THE MORAL PERFECTIONS OF GOD

I.

ALONG WITH ABSTRACT metaphysical perfections, certain moral attributes have typically been ascribed to God. God is not only incorporeal, eternal, self-existent, and so on, but also loving, wise, merciful, and just. Under the impact of these distinctively personal characteristics, the magnificent but remote divinity of philosophical theism takes on a degree of human accessibility. Perhaps for this reason the vocabulary of moral perfections characteristically plays a prominent role in the primary language of religious faith. God is praised for his wisdom and goodness, thanked for his mercy, loved for his unqualified loving-kindness. The interlocking network of these moral attributes fills out the abstract notion of a perfect being with personal content.

The theological tradition has been quick to caution, however, that God must not be represented as a magnified human being, even though our thought about God must work with the linguistic resources we have developed in describing creatures. Anthropomorphic imagery makes God available to the human spirit, but it also threatens to make God less than God by turning him into one of us. Developed theological positions, therefore, have most often carefully qualified the personalistic predicates they ascribe to God: the God of the theologians cannot be caught in any net of anthropomorphic allusions, however important these may be in nourishing the believing imagination.

The decisive counterpoint to anthropomorphism is provided by the metaphysical perfections of God. These remind us of the strangeness of God, his unfathomable otherness. "Between the creator and the creature," it has been said, "no likeness can

be discerned without a greater unlikeness having to be discerned as well."[1] The metaphysical perfections of God anatomize this unlikeness between God and creatures. In stressing the otherness of God, however, we establish a tension at the very center of theological reflection. For the more we hammer home the truth that God is profoundly unlike us, the more it becomes necessary to ask whether familiar personal perfections have any place in our talk of God. As we develop the ontological contrast and epistemological distance between God and creatures, we may wonder whether it becomes impossible to make sense of the claim that God is an appropriate subject of attributes like "loving" and "just." How are we to maintain the meaningfulness of talk about God's moral perfections in the face of the radical distinctions which typically are drawn between the divine and human subjects of these terms?

This, of course, is part of an ancient problem in Christian theology: theologians perpetually struggle with the double agenda of insisting upon God's unspeakable transcendence while speaking about God at exhausting length. In the discussion which follows I want to look briefly at the classical Thomistic solution to the problem about ascribing moral perfections to God and then sketch the outlines of an alternative account. Thomas Aquinas provides the paradigm for pressing vigorously both God's ontological-epistemological transcendence and the appropriateness of ascribing to God certain "pure perfections" drawn from our familiar vocabulary of character assessment. Thomas's account of God's moral attributes is controlled by his primary commitment to a set of categories which articulate God's metaphysical perfection. The result of this procedure is that the moral perfections are submerged within a metaphysic of being which enforces an impenetrable ignorance about what these terms signify in God. In contrast to Thomas's strategy, I want to place the moral perfections at the center of the doctrine of God and follow out the consequences of this

[1] Fourth Lateran Council, as quoted by Eric L. Mascall, *Existence and Analogy* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1949), p. 100, n.2.

for the account we give of the distinction between God and creatures. Where Thomas grounds the theological ascription of moral attributes in a scheme of metaphysical categories which distinguishes Being from beings, I will ground the theological use of these terms in our ordinary practice of appraising an agent's character on the basis of his actions. On this account, we are able to acknowledge the profound incompleteness of our understanding of God's moral perfections, but we do so without slipping into the thoroughgoing agnosticism of the Thomistic position.

II.

Thomas provides the classical formulation of the problem about God's positive perfections, as he does on so many topics, in his *Summa Theologiae.*

> We have to consider two things, therefore, in the words we use to attribute perfections to God, firstly the perfections themselves that are signified—goodness, life, and the like—and secondly the way in which they are signified. So far as the perfections signified are concerned the words are used literally of God and in fact more appropriately than they are used of creatures, for these perfections belong primarily to God and only secondarily to others. But so far as the way of signifying these perfections is concerned the words are used inappropriately, for they have a way of signifying that is appropriate to creatures.[2]

One puzzling feature of these statements is that they seem to take away with one hand what they offer with the other. Thomas tells us that God is literally, not figuratively, wise; when we say that God is wise we are not simply putting forward an evocative metaphor. "Words like 'good' and 'wise' when used of God do signify something that God really is."[3] But God is not wise in any way we are familiar with nor in any way we can envision, for all we can imagine are more perfect modes of creaturely wisdom. Thomas is quite clear on this point.

[2] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae,* gen. ed. Thomas Gilby (New York: McGraw Hill, Blackfriars, 1964), 1a, 13, 3.

[3] *Ibid.,* 1a, 13, 2.

It is the knowledge we have of creatures that enables us to use words to refer to God, and so these words do not express the divine essence as it is in itself. . . .

Since we come to know God from creatures and since this is how we come to refer to him, the expressions we use to name him signify in a way appropriate to the material creatures we ordinarily know.[4]

The divine perfection, and the divine essence generally, is inaccessible to us. Even when the human intellect is supported by grace and supplemented by revelation, it cannot grasp what God is in himself; in this life we are joined to God " as to an unknown." [5] Nonetheless, Thomas affirms that we can use our vocabulary of creaturely perfections to signify the divine perfection. When we say that God is wise, we name a divine attribute which we cannot comprehend. Yet if Thomas is right, this unknown property in God is more appropriately called wisdom than its creaturely counterpart.

We find here a striking conjunction of confidence, in extending our vocabulary of moral perfection to God, and caution, in rigorously maintaining God's radical transcendence of the bounds of human language and knowledge. The question that immediately arises is whether Thomas can have it both ways. If we cannot say what terms like " wise " and " loving " signify in God, can we make sense of the assertion that they apply literally to God and indeed are eminently appropriate to him? If the divine nature remains unknown to us, how can we claim that just these terms, rather than any others, are the right ones to ascribe to God? Simply put, can we meaningfully and nonarbitrarily assert *that* God is wise or loving if we cannot indicate *how* he is wise or loving?

The problem here is not so much one of equivocation as vacuity; it is not a matter of using a single word in two unrelated senses but of using a word without being able to give it a sense, i.e. without being able to explain what we mean

[4] *Ibid.*, 1a, 13, 1 and 13, 1, ad 2. Also see 1a, 12 (especially articles 4 and 11-12).

[5] *Ibid.*, 1a, 12, 13, ad 1.

when we use it this way. This more radical difficulty is the underlying concern of Thomas's remarks about analogical predication. It is not enough simply to insist that God's wisdom is neither wholly different from human wisdom nor altogether the same. If this is all we mean by " analogy," then we have simply found a name for the problem. Thomas's task is to secure the meaningfulness of claiming *both* a) that the positive perfections signify something which God really is, and b) that we cannot conceive of the way in which God exemplifies these perfections. It is easy enough to insist that divine wisdom is not human wisdom. It is more difficult to sustain the claim that divine wisdom *is wisdom,* i.e. that our use of this term to signify a transcendent divine perfection is intelligibly connected to our use of it in signifying human perfections. It appears that we must be able to give an account of what we mean by " wisdom " in these two instances and of how these uses of the term are related. But this is ruled out, of course, by the inaccessibility of the divine essence to creaturely comprehension. Here both similarity and difference would seem to be swallowed up in simple ignorance.

Both Thomas's claims about the ascription of positive perfections to God and his solution to the problems posed by these claims are rooted in the metaphysical structures of his theology. Thomas's approach, simply put, is to develop a metaphysical framework which defines the relation of God and creatures in such a way that certain of the perfections of creatures will have transcendent correlates within the being of God. His metaphysic, in effect, introduces a meta-conceptuality: a set of technical concepts which define the fundamental structures of a general ontology. In working out 1) the intra-systematic relations of these concepts, and 2) their relations to non-technical, extra-systematic talk about the world, Thomas establishes a set of rules for discourse which will guide his statements about God and about God's relation to creatures. Thomas's account of the predication of moral perfections to God, then, will involve two steps. First, he must define the role that concepts of

moral perfection will play within his metaphysical scheme: extra-systematic talk about moral attributes must be given an intrasystematic interpretation (viz., moral perfections are understood as perfections of being, perfections in which the act of existence [*esse*] comes to more perfect expression). Second, he can then offer an intra-systematic account of the ascription of these perfections to God (viz., God, as Being itself [*ipsum esse*], is the essential expression of every perfection of being). The moral perfections are ascribed to God, therefore, only when set on a new footing within Thomas's metaphysical scheme. The rules of inference governing his basic metaphysical categories determine the role of the moral perfections within his theology and, as we will see, require the semantic " deconstruction " of our concepts of perfection.

We need briefly to trace out this pattern in Thomas's thought and see in more detail where it leads him. At the center of Thomas's metaphysical scheme lies his distinction between beings and Being itself. To be an individual being is to actualize in a particular way some set of properties and possibilities which define what the thing is. In every finite being the " whatness," or essence, of the thing can be distinguished from its act of existing (*esse*). For Thomas, of course, this is not merely to point out that we can offer a defining description of a thing quite apart from indicating whether such things actually exist, though he characteristically introduces the distinction this way.[6] Beyond this grammatical remark, Thomas would have us recognize a metaphysical distinction: it is never part of a finite being's nature (essence) to exist. The creature's essence defines a possible mode of being. But it does not define an actual instance of being unless it is made actual by a power beyond itself. Creaturely existence is a participated, or derived, existence; it is grounded outside the creature's defining properties and powers.[7]

[6] See Aquinas, *Concerning Being and Essence (De Ente et Essentia)*, trans. by George G. Lecki (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1937), p. 24.

[7] Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a, 3, 4; 1a, 44, 1.

If creatures are participated beings, in which there is a real (i.e. metaphysical) distinction between essence and existence, God can be identified with unparticipated Being, whose very essence it is to exist. This is not only to say that God exists from himself (*a se*) and can neither come into existence nor cease to exist. Beyond this, Thomas identifies God with Being itself (*ipsum esse*).[8] In addition to all the determinations of existence (*esse*) in particular essences, Thomas speaks of existence-as-such, existence expressed essentially. Here being is not bound within the limiting structures of a particular essential pattern. In its perfect expression the act of being (*esse*) is not the act of being this or that, but rather is simply the act of beign actual, i.e. actuality expressed in undifferentiated plenitude. The being of God, therefore, cannot be qualified by any unrealized potential nor be threatened by any possibility of diminishment. God is pure actuality and so is utterly changeless, perfectly unified, and absolutely simple and complete.

In this way, Thomas provides a structure within which God can be conceptually identified as self-subsistent Being itself (*ipsum esse per se subsistens*). This formula, taken within its conceptual context, defines the referent of our talk about God and establishes the fundamental conceptual relations which determine the rest of what we can say about this referent. The most striking consequence of identifying God in this way is to rule out any possibility of filling in this abstract formula with a concrete description. We cannot, in the nature of the case, say what it is to be *ipsum esse*. For all of our descriptive vocabulary is ordered to the representation of particular beings. Our efforts to conceive of being itself inevitably end in the description of a peculiar *instance* of being. The metaphysical perfections stand resolutely against this tendency by denying of pure act all the metaphysical categories which define finite actualities. But if the achievement of actuality (the expression of *esse*) in a finite being is limited by its particular nature, it is also individuated and made determinate in this way. When we

[8] *Ibid.*, 1a, 3, 4; 1a, 13, 11.

strip away all such limitations, as we must if we are to think of the act of being itself, then it becomes impossible to give any definite content to the object of our thought. We are left simply with the stunningly abstract formula: not a being, but Being itself.

In the face of so thorough and enthusiastic a self-cancellation of human thought, we would seem to be left quite literally speechless. But while we cannot describe God, we can define a procedure for aiming our concepts of perfection in his direction. Within the terms of Thomas's metaphysical scheme it is possible a) to affirm that certain creaturely perfections are themselves perfected (i.e. have their maximal, or ideal, expression) in the being of God, and b) to indicate in general the ways in which we must modify our concepts of particular perfections if they are to be appropriate to the divine nature. The foundation for these moves is provided by the universal causal participation of beings in Being. "Whatever is said both of God and creatures is said in virtue of the order that creatures have to God as to their source and cause in which all the perfections of things pre-exist transcendently."[9] We can say that God is wise or loving because God is the ultimate cause of wisdom or love in creatures. This is *not to* say that the statement "God is wise" means simply "God is the cause of wisdom in creatures." Rather it is also to say that God is wisdom itself. "For when we encounter a subject which shares in a reality then this reality must needs be caused by a thing which possesses it of its nature (*essentialiter*), as when, for example, iron is made red-hot by fire."[10] It is precisely because God is the essential expression of every perfection of being that he is able to impart those perfections to others.[11] The pure perfections of creatures, i.e. those perfections which express the creature's positive participation in being, can therefore be referred back to God as their source and as the ideal exemplification which they "imi-

[9] *Ibid.*, 1a, 13, 5.
[10] *Ibid.*, 1a, 44, 1.
[11] *Ibid.*, 1a, 4, 2; 6, 2; 1a, 13, 2.

tate " so far as they can.[12] However limited or constrained the expression of these perfections may be in the creature's nature, they bear a real relation to Being itself. As being rises up the scale of perfection toward unlimited plenitude, these perfections will approach their fullest possible expression. In Being itself all the positive perfections of finite beings pre-exist in the absolute perfection of pure actuality.

Here a basis is provided for the claim that a positive perfection like life, intelligence, or love has a correlate within the being of God. The familiar meanings of these predicates, however, are tied to the ontological limits of creatures and so must be denied of God. We can express this more precisely as a point about the language rules governing Thomas's doctrine of God. When predicates of perfection are ascribed to God their ordinary semantic relations (i.e., the network of conceptual connections that propositions ascribing these predicates bear to propositions ascribing other predicates) must be modified in accordance with the requirements of Thomas's metaphysical conceptuality. We say, for example, that God is loving. But since pure actuality is utterly immutable, all of God's relations must be strictly external, i.e. they involve no " real change " in God.[13] If the ascription of love entails, among other things, the ascription of internal relation to another, then one of the semantic connections of " loving " is broken when this predicate is ascribed to God. A similar point might be made about God's timelessness and the ascription of any predicate which entails that God acts, since the notion of an action without temporal extension is at the very least quite puzzling (particularly if that action takes effect within a temporal order, e.g. human history).

[12] *Ibid.*, 1a, 9, 1, ad 2.

[13] " Being related to God is a reality in creatures, but being related to creatures is not a reality in God, . . . So it is that when we speak of his relation to creatures we can apply words implying temporal sequence and change, not because of any change in him but because of a change in creatures " (*Ibid.*, 1a, 13, 7). Also see Peter Geach's distinction between " real change " and " Cambridge change " and his remarks on the difficulty of stating a criterion for real change (*God and the Soul* [New York: Schocken Books, 1969], pp. 71-72, 99).

Arguments about the entailments of propositions ascribing a predicate like "loving" can be difficult to settle. But whatever we decide in particular cases, all predicates ascribed to God will fall under one crucial restriction which lies at the center of Thomas's doctrine of God. The identification of God with pure actuality commits Thomas to asserting the utter simplicity of God. In God there can be no complexity or composition; every predicate ascribed to God must signify the absolutely unitary perfection of Being-in-plenitude. It will not do, on Thomas's account, to say simply that all positive perfections are conjoined in the being of God, i.e. that God is living *and* intelligent *and* loving, etc. Rather, all of these perfections must be identical in God. The difficulty, of course, is that these predicates signify distinct attributes in creatures. "What pre-exists in God in a simple and unified way is divided amongst creatures as many and varied perfections."[14] Propositions ascribing these predicates do not mutually, or symmetrically, entail one another and so cannot be identical. While it may be that the ascription of love entails the ascription of intelligence and the ascription of intelligence entails the ascription of life, the inferences do not run the other direction: it is possible to be living without being intelligent and to be intelligent without being loving. We cannot assert the identity of these properties without breaking down the semantic relations which define them. The divine perfection, therefore, cannot be an instance of our concepts "life," "intelligence," or "love." We simply cannot conceive of a being in whom all of the diverse perfections we identify in creatures are reduced to an undifferentiated unity.

We arrive, then, at precisely that odd combination of affirmation and agnosticism which puzzled us initially. On the one hand, we assert *that* God is loving, wise, and so on, i.e. Thomas's metaphysical scheme provides that the perfections we signify in creatures bear a positive ontological relation to the being of God. On the other hand, we are left utterly un-

[14] Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a, 13, 4.

able to say *what* these perfections amount to in God, i.e. Thomas's metaphysical scheme requires the dismantling of our concepts of love and wisdom. The first element of Thomas's approach entitles us to call upon our concepts of perfection in speaking of God. The second element requires that we indicate where and how these concepts break down when used this way. Our talk of God, then, is a carefully conducted deconstruction of ordinary patterns of predication; a deconstruction which is supervised by the rules of inference governing Thomas's metaphysical scheme. It is precisely by dismantling our concepts of perfection that we point beyond their creaturely mode of signification toward the inconceivable perfection of God. When we say that God is loving *and* that love is equivalent to *esse* in God, we (as it were) aim our speech at a target we cannot see. The Thomistic metaphysical scheme fixes the trajectory of these statements about God and provides grounds for the claim that the predicates we ascribe do reach their mark. But we cannot say how they do so. In the being of God all of the diverse perfections we ascribe are reabsorbed back into a primordial unity in which no distinctions can be drawn and of which no description can be given. If it is possible in this context to say that the moral perfections we name in creatures are completed and fulfilled in God, it is also possible to say that they are overcome and extinguished. For when these perfections are fused in the simple perfection of pure Being, they are so utterly transformed as to disappear altogether.

