[65] *Ibid.*, p. 231.

Flowing in that stream of the eternal, beyond the bifurcations of time and space, one takes on the nature of eternity itself.

Transcending that manacled part of my physical self, there is that in me which lives only in eternity, where everything that already was, and is, and will be exists simultaneously. In the pure and simple core of my soul, I am already rooted in that eternal Now-moment. Eternity is the ground out of which I have grown. It is the same Ground to which I am called ultimately to return.

This characteristic of the eternal in the Divine Birth is a very significant one. In hearing God's Word within, in blooming into something new, one is carried out of linear time and into eternity. "Flat" time, as it were, gives way to the "fullness" of time. Human existence is no longer typified by *length* but by *depth*. "The fullness of time is when time is no more," Eckhart defines. "Still to be within time and yet to set one's heart on eternity, in which all temporal things are dead, is to reach the fullness of time." [66] Full time is pregnant time. It is far more than simply a sequence of past-present-future. It is all present—the dead and the living and the not-yet-born, the near and the far, the many and the One. It is all contained in the Now-moment of eternity. It is here, in this Now-moment that the Eternal Birth takes place. And when one arrives at this final resting point, "'here and there' cease to be, and creatures are forgotten, (and) being shall be fulfilled." [67]

IN SUM

In the end, what one finds in Eckhart the preacher is a passionately mystical man. There is no surprise in that, of course, but the fact that mystical insights are so openly shared with his hearers is a significant clue into Eckhart the man. Johann Eckhart, precisely *because* of his experience into God, reaches out to people with a candid vitality and force that may be unmatched in the Church, calling parishioners and religious

[67] *Ibid.*, p. 153.
[66] XII, p. 151.

of every age from the many and to the One, away from the distractions of many-ness and much-ness to the healing wholeness of the Origin itself. " That is the way the soul is made pure," he teaches, " by being purged of much divided life and by entering upon a life that is (focused on) unity." [68]

Eckhart's own singularity of intent illustrates the way for us and demonstrates that it can be accomplished, that persons are capable of quietly rising above the fragmentation of their age and of tasting eternity itself. The Kingdom of heaven is indeed within. One's inner life is pregnant all the time with it. Eckhart's call as preacher is to this eternal Kingdom within the soul, where humans receive both their fullness as creatures and the fullness of their Creator. But the route there is very challenging, and none but the bravest make such a journey. " As I have often said," Eckhart concludes, " ' The shell must be cracked apart if what is in it is to come out; *for if you want the kernel, you must break the shell.*' " [69]

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[68] XVI, p. 173.
[69] XI, p. 148.

GROUNDED IN THE TRINITY: SUGGESTIONS FOR A THEOLOGY OF RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER RELIGIONS

"In our age, when every day humankind is being drawn closer together and the ties between various peoples are increased, the Church attentively considers what is its relationship to non-Christian religions." *Nostra Aetate* #1.

THE DECLARATION ON THE Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, in spite of its checkered history at Vatican II, was a monumental achievement. Yet since its origin and initial importance was as a statement concerning the Catholic Church's relationship with Judaism, and since the document's teaching concerning the other religions is inchoate, the theological implications and ramifications of a positive view of other religions have been scarcely explored, even though a voluminous literature on the subject has appeared since the Council. While *Nostra Aetate* opened the gate, the path as yet can be dimly seen. On the one hand, it definitely resituated the discussion for Catholic theologians; on the other hand, it is true that it "confined itself to making polite remarks."[1] The task of the theologians, especially of those engaged in a theology of the history and relationship of religions, is to move beyond polite remarks into a discussion which can be controversial, polemical, and, at times, acrimonious since the discussion must be faithful to the faith confessed by the Church in its creeds and open to God's action in the religions.

The discussion has two phases. The first is somewhat

[1] W. A. Visser't Hooft, quoted by Robert A. Graham, S.J., in Walter Abbott, S.J., ed., *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: Guild Press, 1964), p. 659.

apriori: granted the profession of Catholic faith, what are the presuppositions and bases within that faith upon which a theology of the history and relationship of religions can be developed? [2] This discussion takes place even before the second phase consideration of the aposteriori data of the history of religions. Of course, this second phase in turn may perhaps lead to a reconceptualization of the apriori phase of the discussion.[3] This reconceptualization would not be so much a revision or shifting of Christian belief as much as a precision of terminology and a contextualization of Christian faith within the religious history of humankind.

The following paper is a contribution to both phases of the discussion, with an emphasis on the apriori, reapproached after consideration of the aposteriori data. Its main concern is not a theology for dialogue, which may be thought of as a contemporary conversation with other religions as they now are. Rather it views the religions from the perspective of their history in order to say something about their relationship, understood in faith, to Christianity.[4] These histories, including those of so-called 'dead' religions, have a relationship to salvation history. Therefore the discussion will be akin to a theology of history, which illuminates the present self-understanding of the believer within the Christian community. The

[2] For two important examples of this apriori discussion see: Karl Rahner, "Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions," *Theological Investigations V* (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1967); from a quite different perspective, see Hans Urs von Balthasar, "Catholicism and the Religions," *Communio V*, #1 (Spring 1978).

[3] For an example of the aposteriori discussion, see: Raimundo Panikkar, *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism: Towards an Ecumenical Christophany*, revised and enlarged edition, (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1981).

[4] Vernon Gregson analyzes concisely the process leading up to dialogue, from a Lonergan perspective: "Dialectics come to full term will be dialogue not only with the past but with present exponents of different traditions." "The Historian of Religions and the Theologian: Dialectics and Dialogue," in Matthew L. Lamb, *Creativity and Method: Essays in Honor of Bernard Lonergan, S.J.* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1981), p. 151. I would go further: At full term dialogue comes to a decision which establishes a relationship. This relationship is also understood as a basis for dialogue.

format will be to offer certain themes in thesis form with explanations.

1. *Catholic theology should take full account of the data of the religious sciences, especially of the history of religions.* This has been said so often it seems redundant to say it again.[5] Yet the context in which such a thesis is presented often determines its precise meaning in a way different from what I am suggesting here. In this thesis, I am suggesting that, apriori, the theologians be open to listening to this data, to allowing the aposteriori data to speak, to bear a word which can only come from the Father in whom the theologian already believes. Yet this word from the Father will emerge from a unique context in a religious tradition which can only be known by studying the tradition in all its breadth. This particular word cannot be known apart from listening to the aposteriori data. Hence the theologian should not, on the one hand, confuse the distinct quality of that word from the Father in that tradition with any other word from the Father in a different tradition, nor, on the other hand, disperse its profound unity with every word coming forth from God. These words are different in their actual expression and, at the same time, profoundly unified in their origin from the Father. In view of the Father's revelation in Christ, the entire history of humans within this cosmos is revelatory, the unveiling and disclosure of God's words, to the person of faith who listens to and hears what God may speak. There is a singular claim of having heard the word, 'Christ', as the revelatory word from the Father to the Christian. From this revelation flow exclusive claims. If we may here allow the use of the word, 'exclusive', as an adjective, the belief in its substance is inclusive

[5] Cf. "The great mission of our times is to create the global human tradition for the first time. Until this generation, mankind has lived in distinctive traditions, even though they influenced each other to a certain extent. But from here on each of us must accept the totality of the human tradition as our own *personal* tradition." Thomas Berry, "The Word Inspires Us: Interreligious Dialogue," *Cross Currents*, XXIV, #2-3 (Summer-Fall 1974), p. 248.

of all ' revelations ' which are related to the Primary Analogue, Christ. Exclusive here means universal inclusion based on the particular claim of a revelation in Christ.[6] This universal inclusion is an intention to listen everywhere and everytime in view of Christ without a gratuitous pre-assertion of what it is that may be heard of what God speaks in the other traditions.

The aposteriori history of religions finds that the ' religions ' and ' spiritual traditions ' do not function on the same level in regard to the human predicament nor do these traditions activate similar levels of human possibility before the real within time and space, and beyond time and space. God's words spoken through this variety will be various without being disunified. If you have listened to one religion, you have not heard what God is speaking in other traditions.

The word, ' religions ', used in the plural is expressive of realities in time and space which are not univocal. Further these realities are not precisely analogical either, rather they are homologous.[7] Only sometimes are they homomorphous [8] and homophylous [9] in certain respects. Yahweh is not to Tao as Brahman is not to Nirvana. Indeed, these are complex relationships. For the believer in Christ, God is speaking different words having different values in different contexts. Hence a claim for one does not include a claim for the others. However, we can see that they operate homologously in their different contexts. For example, Yahweh and Tao as concepts differ. They are homomorphous as to centrality within their distinct traditions but the evolutionary origin, place in the organic structure of differing cultures, function in the system of each as to time and space, ultimacy and transcendence, etc.,

[6] "There are *unique* claims, but Christianity and Christ have exclusive claims only because everything is included. In other words, the inclusion, the universal inclusion, is what makes for the exclusion, and I do not myself accept what might be called exclusive claims." (Berry, p. 255.)

[7] Homology: similar function in a dissimilar system.

[8] Homomorphy: similar form.

[9] Homophyly: same origin within an evolutionary process. I am here only raising the possibility of a common origin. What origin might mean is so amorphous in this context as to render the concept almost meaningless.

are different. Hence the homology rather than analogy. There may be a common 'ancestor' (homophyly) yet its remoteness renders them more dissimilar than similar in this respect. There is a resemblance here of realities otherwise unlike. Yahweh and Tao are central to their different traditions (homomorphy); they may, granted certain dubious presuppositions about the origins of 'religion', have a common ancestor (homophyly); they are in other very important respects dissimilar, more unlike than like (analogy). This is true not only of single concepts like Yahweh and Tao but of entire traditions. This kind of dissimilarity rules out appeals to 'general revelations' in a theology of relationship to other religions.

Such a theology of relationship should adhere to Raimundo Panikkar's homology principle of hermeneutics: "Any interpretation given from outside a tradition has to meet all the requirements of and at least phenomenologically coincide with the self-interpretation given from within." [10] A facile equation of two concepts like Yahweh and Tao would violate the Israelite's interpretation of Yahweh and the Taoist's interpretation of Tao. However, the establishment of a relationship between two religions must go beyond this principle. The relationship is established from within one religion, from its own premises, toward the other religion. Thus the relationship is an extension of self-interpretation and must be one-sided in the experience of the one and not the other. The homology principle then must not be taken to preclude the establishment of a relationship from one religion to another which the second religion may not grant on its own premises.

For the theologian, the aposteriori data disclose such dissimilarity as to render the concept of 'religion', when used plurally as 'religions', dangerously overextended.[11] If the theo-

[10] Raimundo, Panikkar, "Indology as a Cross-Cultural Catalyst" (privately circulated), p. 3.

[11] I accept Wilfred Cantwell Smith's critique of the concept in *The Meaning and End of Religion* (New York: New American Library, 1964). His notion of cumulative traditions is valuable, see pp. 139-153. Less useful is Smith's notion of faith.

logian should use a conceptual grid not appropriate to the data, the possibility will arise whereby what God has not spoken will be heard by mistake. A narrow concept of 'religion' is here useful.[12] This concept of religion may be distinguished from 'spirituality'.[13] A religion is a mode of human culture which deals with the problematic of the human predicament by an appeal to the transcendent (cf. Ps. 42) or in response to a call from the transcendent (cf. Ex. 3). A spirituality is a mode of human culture which deals with the problematic of the human predicament immanently within human resources. These functional definitions describe ways of dealing with and transforming the human predicament. Taxonomically, we need not have the pre-understanding that all humans have had the option within their culture of a religion (as so defined), e.g., Chinese traditions like Confucianism may be predominantly spiritualities (as so defined).[14] These definitions are based neither on transcendental experience nor on religious experience. In this context, religious experiences, encounters with the sacred, would be understood as supportive, but not foundational, for both religions and spiritualities.[15] The adjective, 'religious', referring to the sacred, is different both connotatively and denotatively from this stipulative use of the noun religion.

Category formation in the area of religious studies is extremely problematic. The above attempt at definition is aimed at avoiding that category confusion where a category like religion is conceived in a theistic context and then extended to non-theistic cultures. Also each of these words carries a nor-

[12] Reserved for explicit theisms. In this way we can avoid reductionism with regard to the various non-theisms and allow them to have their word.

[13] I use 'spirituality' for lack of a better term. This usage has been suggested in the works of R. Panikkar, M. Eliade, E. Cousins, and T. Berry. The refinements are my own.

[14] Also, the presence of 'gods' need not be indicative of a religion according to these definitions.

[15] cf. Louis Dupre, "The Transcendent and the Sacred", in *Transcendent Selfhood: The Loss and Recovery of the Inner Life* (New York: Seabury Press, 1976), pp. 18-30.

mative weight which hinders insight and understanding. Therefore I propose these two terms, religion and spirituality, which are symmetrical as modes of culture, but asymmetrical in regard to what may or may not be beyond human possibility.

For the Christian believer God has spoken through both religions and spiritualities. But those words are not symmetrical. There is an asymmetry in God's revelatory dealings with humankind. Apriori, God's dealings are revelatory. Aposteriori, God speaks different kinds of words. A religion will have a certain kind of relationship to Christianity, a spirituality a different kind of relationship. Hermeneutical instruments and taxonomies more subtle than those now in common use should be developed. That suggested here is an attempt to allow the religions and spiritualities to be 'other' and to be related to Christianity precisely as other. The usual taxonomy which sees 'religion' as practically universal has been formulated in a Christian and post-Christian context, which often presupposes as connatural to all cultures what may only be found in some and thus is inserted in other cultures gratuitously. For example, Christian concerns such as ultimacy, revelation, the supernatural, etc., are conceptually presupposed to be relevant elsewhere. As a result, especially in regard to spiritualities, like the many forms of Buddhism, there is a tendency to see theism or realities akin to theism where it is not present. These instruments are unknowingly reductionistic in defining the other in theistic terms. Or the opposite may happen where theism is reduced conceptually to non-theism. Hence the person of faith should discern the asymmetrical variety of God's words to humankind and be able to discover a word from God even where it has not been explicitly heard by the other tradition.

2. *For Catholic theology, the discussion of a theology of relationship to other religions and spiritualities is better placed within the mystery of the Trinity revealed in Christ than as a function of salvation or as a problem of ecclesiology.* All too often this discussion is reduced to the theological task of ex-

plaining the dictum, "outside the Church, there is no salvation." This task may be considered to have been accomplished with relative adequacy at Vatican II in the Documents on the Church, on Ecumenism, and on the Relationship to Non-Christian Religions. There has also been a lengthy discussion of Rahner's theology of the universal salvific will of God and of the anonymous Christian. Unfortunately, most of these discussions have not been in a Trinitarian context.[16] In contemporary theology the focus may now shift from the ecclesial salvation of the non-Christian to that of the revelatory significance of the religions and spiritualities of humankind within the heart of Catholic systematic and dogmatic theology. This theology will be informed, according to the analogy of faith, by the doctrines of salvation and of the Church. Each dimension of theology leads to the mystery of the Trinity which must eventually bear the weight of the conclusions of a theology of salvation and of the Church.

The task of a theology of relationship to other religions and spiritualities is to make our understanding of the Trinity economic for the *oikumene* of humankind in its entire history. If the Father has spoken, that word spoken is human, indeed, a human being. This human being, Jesus Christ, is the culmination, even the surpassing by superabundance, of the Father's creation of and direction of a receptivity for him within the cosmos. The cosmos as such is not so self-contained as to preclude the further event of a Word, Jesus Christ, being spoken by the Father. This human being Jesus Christ, as divine Word from the Father, is the revelation of an entelechy for the cosmos, which once known is seen to be beyond the cosmos's original entelechy.