III.

Thomas's scheme of thought is elegantly constructed and magnificent in its vision. His religious sensibility is deeply informed by a sense of the unutterable mystery of God and of the ordering of all things to this mystery as their ultimate ground and fulfillment. The Thomistic synthesis has perhaps been dismissed too quickly on religious grounds by many modern theologians. But it is apparent that Thomas's metaphysical theism is open to important criticisms its very center:

viz., in the identification of God as *ipsum esse*. On the philosophical side, we may call in question the reification of Being as a distinct reality independent of its modes. On the theological side, we may argue that the identification of God with imimmutable actuality makes it all but impossible to do justice to those strands in Christian thought which portray God in concretely personal interaction with human individuals and human history.

It is not my purpose here, however, to offer a direct critique of Thomas's treatment of the moral perfections of God. Rather, I want to sketch the outline of an alternative proposal whose fundamental strategy can be juxtaposed to that adopted by Thomas. As we have seen, Thomas constructs a metaphysical scheme which establishes a metaphysical relation and a conceptual disrelation between the perfections we identify in creatures and the perfection of God. These two moves are systematically linked: Thomas's metaphysic provides for the real relation of divine and creaturely perfections but requires that our concepts of perfection fail in application to God. In contrast to Thomas's procedure, I want to argue that we *can* use our concepts of perfection in speaking of God without breaking down their defining semantic relationships. This requires, of course, that we step outside the bounds of Thomas's metaphysic of being. Rather than beginning with a set of general metaphysical commitments, I want to begin with our familiar predicates of perfection themselves and explore where it would lead us, in our reflection upon God, to preserve as much as we can of the network of syntactic and semantic rules which govern their ordinary use. The primary worry here, of course, is that this procedure might give way to unrestrained anthropomorphism. I will argue, however, that this is not the case. We are led by this approach to a shift in primary theological categories: viz., from the conceptual machinery involved in Thomas's distinction between Being and beings to the distinctively personal categories of agency and intentional action. But using these personalistic concepts we can, nonetheless, sharply

distinguish the divine agent from all creaturely agents and indicate the singularity of God's perfection. And this we can do *without* emptying our predicates of moral perfection of all recognizable content.

In order to carry out this program it is necessary to observe certain fundamental semantic relations which structure our use of terms like " wise " and " loving." The perfections we ascribe to God belong to a much wider class of predicates (I will call them " character traits ") which are used: a) to evaluate the *intentional actions* of agents, and b) to evaluate *agents* on the basis of their actions. The first of these uses is logically basic, i.e., it underlies and is presupposed by the second. If we characterize a person as generous, for example, then we assert that he has acted generously in the past and/or will do so in the future. It makes no sense to say that Jones is a generous person if Jones has never in his life done a generous thing and is not likely to manage one in the future. The ascription of a character trait predicate p to an agent S entails that S undertakes one or more actions which can be characterized by p. While acting in a way which can be characterized by p is a necessary condition for ascribing p to an agent, it is not a sufficient condition. For it is possible to appraise Jones's action as generous yet conclude that on the whole Jones is tight-fisted. If p is to characterize not only the action but the agent, then this episode must fit into a wider pattern of action which represents an ongoing continuity in the way the agent conducts his life.

The use of character trait predicates to assess actions, then, lies at the foundation of our use of them in describing persons. We can use a character trait predicate to appraise an action only if we can offer a description of that action a) which is of the appropriate type, and b) which has an appropriate content. The description will be of the appropriate type if it is a description of an action the agent performs intentionally. The description will have an appropriate content if it falls under the informal criteria that we use to identify instances of intentional

action which are characterizable by this predicate. The first of these requirements identifies one of the necessary conditions for the use of any character trait predicate in assessing behavior. The second requirement simply notes that the use of each particular character trait predicate is governed by distinctive material criteria of correct application.

Suppose, for example, that we see Jones drop a ten dollar bill from his hip pocket just as he passes a begging child on the street. If his action was merely inadvertant or accidental, then we will not describe it as generous. Only an ironic sense of humor would lead us to congratulate Jones on his compassion if, when he discovers what has happened, he begins shouting for the police to arrest the little thief. We can use terms like "generous" and "compassionate" (or "extravagant" and "gullible") to characterize his action of dropping ten dollars only if we can describe his intention as "giving money to the child" rather than merely as "pulling out his handkerchief."

If we are to appraise an action by a character trait predicate, our description of that action must also be a description of the agent's intention. This is not to say, however, that the agent must have intended to display the character trait which is ascribed to him. Especially when the judgment is negative, the agent is not likely to have set out to be appraised in this way. Neither is an agent in any privileged position with regard to the evaluation of his own behavior. An individual will usually not be aware of most of the appraisals that might be made of his intentional actions; others will often be able to make a more perceptive judgment than can the agent himself. But if our description of an agent's behavior in no way captures his intention, then his behavior (taken under *this* description) cannot be appraised by character trait predicates.[15] An agent need not intend that his behavior be generous in order that it be

[15] Note that our description of an agent's intention in action need not always be a description which the agent himself would give. I want to leave open the possibility of disagreeing with an agent about what he intends in his action, e.g. when an agent is confused about or initially unable to recognize certain of the underlying aims of his own activity.

characterized as generous. But if his behavior is to be judged generous, it must be undertaken as an action whose description (both in intention and execution) renders it subject to that appraisal.

In remarking that we use character trait predicates to appraise intentional actions, I am not supposing that a neat distinction can be drawn between descriptions and evaluations of actions; action descriptions are hardly value neutral. Rather, a more modest but centrally important point is at stake here. To say that a person acted, e.g., wisely is not yet to say what that person did. This characterization of his action establishes certain general expectations about his behavior. But by itself the statement that he acted wisely does not identify a particular project or add a specific detail to the description of his action. It is not as if we note a particular means or distinctive end of action when we state that the action was wise. Rather, this statement assesses the action as a whole, directing us to look for certain general characteristics in his particular project. We might expect a wise action to display a discerning understanding of past experience, a perceptive grasp of the present context, and a judicious assessment of future consequences of action. But these characteristics, and others which would have to be added in an attempt to explain the appropriate uses of " wise," are highly formal general features of actions. They do not fix the exact details of the actions which we appraise as wise. Rather, they give us open-ended criteria whose application is strikingly flexible and resistant to precise delineation.

This shows itself in two notable features of our use of character trait predicates. First, these predicates are used to appraise a wide range of quite diverse particular actions. Our use of character trait predicates identifies similarities in actions whose particular purposes vary with tremendous range and subtlety. A parent may be patient in supervising his child's play, a philosopher patient in constructing his argument, a general patient in the conduct of a war. In each instance the actions involved may display similar qualities of forbearance,

sustained attention, and resistance to the temptation of a premature resolution of difficulties. Yet these actions belong to widely different areas of life and enact quite diverse particular intentions. When we explain the judgment that any one of these actions is patient, we will find ourselves discussing a setting and activity quite different from each of the others: e.g., the parent may read his child's favorite story one more time, the philosopher may throw away another page of flawed argument, the general may choose not to attack just yet. We will cite these details in order to show how each person's behavior displays the " marks " of a patient action. But the formal parallels which justify gathering these diverse actions together under a single concept are differently specified in each instance and can be displayed in an endless variety of diverse actions-in-context.

Second, character trait predicates will be differently expressed in different actions. The specific content of the property signified by a character trait predicate will depend in any instance upon the description of the action that is being appraised. The patience of the parent, the philosopher, and the general is peculiar to each of their actions. If we are to grasp the force of the predicate " patient " in each instance, we must look at the way the general characteristics of patient action appear concretely in these particular undertakings. In order to explain *how* the parent is patient with his child, for example, we must look at *what* the parent does.

These considerations suggest that a character trait predicate does not signify a determinate common property in every action it is used to appraise. We need to be careful, however, with the notion of a " common property." We touch here on the perennial problem of unity in diversity, the one and the many. The many instances in which " patience " is correctly ascribed are sufficiently similar that they can be brought under a single, non-equivocal concept. If we abstract from the details of particular instances, we can achieve at least some success in articulating these unifying similarities as a set of typical character-

istics of patient actions. But it is far from clear that we can identify within this set of characteristics some subset which is displayed by every instance of patient action and whose presence is the necessary and sufficient condition for the use of this character trait predicate. Wittgenstein has offered a well known critique of the supposition that universals must identify a common property in every particular to which they are ascribed. The many instances of a general term may bear a "family resemblance" to one another, i.e., they may display a constellation of typical characteristics which are present in various combinations but no one of which is present in every member of the family.[16] Whether or not this proves to be the case with character trait predicates, we are likely to find that the typical characteristics, or identifying marks, of a wise or patient action are themselves displayed in a great variety of distinctive ways and so pose these same questions about unity in diversity, similarity in difference. When we say, for example, that wise actions are discerning, perceptive, and judicious, we use terms for which we can give no more precise statement of the relation of their many instances than we can for the term whose use we are explaining. Rather than setting forth determinate properties common to every instance of wise action, we find ourselves explaining the interrelations within our vocabulary of determinable evaluative predicates.

Character trait predicates, then, display a remarkable flexibility of application and variation in expression. The richness of this vocabulary reflects the complexity of our actual practice of assessing the intentional actions of agents, a practice which does not run along the iron rails of settled and unchanging norms, but rather constitutes an ongoing inquiry in which norms develop and are revised. In making decisions about which actions should be counted as wise (or loving, etc.), we

[16] On family resemblances see Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 2nd ed. (New York: The Macmillan Company; Oxford: Basil Blackwell & Mott, Ltd., 1958), # 65-77. Also see *The Blue and Brown Books* (New York: Harper & Row; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958), pp. 17f.

are engaged in an open-ended process of discussing what wisdom is or might be; we argue not only over the identification of instances but more fundamentally over what should be included in the concept itself. Our concepts of wisdom and love, patience and generosity, reflect an effort of understanding which is coherent but perpetually unfinished. As a result, these concepts are not fixed linguistic artifacts defined by a precise set of uniformly applied criteria. Rather, they are open to extension and modification as we grapple with the complexity and variety of human action.

These observations, of course, apply to the use of character trait predicates to appraise agents as well as actions. An agent's distinctive personal identity, *who* he is, takes shape in the complex continuity and interconnectedness of his many acts. In ascribing a character trait predicate to an agent we assert not simply that one or more of his actions can be characterized by that predicate, but also that these actions are typical of him, i.e., that they belong to a wider regularity of action which is well enough established that we can identify it as a persisting theme in his personality. As we have just seen, a wide range of actions with quite different particular intentions can be appraised by a single character trait predicate. When we ascribe a character trait to an agent, therefore, the regularity of action we identify may include widely different undertakings with unrelated aims (e.g., a single individual may be patient in his activities as parent, philosopher, and general). It is evident, then, that there will be a great diversity of action sets which can provide the basis for ascribing a character trait to an agent. And once again, the character trait we ascribe will be expressed in a distinctive way determined by the pattern of action in which it appears. There is, therefore, an inexhaustible variety of different ways in which an agent may be patient or generous or wise. The range and diversity of human character can be delineated only by describing patterns of action: we must tell an agent's story if we are to appreciate the special way in which he displays a character trait. Hence, as Gilbert Ryle

points out, it requires an entire novel to convey the particular kind of pride that characterizes the heroine of *Pride and Prejudice*.[17] It draws less heavily on our patience, however, to cite an episode which typifies the wider pattern of action in which a character trait appears. In either case, there is an unavoidable incompleteness about our descriptions of character. As we see more of a person's action we may learn more about the peculiar sort of patience or wisdom that he displays. And if, as I argued above, our use of these concepts is part of an unfinished inquiry, then we may in this process learn something new about what it is to be patient or wise.

IV.

All of this has important implications for the ascription of moral perfections to God. The richness and flexibility of our vocabulary of character trait predicates suggests that this language might be put to work in theology without major conceptual reconstruction. Can we speak of God in a way which leaves intact the ordinary semantic structures governing the use of predicates like " wise " and " loving "?

This will require, of course, that we conceive of God as an agent of intentional actions. If we are to say that God is loving or wise, and maintain the normal entailments of such statements, then we must be prepared to say that God characteristically *acts* in ways which are loving or wise. The question which immediately arises, however, is whether concepts of agency and intentional action can be used this way without themselves undergoing significant modification. It might be argued that when we assert that an individual S is an agent of intentional actions, we must also assert that S is both embodied and temporal. If so, and if the theist denies either of these properties of God, then the ordinary entailments of propositions ascribing character traits will be disrupted.

A full discussion of these claims about agency, embodiment,

[17] Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1949), p. 44.

and temporality would carry us far beyond the bounds of a single essay. But we need at least to sketch the direction of a response before carrying through our analysis of the moral attributes. Paul Edward gives particularly forceful expression to the problem about ascribing moral attributes to a bodiless agent.

> What would it be like to be, for example, just, without a body? To be just, a person has to behave in certain ways. But how is it possible to perform these acts, to behave in the required ways, without a body? Similar remarks apply to the other divine attributes. These questions are of course inspired by the conviction . . . that it does not make sense to talk about a disembodied consciousness, that psychological predicates are logically tied to the behavior or organisms.[18]

Edwards recognizes that in asserting that an agent *is just* we are committed to asserting that he *acts justly*. From this alone, however, he cannot conclude that the agent must be embodied. This will follow only if he can show that all statements about intentional action entail statements about bodily behavior. This claim is clearly false, however, if it means that every intentional action must be a bodily movement. For this rule does not apply even in our own case. We quite commonly conduct projects for thought which do not require nor become full-fledged bodily actions. It must be acknowledged, of course, that our lives of unshared reflection and unenacted plans remain rooted in a wider context of vital interests as bodily agents. Nonetheless, we ourselves continually undertake actions which are not overt bodily movements. One might argue that even intentional mental activities are, at some level, always bodily behaviors as well. But while our thought processes evidently do involve complex organic events, intentional mental action is not a subspecies of intentional bodily action. I intend a bodily event in intentionally raising my arm. But I do

[18] Paul Edwards, "Difficulties in the Idea of God," *The Idea of God*, ed. Edward Madden, Rollo Handy, and Marvin Farber (Springfield: Charles C. Thomas, 1968), p. 48.

not intend any bodily event in working out a bit of mental arithmetic, even though this no doubt involves the stimulation of nerve complexes in the brain. Our mental activities may be dependent upon brain events, but the description of such an activity (e.g., imagining a tropical paradise, remembering scenes from childhood) does not, by itself, entail any statements about brain events. The *concept* of an intentional action does not bear any necessary connection to the notion " behavior of an organism," even though many concrete *action descriptions* (e.g., making a funny face) do entail bodily behaviors.

Edwards might be read as arguing for a rather different claim, viz., that we cannot identify and describe the actions of an agent who is not embodied. Here he would be insisting that we cannot pick out events as the acts of an agent unless we can locate that agent in space and associate him with those events either as motions of his body or effects of those motions. An important part of the solution to this problem is to note that we need not be able to explain *how* an agent brings about the event that is his intentional action in order to assert meaningfully *that* he does so. The theologian is not charged with the responsibility of explaining the means by which God's purposes take effect in our world. The theologian is responsible, however, to give an account of *what* purposes he believes God to be working out in our history, and he will need to anchor this account in events which can be identified within the world or our experience. It must be acknowledged that this crucial theological enterprise faces some significant difficulties. As soon as a theologian moves beyond a literal reading of the Biblical narratives, and so refuses to identify God's acts with miraculous disruptions of the ordinary course of events, he will have to take special care to spell out what he means by an act of God. The rise of naturalistic modes of explanation (e.g., in the natural sciences) and the abandonment in most theological circles of appeal to supernatural signs and wonders makes it necessary to rethink talk of divine action in nature and human history. An adequate response to this problem will

require developing a general account of God's relation to a world which we also describe in terms of immanent structures of intelligibility, i.e. as a natural order.

This, of course, is a major task of theological construction which can be pursued in a variety of different ways depending upon one's principal theological commitments. Disagreements between neo-Thomists and process theologians, for example, bear directly on the question of how best to represent God's general relation to creatures. The debate over these doctrinal-theological issues lies beyond the bounds of this essay. For our purposes it is enough to recognize that: a) talk of God as an agent of intentional actions commits us to offering some account of what God is doing and to explaining how these statements about God's acts relate to statements about identifiable events in the world of our experience, b) within the conceptual structures established by such a theological proposal it will be possible to identify the divine agent and his acts, and c) without further argument, there is no reason to draw the general conclusion that this enterprise of theological construction is conceptually impossible (e.g. inevitably incoherent).

It appears possible, then, to speak of an agent whose intentional actions are not the behavior of an organism. What of agency and temporality? If an agent need not be located in space, can we also say that an agent might exist outside time? Here the salient conceptual considerations weigh in the other direction; it certainly appears that temporality is entailed by the concepts of intentional action and agency. To show otherwise would require that we demonstrate the logical separability a) of the concept "act" from the concept of a temporally extended sequence of activity, and b) of the concept "agent" from the concept of a subject to which we ascribe a temporally ordered series of acts. It is far from clear that this can be done. Neither is it clear that the theist, outside the context of the metaphysical tradition represented by Thomas Aquinas, has a significant theological stake in doing so. While the issues raised by this question are complex and attended by a long history of

dispute, we can simply grant, for the purposes of this discussion, that God's eternity is best understood as infinite temporal extension without beginning and without end.[19]

If we conceive of God as an agent who is located in time but not in space, then it appears that we can ascribe moral perfections to God without disrupting the semantic relations of these predicates. God's distinctive identity will appear in the interconnectedness and continuity of his acts. Beyond asking *what* God is (e.g. a non-embodied and temporally eternal agent, the omnipotent creator of every other agent, and so on), the theist is concerned to know *who God is*. Exactly whom the religious believer worships will depend upon the actions and purposes he recognizes as God's own. Theists may disagree significantly here, as is evidenced by the long history of theological (as well as social and political) struggle between Jews, Christians, and Moslems. It is only on the basis of those actions of God which a religious community recognizes and reflects upon that God is known by the members of that community as a unique agent.

Given some set of claims about what God has done and is doing, it is perfectly possible to characterize God's actions using our vocabulary of character trait predicates. If a religious tradition understands God to act in ways which fall under the open-ended criteria of similarity which govern the use of character trait predicates like " loving " and " wise ", then these predicates can be ascribed to God just as " literally " as they are ascribed to persons. With Thomas Aquinas, we can say that these predicates signify " something which God really is." We make this claim, however, within a very different conceptual context than that constructed by Thomas. For on Thomas's account we must also point out that God is not an instance of any concept " love " or " wisdom " which we possess. Instead, our concepts of perfection are dismantled in order to point beyond themselves to the ontological ground of all perfection. In contrast to this, we are now in a position to say that

[19] On difficulties with the concept of a timeless agent see, e.g., Nelson Pike, *God and Timelessness* (New York: Schocken Books, 1970), Chaps. 6-7.

God is an instance of the concepts of perfection which we use in characterizing human beings: we ascribe love and wisdom to God without denying the normal entailments of such propositions.

The worry here, of course, is that we will not be able to draw a sufficiently radical distinction between the divine agent and all other agents. Do we avoid the mists of predicative agnosticism only to run aground on the hard rock of anthropomorphism? There are two things to be said. First, the divine perfections are not somehow reduced to merely human traits by being characterized in the evaluative language we use to appraise human agents. As we have seen, the specific content of the property signified by a character trait predicate will depend upon the pattern of action being appraised. A predicate like "loving," we argued, does not signify an identical determinate characteristic in every action, but rather identifies an open-ended network of likenesses among a diverse set of actions. The distinctive sort of love we attribute to God, therefore, will be determined by the description we give of his actions. If the scope and content of God's action is unique to God alone, then so too will be the character of his love and wisdom.

In virtually any theological proposal, powers of action will be attributed to God which distinguish him from all other agents. There can be, for example, only one agent who is the free and omnipotent creator of every being other than himself. The love of the creator for his creation, therefore, is necessarily unique: no creature can love as God loves, for no creaturely agent bears God's relation to the world. Even when (as in various forms of process theism) there is dissent from the traditional doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*, God occupies a unique position in the network of agencies whose interactions constitute the unfolding world process. Both classical and neo-classical theists speak of God's love as unsurpassable both in its extension and in its quality: no appropriate object of love is excluded by the divine love and all things loved by God could not be loved more perfectly. This divine love is normative for all

creaturely loves: here is the point at which our value inquiry could rest, if ever we could comprehend the divine love. And though (as Thomas says) all creaturely loves are grounded in and imitate God's love, this love cannot be duplicated in the actions of any creature.

Second, it follows from these considerations that our understanding of God's love or wisdom will be radically incomplete. We cannot expect to comprehend fully the way in which God exemplifies the moral attributes we ascribe to him, for we cannot begin to offer an adequately detailed description of God's intentional activity. God envisions an array of possibilities that includes but vastly outreaches those which we can recognize. His intentions in the actions we attribute to him will extend far beyond our description of those intentions, indeed, beyond the range of any project we have the power to envision. The particular divine actions we identify will be rooted within a project of enormous scope, embracing the whole of our world in a single intention. As a result, the full range of God's activity and the full content of God's life must remain beyond our reach.

Here we confront an irrevocable limit upon our capacity to say *what* predicates of moral perfection signify in God. It is important carefully to observe the nature of this limit, however. The difficulty is *not* that our concepts of moral perfection must be shattered against a divine reality to which they cannot apply. On the contrary, our concepts of moral perfection are fully appropriate to God, but we cannot go very far toward describing what these perfections amount to in this instance. We can "conceive of the divine perfection" *qua* applying predicates of perfection to God without disrupting their defining semantic relations. But we cannot "conceive of the divine perfection" *qua* offering detailed description of how these perfections are exemplified by God. A necessary part of ascribing these predicates to this subject is that we acknowledge a fundamental inability to spell out what they signify.

In the face of this incompleteness of our understanding of God's moral attributes, there are two points to keep in mind.

First, there is nothing unusual about finding that our description of an agent's character must remain unfinished. In our attempts to understand the personal identity of virtually any agent, including ourselves, we face significant limitations imposed by the complexity of the relevant patterns of action. We typically encounter at least two problems. It frequently is difficult to offer a fully detailed description of what an agent intends. Intentions are often subtly " layered " so that action of one description (e.g. raising money for a local charity) is a means to some further end (e.g. making useful contacts with business people) which may be unexpressed or only partially understood. Whenever our knowledge of what an agent intends is incomplete, our grasp of his character will also be incomplete. Furthermore, the patterns of action in which a character trait is displayed are open-ended: the continuities we identify as character are displayed in new ways in an agent's ongoing activity and so lead us to expand and revise our estimate of how he is loving or mean-spirited, wise or foolish. Closure cannot be expected in describing a property whose expression is not closed. Given these difficulties in grasping the most significant patterns of action in the life of a human agent, we should not be surprised that the moral attributes of God are rooted in a wider divine life which we cannot adequately describe. It is not uncommon for our knowledge of an agent's character to be accompanied by significant areas of ignorance; our ignorance of the divine agent is unique only in its depth and finality.

This can be paired with a second point. While our ability to describe the divine perfections is sharply limited, we are not left completely in the dark about how these perfections are expressed in God's life. On the contrary, ascription of moral attributes to God is based upon description of divine actions which display those attributes. Since our account of God's intention and action is necessarily incomplete, our understanding of God's perfections is also incomplete. But by offering a partial description of God's intentional activity, we give concrete

content to our claims about God's love, wisdom, mercy, and so on. We are able, in other words, to indicate at least something of the special *way* in which God is loving or wise by pointing to what we believe God to have done. As we have already seen, single actions can stand for, or typify, central features of an agent's character; the distinctive quality of an agent's concern for others, for example, may be vividly expressed in a particular action or series of actions. Given our inevitably fragmentary understanding of God's activity, this is an especially important move for the theist. The truth of claims about God's moral perfections will hinge upon a) the correctness of our identification and description of God's acts and b) the degree to which these acts reflect the character of God's activity as a whole. We ascribe moral perfections to God, therefore, *not* by virtue of a general metaphysical relation of creature and creator, but rather in light of divine actions which give us access to God's distinctive identity as an agent. On the basis of these actions we can give a correct, though necessarily incomplete, account of who God is and how he exemplifies the moral perfections we ascribe to him.

Once again we find that theological predication involves a striking dialectic of affirmation and negation. Our affirmations, however, are not so radically qualified by negations as they must be for Thomas Aquinas. On Thomas's account, the metaphysical relation which makes it possible to affirm *that* certain predicates of perfection can be referred to God also makes it necessary to deny that we know *what* these predicates signify in God. On the account I have offered, both the positive and the negative elements in our talk of God's perfections are rooted in the relation of the divine agent to his acts. We can ascribe predicates of moral perfection to God insofar as these terms appropriately characterize God's acts and insofar as these acts faithfully reveal God's character as an agent. Given the uniqueness of God's agency, these actions and the moral attributes they display will (at most) only typify a divine life which we cannot hope to comprehend fully. Precisely because

these actions are *God's* actions, we must acknowledge that they belong to a wider unity of divine purpose which extends beyond the bounds of creaturely comprehension. Our positive knowledge of God's moral attributes, therefore, will stand out against a background of ineradicable ignorance. Nonetheless, there *is* a knowledge of God's attributes which stands out against this background. God's love, though rooted in a mode and scope of agency which radically transcends us, becomes available to our understanding when it grasps us in an action which we recognize as God's own. In saying that God is loving, we do not assert simply that he possesses some unknown property which is the pure metaphysical counterpart of creaturely love. Rather we say that God loves in the distinctive way manifest in the actions we attribute to him. By maintaining the link between ascriptions of moral attributes and descriptions of intentional actions, we can acknowledge the radical limitations upon our ability to comprehend the divine perfections and yet not empty the terms we ascribe to God of all recognizable content.[20]

THOMAS F. TRACY

Bates College
Lewiston, Maine

[20] A fuller discussion of many of these issues appears in my book *God, Action and Embodiment* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, forthcoming).

JUST-WAR DOCTRINE AND PACIFISM

THE USUAL ETHICAL ANALYSIS of war begins with a stated or implied contrast of two extreme positions, one labeled realist and the other pacifist. Both concur on the immorality of war, but divide on the ramifications. Realists maintain the necessity of war and participation in it, and pacifists reject the necessity of war and participation in it. Underlying both extremes is an accepted equation of war and violence with action and power; peace and nonviolence with passivity and love. The enigmatic implication is that both active opposition to evil and passive reception of evil beget more evil. Evil is victorious either way.

Proponents of just-war doctrine tend to accept these connotations for realist war and pacifist peace, but hope to avoid the consequent dilemma. They cling to the necessity of war and violence, but advance loopholing circumstances under which violence is justified. At the same time, interpreting movement on behalf of peace as passive, they offer peacemakers only a ritualistic pat on the back. Such an approach concentrates ethical discussion on the details surrounding war battles, with little examination of the correlative moral necessity of peacemaking activities. Prior to a war, nuclear arms buildup, nuclear proliferation, and disarmament, for example, receive scant moral attention, but should World War III break out ethicists would argue *ad nauseam* the morality of why and how it was fought. A second deleterious effect is that justifying circumstances or loopholes have become so pliable that any astute politician readily finds his or her warmongering accorded a moral evaluation, if not by all moralists, at least by a significant few. Thus serious moral criticism of even all-out nuclear war is effectively blunted. This article reexamines these concepts of just-war and pacifism.

The Foundation for Just-War

In a recent article, Thomas Pangle points out that the discussion of just-war by St. Thomas Aquinas is placed not in the section on natural law, the law of nations, nor justice. "In fact," says Pangle, "it is treated in the context of none of the natural virtues but rather within the discussion of the most 'theological' or strictly Christian virtue of charity." [1] "Peace," to quote Aquinas, "is the work of justice indirectly, insofar as justice removes the obstacles to peace; but it is the work of charity directly, since charity, according to its very nature, causes peace." [2]

I do not wish to enter into Pangle's concerns as to whether the source of just-war doctrine in Aquinas is divine law or natural law. But I do wish to reflect on some often overlooked implications of positioning the discussion of war ethics under charity. The principal act of charity is love and under the effects of love St. Thomas posits peace. War is a vice opposing peace. In this discussion Aquinas is clearly favoring the side of charity, love, and peace. Decidedly he is not taking a middle-road stance between war and peace. Given the two alternatives of warmongering and peacemaking Aquinas is a peacemaker. He would hardly see the makers of peace contributing to evil in almost the same mould as the realists, who hold that anything goes in war. Even in phrasing the question which leads to the celebrated just-war doctrine St. Thomas shows his leaning toward peace. He does not ask when are wars moral, nor what are the conditions for a just war. Rather St. Thomas queries sharply "Whether it is always sinful to wage war." [3]

What has happened to the Thomistic doctrine on just-war? A significant but simplified answer is that we have fallen prey

[1] T. Pangle, "A Note on the Theoretical Foundation of the Just War Doctrine," *The Thomist*, Vol. 43 (1979), p. 467.

[2] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, Pt. II-II, ques. 29, art. 3, ad 3. Pangle also quotes this passage.

[3] *Ibid.*, ques. 40, art. 1.

to thinking characteristic of Machiavelli and Hobbes. Machiavelli says, ". . . Whoever desires to forward a state and give it laws, must start with assuming that all men are bad and ever ready to display their vicious nature . . . ." [4] And again, ". . . Men act right only upon compulsion." [5] Hobbes says regarding the natural condition of mankind:

> To this war of every man, against every man, this also is consequent; that nothing can be unjust. The notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice have there no place. Where there is no common power, there is no law: where no law, no injustice. Force, and fraud, are in war the two cardinal virtues.[6]

The first law of nature Hobbes describes as follows:

> Every man ought to endeavor peace, as far as he has hope of obtaining it; and when he cannot obtain it, . . . he may seek, and use, all helps, and advantages of war.[7]

The contrast between Machiavelli and Hobbes, and Aquinas is thus stark. Evil is primary, and good a hope, in Machiavelli and Hobbes; while, in St. Thomas, goodness is the natural condition of humans, with evil a deficiency. In the former, the state, the sovereign, or the prince must compel goodness against human inclinations; in the latter, laws are enjoined in keeping with the natural condition of humanity. A 'realist' view of war dominates the one; a peacemaking view, the other. Parenthetically speaking, I have placed realist in quotes because although it is the current term used in war morality analyses it is hardly realistic; Wasserstrom is more sensitive to the meaning in labeling the view 'nihilistic.' [8]

Reinhold Niebuhr, in an influential work, *Moral Man and Immoral Society,* tries to tiptoe between the nihilistic and

[4] N. Machiavelli, *The Discourses,* Bk. I, ch. III.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] T. Hobbes, *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes,* Vol. III, p. 115.

[7] *Ibid.,* p. 117.

[8] Cf. R. Wasserstrom, "On the Morality of War: A Preliminary Inquiry," in his edited work *War and Morality* (California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 1970) p. 78-85.

peacemaking alternatives without committing himself to either.[9] He maintains that humans as individuals may be moral but when gathered in a large society become immoral. This seems to be a reversion to the old Manichean philosophy of two separate forces but with two distinct constituencies. What is right for the state is wrong for individuals, and what is right for individuals is wrong for the state. Actually Niebuhr's views are expressed with a host of confused terms, which linger in the literature. Moral individuals, according to Niebuhr, have at their disposal only reason and religion, which include education, some communication, and peaceful social groupings; otherwise they must revert to force, which is immoral. Since the effect of passive undertakings dissipates as groupings enlarge into a society the "society is in a perpetual state of war."[10] Even democracy, for Niebuhr, uses violent force. The main tools of coercion are the military and the economy; both keep people in a state of uneven power. Religion's only moral response is an ineffective compromise and accommodation.

Central concepts that are distorted throughout Niebuhr's text are power and force. These somewhat related terms are associated, in Niebuhr, with society, and always carry an immoral as well as violent connotation. Hence individuals may not morally use power, and society is necessarily immoral, because being in a state of war, society is compelled to use violence. Hannah Arendt opposes such a conception, saying "to equate political power with 'the organization of violence' makes sense only if one follows Marx's estimate of the state as an instrument of oppression in the hands of the ruling class."[11] By contrast, governments conceived as founded on the consent of their people derive their power from their citizens. Violence would then be the use of force in opposition to the power of the people. The inadequacy of equating force with violence and immorality can be further judged from a variety of counter examples: gravity, electricity, laws, muscles, mores, firemen,

[9] R. Niebuhr (N.Y.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932).

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 19.

[11] H. Arendt, *On Violence* (N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1969), p. 36.

diseases, and fireworks all display force but could hardly be called immoral or warlike. Accordingly power and force have a morally licit and a nonviolent usage.

Many just-war commentators, like Paul Ramsey and Michael Walzer, acknowledge the moral use of power and force, but discredit the nonviolent use. Nonviolent and constructive forms of conflict resolution are rejected as ineffective. With power and force construed as essentially warlike, St. Thomas's crucial just-war question is watered down to read " Whether it is always sinful to use force." Even though Ramsey gives an historical account of just-war he does not notice his own position veering closer to the violent underpinning of Machiavelli and Hobbes through Niebuhr, than to the grounding in charity of St. Thomas. To approach just-war from a perspective of a presumed warlike human nature needing moral mollification is a far cry from emphasizing human nature as inherently good while permitting some unavoidable wars under restricted conditions.