Within the history of the cosmos, the emergence of the human occurs with the development of culture. Culture, functionally understood, is a human answer to the predicament of human awareness of being finite in time and space. Culture

[16] An important exception has been Raimundo Panikkar. See *The Trinity and the Religious Experiences of Man* (New York: Orbis Books, 1973).

mediates to individual human beings both meaning and experiences of the sacred. These mediations, the traditions of religion and of spirituality, are particular, specific, and discrete. Cultures embodying meaning and mediating experiences of the sacred have been both religions and spiritualities. Religions emphasize human striving, spiritualities human initiative. Yet the process of "cosmic receptivity", productive of that quality of human finitude which allows the human to perceive that something is lacking within the cosmos, also renders the Speaker unheard. The Speaker of this original cosmic word is often not heard. He is the Father, Creator, the font of the sacred and the source of meaning, yet relatively unknown (cf. Acts 17.). The Speaker may not be known precisely as Speaker or Creator, unless he speaks a greater Word, incarnate in Jesus Christ, which is then actually heard in faith by the Christian.

This Word of the Father is Christ in the entirety of his human reality. The incarnate Son is the Concrete Absolute, he toward whom and through whom all meaning (for the Christian) flows. This Word, the Concrete Absolute, is incommensurable with the possible cosmic respectivity for him. The Word made flesh is a revelation of the Father completely and definitively within the finitude of time and space. The particular vehicle of the Father's expression is the human life and death of Jesus. The resurrection reveals that his life was the particular vehicle of the Father's expression. Only with this Word is the possibility of that prior word of cosmic receptivity revealed fully. By this Word spirituality is transformed into religion, religion is transformed into a response to God's pursuit of the human. These transformations are embodied in an historical religion, Christianity, which in its Catholic form seeks to understand its relationship to the other religions and spiritualities. Human initiative in spirituality and human striving in religion is dialectically negated, yet affirmed as the Father's Word made human allows a way to return to God. The human beings have a means, incommensurable with their initiative and striving, to strive for God in love with all heart,

mind, and soul. Yet the initiative and striving are vindicated at another level in this dialectic. They are incorporated within the ' revealed religion ', founded on God's prior initiative and striving.

The key word here is incommensurable. The initiative of the Speaker-Father is incommensurable with the human striving. In view of faith, the absolute concretization of the Word in Jesus is incommensurable with the sociological realities of the religions and spiritualities.[17] There was no need from the human side for the Father's initiative, no need for the Word, or for a ' new ' religion. The spiritualities and religions were relatively adequate in their historical contexts, yet through the Paschal Mystery of Jesus, the death vindicated in his resurrection, there is a salvation. This salvation, affirmed in the Creeds as a resurrection to a new life in Jesus, gives entitlement to the claims of the spiritualities and religions to be themselves in their precise particularities. It also transvalues these entitlements for the believer present on the Church. As Peter Schineller says: "From the insights gained into the boundless love of God revealed in and through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, we dare to speak of the universal saving will of God." [18]

We also dare to speak of the continuing presence of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the sanctifying presence of the Father's will to save.[19] The Spirit is the proleptic presence of the end of the history of humankind within that very history. The Spirit of Jesus Christ is present as entelechy in which all the initiatives and strivings of the spiritualities and religions are mutually inherent in the finality of Jesus, God's Word present

[17] Indeed as human these religions and spiritualities, including Christianity, are comparable in the full sociological sense of the term. Incommensurability is a theological judgment made on the quite different grounds of a response in faith to the Father's initiative.

[18] Peter Schineller, "Discovering Jesus Christ: A History we Share" in Leo J. O'Donovan, ed., *A World of Grace: An Introduction to the Themes and Foundations of Karl Rahner's Theology* (New York: Seabury, 1978), p. 101.

[19] Cf. Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith* (New York: Seabury, 1978), pp. 316-318.

and yet to come. This Spirit is manifest, manifold, and hidden, disclosed to the believer in the particularities of the spiritualities and religions. The presence of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Word of the Father, is the basis for a theology of relationship with other religions and spiritualities. The presence of the Spirit of Jesus Christ transvalues the particularities of the religions and spiritualities, giving them a Triune significance for the Christian: first, precisely, in their particularity as founded in the Father's creative act of making actual the cosmic receptivity for human evolution, they are from the Father; second, as human initiatives and strivings, they are taken, without mixture and without separation, into the concretization of the divine and the human in Jesus Christ; third, in their moving to an end, an omega, drawn by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, they are the ordinary vehicle for the Father's offer of salvation.

3. *Catholicity is a dialectical sign of the presence and the lack of presence in the religions and spiritualities of the singular events of the Paschal Mystery, i.e., the absolute presence of Trinitarian love.* In the events of Jesus's living and of his death are grounded the unique particulars of the Father's total salvation history. The concrete particularity of each religion and spirituality receives significance within this salvation history. There is a complex analogy here of inclusion in, and of exclusion from, the Unique Event. The inclusion in the Christ event of each religion's and spirituality's participants as in some way already Christian does not render the historical particularity of their non-Christian (or not-yet-Christian, or perhaps not-ever-to-be-Christian) experiences any less unique. The uniqueness and particularity are not postulated in their own right (for the Christian) but rather as a genuine expression of the Father's revelatory actions among these specific people and therefore in and through the concrete particularity and uniqueness of Christ.

Catholicity is a mark of a community as the vanguard of the Father's people. This community is the extension in time of Christ and shares in his task of being a light to the peoples.

In the words of Yves Congar, the catholicity of the Church is "the dynamic universality of her unity: the capacity that her principles of unity have for assimilating, fulfilling, exalting, winning for God, and reuniting in him each and every man, every value."[20] This catholicity affirms the universal salvific will of the Father in which the Father is at work and present at every time and place. On this basis it affirms the hope that all will be saved and joined to Christ. Aside from Christ there is no patent reason either to affirm that there is a salvation or that it is a universal possibility. Of course, the religions and spiritualities each offer a transformation of the human predicament. But from the Christian point of view these transformations are either not as ultimate as is salvation or are not grounded in historical fact as is salvation. This last statement is based on the insight that 'salvation' may not, apart from Christ, be gratuitiously affirmed as immediately available to all humans. Salvation is not an obvious reality derived from the general experience of human beings. Although it may be understood as one of a variety of transformations of the human predicament, salvation, resurrection in Christ, cannot thereby be equated with these other transformations.

Catholicity is an aesthetic which appreciates the particularity and uniqueness of each religion and spirituality: "all things counter, original, spare, strange" (Hopkins). Awe before the fathering forth of God's beauty in the initiatives and strivings of humankind is praise of God. Not only is there a universal presence of the triune God but it is through the parts of the whole history of humankind. Catholicity should acknowledge, respect, and expect differences and variety among the religions and spiritualities. In each is a gifted word from the Father, waiting to be heard. These words are gifts to the Son, and thus to us. Catholicity affirms that the Father has spoken differently and to different extents in humankind's traditions.

[20] Quoted in Louis Bouyer, *Dictionary of Theology* (New York: Desclée, 1965), p. 76.

Sometimes the Christian community is not able to hear a word and is called to growth. Sometimes it does not in fact hear the word which the Father has spoken. The laments of non-Christians from Julian the Apostate to Chief Seattle that it is a strange kind of God who would talk to some of the people only some of the time should give pause to the believer. These laments reveal that the message of the Gospel may have been preached in dissonance with the previous revelations of the Father. Sins against Catholicity are common, almost unavoidable. If the preaching of the Word means that people must abandon some of the words they have previously heard from God, then something is lacking in the preaching. Perhaps what is lacking is the patience to listen in faith since listening must precede preaching.

However, at times, in truth, Catholicity listens and hears no word since it finds that the Father, in that time and place, has not yet allowed the Word, which he has indeed spoken, to be heard precisely as Word of the Father. Catholicity finds that in some times and places God has not yet spoken the Word in such a way that it might be heard, even when in faith it sees the presence of the Spirit of Jesus Christ in the entelechy of a tradition toward Christ. Even in not hearing, there is a word in the silence of God.[21] In the aposteriori data of the history of religions and spiritualities this silence of God must be respected. The silence is perceived because of the Christian's faith in the Word made flesh. As silence it grounds both God's freedom and the human's: God may not yet have spoken, the human may not yet have heard or may not yet have listened. This silence, as the not hearing because not listening of humans, is from the human side the reason why the Cross of Jesus was possible. Yet the greater ground for the Cross is God's free redemptive love. This love overwhelms as does a great work of art which is both simple and subtle.

4. *In meeting the concrete grace of Christ in each religion and spirituality we cannot but be changed as we hear God's*

[21] Cf. Daniel P. Sheridan, "The Silence of God in Early Buddhism", *Studies in Formative Spirituality*, I, #2 (May 1980) pp. 245-255.

revelation and are graced by his expected and unexpected deeds and words. We will be forced to deepen our understanding of God's triune activity in history. In addition we cannot but change others as we witness to our faith in Jesus Christ. There is indeed a certain convergence of religions and spiritualities but it is not the whole story and may be accidental. Failure in mutual metanoia is to be expected since the concrete grace of Christ is revealed in the Cross and death of Jesus. The measure here is not historical progress. History itself can be the Cross for the community which extends Christ in time. The extension is not an organic and continual penetration into human society and history since sometimes fidelity to the Word may demand retreat from society and from ' history '. The history of salvation and world history, on one level, have the same scope and extent. On another level, dialectically they may be in opposition. The aposteriori data disclose a tragic dimension to many meetings of Christianity with the religions and spiritualities.

5. *There is a need to rethink the relationship of Hebrew religious traditions and history to Christian faith in view of a theology of relationship to other religions and spiritualities.* Faith has appropriated the Hebrew religious experience and history through acceptance of the Old Testament canon and through an acceptance of the revelatory quality of the history of Israel. Homologously, there might be a future appropriation of the scriptures of other religions and spiritualities. Homologously, Christian faith can recognize the revelatory quality of the histories of humankind's communities. The history of Israel has a privileged but complex place in Christian theology. Already in contemporary theology, Post-New Testament Judaism is being reevaluated as a locus of God's presence and activity. Without arguing for symmetry between Israel and Judaism, and the other religions and spiritualities, we can see that the case of Israel and Judaism must not be seen as a separate question but rather as an integral part of the theology of relationship.

6. *A theology of relationship based on the speaking of the Father in, and through the Son affirms the mutual inclusivity and mutual inherence of the finalities of the religions and spiritualities of humankind.* This affirmation is not made because, as is so commonly said, all religions are in some way the same. That is patently false. That kind of an affirmation allows no value to the particularity of each of the religions and spiritualities. Rather, the finalities of each are caught up in a single finality, the consummation of all in the Son in an act of praise to the Father. The final meaning of any given tradition in history, of course, cannot be known until the end of the story. Hence, the affirmation here is that the Spirit of Jesus Christ is present in each as an entelechy. This entelechy is affirmed in faith, not empirically. But the entelechy will be seen through the eyes of faith in the definiteness attached to each religion and spirituality by their participants. To the extent that each tradition's entelechy differs, so does the presence of the Spirit vary. This presence is transcendental, as Rahner emphasizes, but it cannot be excluded, as he states, that the presence might be discovered to be actually present in history. Therefore, " there is no reason to exclude such discoveries a priori, nor to judge them in a minimalistic way to be merely a negative contrast to Jesus as the eschatological and unsurpassable savior ".[22] I might add that there is no reason to maximalize such discoveries either. Both minimalization and maximalization are leveling and do not allow to each religion and spiritually its proper particularity.

The affirmation of inclusivity and inherence of finalities recognizes in each religion's and spirituality's particularity differing and conflicting truth claims, errors, and discontinuities. It is clear that theology cannot relate to each tradition in the same way or in general. In interreligious dialogue, the presence of a third tradition is needed to insure a proper context. For example, Christian-Zen dialogue needs the presence of a Vaishnava theist. Otherwise the discussion becomes narrow,

[22] Rahner, *Foundations*, p. 321.

perhaps, in this example, focusing Christianity to its apophatic dimensions. All dialogue must be ecumenical in the sense of the entire *oikumene* of religious traditions. Particularly, it should include traditions like Islam which make concrete historical claims in a way analogous to Christianity.

This thesis's main thrust is that the Christian should humbly listen to and should allow the historical data to speak what words they bear. Words from God may be heard or not heard. Even the not hearing, what might be called listening to the silence of God, is disclosive since it may be not just a silence in which God is not heard, but a silence in which God may not (yet) have spoken. The listening anticipates an entelechy, a *potentia obedientialis*, a receptivity, toward a word which will be spoken at the consummation.

This affirmation of inclusivity and inherence with its corollary of listening makes possible an authentic and nuanced kerygma. Such a kerygma is the sowing of the seed in a soil (the particular religions or spiritual tradition) which is known, respected, and loved. The theology of relationship here described is primarily an economic Trinitarian theology of history.

7. *The theology of relationship to other religions and spiritualities involves listening to and correlation of the four sources of words of the Father to humankind, and sublation of them to the Word, the Concrete Absolute, Jesus Christ.* God speaks, the human person listens. The human is one who may listen for and hear God's word. Often the order is reversed: having heard the Word, the Christians realize that they have been listening. From the fact of hearing, God's previous silence is clarified as the stillness before the Word. From the fact of hearing, the anguish of the human predicament is then understood as having been a straining to hear. Having heard the Word, the Christian recognizes the four words of God spoken to the human that *the* Word might be heard.[23] God has

[23] For the idea of the 'four words of God' I am indebted to Thomas Berry, although the form of the idea as presented is my own.

spoken in the word of the cosmos, heard and studied in cosmology and the sciences. God has spoken in the word of the human heart, heard and studied in psychology, anthropology, and philosophy. These two words, of the cosmos and of the human heart, explain the importance of metaphysics which unites in single understanding the concerns of the word of the cosmos and the human heart. God has spoken in the word of the history of humankind and in the history of each person, heard and studied in history and autobiography. God has spoken in the word of the scriptures of humankind, heard in proclamation, reading and study. These two words explain the importance of hermeneutics.

For the Christian the context for properly hearing each of these words is the event of the Word become flesh, crucified, and gloriously risen, witnessed in Scripture and in the life of the Church. Apart from the Word's communication of the Father's redeeming love, the person might not have listened within these four words for any such reverberations of God's Word. Then the words of cosmology, anthropology, history, and hermeneutics would not have spoken of God, and the people would have heard the silence of God. Because the Word of God is freely spoken, such a silence would have been not just a silence in which God is not heard, but a silence in which God has not (yet) spoken.

The Father's Word in its various forms is spoken to a person who may listen. In view of the Trinitarian circumincession, it is the very premise for that person's existence. Where the Father is there is the Son and the Spirit. If the Word is not spoken, the person's existence is at stake. If the Word is not concretely spoken in the life and death of Jesus, the salvation of that person, resurrection in Christ, incommensurable though it may be with that person's existence, would not occur. Such a dual silence, of a person's not hearing and of God's not speaking, would frustrate human existence and the possibility of this salvation. Other ways of transformation would then be sought. In Christian experience both the Word of the Father in the event of Christ and in the Scriptural witness to it and

then the various words of God are mutually inhering. They resonate to each other. Their historical order proceeds from hearing the Word of the Father, Jesus Christ, to listening to these four words of God, while their logical order is reversed. In order to properly hear the Word, one must first have listened for that Word mediated through the four words. This is another way of stating the problematic of Christian philosophy in relation to theology. The human being, in Rahner's terms, is a 'spirit in the world' and 'hearer of the Word'. The one is a precondition of the other.

The model of the correlation of the four words sublated in the Word of the Father, which is concretized in Jesus Christ, allows a broadly based relationship to the religions and spiritualities. Each of these religions and spiritualities has a cosmological, anthropological, historical, and scriptural component. These words are revelatory (both by presence and by absence) to the Christian and challenge the Christian to listen more carefully. That they are God's words demands that they be correlated. That they are asymmetrical, that is different from each other, and from the Word heard in Christian faith, demands a sublation to that Word.

In the contemporary situation where Christianity and the religions and spiritualities are present to each other, Christian theology is called to a greater development and clarification. The classicism of theology, which has been questioned so well by Bernard Lonergan, was too simple a correlation and sublation of the four words before the Word.[24] A broader and deeper correlation opened up through relationship with the religions and spiritualities relativizes both the classical correlation of traditional theology and also the kinds of correlation being made by much of contemporary theology in view of 'the covenant with modernity'.

The differences between religion and spirituality, e.g., between theistic Hinduism and non-theistic forms of Buddhism

[24] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), p. 338.

on the issue of human initiative, make more difficult the correlation among themselves and with Christianity, and their sublation to Christ. Because the Word heard by the Christian is particular and concrete, the correlation and particularly the sublation are peculiarly the Christian's task. However, the participants of the other religions and spiritualities may have their own homologous tasks.

8. *Finally, we must beware of premature conclusions since the task is just begun.* In a sense the task for the Christian is a global Trinitarian patristics, an ecumenical *ressourcement.* The spiritual and religious history of humanity is one and a heritage and resource for the Christian. The Father wills the salvation of all, the offer is real. The Father has spoken concretely in the Word of Jesus Christ. Hence there is a universal salvific will based on the particular Word of Jesus Christ which was preceded by the four words of cosmos, human heart, history, and scripture. Within this context the religions and spiritualities are being met with existential force. A theology of relationship includes an aesthetic to help us to appreciate, respect, and listen to other traditions, a dramatics of exchange and conversion for us both as human beings and as Christians; and a theologic to help us to understand the overwhelming love of the Father for us all.[25] This love distinguishes us human beings (it raises us up and separates us) as it is concretely expressed in the event of Christ's life, death, and resurrection; as it guides in the living Torah; as it is embodied in the emigration of Muhammad; as it enlightens in the Buddha's encounter with sorrow and nothingness; as it teaches in Confucius's words about human authenticity; as it watches the Tao of the seasons; as it celebrates in the mythic sublimity of Krishna's sport among living beings.

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[25] Cf. Hans Urs von Balthasar's project for an aesthetic, dramatic, and logic of revelation.

SACRAMENTAL REALISM: AN EXCHANGE *

A REVIEW

THE BOOK UNDER REVIEW, Colman O'Neill's second major work in sacramental theology, has been written under a double handicap. In the first place, it is a number of a series intended for the general reader, and the format imposed by that intention is simply incompatible with the author's declared ambition of providing a theory which may serve as the structuring or systematic principle of a general theology of the sacraments and so of theology across the board. Such a project is highly specialized, requiring a lengthy historical introduction and an extended synthetic development, responsive by anticipation to a criticism incapable of reduction to such conventional indictments as juridicalism and impersonalism. That O'Neill accepted these limitations and strove to work within them is understandable; few publishers would consider publishing a "theological book" today which was not thus circumscribed, and it may be thought better to publish something than nothing at all, the evident alternative. Nonetheless the burden he has accepted is an impossible one.

The second element of handicap under which the author labors is self-imposed, that of a traditional Thomist philosophical metaphysics, which vainly attempts to match the monadic cosmological logic of Aristotelian metaphysics to the trinitarian, historical and covenantal truth of a good creation, and thinks to find in the *esse*-essence distinction of St. Thomas the device by which this radical incoherence may be overcome.

* Colman O'Neill, O.P., *Sacramental Realism: A General Theory of the Sacraments. Theology and Life Series* 2. Wilmington, Del., Michael Glazier, Inc., 1983. 224 pp.

For O'Neill, the ground for doing theology is provided by our creation in the divine image, which is of the Father, the One God alike of Judaism, Christianity and Islam who, it is supposed, may be known in principle apart from the Christ. This poses for O'Neill, although he does not recognize it, the impossible systematic problem of relating cosmos and covenantal history. It does no good to speak of the cosmic Christ until the primordial quality of that adjective is acknowledged, and with this, the fact of our creation in Christ, the Lord of history. This acknowledgement immediately rules the old metaphysics of the natural creation out of court, as Rousselot saw seventy years ago, and it is time that systematic theology took his insight to heart, for there is no other basis upon which a systematic theology may be founded. Short of this, the long futility of the dispute *De auxiliis* will continue to haunt any Thomist theologian, however much he devotes himself to more fashionable causes.

O'Neill's abiding concern is the justification of the sacramental realism without which Catholic orthodoxy is undone, and he is alert to any dilution of this realism, whether by the reduction of Catholic sacramentalism to subjectivity, or by its reduction to servility. On balance, it is to dangers of the latter that he is the more alert; taught by a personalist Thomism, he is intent upon the autonomy of the worshiper, and under the tag of juridicalism poses to himself the perduring dilemma of Hegel: how to appropriate responsibly a salvation worked by another. His solution is supported by a weighty theological tradition: the union of Christ and the faithful is in that "one body" which assures both identity with the will of Christ and the personal autonomy of the individual. How this is done is not further set forth, although it is of course the heart of the systematic problem. O'Neill wishes to understand 'one body' union of Christ and believers as meaning 'one person,' which is to urge a unity between Christ and Christian hardly supportive of the latter's autonomy. A closer attention to the covenantal interpretation of that union, i.e., as of "one flesh" of Eph 5 rather than "one body" (for the "Body" which is

the bridal Church is so only in the "one flesh" of her union with her Head, the Christ—who is not a member of the "Body") would have provided the systematic base for developing the trinitarian structure of the Christ-Church union, and thus for transcending Hegel's rationalist dilemma. However, O'Neill is in good company here: under Neo-Platonic auspices, Origen, Ambrose, and Augustine, to name only the founders of that theological tradition, have all underwritten a communication of idioms which confuses the personal unity of the hypostatic union with the covenantal unity of the Christ-Church union, as Paul never did. The consequence is of course an oscillation between a Nestorian Christology and a Christomonist, monophysite ecclesiology, neither of which provides a place for a Catholic theologian to stand. However, only a truly historical metaphysical theology, one grounded in the historicity of the Church's worship, can avoid this ancient mistake; it is otherwise inescapable. The logic of O'Neill's philosophical metaphysics has found it with no assist from Philo.

Had O'Neill not found himself forced by the logic of his systematic disinterest in the covenantal-marital structure of the historical good creation to choose between juridicalism and autonomy, certain further difficulties might also have been avoided. For instance, O'Neill is not at ease with the Servant Christology which is basic to the Catholic Eucharistic liturgy; its representational and sacrificial imagery seems to him vulnerable to the charge of juridicalism and impersonalism until purified of such connotations by a species of demythologization. While O'Neill insists upon the fundamental points of sacramental orthodoxy, the logic of his revision of the notion, e.g., of sacrifice of the Mass, tends ineluctably toward the reduction of its realism "to the category of word" that he is most determined to avoid. After a discussion of the difficulties raised by the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist as the the sacramental representation of Christ's sacrifice upon the Cross, O'Neill concludes:

> It seems better simply to affirm the real presence of the risen Christ, worshipping and giving the Spirit, in the Eucharistic bread

and wine, and to speak of sacrifice only in terms of the community's worship as it is united to that of Christ. (112)

Perhaps this language can be given an orthodox interpretation, but it is also on its face equivalent to the Lutheran doctrinal position, which also knows a "real presence," but not a historical one (i.e., one that is also an event, whether of sacrifice or transubstantiation) and which requires in consequence a nonhistorical worship in a nonhistorical Church. The Lutheran refusal of the *ex opere operato* is latent in O'Neill's metaphysics. Such a consequence could hardly be further from O'Neill's mind, but the confusion, ecumenical and otherwise, which such language as that cited can arouse is considerable. The Lutheran denial of the sacramental representation of Christ's sacrifice in the Mass is the *fons et origo* of the Reformation; that it contradicts the Catholic tradition has been settled for four centuries. A Catholic sacramental theology which can contemplate limiting the sacrifice of the Mass to the "sacrifice of praise" needs rather more work.

At bottom, O'Neill's mistake is derived from the cosmological stance of the Thomist metaphysics, in which structure is more important than event, because event comes under the cosmological indictment of the material singular, viz. that apart from *a priori* reference to a timeless essential form it is *in se* meaningless, even if it be the sacrifice of Christ—which O'Neill accordingly subordinates to the higher intelligibility of a cosmic "real presence". While admitting that

> there is a reason for speaking in Catholic theology of a "moment" in which Christ, already present in several ways, begins to be present sacramentally, (cf. 6.4); and this constitutes the clearest objective distinction that can be made between word and sacrament. (115)

he nevertheless appeals to the "cosmic role" of Christ to ground this distinction:

> To appeal to the unique power of the risen Christ in his cosmic role is sufficient to mark out the newness of baptism and the Eucharist in relation to the ministry of the Word. (sec. 6.4; p. 161)

It would not be difficult to multiply such examples of the impact of a radically nonhistorical metaphysics upon O'Neill's notion of realism and upon the orthodoxy of his eucharistic theology. This metaphyiscs simply stands in the way of his sacramental realism, as it has done for that of many others.

It would be tedious, even were this the place, to recite the incoherencies this version of Thomism imposes upon the theologian, but in a review of a work of this importance for Catholic worship as well as for Catholic theology, the antihistorical impact of its unsystematic and merely nominally theological merger of cosmos and covenant should be pointed out, for it cannot but lead Catholic theology into those dead ends whose issue four centuries past was the Reformation denial of sacramental realism, a pessimism which has since haunted the western world. It is not by recourse to such nonhistorical and pseudo-systematiac devices, however time-honored, that Catholic sacramental theology may be renewed, but only by a total systematic reliance upon radical novelty of the new creation, the New Covenant, as the single and unique *prius* upon which theology must stand if it is to stand at all. This historical confidence is explicit in the worship of the Mass, and must be equally explicit in any theology which that worship sustains.

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A RESPONSE

It is relevant to recall that Donald J. Keefe (= DK) is the author of *Thomism and the Ontological Theology of Paul Tillich* (Leiden, NL, 1971), which contains a chapter entitled "Thomism—A 'Questioning Theology'" (pp. 43-134). In this he puts forward an interpretation of Thomism that appears to be influenced by the transcendental method of the Maréchal school and by a Barthian-type theology of the Word but is primarily the fruit of his personal speculation. The starting-point of an ontology of the subject is taken by DK to be strictly theological: the believer's act of faith in Christ. The "substantial actuality of humanity" is quite literally to be achieved in this act of faith. The act is to be understood as a participation in the truth who is Christ (the act's formal object) and as the self-knowledge of the believer as he participates in, and is actualized by, the revelation (the act's material object). In this very specific sense "men are created in and by the Incarnate Word". "Thomism," states DK, "cannot separate the affirmation of contingent participation in substantial truth [by the act of faith] from the [ontological] affirmation of contingent participation in substantial existence, for the two identify" (pp. 60, 62).

Reality (so I interpret) is not simply thought; it is, directly or indirectly, participation in Christ by faith. Thus:

> The Incarnation, the creation of the man Christ, is the creation of humanity, whose contingent, existential act of *intellectus* is the actuality of the cosmos [. . .]. The formal cause of this *intellectus* is the created actuation of Christ's human nature, His intrinsic essence-*Esse* correlation. In no other way can the existential contingency of man and the created universe be understood by Thomism (p. 88).

DK is aware that other Thomists have not discovered this doctrine in the text of Aquinas. The fact seems to be that St. Thomas himself gave a false lead with his "decision to place the agent intellect in the individual, for then the individual is

complete in the order of *intellectus*, and thus in the order of substantial actuality" (p. 85). When, going further, Thomists abstract from the hypothesis of faith in Christ they abstract from *esse*. They attempt to set up an autonomous philosophy; but it is condemned to be one that views the contingent existent as positively intelligible and thus as "a necessary conclusion of logic". An essentialist deduction of a "natural" Creator, who creates by necessity, ensues (p. 57). When this understanding is imported into theology the supernatural becomes simply "an accidental perfection of the natural substance" and so is reduced to the natural. Philosophy now decides what revelation must be. The natural virtues are seen as already doing most of the work of the theological virtues, faith and charity; the latter are to be used only occasionally "so that they may be relied upon at the crucial hour of death" (pp. 58-59).

This is too rapid an allusion to what I think is the main thrust of DK's highly personal and subtle views on what constitutes Thomism, authentic and inauthentic. His review makes it clear that my *Sacramental Realism* does not fall within the former category. I agree with his judgment; his account of Thomism had no influence on my essay. Nor could any amount of work on my part bring me to try to repair this omission. On the other hand, I should be unhappy if this meant that I was to be classed with DK's false Thomists. I can only plead that my understanding of the metaphysics of St. Thomas derives from the interpretation of what he meant by *esse* given, over the past fifty years or so, by realist philosophers (E. Gilson, C. Fabro, J. Owens and many others; a review of the authors in: A. McNicholl, THE THOMIST 38 [1974], 768-825; 43 [1979] 507-580). Oddly enough, I sympathize with DK's desire to restore the theological context of St. Thomas's thinking. Still, this was a theologian who was held in high esteem by his contemporaries in the faculty of arts at Paris because of his commentaries on Aristotle, and who spent a good part of his energies, during his second period of teaching in Paris, combatting Averroism.

Given the highly systematic character of DK's synthesis, it is quite impossible to enter into debate about particular points. No single element of the massive structure can be discussed without putting in question the whole. This no doubt accounts for the bland assurance with which is proposed what is, after all, an eccentric version of Thomism and the tradition. It may account too for the need to censure in an extravagant way anyone who sees things differently. In spite of this, a few comments on points raised in the review seem necessary.

Probably the most fundamental insight that the Catholic tradition has to offer in ecumenical discussion is its awareness of the values of creation as ontologically presupposed to the cosmic drama of sin and justification in Christ. Sacramental practice and ecclesiological theory are living witness to this; moral theology depends on it; the autonomy of the human sciences and politics derives from it. This requires theological analysis of the Christ-event but does not in any way set aside its existential priority. It is one of the basic tenets of St. Thomas's theology that the supernatural order is to be defined in terms of the beatific vision, that is, in terms of the Blessed Trinity as the wholly gratuitous end promised and proposed to humanity. His whole theology is dominated by consideration of this end which imparts an inner dynamism to those who are created in the image of the triune God and who will be like Him because they will see him as he is. In a word, the human person, as image, is *capax summi boni* (*Summa theol.*, I, q. 93, a. 2, ad 3). It is this which confirms St. Thomas's philosophical confidence in human reason within the faith (*ibid.*, q. 12). It is this which determines the relation between grace (including the theological virtues) and nature (*ibid.*, q. 1, a. 2, ad 2); for a final cause unifies formal causes (thus seen as distinct though coordinated) and presupposes an efficient cause corresponding to the end (cf. *ibid.*, q. 5, a. 4). All this analysis provides the realist coordinates within which the integral meaning of the Christ-event is sought. The systematic method used subsumes the biblical theme of creation in Christ under the doctrine of the creative Trinity, thematized in terms of

participated *esse*. Karl Barth, with his polemic against "natural theology" and the first Vatican Council (*Dogmatik*, I/1, sec. 26), offers a developed covenantal theology. In its positive elements it constitutes an essential element of any Christian theology. But if it is to be safeguarded against anthropomorphism (which, paradoxically, was what Barth most abhorred), it needs to be situated in a wider context of reflection in which are established the basic relations that subsist between the creature and the creative Trinity. To suggest that St. Thomas understands the mystery of Christ in terms of formal causality alone is to make him an idealist, which he was not. Nor do I think that the distinctive character of the Catholic tradition can be expressed in terms of idealism.