Ramsey's prolific writing on just-war in the sixties have effectively given carte blanche moral approval to all U.S. military moves, nuclear or otherwise, since World War II.[12] With the specter of unrestrained terrorism hanging over the world—Ramsey sees our involvement in Vietnam as an act of charity—the U.S. has a sufficient standby just cause for entering militarily into any embroglio the President may deem fit. Although the Brookings Institution has calculated the number of U.S. military involvements between 1945 and 1975 at 215, the U.S. marches uprightly.[13] Furthermore Ramsey's analysis of deterrence and limited nuclear war allows so much maneuverability that twenty-five million people can be annihilated in an opening salvo without raising a moral scruple.[14]

[12] Cf. P. Ramsey, *War and the Christian Conscience* (N.C.: Duke University Press, 1961) and *The Just War* (N.Y.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968).

[13] For a complete listing and examination of these employments cf. B. M. Blechman and S. S. Kaplan, *Force Without War* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1978).

[14] Cf. P. Ramsey, *The Just War*, p. 213ff.

The work of Walzer is much more sensitive but still insufficient.[15] He opposes the obliteration bombing of Hiroshima, Dresden, Hamburg, and Tokyo as British and U.S. terroristic tactics.[16] He only accepts deterrence as temporarily necessary, and he condemns nuclear war. But he prefers to concentrate upon the historical circumstances surrounding conventional guerrilla warfare past and present. In the process he makes many balanced applications for just-war enthusiasts. My difference with Walzer is that he, like Ramsey, never illustrates the peacemaking imperative that is correlative with St. Thomas's account of just-war. Admittedly St. Thomas too does not address particulars, but he never devoted a book to the subject! A thorough examination of just-war that does not position the doctrine within its broader peacemaking context is like a thorough examination of a cancerous organ without regard for the condition of the rest of the body. With Walzer and Ramsey we are presented half a doctrine.

Nonviolence, Peacemaking, and Pacifism

Turning to a discussion of nonviolence, we note the prefix 'non' is readily misconstrued. The usual depiction is no action, connoting anything from noncooperation to inaction. So pervasive is this fallacious interpretation that actively hiding a slave during the Civil War period or a Jew during Hitler's reign would be considered a compromise, albeit slight, of one's nonviolent principles. Thus Niebuhr equates nonviolence with noncooperation and lists three types: civil disobedience or not paying taxes, boycotts or not trading with a group, and strikes or not rendering services.[17] In each instance the nonviolent person is characterized as not acting.

Elizabeth Anscombe is much harsher. She accuses pacifists

[15] Cf. M. Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars* (N.Y.: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1977). His *Obligations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970) addresses some peacemaking issues but only within a state, not between states.

[16] Cf. M. Walzer, "An Exchange on Hiroshima," *The New Republic*, September 23, 1981, pp. 13-14.

[17] Cf. Niebuhr, p. 240.

of following a fantastic illusion, and of withdrawing from the world. Pacifism, she says, " teaches people to make no distinction between the shedding of innocent blood and the shedding of any human blood." [18] How she interprets the actions of the Berrigan brothers, who have poured human blood on draft records and atomic warheads, is not clear. Anyway, with its teachings, Anscombe argues, " pacifism has corrupted enormous numbers of people. . . ." [19]

In an early article Jan Narveson sets up a straw man by defining pacifism as the belief " not only that violence is evil but also that it is morally wrong to use *force* to resist, punish, or prevent violence." [20] He says the pacifist must maintain " fighting back is inherently evil." It also follows from their view, he continues, " We have no right to punish criminals " and " robbers, murderers, rapists, and miscellaneous delinquents ought . . . to be let loose.[21] The problem with Narveson's analysis is his equation of force with violence: pacifists on the whole, for example, are not opposed to police force but to police and military brutality. Force, as we said above, has usages other than violence and destruction. In his more recent article Narveson modifies his definition of pacifism to read more acceptably " adherence to the rule that one is to refrain from using violence under all circumstances. . . ." [22] Unfortunately he then overextends the scope of violence to " the intentional infliction of damage, pain, injury, or death by forcible means." [23] With this description violence is again virtually equated with force. Contrariwise, Newton Garver argues that ' violence ' stems from the same root as ' violation.' [24] Unless a violation occurs

[18] E. Anscombe, " War and Murder " in *War and Morality,* p. 49.

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] J. Narveson, " Pacifism: A Philosophical Analysis," *Ethics,* Vol. 75 (1964-65) p. 259. The italics are mine.

[21] *Ibid.,* p. 264.

[22] J. Narveson, " Violence and War," in *Matters of Life and Death,* ed. by T. Regan (N.Y.: Random House, 1980), p. 117.

[23] *Ibid.,* p. 110.

[24] Cf. N. Garver, " What Violence Is," *The Nation,* June 24, 1968, pp. 817-22.

there is no violence. Hence the intentional infliction of property damage that occasions mere inconvenience is not violence. For example, digging a grave on the White House lawn to symbolize humanity's death in a nuclear war does not violate the President nor U.S. citizens, whereas burning a cross on a front lawn to intimidate specific residents does violate these residents. Similarly, pain precedes health as well as disease. Pain inflicted by a surgeon for the purpose of healing is not violence. Admittedly, the notion is complicated by what Garver terms institutional and covert actions; still an adequate account of violence must differentiate various types of force.

John Dewey distinguishes force from violence and in the process affords insight on the power of nonviolence.[25] Three terms are contrasted: power, coercive force, and violence. Power, energy, and force are neutral terms not equated with violence. Power can be used to excavate subways or obliterate cities. It is the " ability or capacity to execute, to realize ends." Only when energy defeats or frustrates purposes is it said to be violence. Violence is destructive force, the inefficient use of force. Thus we have force or power as neutral, and violence as destructive. The third term, coercive force, is a misnomer for implying compulsion over consent. However, for Dewey, it denotes the constructive, creative, efficient use of force or power. Coercive force comes closest to what peacemakers call nonviolent action. Humans accordingly have a choice in the employment of power. They can choose a constructive or a destructive, a nonviolent or a violent way of life. We are back, it seems to me, at St. Thomas's view of the primacy of peace and the deficiency of war.

For those who, as Pangle, are reluctant to follow Aquinas in undergirding just-war with a theological virtue—charity—let

A revised version is reprinted in *Philosophy for a New Generation*, ed. by A. K. Bierman and J. A. Gould, 4th Edition (N.Y.: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1981), pp. 217-228.

[25] Cf. J. Dewey, " Force and Coercion " in *Characters and Events* (N.Y.: Henry Holt and Company, 1929), Vol. II, pp. 782-89.

me revert to the less religious writings of Dewey. Dewey maintains we cannot demonstrate whether human beings are naturally cooperative—as in Plato, Aristotle and St. Thomas—or naturally competitive—as in Machiavelli and Hobbes.[26] But we can say that whereas capitalism (and war) stresses competition, democracy is allied with humanistic cooperation. "Democracy means the belief that humanistic culture should prevail." [27] This proposition, Dewey points out, is a moral one. And it is on moral grounds that we need the courage to reawaken a belief in our fellow human beings.

This reawakening of the various facets of our culture to its nonviolent, peacemaking purpose or goal is hardly a passive inactivity. It ought to be a lifelong pursuit. I spoke earlier about writers on just-war who have presented only half a doctrine. The other half involves requirements for the proper conduct of peace. In a more balanced examination we might find that only a leader who has pursued peace as steadfastly as our leaders have prepared for war could be said to possess the right intention prescribed for just war. As an historical example of a peacemaking endeavor we could point to John F. Kennedy's formulation of Food for Peace, the Peace Corps, and the Alliance for Progress during his first year as President. Admittedly these programs deteriorated with longevity, and Kennedy's other side precipitated the Bay of Pigs fiasco and an unwarranted huge nuclear arms buildup. Nevertheless my point remains that moralists need to examine ongoing peacemaking ventures as a balance to warmongering gestures before affixing the label 'just war.'

Peacemaking, or perhaps a more cogent word for today 'peacebuilding', is a moral commitment to action. Although there have been individuals and groups who, in the name of peace, have withdrawn from worldly interaction, such persons are today more accurately construed as cowards. At least these withdrawn personalities should no longer be portrayed and then

[26] Cf. J. Dewey, *Freedom and Culture* (N.Y.: Putnam, 1939), p. 111.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 124.

critiqued as the prototypes of nonviolence. Gene Sharp in a lengthy work describes 198 different types of nonviolent actions used by peoples in struggles for peaceful redress for human rights violations.[28] These actions include protests and persuasions; social, economic, and political methods of noncooperation; and a host of nonviolent interventions. Peacebuilding is not quietistic. Careful organizing and astute planning are instrumental for success.

Before concluding, I wish to make another distinction. Peacebuilding and nonviolent acting are not equivalent to pacifism. I have been careful to call Aquinas a peacemaker and to point out how necessary peacemaking is to a proper conception of just war. Too many commentators have garbled the original intent by approaching just-wars from the perspective of justifying violence. However, once one has understood the foundation in peace for a consideration of war morality one may still, with integrity, disagree with St. Thomas on the pivotal question " Whether it is always sinful to wage war." The pacifist, going beyond peacemaking, answers yes. One of the main reasons for an affirmative response is the belief that if peace were really tried it would succeed; because the basis for war is fear, and fear is overcome with love. Deep within, the pacifist is not convinced peacebuilding is sufficiently undertaken whenever the result is war; and if peace has not been sufficiently pursued, the right intention, which is one prerequisite for entering into a just war, has not been satisfied.

Many contemporary pacifists ask a more restricted question than St. Thomas. They ask whether it is always sinful to wage *nuclear* war. Here they are not talking about a logically possible, isolated firing of a small tactical weapon against a hardened military silo. The question concerns a real nuclear war. Gordon Zahn argues, " Because nuclear war involves the near-certainty of mutual destruction and passes far beyond all limits

[28] Cf. G. Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1973). For a similar treatment cf. S. Gowan, G. Lakey, W. Moyer, and R. Taylor, *Moving Toward a New Society* (Philadelphia: New Society Press, 1976).

of human decency, any statement of the pacifist position must begin with a negative—the outright repudiation of nuclear war as a conceivable defense option." [29] Using just war conditions we can ask: Do either the United States or the Soviet Union, individually or in opposition to one another, have a just cause and a right intention for entering into a nuclear war? Is a nuclear means proportionate to the end? Can a nuclear war discriminate between combatants and noncombatants? If one agrees that nuclear war is neither effective nor moral how does one justify the nuclear arms buildup, and the lack of serious talks on nuclear disarmament? What is the prerequisite commitment to charity? What is demanded of a nuclear arms peacebuilder? Even the nuclear deterrence position fails beside these questions. To be sure, we might be able to justify deterrence "temporarily," as Walzer says, but can we justify it to the tune of combined U.S./U.S.S.R. arsenals of 50,000 nuclear warheads? Can we justify the U.S. addition of the MX missile, the cruise missile, the highly accurate Pershing II, the neutron bomb, the Trident II submarine missile, a new bomber, and on and on? Can we morally justify the cost in loss of human services? The nuclear pacifist emphatically says no. In the face of today's horrendous military preparations one could hardly call such a pacifist a moral lunatic.

In this essay I have tried to show that an acceptable just-war doctrine requires more than a set of conditions applicable during wartime maneuvers. To defend only such conditions is to misrepresent seriously what should be the essential thrust of any just-war theory. To step further backwards and to build the just-war doctrine on a presumed basis of necessary human evil or violence is totally to distort the moral justification. On the other hand, to argue in the Thomistic vein is to presuppose a fundamental espousal of peacebuilding activities. The primacy of striving wholeheartedly for peace ought to be actively shared by just war proponents and pacifists alike. However,

[29] G. Zahn, *War Conscience and Dissent* (N.Y.: Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1967), p. 100.

on the question of the legitimacy of nuclear war and the extensive military nuclear arsenals both pacifist principles and just-war conditions again concur: the present nuclear deterrent stockpiles must be drastically reduced or eliminated, not enlarged nor improved if any moral sanity is to be presumed.

JOSEPH C. KUNKEL

University of Dayton
Dayton, Ohio

LOGICAL POSSIBILITY: AN ARISTOTELIAN ESSENTIALIST CRITIQUE

CLAIMS SUCH AS THAT IT IS logically possible for a solid iron bar to float on water or a cat to give birth to pups are either false or highly ambiguous, and this is a result of more than a mere failure to distinguish between so-called "logical" and "empirical" possibility. Rather, it is a result of a complete and total confusion of the objects logic properly studies, viz., second intentions, with those that science and metaphysics study, viz., first intentions. Further, this confusion of first with second intentions results from a tendency prevalent in philosophy, since at least Descartes, to regard concepts as atoms of meaning which one "unpacks" [1] in order to discover a priori or conceptual truth rather than intentions whose proper and definitive being consists in being of or about something other than themselves and which thus reveals the character of things.

Though others [2] have noted that there is indeed something

[1] Norman J. Brown notes that according to "the classical view of analyticity . . . a concept is thought of as analogous to a chemical compound, a complex capable of resolution into (comparative) simples; indeed, the notion of simple ideas which we find in Locke, with their successors the simple unanalyzable qualities of Moore, the atomic facts of logical atomism and the protocol sentences of some positivists (merely the linguistic version of the old conceptual doctrine) have been cast very much in the chemical-analysis mould. Necessary statements, on this view, simply unpack the implications—the contents—of a given concept. Above all, they cannot extend to 'matters of fact and existence.'" "A Kind of Necessary Truth," *Philosophy* 50 (January 1975): 49.

[2] See José A. Bernadete, "Is There a Problem about Logical Possibility?" *Mind* 71 (1962): 342-352; Arthur W. Collins, "Philosophical Imagination," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 4 (January 1967): 49-56; Tibor R. Machan, "Another Look at 'Logical Possibility'," *The Personalist* 51 (1970): 246-249; and "A Note on Conceivability and Logical Possibility," *Kinesis* (Fall 1969): 39-42; Edward H. Madden, "Hume and the Fiery Furnace," *Philosophy of Science* 38 (1971): 64-78; Wallace Matson, "Against Induction and Empiricism," *Proceedings of The Aristotelian Society* 62 (1961-1962): 143-158 and *Sentience* (Berkeley:

problematic [3] about such claims as it is logically possible that a solid iron bar floats on water, it seems that no-one has attempted to examine how such claims might be considered when viewed from the perspective of the Aristotelian/Thomistic tradition in logic. Such an examination this essay will undertake. First, it will begin by describing the Aristotelian/Thomistic view of logic (or at least one interpretation of that view). Second, it will describe the contemporary view of logical possibility and the procedure of *inspectio mentis*. Third, the use of *inspectio mentis* as a procedure for determining logical possibilities will be criticized. The basis for this criticism will be an Aristotelian/Thomistic view of concepts. Fourth, possible objections will be considered and replied to, and an equivocal use of the phrase 'it is logically possible that' will be noted. Overall, it will be argued that these difficulties can be overcome and ambiguities prevented if logic is approached in the manner suggested by this tradition.

An Aristotelian/Thomistic View of Logic [4]

Aquinas has described the character of thought and perception in the following manner:

University of California Press, 1976), pp. 10-55; Leonard Peikoff, "The Analytic-Synthetic Dichotomy," *The Objectivist* (May-September 1967): reprint ed. (New York: The Objectivist, 1967), pp. 3-25; Douglas B. Rasmussen, "Logical Possibility, Iron Bars, and Necessary Truth," *The New Scholasticism* 51 (Winter 1977): 117-122; F. Rinaldi, "Logical Possibility," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 28 (1967): 81-99; and George Seddon, "Logical Possibility," *Mind* 81 (October 1972): 481-494.

[3] Bernadete considered many contemporary uses of 'logical possibility' to involve a "make-believe or storytelling" sense of 'possible'. Op. cit., 343. Rinaldi contended that many uses of 'it is logically possible that' should be replaced with 'in fairy stories, but only there, one might say that'. Op. cit., p. 97. George Seddon may have put the difficulty best of all when he noted that "'logical possibility' has become a debilitating term because it blurs the distinction between science and pseudoscience, one variant of science fiction." Op. cit., p. 481.

[4] The following presentation (and interpretation) of the Aristotelian/Thomistic view of logic owes much to Jacques Maritain, *An Introduction to Logic*, trans. Imelda Choquette (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1937); Robert W. Schmidt, S.J., *The Domain of Logic According to Saint Thomas Aquinas* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966); and Henry B. Veatch, *Intentional Logic* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1970).

the intelligible species is to the intellect what the sensible species is to sense. The sensible species [i.e., the percept] is not what is perceived, but rather that by which we perceive. Similarly, the intelligible species [i.e., the concept] is not what is understood, but that by which we understand.[5]

Concepts and percepts are intentions. Their very nature consists in generating a reference to, signifying, meaning something beyond themselves. They have the character of *esse intentionale*, and this means that "*being of an* X is not a relation in which the thought or sensation stands, but is simply what the thought or sensation *is*."[6] In other words, concepts and percepts—indeed all the modes of awareness—are inherently relational and are necessarily of or about something other than themselves. It is thus quite impossible for all the objects of awareness to be in the last analysis nothing more than a manifestation of consciousness. Rather, the existence of beings *in rerum natura*, of a world that exists and is what it is independently of awareness, is evident. It is given *in* thought but not ultimately *by* thought. For Aristotle and Aquinas there is no Cartesian question regarding the existence of an "external" world or doubt as to our ability to know it—only a question of how this is done.

Accordingly, the Aristotelian/Thomistic tradition's conception of logic is one that proceeds from this realistic[7] premise. Logic is formal in nature, but this does not make it a self-

[5] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 85, a. 2. Also, Aristotle states: "But it is clear that knowledge, perception, opinion and understanding always have some object other than themselves. They are only incidentally their own objects. . . . Thinking and being thought are different. . . . For the essences of 'thinking' and 'being thought of' are not the same" *Metaphysics*, Bk. XII, Ch. 9, translated by Anthony J. Lisska in "Axioms of Intentionality in Aquinas' Theory of Knowledge," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 16 (December 1976): 318.

[6] G. E. M. Anscombe and P. T. Geach, *Three Philosophers* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1961), p. 95.

[7] Roger Trigg in a most recent work, *Reality at Risk* (Totowa, New Jersey: Barnes & Noble, 1980), argues that a realist premise is absolutely crucial to the maintenance of objectivity in the sciences and that various forms of "intersubjectivity" (linguistic, conceptual, and cultural) do not suffice and only lead to relativism.

sufficient, a priori enterprise, for the formality of logic is a function of the objects logic examines—intentions—and the form or nature of these is such that they cannot exist without being of or about something other than themselves. Thus, the formal character of logic is *not* a result of its being divorced from and indifferent to the nature and character of reality.[8] As Coffey and Joseph respectively put the position,

> The laws of thought are not *purely formal* in the sense of being *totally and absolutely independent* of the nature of its *matter* or *content*. They are, however, formal, or non-material, in the sense that they do not vary even when the particular subject-matter of our thought does vary.[9]

And:

> We cannot think contradictory propositions because we see that a thing cannot have at once and not have the same character; the so-called necessity of thought is really the apprehension of the necessity in the being of things. . . . The Law of Contradiction is metaphysical or ontological.[10]

The objects that logic studies are intentions, not mere receptacles for content. Their entire nature is ordered to the disclosure of something beyond themselves, and so the basis for logic's ultimate principles is metaphysical or ontological.

Yet logic does not study beings *in rerum natura*. Logic studies the tools by which human consciousness knows the world—namely, concepts, propositions, and arguments. Though dependent on psychological processes for its objects of study to exist, logic does not deal with actual thought processes

[8] See Panayot Butchvarov's *The Concept of Knowledge* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern Press, 1970), pp. 105-142, for a most devastating critique of the attempt to explain necessary truth by appeal to purely formal or linguistic considerations. Also, Arthur Pap's *Semantics and Necessary Truth* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1958) still provides a most effective criticism of the attempt to deprive necessary truth of factual or ontological import.

[9] Peter Coffey, *The Science of Logic*, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919) 1: 22-23.

[10] H. W. B. Joseph, *An Introduction to Logic*, 2d ed., rev. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1916), p. 13.

(which psychology studies). It is not the acts of conceiving or judging *qua psychic states* but *qua signs* that concerns logic.[11] It is the character of the acts of consciousness qua signs—as something inherently significatory—that makes the beings that logic studies both different from beings *in rerum natura* and yet ultimately revelatory of them. Concepts, propositions, and arguments depend upon acts of the human mind to exist, and their character is such—their essence is to be relative—as not to be equivalent with any form or relation of beings *in rerum natura*.[12] Yet this character is the very thing that makes logic an " organon," an instrument for knowing the world, because concepts, propositions, and arguments are by their very nature ordered to express respectively the what, whether, and why of beings *in rerum natura* without, however, being reduced[13] to them.

This understanding of logic has been traditionally expressed by the statement that logic studies second intentions, and by

[11] E. A. Moody explains this distinction most aptly. " It is to be noted that the terms which logic *uses* (called terms of second intention, because they signify terms not things) do not signify concepts *qua* ' *psychic* states ' but only as modes of signification. If logic were concerned with psychic states as such, it would be part of psychology, and its terms would not stand for terms *qua* signs of things, but *qua* ' real things'." *The Logic of William of Ockham* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1965), p. 33.

[12] Forms or relatives which do not depend on acts of the human mind to exist do not possess this inherently relational—intentional—character. Henry Veatch has noted that the failure to distinguish between intentional (or logical) relations and real (or ontological) relations leads to the classic realism versus nominalism controversy. See Veatch, *Realism and Nominalism Revisited* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1954). He has also noted that this controversy takes a more contemporary form in the debate between those who contend that language must (somehow) be isomorphic with the world and those who embrace a transcendental linguisticism in which language structures and conditions our understanding of the world. See Veatch, " St. Thomas' Doctrine of Subject and Predicate " in *St. Thomas 1274-1974 Commemorative Studies*, 2 vols., ed. Maurer (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1974) and " LFC Predication: the Achilles Heel of Analytical Philosophy? ", a paper presented at three seminars on the philosophy of language at the University of Texas, November, 1980.

[13] *Ibid.* Also, see Veatch, *Intentional Logic*,, pp. 29-78.

this it is meant that concepts, propositions, and arguments become objects of study only through the cognitive process of reflection. It is only through a consideration of the acts of conceiving, judging, and reasoning (which concepts, propositions, and arguments do not exist independently of)[14] that they can be studied. Such reflection, however, is accomplished only by other concepts, propositions, and arguments which signify these concepts, propositions, and arguments as they are used in knowing the items of the world. This is why logic is second intentional, for its concepts intend other concepts. All other sciences are first intentional, for their concepts intend beings *in rerum natura*.[15] Logic deals not with things as they exist *in rerum natura* but rather with things *as they are known*, that is, as they have existence in cognition. In the Aristotelian/Thomistic tradition cognition is a way of being, and the domain of logic is the domain of thought cognizing things.

Though concepts, propositions, and arguments are intentional in character, this does not mean that the features possessed by them—for example, universality, extension, comprehension, predicability, and validity—are, therefore, possessed by the objects they intend.

> Although it is necessary for the truth of cognition that the cognition answer to the thing known, still it is not necessary that the mode of the thing known be the same as the mode of its cognition.[16]

There is a difference between X as it exists in cognition and X as it exists independently of cognition. This difference pertains only to the mode of existence in each case, and so this does not imply that the relatedness of the concept of X to X is in any way threatened. Yet what this difference in mode of existence does imply is that one should never identify the concept of

[14] See John N. Deely's "The Ontological Status of Intentionality," *The New Scholasticism* 46 (Spring 1972): 232-233, n. 34, for a most illuminating account of the relation between the logical and psychological.

[15] See Henry B. Veatch, "Concerning the Ontological Status of Logical Forms," *The Review of Metaphysics* 1 (December 1948).

[16] *Summa contra Gentiles*, II, 75.

X with X or the features of the concept of X with those of X. Though knowledge is *of* the real, it would be wrong to say that knowledge *is* the real.

Cognition is a process, an active state, but it is nonetheless a union with the real. It is not necessary to claim that cognition is entirely passive or that we somehow " duplicate " or " copy " reality in cognition in order to claim that we can know reality. To attempt to do either would be to forget that knowing is a relational way of being. Logic acknowledges this most basic epistemological fact. While not letting the mode of cognition determine the content of cognition, logic studies the mode of a thing's cognition and prescribes what must be done if we are to be successful in knowing the thing. It seeks to teach us how we should use our concepts, propositions, and arguments. Logic should never be confused with enterprises that purport to directly describe the real. Logic is not metaphysics. Rather, logic is normative in character—its end is knowledge—and as such it is a practical enterprise.

Logical Possibility

Let us now consider the following definitions of logical possibility and logical impossibility.

A state-of-affairs is said to be *logically possible* whenever the proposition that this state-of-affairs exists is not self-contradictory, and logically *im*possible when the proposition *is* self-contradictory.[17]

Statements which describe something logically impossible are contradictory and hence may be shown to be false by appealing to nothing more than logic and the meaning of terms.[18]

Any state of affairs that is not logically impossible must be logically possible, and ' logically possible ' is defined in terms of self-contradiction of the form 'p and not-p '.[19]

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[17] John Hospers, *An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis* 2d ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967), p. 170.

[18] James W. Cornman and Keith Lehrer, *Philosophical Problems and Arguments: An Introduction* (New York: Macmillan Co.; London: Collier-Macmillan, 1974), p. 20.

[19] Seddon, " Logical Possibility," p. 481.

These remarks indicate the following: (1) states of affairs asserted to exist by propositions or that which is described by statements are the sorts of things declared to be logically possible or impossible; (2) the determination of whether these sorts of things are logically possible or impossible is accomplished by recourse to the *meaning* of the terms involved and (3) the rules of logic, especially the principle of non-contradiction; and (4) the category of logical possibility is set up by exclusion—it is said of states of affairs not logically impossible.

A putative example of a state of affairs that is logically possible is that of a solid iron bar floating on water.

> There is no contradiction at all in it. It is a law of physics that objects with a greater specific gravity than water (i.e., weighing more than an equal volume of water) do not float on water (with certain exceptions such as the phenomenon of "surface tension"). There is no *logical necessity* about this—that is to say, it is logically possible for it to be otherwise. You can imagine it now (remember, if you *can* really imagine it, it is logically possible, but if you can't, it may only mean that your powers of imagination are limited): you take a piece of iron (a chemist has verified that it really is iron), you weigh it, then you plunge it into a vessel of water, and behold, it floats. You have also verified that it is a solid iron bar, not hollow inside with large air-filled spaces like a battleship; indeed, you have weighed it and measured it so as to make sure that its weight is really greater than that of an equal volume of water. This is a logically possible state-of-affairs; it does not actually occur, but there is nothing *logically* impossible about it.[20]

Another alleged example of a logical possibility is that of a cat giving birth to pups. It is claimed that no contradiction is involved, and though it may be a fact of nature that like produces like, there is no logical necessity about it.

> "But isn't anything that a cat gives birth to, by definition, a cat?" You need only think this through for a moment to see that it is false. *Suppose* that what the cat gave birth to barked, wagged its tail, had all the contours of a dog, exhibited typical dog-behavior, and was unhesitatingly identified by everyone as a dog. Would

[20] Hospers, *An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis*, p. 173.

you still call it a cat? In such a situation no-one would say that the offspring was a cat—rather, they would be astonished by the unusual phenomenon that a cat had produced, not another cat, but a dog.

"But if a pup was the offspring, the mother must not have been a cat!" Not even if it looked like one, meowed, purred, and had all the other characteristics which cause us to call it a cat? Would you have hesitated to call it a cat *before* the strange birth took place? Must you wait to see what the creature's offspring look like (if it has any) before being able to identify it as a cat? Once again, cats are distinguished from dogs and other creatures . . . by their general appearance, and it is logically possible for something with all the feline appearances to give birth to something with all the canine appearances. That nature does not operate in this way, that like produces like, is a fact of nature, not a logical necessity.[21]

In other words, as far as logic is concerned, there exists a possibility that a cat may give birth to pups. No-one expects it; nature does not operate that way. Yet logic cannot guarantee that it might not. There is no logical necessity about it, for there is no self-contradiction in supposing the occurrence of such a happening.

Usually accompanying this view of logical possibility is an account of empirical possibility. Empirical possibility is determined by reference to the laws of nature, and any state of affairs not contrary to such laws is an empirical possibility. A solid iron bar floating on water would be an empirical impossibility, for that would be contrary to the laws of nature. The relationship between logical possibility/impossibility and empirical possibility/impossibility is as follows: If something is logically impossible, then it is empirically impossible, but if something is empirically impossible, it need not be logically impossible. If something is logically possible, then it need not be empirically possible, and if it is empirically possible, it certainly is logically possible. It is held that logical possibility is determined from the philosopher's armchair, by an appeal to the meaning of terms and the laws of logic (viz., by a procedure of *inspectio mentis*), while an empirical possibility is deter-

[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 173-174.

mined by an investigation of the facts, by the research of the empirical sciences. It is concerned with more than logic and the meaning of terms. Accordingly, one should not confuse logical with empirical possibility. As John Hospers has written regarding logically possible states of affairs,

> We do *not* mean that we expect them to happen, or that we think there is the remotest empirical possibility that they will happen; we only mean that if we asserted that they did happen, or would happen, our assertion would *not* be self-contradictory, even though it would be false.[22]

Closely related to the foregoing account of logical possibility is the notion of conceivability, for sometimes a logical possibility is expressed by saying " it's conceivable." The relationship, however, between conceivability and logical possibility is not one of mutual implication. The relationship can be expressed as follows: If a state of affairs can be conceived (or imagined), then it is logically possible; but if it is inconceivable (or unimaginable), then such a state of affairs is not necessarily logically impossible. The reason for this one-sided relationship is simply that what is inconceivable (or unimaginable) may merely reflect the human mind's inability to grasp something and accordingly would make the standard for logical impossibility too psychologistic, while what is conceivable (or imaginable) is a legitimate benchmark for logical possibility. If a state of affairs were really logically impossible, that is to say, something self-contradictory, then it would not be conceivable (or imaginable) by anyone. No-one can conceive or imagine a contradiction.[23] " If someone says he can form the image of a square circle, he is probably forming the image of a square, then a circle, then of a square in rapid succession. But he can hardly imagine a figure that is both circular and not circular." [24] So,

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 171.

[23] " If a state-of-affairs is really logically impossible, it is not imaginable by anybody." *Ibid.*, p. 172. This statement implies, of course, its contrapositive—namely, if a state of affairs is imaginable, then it is logically possible.

[24] *Ibid.* The claim that contradictions cannot be conceived or imagined must be carefully construed. It must be noted that contradictions are impossible if and

if something can be conceived (or imagined), we have then a logical possibility on our hands.

It should be noted that conceivability could be explained in terms of logical possibility, viz., what is logically possible could determine what is conceivable and not vice versa. This would be a perfectly legitimate move. In this case logical possibility would not be amplified by the notion of conceivability, and this would, by and large, make the notion of logical possibility philosophically uninteresting. Of course, this is not to say that it should not be so! It is, however, to say that the forthcoming criticism of contemporary uses of logical possibility should not be regarded as directed against logical possibility *per se* but rather as directed against the use of the procedure of *inspectio mentis* to determine whether denials of propositions about beings *in rerum natura* are self-contradictory or not.[25]

Rejecting the Procedure of *Inspectio Mentis*

Contemporary users of the notion of logical possibility have claimed that it is logically possible for a solid iron bar to float on water, cats to give birth to pups, cows to jump over the moon, and rabbits to be carnivorous. These are each said to be free from contradiction because they can be conceived or imagined. Whether this is so or not has been a matter of dispute. Much depends on what one takes a concept to be and its

only if two additional conditions are met—namely, those of sameness of time and respect. So, a person could at one time explicitly hold a particular belief, and then later, having never revoked that belief but now not consciously considering it, explicitly hold its contradictory. Or, a person could at a given time have two ideas which, although not themselves directly contradictory, have contradictory implications which the person has not yet recognized or discovered. In both these instances one could be said to "conceive" contradictories, but in each instance there was respectively a difference in time and a difference in respect. None of this, however, undercuts the contention that contradictories cannot be conceived or imagined and accordingly the belief that nothing conceivable or imaginable is contradictory. Instead, it emphasizes that one make sure that the conditions of time and respect be upheld when it is asserted that a state of affairs is conceivable or imaginable.

[25] See Albert Casullo, "Conceivability and Possibility," *Ratio* 17 (January 1975): 118-121, for a defense of the procedure of *inspectio mentis* in determining the modal status of a law of nature.

role in cognition, and it is here that the Aristotelian/Thomistic approach to logic is so important, for the significance of a term or concept in such a logic is the reality it intends. To quote Maritain:

> According to the nominalist theory, concepts contain only what we put into them, for according to this hypothesis we do not attain through our concepts essences or natures which are what they are in themselves, independent of the manner in which we comprehend them.[26]

Accordingly, the significance of a concept is to be understood in a subjective sense only. "It is merely a group of notes which we have explicitly connected. . . ." [27] Yet, if things are what they are and if concepts are complete instrumentalities which allow us to attain knowledge of things, then the significance of a concept must be understood objectively. What as a matter of fact the nature of iron bars, water, floating, etc., is determines what the terms 'iron bar', 'water', and 'floating' signify. What a concept is *of* is what it means or signifies. This is why Maritain opposes the attempt to reduce a concept to what is actually and explicitly being thought. He attacks Keynes for supposing

> that a concept may be reduced to what we are *actually* and *explicitly* thinking about the several notes or characteristics which we use to define it. The concept man, for instance, contains only what actually and explicitly I am thinking of *hic et nunc*, in saying "animal" and "rational" (instead of the vast intelligible content virtually contained in these two notes) . It is not surprising that those who so misinterpret its nature should look upon the concept as something "poor" and "empty." [28]

Since concepts are not self-contained atoms of knowledge, but, on the contrary, tools we use to identify what things are, it is wrong-headed to think of concepts as signifying only what we explicitly think when we use them. A "concept is really nothing but a relation of identity, the identity being between the

[26] *An Introduction to Logic*, p. 23.
[27] *Ibid.*
[28] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

one nature or essence thus abstracted and the many particulars from which it has been so abstracted and in which it exists as a real multiplicity." [29] Beings *in rerum natura* are, of course, never separate from their nature, but in thought they can be. So this relation of identity is also a relation of reason. Hence, it should be realized that a concept's significance is neither some product of consciousness which bears little or no relation to the world nor an arbitrary grouping of existents based on nothing more than inexplicable relations of resemblance. Rather, the nature of the existents provides the basis for their identification, and we provide the selective mental focus which establishes the identifying relation between the nature so abstracted and the numerous existents possessing the nature in various ways. A concept thus signifies what things are.[30]

Yet it must be remembered that a concept is an instrument for knowing the real, not a closed a-contextual, repository of omniscience which provides a non-empirical path to knowledge. To declare that a concept intends the nature or essence of a thing does not mean that the thing is at once completely and exhaustively known. A person can know something about X without knowing everything there is to know about it. The apprehension of " what a thing is " may at first be only incomplete and vague, but one has at least some apprehension of *it*. We come to know more and more about X's nature. Accordingly, a concept must be considered part of the continuum of knowledge which begins in sense experience and seeks perfection in full scientific explanation and/or integrated world views. As Veatch notes:

[29] Veatch, *Intentional Logic*, p. 113. Accordingly, a concept's significance involves both comprehension and extension and cannot be confined to one or to the other.