A second remark: There is a tension, even within the Pauline writings, between the "one person" theme of union with Christ and the "covenantal unity" symbolized by marriage. I do not think it is irreconcilable. For DK to suggest that the former is "hardly supportive" of Christian autonomy seems to be a case of allowing system to prevail over the New Testament together with a strong patristic, medieval and contemporary tradition. The "one person" theme is first of all symbolic, and, whether one accepts it or leaves it aside, it is not ging to settle the "*de auxiliis*" controversy which betrayed quite another approach to the mystery. In any case, I make quite plain the distinction between the Head and the body, particularly when speaking of the Eucharist, in view of which (following St. Augustine) I was interested in developing the theme. It is in the same sacramental context (which I consider an indispensable dimension of Christology) that I took up such traditional notions as "merit", "satisfaction" and "sacrifice". DK calls the result "demythologizing"; I take this to be a negative judgment. I should prefer to say that I attempt to explore the significance of these Christian symbols which, at least in the neo-scholasticism at the turn of the present century, were understood in a less than personalist fashion. They should not be isolated from their Trinitarian background. If they are, I persist in calling the outcome juridical thinking.

I was specially interested in pointing out the inadequacy of the theory of " vicarious satisfaction;" this was a preliminary to interpreting the " for you " of the words of institution and to the whole theology of the sacrifice of the Mass. It is my belief that there are popular ways of understanding this sacrifice, not least among Catholics, that constitute a genuine obstacle to ecumenical discussions. The theology of the Counter Reform does not seem to me to meet the difficulty. I am open to correction on the theory I offer, but not, I am afraid, from a reviewer who fails to notice what I say about transsubstantiation.

As DK correctly perceives, it is impossible to construct a general theory of the sacraments without calling on a whole theology and without some emphasis on theological method. These are aspects of the project which are frequently neglected in contemporary monographs on the sacraments. I was hoping to call attention to them and to the need for a realist metaphysics. The theme of the book is one of systematic theology; I think there is enough history in it for its purpose.—I have to say a final word in defense of my publisher: the " Theology and Life Series " was set up after he had read my typescript. He is not really the daunting figure DK imagines.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Galileo and His Sources: The Heritage of the Collegio Romano in Galileo's Science. By WILLIAM A. WALLACE. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984. Pp. xii + 371. $42.50.

In the past two decades we have seen a proliferation of studies on Galileo and his influence in philosophy and modern science. Wallace's latest work, *Galileo and His Sources,* is actually the third book he has devoted to this subject, the two previous being *Galileo's Early Notebooks* (Notre Dame: 1977) and *Prelude to Galileo* (Reidel: 1981). It represents the summit of his achievement, and indeed makes an invaluable contribution toward understanding all of Galileo's writings and the sources from which they ultimately derived. This is especially true with respect to the early Latin notebooks of the famous physicist, usually ignored by scholars on the basis that they are irrelevant to an understanding of his major later writings and the "new science" of motion.

Wallace's assessment is quite different. The first part of his volume is devoted to studying these Latin notebooks and exploring the tradition within which they originated. For Wallace, such research is indispensable for understanding and evaluating Galileo's later work. After years of investigation he has discovered that the early notebooks, containing questions on logic and methodology as well as questions on the universe and the elements, show remarkable parallels with manuscript notes of lectures given by Jesuit professors at the Collegio Romano in the last decades of the sixteenth century. Galileo was undoubtedly influenced by the teaching of these men, most of them in their mid-twenties, whose philosophical position he characterizes as that of "progressive Aristotelianism." Wallace documents their influence in an original and remarkable analysis of their surviving lecture notes, showing how they were appropriated by the young Galileo when writing his logical and physical quesions. Perhaps the most significant of Wallace's discoveries is that Galileo composed these notes in the period between 1588 and 1591, while he was already teaching mathematics and astronomy at the University of Pisa or actively preparing for that post—and not while he was a student either at the Monastery of Vallombrosa or at the University of Pisa, as previously had been thought. This makes the logical and physical questions practically contemporaneous with Galileo's writing of his early treatises on motion, preserved in another Latin manuscript usually dated *ca.* 1590, which has long been seen as preparatory to the analysis of local motion given in his *Two New Sciences* of 1638.

Such painstaking textual research occupies the first two parts of the volume, in our opinion its most valuable contribution. Here the scholarship involved in Wallace's scrutiny of these sources is simply extraordinary, involving as it does knowledge of paleography as well as the intricacies of scholastic logic and natural philosophy. Every possible extant source, most of them in manuscript, is analyzed, explained, and compared in detail with Galileo's own notes—all in his own hand and thus of undoubted authenticity.

The first chapter of the first part deals with Galileo's logical questions, actually 27 queries arising from Aristotle's treatment of demonstration and its prerequisites in his *Posterior Analytics;* the second, with 25 additional questions relating to matters treated in Aristotle's *De caelo et mundo* and his *De generatione et corruptione.* The amount of data uncovered, its organization and careful evaluation, would alone suffice to make this volume a signal contribution to Galileo studies. Subsequent researchers in this field simply cannot afford to ignore it. And not only is it important for understanding Galileo's contribution to early modern science; it is also of value for intellectual history generally, for, Galileo studies aside, Wallace's examination of the writing of these Jesuits at Rome is itself a positive (and quite unexpected) contribution to the histories of natural science and natural philosophy.

The second part of the volume expands the textual analyses of the first part to explore in fuller detail the logic and natural philosophy being taught at the Collegio Romano and how these impacted on the methodological problems raised by the prospect of a "new science" of local motion. In other words, Wallace here proposes to reconstruct the philosophical background for which Galileo was indebted to the Roman Jesuits. He shows clearly that Galileo tried to develop a science of motion based on the ideals of *scientia* and *demonstratio* set forth in Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics,* and how certain prerequisites in the form of *suppositiones* were necessary to assure the validity of demonstrations in such a contingent subject matter as local motion. All of these problems "were far from irrelevant to the concerns that dominated his [Galileo's] later life." (p. 110)

A detailed examination of problems relating to local motion constitutes the second chapter of this part (pp. 149-219). Here Wallace claims that "Galileo's interest in local motion was not unconnected with the logic and natural philosophy he had carefully studied and excerpted from the notes of Jesuit professors." (p. 149) To document this statement he analyzes the teachings on motion contained in the lecture notes of the Jesuits whose teachings he has explained in the preceding three chapters. Then he complements the survey "by detailing developments in the science of mechanics that took place outside the Collegio [but] . . . could be part of the tradition that influenced Galileo's final drafting of the *Two New Sciences.*" (p. 150) This documentation ranges through a variety

of primary sources: scientists and philosophers such as Menu, Valla, Vitelleschi, Rugerius, Tartaglia, Guidobaldo del Monte, Blancanus, and Guevara are studied and their possible influences on Galileo assessed.

Part three of the volume deals with Galileo's science in transition, that is, his science before and after 1610, the year in which he recorded his discoveries with the telescope for which he is famous (pp. 219-335). This part attempts to trace the influence exerted by the conceptual structure explained in the first two parts on Galileo's subsequent work. According to Wallace, these materials continue to recur in Galileo's writings in surprisingly consistent ways that have hitherto been overlooked. "Actually, his philosophical stance turns out to be more scholastic, and much more nuanced, than has been suspected." (p. 220) Wallace supports this judgment with extensive analyses, suggesting "that Aristotelian concepts as set forth in the physical questions and their supporting works provided an enduring background for Galileo's studies of motion." (p. 277)

The second chapter of this part deals with Galileo's later science, that developed after 1610 (pp. 287-335). By that time Galileo's science of nature, based as it was on experimentation and mathematical reasoning, had already taken definitive shape. Wallace deals here successively with the Copernican debates, the *Two Chief World Systems,* and the *Two New Sciences.* This section, though based on Galileo's actual texts in Latin and Italian, does not invoke the original research found in the previous sections. But the author's explanations of the philosophy, science, mathematics, and experimentation recorded in Galileo's later writings proves to be illuminating. In a clear and systematic way he evaluates Galileo's mature thought, his contributions and the rigor of his treatment, which have made him the Father of Modern Science.

For Wallace, even the work of his later period is "in accord with the goals and methodological canons outlined in the *Posterior Analytics,* particularly when interpreted along lines pioneered by the Jesuits, as opposed to the textual orthodoxy of the Aristotelians in the Italian universities." (p. 339)

This study does not attempt to minimize the originality or the inventiveness of Galileo, for "[t]hese innovations, clearly more than the seedbed from which they sprang, are what earn for him the title of Father of Modern Science." (p. 339) As Wallace sees it, Galileo's originality lies chiefly in two areas: "in the mathematical techniques he perfected to make the new physics possible, and in the experimental methods he devised to make such techniques practicable in the study of local motion." *(ibid.)* These insights, implemented in countless ways, represent Galileo's unique contribution to the science of mechanics, transforming that science "into a *nuova scienza* on which the Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century was soon to be erected." (p. 347).

Wallace admits that his study leaves many questions unanswered. His treatment may not be exhaustive from this point of view, and yet the volume is worth every penny of its price. It really is a fascinating book. The reader goes from surprise to surprise, following a rigorous exposition of facts and principles that leads to conclusions themselves inescapable. The volume will prove of value to scientists, historians, philosophers, and all scholars interested in the complex ramifications of the Italian Renaissance.

To bring this review to conclusion we propose the following question. Does Wallace prove his thesis? Does the new science of motion stand in essential continuity with the ideals laid out in Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*? We believe that it does, but this is bound to be the subject of future controversy, as Wallace himself foresees (p. 347). Whether the thesis is demonstrated or not, however, the book stands on its own merits. Wallace's research is so interesting, so well documented, so well written, so appealing, and so original that we recommend the book unreservedly to everyone.

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The Point of Christology. By SCHUBERT OGDEN. New York: Harper & Row, 1982. Pp. 191. $14.50.

Schubert Ogden is recognized as a leading American theologian. Two of his works, *Christ without Myth* and *The Reality of God,* have had substantial impact on contemporary theological thought. This present work, *The Point of Christology,* contains Ogden's Sarum Lectures given at Oxford in 1980-81.

A. *Authenticating Our Existence*

As the title indicates, Ogden is not interested solely in determining the content of Christology, although he does that, but rather in making "a critical inquiry into the *point* of all such doctrinal formulations" (p. xi). In other words, before Ogden takes up the question of who Jesus Christ is he explores the underlying question why one would formulate a Christology or be concerned with Jesus in the first place. Ogden is asking what might be termed the meta-Christological question.

Ogden sees the need for such a study because he believes that both traditional and present revisionary Christology contain inherent weaknesses that can only be eliminated if such a prior question is addressed and answered. Besides rejecting a mythological world view inherited

from the New Testament and a metaphysical system which can no longer be maintained, Ogden believes that traditional Christology is concerned too exclusively with the question of "Who is Jesus" in himself (cf. pp. 6-14). He also believes that contemporary revisionary Christology takes as its own this same presupposition that Christology is primarily concerned with Jesus in himself (cf. pp. 15-19).

In examining the question of the point of Christology, Ogden asserts that Christology should deal not only with who Jesus is in himself, but also with Jesus's meaning for us and who God is in relation to us (cf. pp. 23-28). These latter two concerns are fundamental to any true Christology (cf. p. 29).

Ogden proceeds to argue that the question underlying any Christology deals with our authentic existence as related to and sanctioned by ultimate reality, i.e. God (cf. pp. 30, 34, 38-40, 64-65). Christology is "fundamentally a question about the ultimate meaning of our own existence" (p 64). Whatever one states about Jesus must be seen from this point of departure. Christology must be what Ogden calls "existential-historical", that is, it must be a statement about Jesus (historical) that is primarily concerned with our authentic existence (existential) in relation to ultimate reality (God). Ogden states: "The Christological assertion must be an assertion about both the ultimate reality and ourselves, in that it asserts conversely both that the ultimate reality which authorizes the authentic understanding of our existence is the God who is decisively revealed through Jesus and that the authentic self-understanding that is implicitly authorized by ultimate reality is the faith in God of which Jesus is the explicit authorizing source" (p. 42). Christology thus deals with God's authentication of our lives revealed through Jesus and our faith self-understanding as being affirmed by God also revealed through Jesus. Jesus (and thus the point of Christology) makes explicit that God is for us and that we in faith can acknowledge that our existence has purpose and meaning.

B. *No Ultimate Need for the Jesus of History*

Having established that this is the ultimate purpose of Christology, Ogden believes he has alleviated a number of Christological problems. He now readily admits that it is impossible to return to the historical Jesus as such. The closest we can come is in the earliest witnesses within the Gospel tradition, but these remain "witnesses" and do not take us back to Jesus himself. What they bear witness to as historical fact may be more or less true. However, it does not ultimately matter to Ogden whether or not they put us in touch with the historical facts, for what is essential is not the "empirical-historical" but the "existential-historical," that is, who Jesus was perceived to be *by these witnesses* and how their *perception* of Jesus confronted them and changed their lives. Since

the point of Christology concerns the authentification of our existence in relationship to God, what Jesus says or does in the empirical and historical sense does not finally matter as long as historically he is perceived as confronting people's lives. It is the confronting and revealing *perception* that is really at stake here.

Even though the earliest witnesses may have presumed that they were speaking of the historical Jesus as he is in himself, " Their assertions all had to do with the meaning of Jesus for us as he still confronts us in the present . . . Because this is so, I contend that the Jesus to whom the earliest witnesses point as 'the real locus of revelation' is the existential-historical Jesus, and therefore neither the empirical-historical Jesus nor their own witness of faith, save insofar as it is solely through their witness that this event of revelation is now accessible and continues to take place" (pp. 59-60).

> Because the subject of the Christological assertion is Jesus in his meaning for us, not Jesus in his being in himself, whether he did or did not imply a claim for the decisive significance of his own person has no bearing whatever on the appropriateness of this assertion. Whether he implied any such claim or not, the fact remains that what those to whom we owe even the earliest Christian witness meant in so speaking of him is the one through whom they themselves have been confronted with such a claim and who still continues to make it through their own witness to faith (pp. 60-61).

Within this Christological setting, Ogden holds that Jesus does not have to actualize perfectly what he himself reveals: " We have established that the conditions of asserting a Christological predicate in no way require that Jesus has perfectly actualized the possibility of authentic self-understanding' (p. 87). In addition, Ogden asserts that Jesus does not necessarily have to have a perfect self-understanding that he is " the one through whom the meaning of God for us is made fully explicit . . ." (p. 77, cf. pp. 64-85). What is important is that we are confronted with and believe the self-authenticating truth that God is for us. For Ogden, Jesus in himself is not of ultimate significance; what is important is the message of truth which others perceive coming from him.

C. *Jesus reveals God's Boundless Love—We are Now Free to Love*

What then is the message that confronts us through Jesus and which authenticates our lives in relation to ultimate reality? Ogden states, " The essential point (of the Gospels), as I should put it, is that *Jesus meant love* . . ." (p. 119). Through Jesus, " God was confronting his hearers with the gift and demand of boundless love and thus with the possibility of authentic existence in faith" (p. 120). Jesus still means love today and so this revelation of God's boundless love is present, now demanding a response from us (cf. p. 122). To accept and respond to God's love

sets a person free "both from and for oneself and all of one's fellow creatures" (p. 123). Ogden later reinforces this by stating "Specifically, the claim that God as ultimate reality is boundless love means primarily that we ourselves are free to exist and act in love in relation to all our fellow creatures" (p. 144). Ogden concludes his study by specifying and developing the social and political aspects of this freedom to love explicated in Jesus Christ.

One could summarize Ogden's work by stating that the point of Christology is to determine the authentification of our existence in relation to God. Jesus does this by explicitly revealing that God, as boundless love, is for us and that we are thus free to love one another.

It is possible to respond to Ogden in various ways. For example, one could challenge his understanding of the historicity of scripture or his critique of classical metaphysics and its relationship to traditional Christology. However, it seems appropriate to take up Ogden's primary question concerning the point of Christology and the Christology that issues from it.

D. *Recognizing the Reality of the Fall*

In answering the question of the point of Christology, Ogden maintains that it has to do with the authentification of our existence. In proposing that Jesus reveals God's boundless love for us and our constant relation to him, Ogden presupposes that our relationship with God is already established and that this relationship is the way it should be. He would mention that God is and always was for us, that he loves us constantly, and that our lives are inherently worth living. We need only to allow God's love to enable us to love others. According to Ogden, what Jesus does is to make known and thus to verify this established *status quo* relationship between ourselves and God. In so doing, man's relationship to God does not change in kind, but only in degree in the sense that we now know what our relationship is and this gives us greater freedom and confidence to live out the consequences of such a relationship. This is hardly the full point of traditional Christology or soteriology. Ogden, as do many contemporary Christologists, fails to grasp a number of very critical Christian beliefs concerning Jesus and his significance.

The first truth Ogden fails to acknowledge is the reality of the fall of man. One of the truths that Jesus reveals is that prior to his life, death, and resurrection, and the outpouring of his Holy Spirit and prior to our own repentance and faith in him, we are literally God's enemies (cf. Lk 13:3,5). "There is no just man, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one in search of God. All have taken the wrong course, all alike have become worthless; not one of them acts uprightly, no not one" (Ps 14:1, also Rm 3:11-12). According to Paul, "All men have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God" (Rm 3:23).

It is true that God is always for us. It is true that he always loves us. However, it is also true that because of the sin of Adam, we have become children of Satan; we are slaves to sin; we are at enmity with God (cf. Jn 8:44, Gal 4:3, Rm 5:10). Our sin is an affront to the very justice and holiness of God and is an insult to the very boundless love that God constantly has for us. Thus, man's situation before God prior to the salvation offered through Christ is not a positive one that only needs to be revealed and verified, nor is it basically a good relationship that can now become better. What Jesus reveals is that apart from him and the salvation he brings, our relationship to God is absolutely broken. We are unable to know God personally, and cannot experience his intimate love as a Father. His Spirit does not dwell within us. We cannot live by the power of the same Spirit. We are ruled by our passions and are corrupt because of our resentment, bitterness, and hatred. Inherent in the biblical language and images is the truth that our sin has cast us outside the love and friendship that God so much desires us to share. Our relationship with God and the life that we live differs in kind from the relationship we should have with God and the life that we should live. Without God's initiative, without his mercy and love, without his plan of salvation in which an entirely different kind of relationship with God is established, each of us would have nothing other than eternal damnation. This is neither exaggerated rhetoric nor mythical language which needs to be demythologized but the truth that God has revealed to us about our desperate need for salvation.

Ogden also fails to grasp that the salvation demanded by our "present" state is more than that of obtaining knowledge and verification of an already good situation. God has to do more than tell us that he loves us and that we should love him and one another. God has to initiate and establish a wholly new and different kind of relationship with himself. There has to be a change not just in the way we perceive reality, for reality itself has to be radically changed. God has to make it possible for us to become his friends. He has to overcome sin and death, and obtain for us eternal life.

E. *The Full Significance of Jesus and His Salvation*

Secondly, Ogden hardly touches upon the true significance of Jesus. He is able to do away with the historical Jesus because he does not believe that the person of Jesus is as important as the "truth" he reveals. Ogden erroneously believes that as long as the "truth" is known, the manner or way it becomes known is of little importance. However, Christianity recognizes that salvation is far more than telling us that "God is in his heaven and all is well with the world."

Christian revelation proclaims that despite the harsh reality of our sinful state God in his love sent his Son to redeem us. "Yes, God so

loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believe in him may not die but may have eternal life. God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world might be saved through him (Jn 3:16-17, Cf. 1 Jn 4:9). Jesus *himself* as the Incarnate Son of God is the Father's solution to the problem of man's slavery to sin, death, and Satan. His eternal Son came into the world in order to change our relationship with God, thus enabling us to become his sons and daughters. An inspired prophet or some wise philosopher could proclaim some religious "truth", but only God can actually destroy powers of evil beyond man's control and establish an entirely new type of relationship with himself. The traditional doctrine of the Incarnation, that Jesus is God the Son existing as man, is essential for accomplishing the work of salvation that needs to be done.

Jesus's love was revealed not only in the historical act of the Incarnation, but also in the historical event of his death and resurrection. He came into our midst precisely for this reason. Paul declares:

> **At the appointed time, when we were still powerless Christ died for us godless men. It is rare that anyone should lay down his life for a just man, though it is barely possible that for a good man someone may have the courage to die. It is precisely in this that God proves his love for us: that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Rm 5:6-8).**

Jesus is God's justice so that we might be just. "All men are now undeservedly justified by the gift of God, through the redemption wrought in Christ Jesus" (Rm 3:23). Man's sin is primarily an arrogant affront to the very holiness, sovereignty, and justice of God. Jesus, in offering himself on the Cross, rectified the infinite wrong done to Almighty God who loved his children as a true father. Jesus's death allowed that love of the Father to be poured out once more into our hearts through the Holy Spirit (cf. Rm 5:5). "We are at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rm 5:1). We have been "justified by his blood" and "saved by him from God's wrath" (Rm 5:9).

This is the Good News of the Gospel and Ogden seems completely unaware of this truth. The blood of Christ, the blood of the eternal Son, has washed us clean of sin and guilt. He has enabled us once more to stand justified and holy before God the Father. "It is in Christ and through his blood that we have been redeemed and our sins forgiven" (Eph 1:7).

F. *An Entirely New Kind of Relationship with God*

Thirdly, Jesus's death and resurrection must have an impact on the life of each human person. When a person repents of sin and puts faith in Jesus Christ a whole new reality develops. Ogden again is not cognizant of this great change which occurs because Christians participate

in and experience a whole new life which comes to them through the indwelling Holy Spirit. The Spirit unites the believer to Jesus Christ and through him to the Father. Men and women are brought into the life of the Trinity only through the Spirit; it is not simply a part of being a human person; it is not part of the *status quo* reality into which we are born. "I solemnly assure you, no one can enter into God's kingdom without being begotten of water and Spirit. Flesh begets flesh. Spirit begets spirit" (Jn 3:5-6).

Paul proclaims that through faith the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (Rm 5:5). This new experience of God's love, this new relationship with him as an intimate Father, is unique to the Christian. Only those who are united to Christ and share in his Spirit are incorporated into this relationship of love. Again Ogden fails to acknowledge this truth. For him everyone is in a loving relationship to God which only needs to be recognized.

This life in the Spirit transforms us into new creations. Christians must lay aside their former way of life to acquire "a fresh, spiritual way of thinking." They "must put on that new man created in God's image, whose justice and holiness are born of truth" (Eph 4:22-24). Jesus empowers Christians to overcome sin in all of its forms and to think and act as sons and daughters of the Father. Christ does not leave us helpless in sin and vulnerable to the wiles of Satan, but enables us to live lives worthy of our calling (cf. Eph 4:1).

Faith in Jesus also assures us of our own resurrection. Ogden does not touch upon this central reality. Human death has been conquered by the bodily resurrection of Jesus. "I am the resurrection and the life, whoever believes in me though he should die, will come to life; and whoever is alive and believes in me will never die" (Jn 11:25-26). The Spirit of Jesus dwelling in us not only guarantees freedom from sin and Satan, but is the seal to our resurrection (cf. Eph. 1:13-14). "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, then he who raised Christ from the dead will bring your mortal bodies to life also, through his Spirit dwelling in you" (Rm 8:11).

The significance of all of this is that Jesus does more than give us a new perspective on life. He does more than help us see the present condition in a new way. He actually brings about an entirely new situation in which he, as God incarnate living in space and time, is central. It is in him, in his very own person, that his new situation is established. He, himself, is the way, the truth and the life (cf. Jn 14:6). We have access to a whole new relationship with God in and through Christ and with it a life that differs in kind from the one we were naturally born into. "He came and 'announced the good news of peace to you who were far off,

and those who were near'; through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. This means that you are strangers and aliens no longer. No, you are fellow citizens of the saints and members of the household of God" (Eph 2:17-19).

G. *The Uniqueness of the Person of Christ*

Lastly, we see then that Jesus, the Incarnate Son, is the center and source of salvation and the newness of life. Jesus—in and of himself and in what he has done—is unique among all religious leaders. Other founders of religious and wise men, such as Buddha, Mohammed, Plato, and Aristotle, are not important in and of themselves. Rather, what they have said, taught, or practised is what may be significant. For Ogden, and for many contemporary theologians, Jesus is placed on a par with such as these.

Jesus, however, is radically different. Jesus, the historical individual who now reigns in glory, is of the utmost and absolute significance, not only in the past, but also in the present and the future. Who he is and the effect of his life, death, and resurrection have eternal significance for all people of all ages. His Spirit has been poured out upon the world from him, and because of his death and resurrection. Only in him do we have forgiveness of sin. In him alone are we sanctified. Solely in him do we have eternal life. Of no other can such claims be made. "There is no salvation in anyone else, for there is no other name in the whole world given to men by which we are able to be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Paul proclaims the primacy of Christ.

> He is the invisible God, the first born of all creatures. In him everything in heaven and on earth was created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominations, principalities or powers; all were created through him, and for him. He is before all else that is. In him everything continues in being. It is he who is head of the body, the church; he who is the beginning, the first-born of the dead, so that primacy may be his in everything. It pleased God to make absolute fullness reside in him, and by means of him to reconcile everything to his person, both on earth and in the heavens, making peace through the blood of his cross (Col. 1:15-20).

A Christian is one who is convinced that Jesus Christ alone is Lord and Savior; there are no others.

The point of traditional Christology and the content of classical Christology as just outlined when compared with the work of Ogden illustrates the sterility and narrowness of his proposal. The good news of the Gospel has a depth, importance, and urgency not found in his book. The solution to the weaknesses within contemporary Christology, as exemplified in Ogden, however, does not lie solely in better academic treatises, necessary as these are. Rather, the full solution resides in

God's people coming to honest repentance and mature faith in Jesus. Through faith the Spirit will bring to life the reality of Jesus and his salvation. Then God's people, and their theologians, will be able to bear witness to and write about what they have seen and heard (cf. 1 Jn 1:1-3).

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Faith According to Saint John of the Cross. By KAROL WOJTYLA. Translated by Jordan Aumann, O.P. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1981. Pp. 276.

This work, though only recently published in English, was written in 1946-1948 as a doctoral dissertation. It was directed by the renowned Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, and presented at the Angelicum University in Rome. Originally composed in Latin, the work was speedily translated into several modern languages upon Wojtyla's election to the Papacy in 1978, and thus it is now available in English.

The subject is the thought of St. John of the Cross, the sixteenth-century Spanish Carmelite known as reformer of his order, as mystic, as poet, and honored also as Mystical Doctor of the Church. Wojtyla thus traces "the nature of the virtue of faith as described in the writings of St. John of the Cross" (p. 29) through the latter's tetralogy: *The Ascent of Mount Carmel, The Dark Night of the Soul, The Spiritual Canticle,* and *The Living Flame of Love.*

The author points out that John of the Cross defines faith as "a certain and obscure habit of the soul" (*Ascent* II, 3, 1). In analyzing this phrase, Wojtyla indicates that in Scholastic thought "'habit' signifies a certain perfection of a faculty ordained to operation" (p. 70). To say, then, "that faith is a habit signifies that it is a certain perfection of the intellect, ordained to a particular mode of operation" *(ibid.).* And yet, in the ordinary experience of faith, this operation is never exercised, for it would entail full intellection of the propositions believed. And thus faith is, as the definition has it, *obscure,* for it is always characterized by lack of full intellectual comprehension of the matter believed. At the same time, faith makes the understanding *certain,* or gives it certitude, for it presents truths to which we may fully assent.

The obscurity of faith is a central motif in the thought of the Carmelite reformer. In the consideration of this concept, Wojtyla points out that in ordinary human cognition the intellect tends to unite its objects to itself according to its proper intentional modality. In order for this to

occur, though, the external senses first perceive the object, the internal ones then form a phantasm of it, and subsequently the agent intellect illumines the intelligible species. It is the latter that is understood by the knowing power or passive intellect, which then assimilates the object to itself. In the case of theological faith, propositions concerning God's existence, his nature, his attributes, the Trinity of Persons, and the like, are received by the external senses, yet the internal sense faculties have no capacity to construct commensurate phantasms. The agent intellect is consequently unable to educe the corresponding intelligible species. The subject is moved to assent by the power of the theological virtue of faith, which is infused, while remaining in darkness.

Nonetheless, in the configuration of the virtue of faith, the element of light predominates over that of darkness. If faith is darkness subjectively, because of the limitations of the knowing powers, it is pure light and resplendence in the objective order, being supernatural and possessing "essential likeness" to God (pp. 38-45; reference is made to *Ascent* II, 8, 3 and *ibid.*, 9, 1). And thus the mind, being granted true yet incomprehensible propositions, as well as the grace to adhere to them, is guided in the darkness as by a blinding light. This darkness of faith can be said to be experienced by all believing Christians.

There is a still greater darkness linked with faith, however, compared to which the former one is only an evening twilight: the "dark night" spoken of by John of the Cross, a most rigorous ascetico-mystical programme undertaken by the soul in its striving for union with God. As Wojtyla notes, "faith . . . because of its intimate proportion of likeness to divinity, penetrates the intellect intimately but obscurely with an unlimited form or species and is therefore in opposition to the natural tendency of the intellect. In order that this opposition be effective, the privation of the intellect is necessary" (p. 142). Throughout this ascent toward mystical communion, thus, the faculty of the intellect is placed in perfection as it produces emptiness in itself regarding its natural object. And "together with the negation of the clear, particular species received by the intellect, there is an affirmation of the divine form as known in its unlimited darkness" (p. 143). To put it another way, the soul must walk in faith, must confirm itself in faith, for it is this virtue that is "the proper and proportionate means" of union (*Ascent* II, 9, 1). But faith in its purity forbids that any creature be substituted for God. Things sensed, felt, known, or imagined must all be banished from man's cognitive and affective faculties. Even intellectual apprehensions of supernatural origin must be rejected, for these are received in a way that is connatural to man and therefore incommensurate with God. Consequently, in prayer, the greater the darkness of the intellect in its natural operations, the purer is the faith and the greater is the approximation to God.

The stage in which the subject purifies himself through the exercise of abnegation is called "the active night of the soul." It is followed by the "passive night," in which purgation is effected, not by the natural powers of the subject, even elevated by grace, but by supernatural infusion of the act of contemplation itself into the rational powers. This act of contemplation is brought about in the order of efficient causality by faith, which "contains in its internal structure the very substance of all the degrees of contemplation possible in this life" (p. 169). It intervenes, further, "not precisely as a virtue but so far as through faith the intellect participates in the light of divine knowledge" *(ibid.)*. When an exceedingly advanced degree of purification is achieved, the subject comes into mystical communion with "the Son of God, who is communicated to the soul in faith" (*Ascent* II, 29, 6). Sharing through vivified faith in the Divine Wisdom, the soul participates at once in the generation of the Word, "terminus of the knowledge in which God, knowing himself exhaustively and comprehensively, expresses his own infinite perfection in the person of the Son" (p. 172). We are told, though, that these intimate and transforming mystical communications are experienced by the subject without intellectual enlightenment, for the Mystical Doctor, in Wojtyla's assessment, is consistent in his doctrine regarding "the excessive light of faith" and "the subject that remains in darkness" (p. 200).