[30] This is not to say that the relation between thought and actually existing beings is isomorphic. See John N. Deely's " Reference to the Non-Existent," *The Thomist* 39 (January-October 1975): 253-308. Also, the ways a term can be predicated of a subject (as indicated in the doctrine of the predicables) should not be construed as determining what it is that concepts signify. See E. A. Moody's *The Logic of William of Ockham*, pp. 66-117, for an important discussion of this issue.

[A]ny concept of a thing's essence or "what" is not so much a neat and static atom of knowledge [as contrasted to Cartesian "clear and distinct ideas" or Humean "impressions"] as it is a dynamic, germinating source of understanding: it "extends" over an indefinite number of possible individuals, in which alone an abstracted essence can be or exists; it also "comprehends" within itself any number of notes. . . .[31]

The dynamic character of the concept is, however, only fully exploited in the proposition, which underscores the characterization of knowledge as a continuum, but a concept on this account is nevertheless "rich," not "poor" and "empty."

The "rich" character of a concept's cognitive content results from the fact that its significance results from the nature of the reality it intends and is not limited by what the knower explicitly considers when using a concept. So the significance of 'iron bar', 'water', and 'floating' is not confined to what we can just subjectively entertain. Yet, by the same token, the significance of these concepts is not determined in some fashion independently of the empirical and scientific accounts of iron bars, water, and floating. "Meaning" is not something that yields a special access to knowledge of the real.[32] The procedure of *inspectio mentis* is then not legitimated by an Aristotelian/Thomistic approach to a concept's significance.

Yet, in order for this view of a concept's significance to be rendered more plausible, a serious misconception must be handled—viz., the belief that a concept's significance is confined to or deduced from the real definition must be rejected. As already stated, conceptual apprehension is not accomplished all at once. It proceeds in steps. We begin with some knowledge of a thing's nature and come to know more and more. It

[31] Veatch, *Intentional Logic*, p. 115.

[32] To the extent "meaning" is regarded as an object of direct awareness, it is not something that an Aristotelian/Thomistic view of concepts could countenance. See Douglas B. Rasmussen's "Deely, Wittgenstein, and Mental Events," *The New Scholasticism* 54 (Winter 1980) and "Necessary Truth, the Game Analogy, and the Meaning-is-use Thesis," *The Thomist* (July 1982) for a discussion of the importance of regarding concepts or meanings as intentions and how this avoids the charge of excessive mentalism in semantic theory.

is in this process that real definitions play an important role. The human knower needs something to state in brief what is expressed by the concept. Moreover, the knower needs something to set the overall limits of the nature of the reality the concept intends. The role of real definition, then, is one of classification.

It is important to realize that a real definition is not a description; it does not mention all the characteristics or features of the nature of the existent the concept intends. If a definition were to do this, it would defeat its very purpose, viz., to distinguish the reality intended from all other realities. Instead, there would be an indiscriminate, undifferentiated conglomeration of characteristics—much as one imagines preconceptual awareness—and nothing would be distinguished or recognized. In other words, we could never say what anything is.

A real definition seeks to state the fundamental, distinguishing characteristic of the reality the concept intends—those characteristics or features without which it would not be the kind of thing it is. In other words, a real definition would be a definition *per genus et differentiam.* Such defining characteristics are cognitively determined; that is, they are determined by appealing to all that is known regarding the reality intended. Defining characteristics are seldom discovered easily. Rather, much effort is required. All that is known about the being in question must be considered in order to determine what fundamentally distinguishes it from everything else. The ability to form such a definition is an immense cognitive achievement and constitutes an ideal for science.

The defining characteristics are those which not only distinguish the existent the concept intends—for there may be many distinguishing characteristics—but do so fundamentally. Fundamental characteristics are those distinguishing characteristics on which all the other characteristics (or the greatest number of others) depend. " Metaphysically, a fundamental characteristic is that distinctive characteristic which makes the greatest number of others possible; epistemologically, it is the

one that explains the greatest number of others." [33] For example, how might the definition of man be determined? There are many characteristics that are exclusive to man: studies algebra, speaks German, reads *Playboy*, blushes or needs to, writes love letters, wears ties, builds skyscrapers, etc. Yet none of these features of man explains the others; none of these features are dependent on the others. We should note, however, that all of these activities do require another exclusive feature of man: conceptual apprehension. All of the exclusive characteristics mentioned depend on the exercise of man's conceptual capacity. One could argue that other characteristics are fundamental, e.g., the possession of a thumb or the having of a language. But neither is sufficient. The first does not even begin to explain the myriad activities in which men engage, and further, it totally ignores the type of consciousness man has. The second fails to realize that language, as opposed to the sounds a parrot makes, requires a certain type of consciousness—one capable of conception. So man's possession of a rational faculty would seem to be the fundamental distinguishing characteristic. The point of this example, however, is only to show how one would begin to determine the defining characteristic of something. There is, of course, more that would need to be said about this particular example. We do, nonetheless, see how the process of determining the real definition of X would take place.[34]

In the Aristotelian/Thomistic tradition, conceptual apprehension does *not* begin with a grasp of something's definition, and neither does the determination of a term's meaning proceed by deduction from the formal definition. Such a viewpoint puts the cart before the horse. It confuses the logical with the real by making the definition that which is known rather than a

[33] Ayn Rand, *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology* (New York: The Objectivist, Inc., 1967), p. 44.

[34] For related discussions of this process, see R. Harré and E. H. Madden, *Causal Powers* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1975), pp. 21-26; Baruch A. Brody, *Identity and Essence* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980), pp. 135-155; and Matson's *Sentience*, pp. 10-55.

most concise formulation of what is known. It must be understood that the definition of X does not exhaust or entail all that constitutes X's nature. The definition of X is not the nature of X; rather, it is a condensation, a formula, which expresses those features that allow us to pick X out from everything else. To let the definition of X be regarded as exhaustive of X, or as somehow entailing all of X's features, would imply that we could learn everything we need to know about X by a process of skillful deduction. This would be a Leibnizian view of a concept's significance and would legitimate the *inspectio mentis* approach to knowledge. It would make concepts the objects of knowledge, not the tools. This approach is not part of the Aristotelian/Thomistic position; a concept's significance is neither limited to the definition nor deduced from the definition.

Another reason for the use of the procedure of *inspectio mentis* to determine logical possibilities has been the assumption that the ability to imagine a state of affairs is sufficient to make such a state of affairs logically possible. The previously cited account of how there is no contradiction in supposing a solid iron bar floating on water illustrates this assumption—" if you can really imagine it, it is logically possible." Or, in response to a critic who considered it inconceivable that a cat should give birth to pups, John Hospers states that

> any child can imagine a cat giving birth to pups, and we can imagine it, draw pictures of it, assess the probability of its happening, so it is surely conceivable in the most ordinary manner of speaking . . .; there is no contradiction in saying that a creature with such-and-such a shape, which meows and purrs, etc., has given or will give birth to a creature that has a long nose and barks, etc.[35]

Clearly, the ability to imagine a purported state of affairs is considered sufficient to establish it as a logical possibility.

This is, however, certainly not a view that an Aristotelian/Thomistic account of conception could endorse. To conceive of

[35] " Reply to Mr. Machan on 'Logical Possibility '," *The Personalist* 51 (1970): 251.

a cat, for example, is to do more than have a sensory image of its shape and color, or even of other sensory data we may note such as the texture of the fur or the "purr" the cat makes. Rather, to conceive of a cat one must engage in abstraction—a noting of similarities and differences among various animals and forming an awareness of certain animals as members of a group possessing similar characteristics but possessed in different degree. Conceiving of a cat involves both differentiation—noting that Tabby is not the dog next door or the otter in the creek—and integration—realizing that the scrawny alley cat, the neighbor's sleek Siamese, and the black leopard of Africa share a common reality even though it is manifested in different ways. In other words, conceiving of a cat involves a recognition of myriad details—"Exactly why is it that this Siamese is not an otter?"—and far-reaching observations—"How is it that this scrawny bit of fluff I find in my alley and the black leopard of Africa can be the same kind of animal?" Every act of abstraction involves differentiation and integration, and each of these processes respectively involves more intensive and more extensive knowledge. Conceiving something, as noted earlier, is a dynamic process. In the Aristotelian/Thomistic tradition conception transcends the static image-building account found in the British empiricism and involves the knower in an awareness of unities that sense perception could not explicitly present. Unless one wants to adopt a "parrot's epistemology," conceiving X cannot merely involve memorizing sets of sense images (or definitions for that matter). Rather, conceiving X must involve an active process of differentiation and integration in which there is an awareness of how our abstractions are linked to the world. Imagining X and conceiving X just are not the same thing, and it is a serious error to assume that they are.[36]

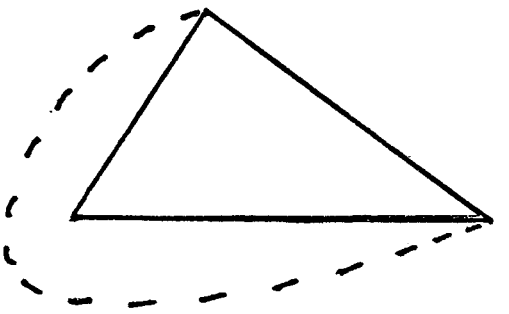
Yet the substitution of imagination for conceiving is one of the central errors in the use of the procedure of *inspectio mentis* for determining logical possibilities. Usually, an alleged con-

[36] This, however, is not to say that imagery may not accompany conception; rather, it is just to say that the two should not be confused.

ception is introduced with a term like 'suppose' followed by a that-clause containing an array of descriptions that call to mind different images about the subject matter, and this is taken to indicate how the putative event is free from contradiction. Yet "conceiving" of a cat giving birth to pups in such exercises involves only forming pictures of how a cat or dog appears or acts from the outside. It is as if a cat or dog has only a two-dimensional or cartoonlike character. This, of course, may constitute entertainment, but it certainly does not constitute a conception of a cat giving birth to pups. Imagining such an alleged event does not render it logically possible—free from contradiction.

There is a possible response to consider. Imagining a solid iron bar floating on water is definitely not a conception nor need it be to show that such a state of affairs is not self-contradictory. The ability to form mental images, pictures of the events, is sufficient in itself to show that such an event is logically possible. One cannot form a picture of a four-sided triangle, but one can form a picture of an iron bar floating on water. This shows, then, that there is at least a type of intelligibility present in the iron bar floating on water picture that is not present in an attempt to picture a four-sided triangle.

It must be understood that this response is claiming that the image or picture that is formed is sufficient *in itself* to show us what is and what is not a logical possibility—what is and is not free from contradiction. But we should consider the following drawing.[37]



[37] Arthur W. Collins, "Philosophical Imagination," p. 50.

Is this a picture of a four-sided triangle or not? It certainly seems that everyone would say "no," but is this an answer that is drawn from the picture itself or, rather, from our understanding of what a triangle is? As Arthur W. Collins notes,

> it is not our ability to form pictures that is in question but the propriety of using them in certain ways. We cannot use a picture as a picture of a four-sided triangle because the very concept of such an object is contradictory.[38]

Images or pictures in themselves are not sufficient to determine what is and is not intelligible. A further criterion is needed, and this can only be found through conception. It is by our understanding of a triangle's nature that we determine what pictures picture that entity—pictures do not picture until we determine what it is that they picture. Imagination is not a criterion for logical possibility, and so this response fails.

In answer to the question "How do we determine whether something is conceivable?" we see that if it is the nature of the reality intended which ultimately determines a concept's significance, then many of the putative states of affairs regarded as conceivable will not be so and hence will not constitute logical possibilities. This consequence applies to our primary example of an alleged logical possibility—a solid iron bar floating on water. What we know about the nature of iron and floating on water work against conceiving such a purported event. Our knowledge of the specific gravities of each—in the range of 7.3/7.8 (iron) and less than 1 (floating on water)—causes us to realize that the denial of the claim that solid iron bars sink when placed in water amounts to

> saying that a mineral with a specific gravity of less than one (i.e., it floats), has a specific gravity in the range of 7.3/7.8 (i.e., it is iron), and this is a contradiction, and is therefore logically impossible.[39]

Considering what we know about the nature of iron and the phenomenon of floating on water, when we contemplate their

[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.

[39] Seddon, "Logical Possibility," p. 483.

specific gravities,[40] we realize that the putative event is indeed inconceivable. When fully understood, a solid iron bar floating on water is a self-contradiction and is hence logically impossible or at least so in the contemporary sense of the term.

Given that a concept's significance is not confined to what the knower explicitly considers or even to what the definition states (or can be deduced from it) but rather to the nature of the reality intended, then it must be the nature of the realities intended by the concepts used in a proposition that will determine whether a proposition's denial is conceivable. From the standpoint of an Aristotelian/Thomistic approach to concepts there is no reason to confine the meaning of ' iron bars ', ' floating ', and ' water ' to anything less than everything we know regarding the respective realities. When we do this, the standard examples of logical possibility come up short, for it is no longer possible to appeal to some standard beyond the nature of the realities the concepts intend. Conceptual analysis, appeals to " meaning," do not constitute some special access to what is and is not logically possible for beings *in rerum natura.*

Objections, Replies, and Ambiguities

Though we have claimed that the self-contradictory character of an iron bar floating on water or a cat giving birth to pups is not determined by a process of *inspectio mentis* but

[40] If we detail the account of a solid iron bar floating on water with knowledge we have regarding the nature of iron and the phenomenon of floating on water, if we include the known facts regarding the situation we are commanded to suppose, then the story goes another way. To wit: " We, accordingly, take the solid bar of iron without holes in it, weighing twenty pounds, within the vicinity of the earth's gravitational region (on the earth's surface to be specific), and place it in a tub of water twenty feet deep, ten feet wide and fifteen feet long, without supports to resist gravity. Now as we release the iron bar, all things being as described above, its failure to sink in the tub would amount to the claim that the laws of physics, which we know to hold for our case, both do and do not hold, or that the iron bar did and did not weigh twenty pounds, or that it was and was not supported to resist gravity. In other words, in terms of what we know of the situations such as the one described [in the account previously cited, which did not include some of the crucial details], the state of affars could not occur. It is logic that tells us so; thus it is logically necessary that this does not happen." Tibor R. Machan, " A Note on Conceivability and Logical Possibility," pp. 40-41.

rather by a consideration of the nature of these entities and the situation in which they exist, it might still be objected that the interpretation of the Aristotelian/Thomistic view of conception presented in this essay amounts to nothing more than Leibniz's view of concepts. After all, if it is by recourse to the *significance* of the concepts used in the propositions "A solid iron bar floats when placed in water" and "A cat gives birth to pups" that such propositions are regarded as self-contradictory, then must it not be that what we are really doing is including in our concepts all that is true regarding the entities and situations in question and thus we are just unpacking the whole thing?

To say that a concept's significance is objectively determined and is not limited to some "criterion in mind" does not require that a concept be viewed as "including" or "containing" sets of facts which upon analysis are "unpacked." This view of the situation fails to grasp just how radically different an Aristotelian/Thomistic approach to concepts is. Concepts are not packets, sets, or atoms of meaning; rather, they are that through which the relation between knower and known is established. Concepts do not *have* meanings; they *are* meanings. As Adler states, "ideas are the only entities in the whole world which *are* meanings, i.e., they are signifiers and nothing but signifiers."[41] Concepts, then, are neither that which has meaning nor what is meant. This is why the phrase "a concept's significance" has been used throughout this essay, because it emphasizes the role of a concept as a sign and not as a mental "container" or "holder" of meanings. Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as an analysis which unpacks the meaning of a concept. A concept does not have any meaning to analyze. Rather, it *means* something, something it is *of*, and unless "conceptual analysis" is understood as referring to a consideration of what is meant (what the concept is *of*), and

[41] Mortimer J. Adler, *Some Questions about Language* (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1976), p. 62. This is not to say that concepts themselves cannot be studied and have their extensions and intentions compared and contrasted. Yet such a study should not be regarded as some shortcut to knowledge of the real.

unless it is realized that this is not necessarily confined to what is " in mind," then " conceptual analysis " should be regarded as a very confused and very confusing notion.[42] The account of the Aristotelian/Thomistic view of concepts presented here, then, is not guilty of viewing concepts as Leibniz did. Rather, it has taken note of the central idea found in this tradition's view of logic—namely, concepts are intentions.