It should be pointed out that the treatises of the Carmelite reformer are not principally speculative but practical, concerned with guiding souls to perfection and union with God. Although he relies on Scholastic terminology, John of the Cross does not develop speculatively many concepts to the fullest. On the other hand, Wojtyla, in his thoroughly speculative commentary, disengages the texts pertinent to the particular issue of faith, and answers potential questions. One point which he establishes resolutely is the unity of the one absolutely supernatural and infused virtue of faith, which is irreducible to any purely human construct or psychological state. It is believed that Wojtyla's mentor, Garrigou-Lagrange, encouraged a development along these lines in order to refute a thesis which had been put forth earlier by Jean Baruzi in *Saint Jean de la Croix et le problème de l'expérience mystique* (Paris, 1924; 2nd ed, 1931). This author endeavored to establish a polarity between "dogmatic faith," expressed in propositions proposed to the faithful for belief, and "mystical faith," understood by Baruzi as a "universalization of the intellect" in which the mind transcends by its own natural powers certain limited modes of conceptualization. Wojtyla establishes that such a thesis has no foundation in the thought of John of the Cross, who taught, to the contrary, that "faith, which is the basis of mystical knowledge, consists objectively in the truths revealed by God and proposed for belief by the Church", and that "adherence to the revealed truths in-

volves the same supernatural impulse that produces the loftiest mystical experience" (p. 181).

Nonetheless, some of Wojtyla's interpretations of the thought of John of the Cross could be given further precision. He asserts with insistence that faith is the means by which the intellect is joined to God, and further, that this virtue moves the subject to adhere to the propositions which express the content of faith. And finally he asserts that it is by this adherence that the intellect is united with God, who is made present to the knowing power intentionally though obscurely (see, among other, pp. 66, 67, 104, 207-9, 259). If we read the Sanjuanist texts with care, however, we will find that the majority of them do not state that faith joins *the intellect* to God, but that together with the other two theological virtues, it joins *the soul* to God. Faith is ". . . the proximate and proportionate means for the soul to be united with God" (*Ascent* II, 9, 1). "The soul . . . is united with God . . . by faith." And a few lines above in the same text, reference is made to "the three theological virtues, faith, hope and charity . . . through which the soul becomes united with God" (*Ascent* II, 6, 1).

This is not to say that there is no particular link between the faculty of understanding and the virtue of faith. There is, indeed, and it is complemented by corresponding relationships between the will and charity, and between memory and hope. What the Carmelite mystic tells us is that the soul cannot be joined to God except through its rational powers, for it is through them that it operates. Union with God must thus be by means of acts of knowing, loving, and remembering. As the human rational faculties are incapable of attaining their proper supernatural ends on their own power, they are each purified and endowed with a higher modality by the corresponding infused theological virtue. It is stated that "the three theological virtues, faith, hope, and charity—which are related to the three powers as proper supernatural objects, and through which the soul is joined with God according to its powers—cause the same emptiness and darkness in each respective faculty: faith in the intellect, hope in the memory, and charity in the will." Consequently, "the soul is joined . . . by faith according to the intellect, by hope according to the memory and by love according to the will" (*Ascent* II, 6, 1). The exercise of the theological virtues, therefore, does perfect and uplift the faculties. But the union with God is *of* the soul, *according to* the operation of its faculties, and *by means* of the theological virtues.

Focusing upon the union between the soul as such and God leads to an expanded understanding of the nature of this communion. By conceiving of it as being between the knowing power and God, Wojtyla is led logically to stress intentionality. For indeed, the only assimilation which the faculty of intellection can effect is an intentional one. Thus arises Wojtyla's emphasis upon the communication of "substance understood," and upon

intentional-presence-though-in-darkness. But this does not quite do justice to the thinking of the Mystical Doctor. His doctrine takes its point of departure from the belief that the theological virtues are derived from sanctifying grace, which also endows the subject with a certain participation in the Divine Being. The principles are articulated by Aquinas in the *Summa Theologiae,* I-II, 110, 3, where he states that by the gift of grace it is given to the soul to participate in the Divine Nature; and in I-II, 110, 4, where he says that by the possession of the theological virtues the subject is made to participate in the vital actions of God. The Carmelite Doctor, on his part, corroborates Thomas's statements with texts to the same effect. In *Ascent* II, 5, 4, and *Spiritual Canticle,* 11, 3, he speaks of a communication of the Divine Being to the soul in and through grace; and in *Spiritual Canticle,* 1, 6, of an essential and presential indwelling of the Trinity in the intimate being of the soul.

It should also be pointed out that in the texts dealing specifically with communication of God in faith it is made clear that He does not communicate himself in and through the darkness, but that He is hidden underneath the darkness (*Ascent* II, 9, 1). In the couplet of adjectives light/darkness, Wojtyla associates light with the propositions of faith, and calls this aspect the objective dimension of faith; and darkness with the human experience thereof, rightly called the subjective dimension. Yet both the propositions of faith and the human inability to comprehend them pertain to the human mode of operation of the virtue of faith. But the soul is placed in communion with God by the operation of the virtue of faith according to its supernatural mode, in a way that is totally imperceptible by the subject and independent of his psychological experience (see *Ascent* II, 9, 1 and 3). What we have here is a true communion of persons, beside which a notion of mere intentional presence becomes pallid. In the Sanjuanist texts the communion is vital, moral, psychological, and metaphysically actual, without being, however, a union of essence. It is effected supernaturally by grace. And from the perspective of this presence of God in the soul of every baptized, believing Christian, it is seen that the entire mystical life is a development of this imperceptible yet real communion. Development, however, only takes place in the subject receiving and not in the object received. Through relentless purification and confirmation in virtue, the soul comes to have a certain experience of God, but only because He was already there. We find the terms somewhat inverted in the presentation of Wojtyla, in which God is said to be made present to the soul in and through his being known in darkness.

In Wojtyla's assessment, it is "'naked faith' that perhaps best exemplifies the fundamental concept of the virtue of faith according to St. John of the Cross. It is a faith that lacks all consolation and is without

any light from above or below. It is a faith that is manifested as the unwavering constancy of the intellect in its adherence to God" (p. 201). The author likewise is insistent that "the entire journey to union with God is enveloped in the darkness of faith; darkness covers all the steps of the soul to God . . ." (p. 144). The texts of the Carmelite doctor, however, seem to indicate that at the summit of the mystical ascent the soul experiences a relative enlightenment which allows a certain intellectual perception, a certain intuition, of the object of faith. Such experience is an effect of what is called the "actual union according to the faculties," which is temporary, and which stands in contrast to the more permanent habitual union in which intellective darkness prevails (*Spiritual Canticle,* 26, 11). As Wojtyla himself indicates, in the passive night of the soul, "an infused, supernatural modality replaces the human, natural modality . . ." (p. 186). Thus it is that the jubilant soul who has surmounted all the rigorous nights of purification can claim: ". . . I sallied forth from my human operation and mode of acting to God's operation and mode of acting . . . My intellect departed from itself, changing from human and natural to divine. For, united with God through this purgation, it no longer understands by means of its natural vigor and light, but by means of the Divine Wisdom to which it was united" (*Dark Night* II, 4, 2). At this stage the soul must still abide in faith. It is, however, "a most enlightened faith" (*Living Flame,* 3, 80), making manifest in some measure the presence of God. A faith like night, yes, but night "at the onset of the rising dawn . . ." (*Spiritual Canticle,* 15). The experience is a prelude of the full vision of glory, which the saint compares to the bright light of mid-day.

Our contemporary commentator of John of the Cross emphasizes the unity and continuity in the latter's doctrine of faith. He observes that it is the same formal cause that is present in contemplation at any level: a sharing in the knowledge of God himself, which participation is one with faith (pp. 169 and 190). This unity, nonetheless, can be stressed even further and seen in the still broader context of a unity of the communication of God to the soul. If what He communicates through the theological virtues is his very Being, as the Carmelite Doctor indeed teaches, then the participation in the divine knowledge which is granted through faith, and the sharing in God's love which is given through charity, are none other than touches of that very same substance of God. In one of his most rapturous passages, John of the Cross tells us that the Divine Being present in the soul is like a flame which enlightens and kindles jointly (*Living Flame,* 3, 49). It is a simple substance, in other words, which refracts upon contact with the complexity of the human subject. The cognitive power is touched by the Divine Substance under the modality of the virtue of faith, and the will is touched by the same

Divine Being as communicated charity. Faith under its numerous modalities is always constituted objectively by the same reality, the participated life of God. This is the case whether it be the faith infused at baptism, the faith which gives the necessary impetus to assent to the formulation of revealed truth, faith experienced in its obscurity in the active night of the soul, faith as the ray of contemplation which purifies in the passive night, or the faith which illuminates at the summit of mystical union. And this virtue of faith is only one of three modalities under which the transcendent Deity penetrates the soul, the other two being hope and charity. All three jointly permeate the soul, each purifying its corresponding faculty, bringing the subject into intimate embrace with the already possessed Triune Divinity.

Although Wojtyla does not emphasize these last-mentioned points, this in no way detracts from the merits of his study. The monograph is indeed filled with numerous keen insights into the thought of the Mystical Doctor, which can be enriching both to the beginner and to the expert in mystical literature. By his ascension to the Papacy, John Paul II has enabled this work to reach a wider audience with its light upon the figure and thought of Saint John of the Cross.

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Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics, and Praxis. By RICHARD J. BERNSTEIN. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983. Pp. xviii + 284. $27.50 (cloth); $9.95 (paper).

Richard Bernstein's great talent as a writer has been to bring together intellectual currents which appear to flow in opposite directions. In *Praxis and Action,* he explored the developing consensus about the inadequacies of the Cartesian "spectator view of knowledge" and about the importance of agency in knowing as well as living, while in *Restructuring Social and Political Theory* he went beyond this largely negative project to argue that such diverse philosophical traditions as linguistic analysis, Marxism, phenomenology, and critical theory were actually creating new and convergent paths through the problems of the age. But, as he says in the introduction to *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism,* he has since come to see the themes of the earlier books as "gravitating toward the complex network of problems concerning the character, dimensions, and texture of human rationality and irrationality." Thus he

finds himself in the midst of the "rationality debates" and trying to handle the spectre of relativism which haunts twentieth century culture. His solution turns on recognizing that this spectre springs, in great measure, from the pursuit of an impossible objectivity.

Contemporary philosophy of science provides the entrée for the argument. At the dawn of the Enlightenment, René Descartes promised in the *Discourse on Method* that the demon of doubt would be banished if only we learned how to order our thoughts correctly, and it became a cultural given that human beings could reach sure and immutable knowledge of things and persons through the application of sound method. Of course, this given has, like all others, had its nay-sayers, but the opposition has usually come from the romantics least interested in science itself. In the last quarter century, however, it has centered among philosophers who have studied the history of science with care and sympathy. The most obvious point of difficulty was with the social sciences when thinkers like Peter Winch noted the strange predicament of Western anthropologists trying to study other societies with methods foreign to the people under observation. If the scientific approach had limited value in bridging the gap between ways of perceiving, it looked as though the social sciences had lost their claim too have universal validity, and, by common acceptance, their claim to be sciences. Next Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* brought the challenge into the domain of physics, which usually stood as the very model of a science. Whatever his ambiguities and inconsistencies, he demonstrated that physics had no neat line of progress in which independent scientific methods led to new theories whose pure truth replaced the errors of old theories. Scientific revolutions seemed, after Kuhn, to be more like the changes in religious world-views and even the methods themselves to be imbedded in the theories they supported. Many readers could see the spectre of relativism, with skepticism breathing close behind. Bernstein, for his part, argues that the efforts of the Winches and Kuhns serve only to undermine an illusory science and that they herald a new understanding of objectivity and of science.

Four figures guide Bernstein toward this new understanding: Hans Georg Gadamer, Jürgen Habemas, Richard Rorty, and Hannah Arendt. Gadamer's *Truth and Method* challenges the concept of a presuppositionless access to reality. Rather we interpret the world through a process of play among ourselves and between ourselves and it. The rationalists were wrong to dismiss tradition and prejudice out of hand as obstacles to faithful judgment since the play Gadamer invokes requires tradition and prejudice. One can say as much without denying the Enlightenment insistence that intelligence pass judgment on all givens. The difference is that intelligence is inseparable from the creative historical action which

embodies it. Intelligent practice is a communal activity, and Bernstein sees the needed hermeneutics as involving more social critique than Gadamer offers. And so he shifts the discussion to Habermas's search for the conditions of communication among people. This second focal thinker may exaggerate the transcendental nature of these conditions, but he is right in stressing that real communication requires freedom and trust and that these in turn require profound changes in the social order. From this vantage, Rorty's deconstruction of " philosophy as the mirror of nature " may qualify not just as a negative achievement but as a demand for a pluralism based on respect for the differences of human beings and their cultures. Finally the historical character of all foundations based on birth into particular societies and on struggle within them is the special emphasis of Arendt. Bernstein takes all four as bringing us to the recognition that new arguments alone will not overcome the dichotomy between objectivism and relativism. We can do so " only if we dedicate ourselves to the practical task of furthering the type of solidarity, participation, and mutual recognition that is founded in dialogical communities."

Beyond Objectivism and Relativism is a valuable contribution to the "rationality debate." Bernstein analyzes issues of importance not just for professional philosophers but for people at large. In doing so he provides us with an interesting and perceptive history of ideas; and, as ever, he draws the insights of Gadamer, Habermas, Rorty, and Arendt into a synthesis with its own integrity. The writing is clear and eloquent, and he does much to set us on what I think to be the right track as he unravels and restores the bonds connecting science, interpretation, and praxis. Nonetheless, *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism* has a serious weakness linked to the very method which has made his books notable so far. As I have remarked, his achievement has been to bring disparate thinkers together and to illuminate important matters by playing them against each other and by uncovering their unsuspected harmonies. What happens unfortunately is that he becomes entangled, nowhere more than here, in the elegant web he spins. On every page, name jostles name and idea jostles idea, and the reader starts to wish that the author could break through the texture of thrust and counter-thrust and simply talk about the " things themselves " using his own independent perceptions and arguments. A unique synthesis is in the making here, and it requires its own justification. Truth, for example, is an important concept in the present book, and we uncover no truth-theory proper to it and at most allusions to the shape it might take. How can we get beyond relativism and objectivism without such a theory? It would also help to have much more in the way of illustrations for the interpretative and communicative process at work. Without them, the treatment remains abstract, and the stress on other writers' contributions ends up casting a veil over the process.

Cutting loose is never easy, but Bernstein must do so and abandon a formula which has served him well if he is to prove himself a philosopher of the first rank.

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Relativism: Cognitive and Moral. Edited by JACK W. MEILAND and MICHAEL KRAUSZ. Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1982. Pp. 272. $20.00.

Relativism is different from skepticism. Where skepticism holds that it is impossible for us to know the truth, relativism redefines truth. Instead of truth being the same for everyone, there is only truth which varies with each society or each conceptual scheme or even each person. In other words, relativism holds that truth is always and only *truth for* some person(s) or point of view and never truth which is objective and universal regardless of social, historical, intellectual, or personal circumstance. Relativism does not deny that we can know the truth, but the truth we can know is only relative truth—truth which is not the same for everyone.