Possibly the foregoing objection to this essay's account of the Aristotelian/Thomistic view of concepts can be put another way—namely, suppose that what a cat gave birth to looked like a pup, acted like a pup, and was identified by everyone else as a pup, would we refuse to identify a cat who gave birth to pups as a cat? If we refuse to identify the creature as a cat, then have we not expanded the definition of a cat to include all the properties, features, etc., we know to be true of a cat and thus after all accepted a Leibnizian view of concepts? On the other hand, if we do identify the creature as a cat, then would this not mean that a cat's giving birth to pups is a logical possibility? So we are faced with a dilemma: either admit that it is logically possible for a cat to give birth to pups or acknowledge that all the properties of a cat are defining and thereby admit that there can be no variations in a cat and have it still remain a cat!

This objection seems most impressive. Yet it is more seductive than it is substantial. First, this objection assumes that in order for it to be inconceivable that a cat give birth to pups, feline offspring must be part of a cat's definition. In other words, this objection assumes that a concept's significance is confined to the definition or what can be deduced from it, that if we say that our knowledge of a cat's biological capacity precludes it giving birth to pups and this is one of the things involved in the notion of a cat giving birth, then we have made

[42] It seems that " conceptual analysis " involves not regarding the terms of a proposition first intentionally, but second intentionally, and yet still not considering the proposition as being about the terms themselves. It is as if the terms " were somehow to be caught or seized in [their] very use, and yet without [their] being thereby made an object of still another concept." Henry B. Veatch, *Two Logics* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1969), p. 89.

this part of the very definition of a cat. But this is not so. All that is required to render the putative occurrence of a cat giving birth to pups inconceivable is that the significance of the concepts used be determined by the nature of the entities intended and that the nature of these entities not be limited to their definitions. Second, this objection in its first word asks us to do what is the central point at issue—namely, suppose or conceive of a cat giving birth to pups. We find the command, " Suppose that what a cat gave birth to. . . ." Yet, why should this point be granted? Admittedly, the directive is given in a most offhand fashion as if nothing crucial depends on following it, but this is just what is so seductive about the argument: it asks us to do most casually what cannot be done—viz., conceive of a cat doing what it is incapable of. When confronted with the *visualization* of tiny doglike entities emerging from the womb of a cat, the proper question is not: " Would you refuse to call the mother of pups a cat? " Rather, the proper question is: " How are we to go about conceiving or supposing the putative event? " Appeals to imagination will not suffice, and it is at this point that the above objection loses its force. Conceiving or supposing a cat giving birth to pups requires that a cat be something quite different from what we know it to be. It requires that an entity be other than what it is, and this is a self-contradiction.

There is, then, no reason to think that this essay's account of the Aristotelian/Thomistic view of concepts has gone astray—at least as regards adopting a Leibnizian view of concepts. Yet there does seem to be something amiss about this discussion of logical possibilities. There is something strange about saying that it is *logically* impossible for a cat to give birth to pups or a solid iron bar to float on water. After all, cats, dogs, and solid iron bars are not the proper subject matter for logic in the Aristotelian/Thomistic tradition, but much of the contemporary discussion of logical possibility involves a discussion of such things. Something has gone wrong here, but what?

What has gone wrong is that most contemporary discussion

of logical possibility has not noted the equivocal use of the words 'it is logically possible that', and this creates confusion. The confusion results from using 'it is logically possible that' in reference to beings *in rerum natura*, solid iron bars, cats, etc., but retaining a sense to the term 'logical' that confines the object of analysis to the definition of the entities in question and not their respective natures. The shifting of focus from things to definitions and back again creates the confusion. When asked to determine whether it is logically possible for a cat to give birth to pups, one is asked to consider an actual entity, a cat, and to ponder whether logically *it* could give birth to pups. It is at this point the focus of the question shifts from beings *in rerum natura* to the definitions of such beings. The question now becomes whether the definition of a cat precludes the cat's offsprings being baby dogs. Since a definition is not a description, and should not be, we discover that a cat's definition says nothing about the nature of its offspring. Thus, the definition does not preclude, show the falsity of, the claim that a cat could give birth to pups. Then the focus of the question shifts back to the actual entity; and presto-chango, one notes that despite everything we know about the nature of a cat it is logically possible for a cat to give birth to pups! This entire argument confuses logic's objects with those of science and metaphysics. The confusion can be dispelled by distinguishing two uses of the phrase 'it is logically possible that'.

(1) When 'it is logically possible that' is used in reference to beings *in rerum natura*, one is using concepts or operating with concepts of such beings and showing by logic (the principle of non-contradiction) what is consistent or inconsistent with the nature of these beings and the situations they are purported to be in. The object of analysis in this case is not the concept or definition of such beings but the actual beings themselves. Indeed, when one is asked to determine whether it is logically possible for a solid iron bar to float on water or a cat to give birth to pups, one is not asked to study the definitions of iron or cats but to study solid iron bars and cats. In this case, it is perfectly legitimate to insist that a logical possibility

be determined by reference to everything we know about the nature of the entities in question.

> Anything is logically possible or any state of affairs *is* logically possible which can be shown *by logic* to be borne out by the knowledge we have of the facts involved in them—namely, the various scientific data, whether biological, physical, chemical, or political.[43]

Furthermore, when 'it is logically possible that' is used in reference to actual beings, there can be situations where the response to the question of whether something is logically possible or not is simply, "We cannot say at this time," e.g., the response to the question "Is it logically possible for a human being to high-jump twelve feet?" Our knowledge of the physical capacities of human beings may not indicate an answer to this question. Rather, it is left to future scientific advancements—the development of knowledge in various fields—to determine the answer to this question. 'Logical possibility' used in this way is determined by everything we know regarding the beings in question.

(2) When 'it is logically possible that' is used in reference to the definitions of entities and not the entities themselves, one is attempting to determine by the use of the principle of noncontradiction what is consistent or inconsistent with the definitions of various beings and nothing else. As such, a *logical* possibility does not pertain to what can or cannot be regarding beings *in rerum natura* but only to what can or cannot be regarding the concepts of such beings. As stated earlier, logic in the Aristotelian/Thomistic tradition does not study beings *in rerum natura;* rather, it studies the concepts of such beings and how these concepts may be used so as to be productive of knowledge. Yet this does not mean that concepts can be studied in and for themselves devoid of all reference to the world. Rather, it means that logic studies second intentions and thus should never allow itself to be turned into a science or metaphysics in which an a priori examination of its objects supposedly reveals some special insight into the real. Studying

[43] Tibor R. Machan, "Another Look at 'Logical Possibility'," p. 249.

concepts " in and for themselves " must always involve a consideration of what the concepts are of, but this does not require, for example, that the study of the relationship between the concept of solid iron bars and the concept of water become a scientific study. The purpose of logic is to study what the human instruments of knowing are and how they are to be used if knowledge is to be acquired. Thus, when the concepts of various entities are studied, all that logic needs is their definition. This allows logic's examination of the concepts of such entities not to be empty or arbitrary. Yet this does not involve (though it does imply the existence of) a consideration of the numerous features that characterize the natures of entities. Logic uses the definition; it does not discover it. This ties logic to beings *in rerum natura,* but it does not make logic a science of such beings. Thus, this use of ' it is logically possible that ' cannot be the basis for determining if the denial of a proposition about beings *in rerum natura* is self-contradictory. After all, such a proposition is about real beings, not definitions, and a concept's significance involves more than what is stated by or deducible from the definition. It would only be by confusing second intentions with first intentions that one could suppose that this use of ' it is logically possible that ' provided such a test.

It might seem that distinguishing between the uses of ' it is logically possible that ' only resurrects the contemporary distinction between empirical and logical possibility. But this is not so. Though the proposition, " A solid iron bar floats on water," was, according to the contemporary distinction, empirically impossible, it was not regarded as self-contradictory. According to the view of concepts presented here, this proposition is indeed self-contradictory. Admittedly, it may not be self-contradictory in virtue of an examination of the objects logic properly studies, in this case definitions, but it is contrary to what the concepts in this proposition signify. Furthermore, this proposition does not claim to be about definitions. So, distinguishing between the uses of ' it is logically possible that ' not only goes beyond the distinction between empirical

and logical possibility, it points to a basic confusion in much contemporary discussion of logical possibility.

Conclusion

Though there are many issues regarding the nature of logic with which this essay has not been able to deal,[44] it is nonetheless this essay's conclusion that approaching logic from the perspective of Aristotle and Aquinas has much to offer contemporary philosophy. Not only does such an approach provide for a more careful use of ' it is logically possible that ', it provides a way for the denial of a proposition about beings *in rerum natura* to be self-contradictory and still not conflate the objects science and metaphysics study with those that logic studies.[45] This, of course, brings us to the difficult topic of necessary truth,[46] but unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately) that must be left for another time.[47]

DOUGLAS B. RASMUSSEN

St. John's University
Jamaica, New York

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[44] Chief among these issues are: (1) the claim that the necessity exhibited by logical truths can be accounted for in a purely formal or linguistic manner—see Note 8; and (2) the claim that the necessity exhibited in logical and necessary truths differs *qua necessity* from that exhibited in natural necessities—see Milton Fisk, *Nature and Necessity* (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1973), pp. 25-26, for a critique of this claim.

[45] See R. Harré and E. H. Madden, *Causal Powers,* pp. 130-139, for a discussion of this difficulty.

[46] Regarding the topic of necessary truth, an endorsement of the following two statements should, at least, be made. (1) " The terms ' necessary ' and ' a priori ' . . . as applied to statements are not obvious synonyms. There may be a philosophical argument connecting them; but an argument is required, not simply the observation that the two terms are clearly interchangeable." Saul Kripke, " Naming and Necessitry," in *Semantics of Natural Languages,* eds. Donald Davidson and Gilbert Harman (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Co., 1972), p. 263. (2) " Fallibilism and necessity are perfectly compatible. . . . Fallibilism is a thesis about our *liability to error,* and not a thesis about *the modal status* (possible falsity) *of what we believe.*" Susan Haak, " Epistemology with a Knowing Subject," *The Review of Metaphysics* 23 (December 1979): 309.

[47] Portions of this paper are a result of my participation in a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar, " Leibniz among the Rationalists," at the University of Massachusetts, 1981.

CAN MORAL THEOLOGY BE APPROPRIATE?

I

A MAJOR PROBLEM has developed in Moral Theology today. It is the relativism inherent in the inability of any mainline Moral Theology to dominate the Catholic scene in a way that provides a basis of consensus against which the diversity in Moral Theology can be evaluated.

One of the reasons for this relativism is the kind of argumentation used in contemporary Moral Theology. It differs from the syllogistic reasoning of scholastic Moral Theology. That type of argumentation sought to be tight, consistent and irrefutable. As a matter of fact, this was achieved only at the expense of ignoring the major role that circumstantial (often social, cultural) elements played in the syllogism constructed and used by Moral Theology.

II

The current argumentation that functions within Moral Theology concerns fittingness or appropriateness. The Latin term *convenientia* aptly suggests this argument because it means a coming together of various elements or parts. The result of such a " coming together," if it is successful, is a fittingness of the good that has thereby been assembled and harmonized.

The ultimate reason for any legitimate argument in Moral Theology depends on the role played by " the good." The objective of Moral Theology is to provide guidance in pursuit of " the good," whereas attaining " the right " thing to do is the object of law, whether canon or civil. A certain diversity or complexity characterizes the pursuit of " the good " that rec-

ommends arguments from fittingness within the enterprise of Moral Theology.

Indeed, we know from the psychology of human conduct and behavior that every concrete deed we initiate always has some aspect of " the good " which accounts for its appeal to the perpetrator of such a deed, and which constitutes the ultimate reason why such a deed could have been done at all, even should it be evil at the same time. The enterprise of providing guidelines for the attainment of " the good " is complex, and the task of arguing for one choice rather than another is difficult, when any choice can always be supported by the presence of " the good " in its favor.

III

Here lies the basis of the conflict that is an inevitable part of Moral Theology. One of the results of this conflict built into Moral Theology is the debate and disagreement, often sharp and acerbic, among those proposing their own perception of the good to be accomplished by the action they are supporting. Surely there is no more fierce disagreement than that between those convinced they are on " the good " side. This constitutes a veritable crucifixion for parties to debate in Moral Theology who know that the adversary is in good faith and is sincerely convinced. The pain of such encounter often leaves such debates unfinished. The various " goods " that invite a decision are in conflict. Even in the evidently good decision to perform a kind act, its legitimation must account for the conflict involved in the refusal or omission to do this act of kindness, at this time, for someone else in need, and the comparison called for entails a judgment of what is appropriate in the situation. Finite and limited capacities account for this forced comparison of one good with another. The fittingness of choosing one combination of goods in preference to another can be formulated as a rule justifying my action. This analysis accounts for the fifteen-year old conflict over birth control within Catholic Moral Theology that has seen sides argue the merits of the

good that they pursue, whether associated with the rhythms of biological fertility, on the one hand, or with the nurturing of love between the spouses on the other.

IV

The argument from fittingness or appropriateness depends on relationships and comparisons. Charles Curran has assigned a prominent role to relationship in Moral Theology, in an attempt to discover a warrant legitimating a course of action because of the presence of multiple aspects of " the good." (Cf. his *Catholic Moral Theology in Dialogue*. pp. 28-30; 171-179). If these can be organically related to form a harmonious whole, they constitute an object of action that may be found to bear comparison with aspects of various goods not being achieved so as to equal or outweigh these goods. This amounts to a " construction " of the moral object through relating many goods together, and it represents a major difference from the scholastic usage of the practical syllogism as it proceeds from a clear focus on a particular good to bear upon a specific situation. There is a clear difference between the use of analysis to isolate the *formal object quo* as the core good at issue in legitimating an action, and the development of a broad synthesis of many goods, related into a totality that compares favorably with a coalition of goods not being achieved in a contemplated course of action, thereby constituting a fitting and appropriate object that justifies moral behavior.

The appeal to fittingness and appropriateness is achieved by proportion, harmony and balance amongst various related goods. To revert again to the birth control argument, justifying the use of artificial methods entails relating various good aspects of this activity, such as the children already born, the spouses and their well-being, world population, health of family members, including the psychological balance of those involved and family financial status. These must be compared with the failure to achieve the finality of the sexual act between the married partners, and the violation of official teaching of the

Church's magisterium. Where a proportionate presence of the good follows upon the use of artificial methods, a fittingness is present legitimating a decision to use them. In this way the conflict over the good that afflicts Moral Theology discussion gives way to a resolution based on a harmonious relation of goods that evidences signs of fittingness and appropriateness.

V

The argument for moral legitimacy based on the fittingness of the good is most readily attained from experience, where the kind of dialogue needed for legitimation can be instituted between various combinations of the good confronting behavior. Experience enables the establishment of relationships among the goods, and of comparisons in the midst of their conflict. The more diversified this experience, the more legitimacy the comparisons enjoy in reaching a moral decision about a course of action to follow. The validity of this appeal to experience to explain arguments from fittingness in the procedures of Moral Theology depends in large part on an understanding of the genesis of experience in terms of a person's perspective or horizon. Perspective constitutes a personal way of appropriating experience, limited and distinctive though it be, by providing an avenue toward the surrounding milieu of one's existence. A perspective tends to restrict access to some realms of experience, even while facilitating access to other areas.

VI

Perspective is the intellectual counterpart of the fundamental option, whose influence on behavior and conduct modern Moral Theology has come to recognize and acknowledge. The fundamental option constitutes the initial foundational response to the good of life, and perspective corresponds to it as the intelligible component of this portion of personal life. Experience is garnered through perspective and fundamental option in such a way that a mutual influence develops amongst them. This is

a kind of interplay that accounts for both the change and the continuity within each person that accompanies moral maturation in comprehending and appreciating the good and evil made available by these limiting factors. Adult experiences can change a person's fundamental orientation, just as these stable elements of a person's character can constrain fluid and fluctuating life experience.

Moral Theology must recognize the role of perspectives and fundamental options. For from their dialogue emerges that capacity to appreciate and compare and relate the goods of life that lies at the heart of moral judgment, especially when enriched by faith and the teachings of the Church. It is the special task of Moral Theology to show the influence of faith and the Church in the legitimation, by way of argument of appropriateness, of relationships of goods being attained by human action. For instance, prayer is a contribution of faith to the experience of communication, which enhances the fittingness of this good by expanding the relationships that pertain to the activity of speech.

VII

Another pervasive component of human behavior influential in the composition of any legitimacy attaching to fitting and appropriate rules of behavior is affectivity. Every person calls on the affective in seeking the goals and objectives that initiate human agency. Appreciation of the good comes by way of an affective attraction that often precedes the intellectual aspect of an action. Affect helps relate goods and values into proportions that appear fitting and appropriate, and thus warrant human action. For instance, argumentation favoring birth control depends on the developing appreciation of love between husband and wife (and also parent and children already present) to express a good resulting more from an affective experience than from an intellectual one. The appropriateness of this love bears upon the morality of artificial birth control devices, and entails a different assessment from that reached by an

analysis that stresses the procreative finality of the marriage act.