The two best known forms of relativism are cognitive and ethical relativism. The former applies to all knowledge claims. The latter is confined to claims of moral knowledge. Together they constitute the chief concern of Messrs. Meiland and Krausz, who seek through this collection of essays to illustrate the range, depth, and importance of relativistic doctrines. Meiland and Krausz consider the selections chosen as constituting "some of the best and most interesting work done on relativism during the last decade" (p. 9).

The central questions that cognitive relativism faces are: (1) What justifies the claim that truth is only relative? (2) Is the claim that all truth is relative self-refuting? (3) What exactly does it mean to say that truth is relative or always a *truth for*? Each of these questions is addressed by an essay in this volume.

Nelson Goodman's essay, "The Fabrication of Facts," attempts to answer question (1). He argues that since we can have no access to things aside from our knowledge of them the notion of an independently existing reality is empty and hence the attempt to understand truth as a "correspondence" with such a reality is fruitless. We would do better, Goodman claims, to focus on world-versions instead of the world. If our version of the world offends no unyielding beliefs and is self-consistent, then our version of the world is true. Of course, there are other versions

of the world which against a different set of unyielding beliefs would be true also. There are many truths, for there is no way that we can compare our version of the world with the world as it really is. We only know via some conceptual framework, and the conceptual framework we use depends on our purposes or habits. So truth is ultimately something relative.

There is much that needs to be said in reply to Goodman, especially regarding his claim that perception cannot serve to differentiate a correct from an incorrect version of the world. It must suffice for now to note a rather glaring *non sequitur* in Goodman's argument. From the proposition that we have no access to things aside from our knowledge of them, it does not follow that we cannot know what things really are; and, if this is so, it certainly does not follow that the notion of an independently existing reality is empty. This argument assumes that our manner of knowing constitutes a barrier to reality. Why? Simply noting, as Goodman does, that human interests and needs play a role in the development of conceptual schemes does not show that there is some barrier between us and the real. Human knowing does indeed "start somewhere," and we cannot claim to know everything in all its detail all at once. We cannot be said to know *sub specie aeternitatis*. But this only shows that man is the measurer of all things, *not* the measure of all things. Though there is certainly more to this issue than can be discussed here, there does seem to be a rather fundamental error in Goodman's argument for relativism.

Maurice Mandelbaum's essay, "Subjective, Objective, and Conceptual Relativism," answers question (2) affirmatively. In this well-written and extremely important essay, Mandelbaum argues that relativism, no matter what form it may take, cannot provide sufficient evidence for itself without regarding the evidence nonrelativistically. If the evidence presented on behalf of the relativist thesis is regarded as sufficient only within the relativist conceptual framework, then sufficient evidence for adopting the relativist thesis will not have been presented to the person who does not share the relativist conceptual framework, and there will be no reason why the person should accept (or consider) the relativist thesis. If, on the other hand, the evidence presented on behalf of the relativist thesis is regarded as sufficient outside the relativist conceptual framework, then an appeal is being made to evidence that the relativist thesis denies exists, and the argument involves a contradition.

Meiland and Krausz offer helpful and informative introductions to every essay in this volume and in their introduction to Mandelbaum's essay make two suggestions as to how the relativist might extricate himself from Mandelbaum's dilemma. First, in offering arguments "the relativist need only presuppose statements which are true-for-the-person-

being-persuaded-or-convinced" (p. 32). The relativist need not appeal to evidence that is sufficient in a nonrelativist sense. Thus, for the nonrelativist to become persuaded of the truth of relativism all that is necessary is that he regard the evidence as sufficient to make relativism true-for-himself. He does not need to suppose that relativism is true independent of some person(s) or conceptual framework. The evidence need not be nonrelative. Second, the relativist purpose in giving arguments need not be one of persuasion. Arguments could have other purposes than persuasion. They could, for example, be used to present a view in a logically ordered way so that one's audience could come to "better understand" that view (p. 32).

> To insist that the relativist should have the same purposes in argument as the nonrelativist might is misguided. It is an example of a practice often followed by absolutist objectors to relativism—the practice of requiring the relativist to adopt ends and to satisfy standards which are appropriate to absolutism and then declaring relativism refuted when relativism fails to live up to the mark. Relativism may be more appropriately considered as a world-view which generates its own goals and standards. (p. 32)

In other words, the purpose of argumentation for the relativist need not be the demonstration of the truth of the relativist thesis but somthing else.

Meiland and Krausz's suggestions do not, however, succeed in saving the relativist from Mandelbaum's dilemma. First, saying that the evidence presented on behalf of the relativist thesis need only be regarded by the nonrelativist as sufficient to make relativism true-for-himself and nothing more amounts to saying that the nonrelativist is not a nonrelativist and already accepts the relativist thesis. It must be remembered that if the relativist thesis applies to itself—to its own articulation—then no matter what evidence is presented on its behalf, no matter how powerful that evidence might be, that evidence can only be considered sufficient within the relativist conceptual framework, and the nonrelativist, by definition, does not share this framework and thus has no reason to regard any evidence presented for the relativist thesis as sufficient. If the relativist seeks to offer evidence that will be sufficient to persuade the nonrelativist, he must use evidence that is capable of establishing relativism's truth independent of the relativist point of view. But this means that the relativist must use what he claims does not exist and is thus caught in a contradiction. It is true, as Meiland and Krausz state in their second suggestion, that the relativist can avoid this difficulty by giving up the goal of persuasion—at least, rational persuasion. This, however, only means that the relativist is caught on the other horn of Mandelbaum's dilemma, for there is no longer any reason why the nonrelativist who is interested in knowing the nature of truth should take the relativist seriously. Meiland and Krausz imply that the nonrelativist might seriously consider the

relativist's arguments so as to "better understand" what relativism involves. It is, however, very difficult to see why the nonrelativist would be interested in "better understanding" the relativist thesis, for it has already been admitted that the relativist cannot present any evidence sufficient to persuade the nonrelativist of the relativist's account of truth. Furthermore, it is very unclear what "better understand" would mean in such a context. Now, it might be objected that the nonrelativist is unfair in refusing to consider seriously the relativist's argument, for he is requiring the relativist to adopt ends and standards he need not hold. But there is nothing unfair about this. Relativism claims to generate its own goals and standards, but this is only *for those who accept it.* Those who are nonrelativists and interested in knowing the nature of truth are in no way obligated to treat the relativist's argument "fairly," i.e., seriously. There are no standards to which the relativist can appeal in order to have the nonrelativist consider his arguments. This illustrates one of the unfortunate consequences of relativism.

Chris Swoyer's essay, "True For," answers question (3). He claims that any philosophically interesting form of relativism must not equate 'true for' with 'believes that'. If someone's believing something makes it true for him, then our notion of *true for* does not come close enough to *truth* to be of any philosophical interest at all" (p. 95). Yet this gap between believing P and the truth of P can be preserved by a relativistic doctrine if it claims that truth is relative to a conceptual framework. When we say that "P is true for Smith," we mean that P is true according to the criteria implicit in the conceptual scheme employed by Smith, and this is distinct from saying that "P is believed by Smith." In this way, Swoyer sees relativism as avoiding being regarded as merely a confused way of talking about belief and maintaining its candidacy as a theory of truth.

Swoyer distinguishes between two forms of relativism—a strong sense and a weak sense. If truth is relative in a strong sense, there is something which is true in one conceptual framework, but false in another. If truth is relative in a weak sense, there can be things that are true in one framework, but inexpressible in another. What sentence S in framework F_1 is about has no counterpart in framework F_2. Swoyer then argues against relativism in the strong sense: if two conceptual frameworks are indeed different, then it is most difficult to see how *the same thing* could be true in one conceptual framework and false in another, for if the different conceptual frameworks help to constitute "different worlds," how can a sentence in one conceptual scheme be about the same thing as a sentence in another conceptual scheme? The claim that sentence S is true in conceptual framework F and false in conceptual framework F_1 cannot be true, for the relativist cannot say *what it is* that is true (and false) in a relative sense. Of course, if the different conceptual

schemes are not so radically different as to prevent reference to the same thing in different conceptual schemes, viz., translation between conceptual schemes is possible, then it becomes problematic to continue to claim that truth is relative to a conceptual scheme. As Meiland and Krausz put the problem,

> But now suppose that such a translation were possible. Then the statement "S is true in framework F_1 and false in framework F_2" is either absolutely true or relatively true. If it is absolutely true, the game is up because the notion of relative truth is parasitic upon the notion of absolute truth; if it is relatively true, then we are using the notion of relative truth to explain itself, resulting in no enlightenment. (p. 83)

Interestingly enough, Swoyer does not see this criticism of relative truth in the strong sense as applying to conceptual relativism—the claim that the world we know and experience is partially constituted by our conceptual framework. In other words, relative truth in the weak sense is not affected by Swoyer's argument. This is so because Swoyer dissociates conceptual relativism from a problematic doctrine of truth. He claims that there might be alternative conceptual frameworks and indeed things which resist translation from one framework to another, but this does not imply that the same thing is true in one framework and false in another. "By giving the relativist benefit of doubt at nearly every stage, we have seen that his claims that our knowledge of the world is colored by our concepts, that these might have been quite different, and the like, do not lead to the conclusion that truth is relative in a strong sense" (p. 106).

Swoyer's argument against relativism in the strong sense is most ingenious. Yet what is curious is that he rejects a parallel argument by Barry Stroud against relativism in the weak sense. Stroud claims that if two allegedly different conceptual frameworks allow for translation into each other, then we do not discover anything radically different or new in the "worlds" presented by these conceptual frameworks, and so the frameworks are not really so different. Swoyer replies that, even if we grant that translation between conceptual frameworks is possible, this does not make relativism in the weak sense false. There is a difference between the expressibility and the accessibility of concepts, and the mere fact that we can translate from one conceptual scheme into another does not mean that we can think about the world in the same way. "There is a difference between having the ability to express certain things and actually being able to use these things directly in one's thought" (p 104). But this difference does not seem as great as Swoyer contends. First, there are cases of people doing what he says cannot be done. It is often noted that people who master a foreign language really well are able to think in that language and need not translate everything they read or

hear into their mother-tongue before they understand what they read or hear. Second, the fact that human interests and needs play a role in the development of conceptual schemes, e.g., the snow-dweller's account of snow as compared with the nonsnow-dweller's reflects the former's greater concern for the features of snow than the latter's, does not prove that our concepts or language play an active role in molding reality. As was noted in the case of Nelson Goodman's essay, this only shows that human knowing "starts somewhere" and cannot (and need not) claim to know from God's vantage point. Human knowledge can be partial and still pertain to the world as it really is. Third, Swoyer interprets concepts in a Kantian fashion. He assumes that the mode of human cognition affects the content of that cognition. He does, of course, share this assumption with most contemporary epistemologists, but he does not argue for this assumption. Neither does he consider how a view which treated concepts as intentions might affect the issue.

Ethical relativism claims that moral judgments are true only relative to the standards held by some individual(s) or community or society or generation or culture. Ethical relativism is a doctrine about the nature of moral judgments. It makes no moral claim and hence does not refer to itself. Ethical relativism need not involve cognitive relativism. So it can claim to be true in a nonrelativist sense. Three central questions that ethical relativism faces are: (a) What justifies the claim that ethical judgments are only relatively true? (b) Can an ethical relativist consistently make ethical judgments? (c) Can an ethical relativist have moral beliefs of his own?

Gilbert Harman's essay, "Moral Relativism Defended," attempts to answer question (a). Harman argues that there is a type of moral judgment which can be explained only if one assumes that morality arises when a group of people reach an implicit agreement or tacit understanding about their relations with one another. Harman thus argues for a version of ethical relativism by claiming that a certain type of moral judgment "makes sense only in relation to and with reference to one or another such agreement or understanding" (p. 189). Though Harman makes no explicit statement on whether there is a way to determine which set of principles agreed upon by a group of people is objectively correct, he does imply that there is no objectively true moral code that exists apart from human agreement.

The type of moral judgment that can only be accounted for by assuming a version of ethical relativism is what Harman calls "inner judgments." Inner judgments say that someone morally ought to do X or morally ought not to do X. Inner judgments imply that the preson whose actions are being judged is capable of being motivated by relevant moral considerations. It would be "logically odd," Harman notes, to use the

moral 'ought' in reference to an agent's action if the agent cannot be motivated by it. One can, of course, offer an evaluation of the situation, "X would be a good thing to do" or "X would be a bad thing to do," but it would be a contradiction by implication to say *of someone* that he or she ought to do X or ought to avoid X if that person is not capable of being motivated by these judgments. Harman asks us to consider the example of some contented employee of Murder Incorporated who was raised to respect all members of the "family" but have contempt for the rest of society and is given the assignment to kill a certain bank manager. Though we might be able to point out some practical difficulties and thus in that way persuade him that he should not kill the bank manager,

> It would be a misuse of language to say *of him* that he ought not to kill [the bank manager] . . . or that it would be wrong *of him* to do so, since that would imply that our own moral considerations carry some weight with him, which they do not (p. 191, emphasis added).

Indirect moral judgments make sense only if the person who judges and the agent whose actions are judged share certain motivating attitudes.

Harman claims that shared motivating attitudes are the result of an implicit agreement or tacit understanding. He presents this claim as the only hypothesis he knows which can account for a puzzling aspect of our moral views—namely, why it is that most us think it is worse to harm than not to help someone. Harman argues that, if we see morality as a compromise based on implicit bargaining, then this attitude becomes understandable.

> The rich, the poor, the strong, and the weak would all benefit if all were to agree to avoid harming one another. So everyone could agree to that arrangement. But the rich and the strong would not benefit from an arrangement whereby everyone would try to do as much as possible to help those in need. The poor and the weak would get all of the benefit of this latter arrangement. Since the rich and the strong could foresee that they would be required to do most of the helping and that they would receive little in return, they would be reluctant to agree to a strong principle of mutual aid. A compromise would be likely and a weaker principle would probably be accepted. (p. 196)

Other views of morality, Harman contends, do not account for this moral view. So he claims that he has presented the only explanation that will account for this moral view and in that way made a case for his version of ethical relativism.

Three things immediately come to mind when considering Harman's argument for ethical relativism. First, the claim that it makes no sense to judge what people ought or ought not to do if they are not capable of being motivated by these judgments is ambiguous. Certainly, the em-

ployee of Murder Incorporated would have no motivation to follow our judgment that he should not kill the bank manager, but this does not mean that he could not become so motivated. "Ought implies can" is true, but this does not mean that a human being cannot radically change his worldview from the one he has been taught. If the employee can choose and think for himself, then it is in principle possible to persuade him of the error of his ways. An advocate of objective moral knowledge sees this as the point of moral education. As long as it is possible for the employee of Murder Incorporated to change his ways, it would be legitimate to say *of him* that he ought not to kill the bank manager. Second, the question of why we ought to keep our implicit agreements and tacit understandings looms large; for, according to Harman's view of morality, there is no standard to which one can appeal in order to say that one ought to keep his agreements and understandings. Harman is, however, unimpressed by this question. He notes that to agree is to intend to do something, and, when we intend to do something, we are motivated to do it. Hence there is no problem as to why we would keep our agreements or understandings. But we can still ask why would one intend to abide by certain principles. Granted that once we intend to do something, we have a reason to do it, why would we develop the intention in the first place? Harman's answer seems to be that this would be determined by bargaining. But why ought one to bargain? It seems that Harman would say that we just do, and this is ultimate. If so, then bargaining should be more fully explained. Third, could not an advocate of objective moral knowledge offer a theory of natural rights which claimed that not harming others was the necessary precondition for a society in which the achievement of human fulfillment would be possible and in this way attempt to account for the moral view that it is worse to harm others than to refuse to help them? Certainly, such an approach to morality is not Harman's, but there are many theories which purport to offer such an account of natural rights—especially as developed by libertarian political theorists. Harman should, at least, say something about theories of this sort.

Bernard Williams in his essay, "An Inconsistent Form of Relativism," answers question (b) negatively or, at least, as regards what he calls "vulgar relativism." He notes that "the central confusion of relativism is to try and conjure out of the fact that societies have differing attitudes and values an *a priori* nonrelative principle to determine the attitude of one society to another; this is impossible" (p. 173). Yet Williams in his essay, "The Truth of Relativism," does contend that there is a way in which an argument against interfering with other societies can be made from a relativist perspective. "Appraisal relativism" holds that in order genuinely to appraise a system of moral beliefs we must be able really to confront that system of beliefs. This means that it must be

possible for us to live within that system of beliefs and be able to compare these beliefs with our own beliefs. Furthermore, the system of beliefs to be evaluated must relate to our concerns, and the evaluation must not be one in which we have nothing at stake. If we cannot really confront a system of moral beliefs, then we cannot make a genuine appraisal of that system and thus cannot be justified in claiming that system of beliefs to be defective. Hence, we could not be justified in interfering with that system of beliefs on the basis of such judgments.

Williams presents a novel and most interesting form of relativism, assuming that that label still applies. Still, it is hard to see why one must be able to live within another system of beliefs in order genuinely to appraise it. Meiland and Krausz in their introduction to Williams's essay note that it is possible for someone with a moral ideal to be concerned with a system of beliefs, have something at stake in regard to those beliefs, and still not be able to live within that system of beliefs, e.g., a businessman whose ideal is to contribute to economic growth condemning the moral beliefs of a Samurai in medieval Japan because they deal solely with duty, loyalty, and honor and make no room for economic achievement. It seems that the businessman's interest and concern is quite real even though it is no longer possible to live within the Samurai's system of beliefs. More work by Williams regarding the conditions for genuine appraisal seems necessary.

Philippa Foot's essay, "Moral Relativism," deals with, among other things, question (c) and answers it affirmatively. Foot finds the claim that the ethical relativist can have no moral beliefs of his own to be false because the claim confuses ethical relativism with moral skepticism. The ethical relativist does not deny that moral judgments can be true. It is, however, only relative truth that he can believe, for relative truth is all that one can expect from moral matters. But as Foot asks: "Why is it not enough that we should claim relative truth for our moral judgments, taking it as truth relative to local standards or to individual standards, according to our theory of moral judgment?" (p. 161). Hence, ethical relativists can be understood as having moral beliefs of their own—that is, beliefs that certain propositions are true.

Foot is correct insofar as she notes that the ethical relativist can believe in relative truths, but, if one recalls that the ethical relativist need not be a cognitive relativist and thus can have a nonrelative conception of truth, then ethical relativism does seem to involve moral skepticism. Ethical relativism denies that moral judgments can be true in a nonrelative sense. So moral judgments cannot qualify as instances of knowledge as nonmoral claims can. Therefore, an answer to question (c) depends on whether a case for cognitive relativism can be made. If cognitive relativism is true, then the ethical relativist is not a moral skeptic. If cognitive

relativism is false, then there is a very real sense in which the ethical relativist is a moral skeptic and would not be able to believe any moral truths, that is, have any moral beliefs of his own. Whatever practical difficulties an ethical relativist would face when confronted with the fact that he cannot believe that any course of action is better than any other need not be considered here, but it certainly does not seem to be a comfortable situation.

Jack W. Meiland and Michael Krausz's *Relativism* is an excellent book. Besides the essays discussed here, there are essays by Davidson, Doppelt, Lyons, and Harrison. There is also a useful bibliography and helpful index. The importance of the articles, together with the well-written introductions that the editors provide, makes this a book that evry philosopher should have at hand.

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From Aristotle to Darwin and Back Again: A Journey in Final Causality, Species, and Evolution. By ETIENNE GILSON. Translated by J. Lyon. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984. Pp. xx + 203 + Index. $23.00 (cloth).

This work is a translation of Gilson's *D'Aristote à Darwin et Retour: Essai sur Quelques Constantes de la Biophilosophie* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1971). The work has been rendered into very readable English by John Lyon, who has also done yeoman service in his completions, augmentations, and corrections of Gilson's original set of notes, tasks which sorely needed doing. There is also an Introduction by S.L. Jaki, providing a brief overview of Gilson's career, philosophical interests and methods, and the contents and purpose of the work.

Why the long delay in making this work available to English-speaking readers? I can see several reasons that might be offered for not bothering to translate the work at all. It lacks the strict coherence and integrity of intellectual development we are so used to finding in Gilson's written material. The central and longest (58 pages) chapter, Chapter Three, "Finality and Evolution," for instance, could easily stand as a separate essay, as is true of some of the others. Also, Gilson is not as cautious in this work, when it comes to giving evaluations of the intentions of various authors, as he has been in the past. The harsh judgment he passes on Malthus, for example, does not seem fully justified, something noted by Lyon (p. 181). In addition, soon after its appearance in French, the work was outdated in certain ways. By the middle 1970s, Darwinian

scholarship was witnessing a new outburst of activity, such as the publication of Darwin's early notebooks, the re-evaluation of Darwin's supposed atheism, and the debate (which still continues) over punctuated equilibriumism and gradualism in which Gilson's work does not participate.

However, in my opinion, these reasons for not publishing the work in English are by and large irrelevant. Its main strength, after all, is its powerful x-ray vision approach to certain constant problems in the philosophy of animate nature. I see two main themes in the book. One is the emphasis upon the *fact* of teleology in nature, a fact to which those who verbally denounce teleology (usually because they misunderstand it in the first place) are forced to return over and over again. The other is the role of anthropomorphism in the rational evaluation of the relationship between art and nature.

In an earlier work, *God and Philosophy,* Gilson had pointed out that anthropomorphism in natural theology was really not such a bad thing, because it is quite unavoidable, and in fact serves the very fundamental purpose of preserving a minimal personalism (the essential presence of intellect and will) in our understanding of superhuman beings. Chapter Four of *God and Philosophy* is very much concerned with anthropomorphism and teleology in contemporary thought, and the present work can be viewed as an expansion, up-dating, and development of that chapter in reference to the history of modern (1750-1970) biology.

Roughly speaking, the work under review pictures Aristotle's four causes as being divided up, so to speak, among three levels of enquiry, the scientific, philosophical, and theological, each with its own special set of problems to be addressed and answered. The scientific level is that of sensually verifiable observation. On this level the material and agent causes are of special importance insofar as they are used actually to *explain* the operation of organisms. Gilson fully appreciates why so many scientists seem to be so congenitally opposed to final causality. As scientists they want to know precisely and exactly *how* an organism, and all of its parts, operate so as to achieve its goal. Simply to speak about the aim or purpose of an organism and leave it at that would be, from the scientific viewpoint, quite fruitless. To do what they want, though, means that they must necessarily emphasize material and motor causes.

This does not, however, in the least mean that teleology is not there, in nature, in the organism, to be observed, witnessed, and seen. Even though we cannot literally see a final cause *per se,* "we can speak of it with assurance because the effects which we require it to account for are visible, tangible, and perceptible with an obviousness equal to that which we have for extension and movement: they are the very structures of these organic beings" (p. 122). No naturalist or biologist could possibly deny this fact.

This is certainly true of Darwin himself. The typical textbook version of Darwin as an anti-teleological atheist is not the real Darwin, according Gilson. The philosophy of evolutionism should be kept separate from Darwinism, which Gilson, like Asa Gray in the last century, equates with the doctrine of natural selection and nothing more. "The Darwinism of evolution does not belong to actual history, but to mythological history" (p. 71). This mythology was created by people such as Huxley who wanted to use Darwin for their own ends. But, as someone in direct contact with the *facts* of nature, Darwin could no more tear himself away from teleology than could Newton (another "mechanist"), who berated his fellow scientists for inventing mechanical hypotheses in a vain attempt to explain everything in such a fashion (p. 27).

Darwin's problem was not the fact of teleology but its explanation. He was trapped in an intellectual vise which allowed for only two alternatives: Either the transformationism and mutability of species or the theological doctrine of special creationism. He felt forced to choose the former. If, however, he had been raised in a different intellectual atmosphere the whole evolution vs. religion dilemma never would have arisen in the first place.

In any case, even if only by default, Darwin ended up in the evolutionistic camp and now seems destined to remain there forever, at least in the popular mind. Scientists will continue to be hopelessly confused about teleology, grasping it dearly in one hand, while desperately attempting to throw it away with the other. What they should be doing instead, thinks Gilson, is, as good observers, admitting its existence, while, as good thinkers, leaving its explanation to others.

On the philosophical level the formal cause is of special importance. Here, also, we have a confused situation. Rather than admit the truth of hylomorphism and the immutability of species, thinkers will turn to any device under the sun, however irrational. Bergson, for instance, even though doing a great deal to restore the respectability of teleology in philosophy, first had to go through a long painful process in which he took for granted a false form of teleology. According to Gilson: "'It was not Bergson who invented inadequate finalism, wherein living beings only change in order to realize predetermined ends; but he ought perhaps to have made an effort to comprehend true finalism, that of forms immanent in nature and working from within to incarnate themselves there by modeling matter according to their law" (p. 99). Thus an acorn becomes an oak rather than a daisy. There is also the example of the scientist W. M. Elsasser, who, on the basis of his knowledge of twentieth century quantum mechanics, knew full well that no purely mechanistic model of homogeneous matter could explain heterogeneous organisms, and who consequently decided that the situation called for two different kinds of *matter* (p. 115).

Closely related to the foregoing, and, strictly speaking, another issue scientists should steer clear of, is the problem of universals (species). If there is one problem which has always been very dear to Gilson's heart it is this one. "This is the celebrated problem of the universal, and it is fashionable to make fun of the Middle Ages for having reduced philosophy to this problem. But the Middle Ages only said that all the rest of philosophy depended on the response made to this problem, which is the case" (p. 39). (*C'est le célèbre problème des Universaux, et il est de mode de moquer la moyen âge pour y avoir réduit la philosophie, mais le moyen âge a seulement dit que tout le reste de la philosophie dépend de la réponse fait à ce problème, ce qui est vrai*—Fr. ed., p. 65.)

The important point, philosophically speaking, is that species cannot change. A changing species is a contradiction in terms. "To say that species are fixed is a tautology; to say that they change is to say that they do not exist" (p. 144). The issue is of such central importance that it will not go away, even for those who wish it would. Species, like final causes, are a *fact* of nature, yet they cannot be explained via any sort of mechanistic means. Darwin himself is a prime example of someone who, *qua* scientist, had to talk about species, but who, *qua* inept philosopher, had to deny their existence in order to allow for their transmutation.

But how can "fixed" species be reconciled with the fossil record? Certainly not via transformism, or via the superior coming from the inferior. Gilson, realizing that Aristotle's hylomorphism must be modified, wants to think in terms of one species replacing another, not changing into another. With respect to Aristotle: "It is assuredly necessary to loosen up Aristotelian fixism, but that ought to be possible since it is less a question of a position born of reflective choice than of a fixism, so to speak, by inadvertence. It is not forbidden to think of the [substantial] form as an inventive and at the same time conservative formula" (p. 101).

With respect to the appearance of new species, Gilson seems to agree with Paul Lemoine that there are an infinite number of forms virtually contained in nature, ready to come forth under the right conditions, some of which might be man-made. Gilson states: "The situation has thus changed less since Aristotle than one would think, since it is still a question today of 'drawing forms from the power of matter' where they are found in potency" (pp. 129-130). (*La situation a donc moins changé depuis Aristote qu'on ne le dit puisqu'il s'agit encore aujourd'hui de "tirer les formes de la puissance de la matière" où elles se trouvent virtuellement*—Fr. ed., p. 208.) Is this the doctrine of the eduction of forms? And in Gilson?

As far as anthropomorphism is concerned, it is philosophically justified as long as we are careful about separating its essential from its accidental elements. Human beings are a part of nature; mother nature works

in and through us. There is no reason to suppose that the thoughts of her children do not reflect her own. The artistic, being in man, is also in nature. In other words, teleology, rather than necessarily being an illegitimate projection of human thoughts into nature, could just as well be a projection of nature into us. And intelligence, which exceeds the limits of abstract ideas, is one its most important manifestations.

In any event, anthropomorphism cannot be avoided. The whole mechanistic orientation is not its negation but a prime example of it in operation. All machines are necessarily teleological. Chance cannot be called upon to explain the laws of nature any more than it can be used to explain the spring in a watch. The main difference between art and nature is that in art the agent is external to its art, while in nature it is internal. When an artist (or artisan) makes something he is doing what nature does, but usually in a way that is not as good and dependable as nature. This is the more profound meaning of the saying that art imitates nature. This is even true in the creations of the mathematicians. What could be more human than mathematics?, asks Gilson. But does this make it unnatural? Not at all. "The more science becomes mathematical, the more anthropomorphic it is" (p. 134).

Even Darwin could not escape anthropomorphism, despite his protestations about the strictly metaphorical meaning of the term "selection." In fact Darwin argues from human activity to nature via an anthropomorphic analogy, namely, the actions of many human breeders acting independently of each other and unconsciously working for the same goal *is to* the actual production of improved creatures *as* the actions of many unconscious natural forces always tending towards better creatures *is to* the actual production of the wonderful array of creatures filling in the "polity" of nature. Moreover, nature does it better.

According to Gilson, Darwin's logic runs like this: "If one can describe artificial selection as being as unconscious as natural selection, the latter benefits forthwith from the quasi-experimental certitude which we have of the former. For this to be the case, it is necessary that nonscientific artificial selection should be unconscious; therefore it is" (p. 155). The only problem, of course, is that it isn't. Without the right to be anthropomorphic Darwin's own mechanism of natural selection would be completely unintelligible, even in science.

On the theological level, which would be primarily interested in the *ultimate* final causes of man and nature, Gilson has very little to say. In his view, the solution to the problem of evil, for instance, is really not the proper subject matter of the present work. Neither must the naturalist be concerned with the final end of nature. Creationism is not necessarily connected to teleology, and "Finalism does not even require that the phenomena of life tend toward a 'preconceived' end. Whether in fact they do or not is up to the theologians to decide" (p. 120). As we have

learned from Paley's blunder, it is best to keep theology separate from the philosophy of nature.

By way of critical comment on this work, two points come to mind. I wonder, first of all, whether or not it is really historically accurate to identify Darwinism with nothing more or less than natural selection. I think there is more of the evolutionary evangelist in Darwin than Gilson is willing to admit. He does mention in passing that Darwin may have been merely substituting one indemonstrable theology or another, but he then immediately abandons the point in order to return to his previously stated position (p. 149).

The other point is Gilson's inability to see nonreductionist materialism as a possible position between reductionism and Aristotelianism. Anyone who cannot live with mechanism is regarded as a crypto-Aristotelian. Elsasser, for example, who has all the earmarks of a nonreductionist materialist (the inability to reduce biology to physics, the real existence of hierarchical order in nature, etc.), is taken as occupying a middle position between vitalism and mechanism, which is in principle at least, as far as Gilson is concerned, the hylomorphic view (pp. 116-119).

To conclude, this is certainly a work which every serious philosopher should read, especially those interested in the philosophy of science and nature. In doing so, the reader can also look forward to another dozen or so examples of Gilson's dry, understated Gallic humor, e.g., "It is not superfluous to examine this old doctrine of chance, already rejected by Aristotle, under one of its modern forms. How should we know otherwise whether it has not become true in the meantime?" (p. 107). "We say that primitives take a watch for an animal, but only the genius of Descrates has been able to take animals for watches" (p. 123). Gilson always did appreciate Chesterton.

The books itself is very nicely printed and bound; I found only two or three typographical errors.

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