VIII

To argue from fittingness and appropriateness can be verified and warranted just as to argue in a syllogistic way. In fact, it may help Moral Theology to regain consistent argumentation, and public status, so that it can be noted by " outsiders " and judged credible. This is called for to offset the impression left by so many of the arguments used in an older Moral Theology that relied on tightly constructed syllogisms that nonetheless lacked credibility and persuasiveness in the modern community of moralists and ethicists. An instance of this is the little credence given today to the argument against birth control based on an interpretation and analysis of the finality of the sexual act. This problem can be alleviated by arguments about the fittingness and appropriateness of such conduct based on a broader range of goods that are achieved and that are recognized by contemporary men and women as securing the public warrants of relationships that correspond to the sexual experience in contemporary Christian marriage.

The credibility factor depends on experiential and affective elements in developing warrantable moral argument. Sheer intellectual argument centered on the premises of the syllogism lacks public recognition. Arguments formerly used to justify slavery enjoyed a certain semblance of reasonableness, but failed to elicit recognition and consent from modern persons. For instance, attempts in the early Christian empire to maintain that slavery was merely corporal or external, and does not exist in the moral and spiritual domain, were not persuasive, nor were observations to the effect that some men are naturally disposed to work under other men for their own good and, indeed, for the common good of all. The elements of truth in these remarks are over-shadowed by their capacity to be misunderstood and misinterpreted. Today they enjoy no acceptable status in the public forum. They are inappropriate because

they cannot breach the conflict apparent in the imbalance of goods achieved for the human person by the practice of slavery.

Arguments of fittingness and appropriateness based on the experience of contemporary persons who have used artificial birth control have achieved public status and recognition, because they point to the inter-related goods that have been experienced prior to their formulation as moral reasons. To insist, for example, only on selfishness as inevitably linked to artificial birth control methods simply flaunts the experience of many for whom that is not true, and endangers the credibility of moral argumentation as being unfitting and inappropriate, if not illogical.

IX

The process that accumulates arguments associated with a number of goods is apt to legitimate a purported course of action. It invites the weighing of reasons that can gain credibility and provide warrant. We have traditionally acknowledged a kind of argumentation in Moral Theology associated with statements called "*ut in pluribus*" ("true for the most part"). These have played a prominent part in the guidance offered by Moral Theology, as have absolute propositions and principles capable of no exceptions. The "*ut in pluribus*" principle resembles an argument from fittingness and appropriateness because it is open to the reassessment of the goods present and/or absent from a purported course of action. The "for the most part" acknowledges the needed flexibility in balancing goods supporting one course of action against those supporting another with which it is in conflict.

X

Another comparison can be made with modern attempts to rethink the conflict of duties (previously approached by way of the principle of the two-fold effect) in terms of the principle of proportion, depending on the distinction between moral and

ontic goods and evils. For again it is a question of appreciating the fittingness in a proportion of goods for justifying and legitimating a course of action in conflict with another.

XI

Argument from fittingness and appropriateness can be principled. It is open to the magisterium of the Church and the guidance it offers Christian people. However, we live in the midst of a very diverse and complicated world, and the community of moral theologians is seeking some consensus about the fitting and appropriate way to act within a given situation. The magisterium would do well to rely more heavily on the principles of fittingness in guiding its members. There will be conflict situations where consensus is not achieved; then it may be pastorally appropriate to enforce one guideline over another, provided that the community of moral theologians is still free to explore the appropriateness of arguments cited in the debate. A disciplined way of acting and living is not opposed to freedom of discussion.

XII

The community of moral theologians, in its turn, should acknowledge the need on the part of the Church to proceed authoritatively and decisively at times, despite their memory of numerous occasions in the past when the Church imposed disciplinary control on the academic community, expressly forbidding further pursuit of intellectual issues even though satisfactory solutions had not yet been reached. Thanks to the presence of the Holy Spirit in the guidance of the Church, there is an inevitable influence of her clear and authoritative teaching on those that she guides; by the same token, the Spirit of God speaks through others, such as the community of moral theologians, to work his influence on the magisterium of the Church, providing guidance for her members in a rapidly changing and complex world.

This is seen today in the kind of argumentation developing

around the production and possession of nuclear weapons. While still supporting the just war theory, the magisterium is exhibiting a great degree of interest in the fittingness and appropriateness of other responses to nuclear weapons, such as a nuclear freeze, or a bilateral reduction in nuclear arms. Many Bishops are beginning to discover and interrelate the values that are associated with these alternatives. A pluralism of viewpoint is obvious here that is hardly unhealthy or injurious. The preponderant weight given to the value of justice in the just war theory is now clustering around the value of life, catapulted to the fore by the development of sophisticated modern nuclear weapons. The relationship of goods clustered around life values serves to update the fittingness of the perennial demands of justice.

Catholic Moral Theology is on the verge of a new era in methods and procedures. It will gradually emerge from a transition period of wide diversity in methods, as it has done in the past, and move toward consensus, though of a different kind. It will depend on a newly gained ability to discover and weigh the goods and the values (and the evils and disvalues) associated with proposed courses of action, to the point where arguments, guidelines, principles and laws gain public warrant and legitimacy because of their fittingness and appropriateness in helping people to live out their Christian lives well in this complex world.

SEBASTIAN MACDONALD, C. P.

Passionist Community
Chicago, Illinois

IS DARWIN DEAD?

I. *The Snails vs. The Grasshoppers*

Darwin wrote, in defense of his own theory, that one would not expect a false theory to explain so much. Alas for the defenders of many a good-looking theory, neither history nor philosophy sanctions such an intuitive conviction.[1]

DARWIN IS DEAD; long live Darwin. Which is to say that although the *letter* of Darwinism is no more, the *spirit* of Darwinism lives on. This, at least, is the main thesis of Stephen Jay Gould in a recent *Science* article on the present status of Darwinism. According to this well respected geology professor, " we should not claim that all Darwin's books are about evolution. Rather, they are all about the methodology of historical science." [2] This is his area of broader interest, of which his *Origin* is only a special case. Darwin's main problem, claims Gould, was how to render history scientific. His answer was to try to establish in the present a basis for extrapolation into the past. As far as the emergence of new species is concerned, to Darwin's mind the main value of the doctrine of natural selection operating upon individuals is the way it seemed to supply a basic mechanism for just the sort of uniformity he wanted throughout the history of the world.

To what extent, then, can we tamper with natural selection and still consider ourselves to be Darwinians? Pretty far, thinks Gould, if we remember that Darwinism stands for common descent with modifications via natural selection. That is, the

[1] K. L. Caneva, Book review of *Conceptions of Ether* in *Science*, 216, 14 May 1982, p. 726.

[2] " Darwinism and the Expansion of Evolutionary Theory," *Science*, 216, 23 April 1982, p. 386, note 1. See also his letter to the Editor of *Science*, 219, 4 February 1983, pp. 439-440.

real essence of Darwin's doctrine is not his particular version of the theory of natural selection gradually operating upon individual organisms, but his emphasis upon the *creative* power of nature, operating without direct divine influences, so as to produce new species by natural generation. A truly historical Darwinism, strictly interpreted, must of course take Darwin at his word when he tells us that creativity takes place primarily via natural selection, that it operates exclusively upon individuals, and that every surviving change is somehow or other adaptive. In addition, all changes must occur *gradually, i.e.,* in minute, numerous, and successive stages. Any sudden large-scale change must be rejected as absolutely opposed to the uniformity of nature and therefore as radically opposed to Darwin's whole purpose in proposing his theory in the first place.

In Gould's view, Darwinism, strictly speaking, can be reduced to two central claims, namely, the " creativity of natural selection," with " gradualism " and " adaptationism " as its two chief sub-points [3], and the claim that selection is an " interaction among individuals; there are no higher-order laws in nature, no statements about the 'good' of species or ecosystems." [4] This latter point is referred to by Gould as Darwin's " reductionism."

As Gould goes on to say, however, neither of Darwin's main sub-claims can be sustained according to the information now available in modern biology. In their strict formulation, in what has passed for many years as the " modern synthesis," *i.e.,* the combination of Darwin's special theory of natural selection with modern genetics, both claims have been so thoroughly discredited that the time is now ripe for a new restructured theory which will " embody the essence of the Darwinian argument in a more abstract, and hierarchically extended, form." [5] In order to rectify, round out, and complete this reconstruction a new synthesis is required, one which will

[3] *Ibid.,* pp. 380-381.
[4] *Ibid.,* p. 381.
[5] *Ibid.,* p. 382.

save the spirit of Darwinism, while abandoning the letter of his law. To Gould this means dropping Darwin's insistence upon gradualism and adaptationism.

The modern scientific justification for a restructuring of evolutionary theory is pretty well taken for granted by Gould. In view of the many articles and books on the subject in recent years it is not necessary for him to go into any great detail on the subject, and he does not do so.[6] Gould's main purpose is to sketch an outline of what he considers to be the highlights of his new special theory of evolution, the one referred to for several years in the scientific literature as "punctuated equilibriumism." Gould does not claim that what he has to offer is

[6] On this topic see D. M. Raup, letter to the editor of *Science* on the fossil record, 213, 17 July 1981, p. 289; G. L. Stebbins and F. J. Ayala, "Is a New Evolutionary Synthesis Necessary?" *Science*, 213, 28 August 1981, pp. 967-971; R. Lewin, "Seeds of Change in Embryonic Development," *Science*, 214, 2 October 1981, pp. 42-44; R. Lewin, "No Gap Here in Fossil Record," *Science*, 214, 4 November 1981, pp. 645-646; the recent NOVA Series TV program entitled "Did Darwin Get It Wrong?"; Steven Stanley, *Macroevolution: Pattern and Process*, Freeman, San Francisco, 1979 and *The New Evolutionary Timetable*, Basic Books, N.Y., 1981.

Older works on the subject abound, not only from religiously oriented writers, but from philosophers and scientists as well. For example, the always prolific Herbert Spencer, *The Factors of Organic Evolution*, Humboldt, N.Y., 1887; *Illustrations of Universal Progress: A Series of Discussions*, Appleton, N.Y., 1889; *The Inadequacy of "Natural Selection,"* Appleton, N.Y., 1897.

For a nicely comprehensive yet detailed study of the scientific reaction to Darwin see Philip G. Fothergill, *Historical Aspects of Organic Evolution*, Hollis and Carter, London, 1952. Also, A. O. Cockshut, *The Unbelievers*, N.Y.U. Press, 1966; H. Driesch, *The Science and Philosophy* of the Organism, Black, London, 1908; A. H. Dupree, *Asa Gray*, Atheneum, N.Y., 1968; R. B. Goldschmidt, *The Material Basis of Evolution*, Yale U. Press, 1940 (reprinted 1982); D. L. Hull, *Darwin and His Critics*, Harvard U. Press, 1973; L. T. More, *The Dogma of Evolution*, Princeton U. Press, 1925; R. Nisbet, *History of the Idea of Progress*, Basic Books, N.Y., 1979; E. B. Pusey, *Un-Science, Not Science, Adverse to Faith*, Parker, London, 1878; G. Robinson, *A Prelude to Genetics*, Coronado Press, Lawrence, Kansas, 1979; G. N. Shuster and R. E. Thorson (eds.), *Evolution in Perspective*, U. of Notre Dame Press, 1970; V. E. Smith (ed.), *Philosophical Problems in Biology*, St. John's U. Press, N.Y., 1966; P. J. Vorzimmer, *Charles Darwin*, Temple U. Press, 1970; A. R. Wallace, *Darwinism*, 3rd ed., Macmillan, London, 1909; J. A. Zahm, *Bible, Science, and Faith*, Murphy, Baltimore, 1894, and *Evolution and Dogma*, McBride, Chicago, 1896.

especially new, for indeed it has been proposed on and off ever since Darwin's own lifetime. By and large, though, it has been rejected by most scientists because they felt that there was sufficient evidence to support the old orthodox view. Now, however, we know this is not the case, and soon, he hopes, everyone else will know it as well.

The heart of Gould's proposed new orthodoxy is to take seriously the unity of the species. Rejecting the notion that Darwinism is a " mathematical formula " or a deductively arranged set of statements [7], Gould likewise rejects the notion that evolution can depend upon " atoms and molecules " [8] after the fashion of Dawkins's *The Selfish Gene* (1976). Rather than endorsing either the statistical population genetics approach or the hyper-reductionistic molecular biology approach, punctuated equilibriumism emphasizes the reality of species as a means both for saving what can be saved of the old Darwinism and for explaining what must be explained based upon the facts of modern biology. If we are to make sense of biological reality in the world today, species must be treated as individuals in their own right rather than as classes or conglomerations of individuals. Not only would this allow for long periods of little or no change in species, thus altering the traditional Darwinian " tempo " of evolution, but it would also allow us the freedom *not* to have to regard each and every feature of an organism as necessarily adaptive in nature at some time and place in the past.

This in turn would have tremendous consequences for all interspecific and intraspecific interactions, especially with respect to the place of human beings in the biosphere. For instance, with respect to ethics, we would then have a basis for justifying the regulation of individual behavior relative to the group or species as a whole. Rather than emphasizing the cut-throat, hyper-individualistic, *laissez-faire* " struggle for existence " among separate organisms, we could emphasize mutual coop-

[7] S. J. Gould, *art. cit.*, p. 380.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 381.

eration and compromise between and among different *levels* within and between species.[9] After all, hierarchies do in fact exist in the world; they are a contingent fact of history, and not merely a convenient heuristic device or logical tool invented by the scientific investigator of nature.[10]

In Gould's estimation, therefore, because the proposed new orthodoxy of punctuated equilibriumism allows us to individuate species in time and space as real existential unities forming truly objective hierarchies in nature, we are simultaneously free both to reject the old Darwinian gradualism and adaptationism and to call upon a new form of selectionism within and among the natural hierarchies (based to a large extent upon the non-adaptive features of the organisms which compose the species) in order to account for the creativity of the natural universe. And, thinks Gould, it is precisely this non-reductionistic character of punctuated equilibriumism which may well emerge as its primary contribution to the new evolutionary theory of the twentieth century.[11]

II. *The Unity of Species and Individuals*

We live in a world with reductionistic traditions, and do not react comfortably to notions of hierarchy.[12]

Gould is sure that it is possible to reconcile his own anti-reductionistic materialism with the doctrine of natural selection and thereby remain a faithful disciple of Darwin. He wishes to expand upon Darwin, not replace him. He is announcing a development of Darwinism, not a substitution for it. This can be accomplished, Gould believes, by separating out what is primary and what is secondary in Darwinism, casting aside the secondary notions of gradualism and adaptationism and retaining the central doctrine of natural selection, but transposed to the level of differentiated hierarchical species, so that different

[9] See *ibid,* p. 385.
[10] See *ibid.,* p. 384.
[11] *Loc. cit.*
[12] *Ibid.,* p. 386.

modes of selection would operate at different levels. In this way the modern evolutionist could have the best of both worlds; science would prevail, but so would love and beauty and humanitarianism.

According to Gould's analysis, the gradualist-punctuationist debate is really an intramural battle over the true nature of change in the universe. Is the world in constant undirected flux with species-structures mere fleeting and superficial phenomena, or are there basically stable species-structures in reality, structures which change infrequently, and then do so in jumps or leaps in response to only the most pressing and perturbing influences? In other words, the whole issue is really a question within the philosophy of nature—the ancient philosophical argument over which theory of the world best explains our experience of change (often for the worse rather than for the better *vis à vis* individual human beings) that is paramount. It turns out that we are right back with Parmenides among the ancient Greeks, once again contemplating the problem of being and becoming, and its close relative, the problem of why, if God exists, there is imperfection and evil in the world.[13]

But are Darwinism and punctuated equilibriumism (dare I say " Gouldism ") really compatible? As Gould himself admits, quoting from Darwin, Darwin himself places such a heavy emphasis upon gradualism that it would certainly seem to be a primary part of Darwinism rather than a dispensable and disposable secondary part.[14] Yet this is precisely what is denied by Gould. Does Gould know Darwin better than Darwin knew

[13] As philosophers know, old philosophical problems never die; they just keep coming back in new bodies. Cf. G. Holton, " On the Role of Themata in Scientific Thought," *Science,* 188, 25 April 1975, p. 331: " I have been impressed by how few themata there are—at least in the physical sciences. . . . Related to that is the antiquity and persistence of the themata, right through scientific evolution and 'revolution.' Thus, the old antithesis of plenum and void surfaced in the debate early this century on 'molecular reality'—indeed, it can also be found in the work of contemporary theoretical physicists." See also his *Thematic Origins of Scientific Thought,* Harvard U. Press, 1973, and *The Scientific Imagination,* Cambridge U. Press, N.Y., 1978.

[14] See S. J. Gould, *art. cit.,* p. 382.

himself? Does he really understand the meaning of Darwin's " reductionism "? I don't think so.

If we put the present debate in its proper context, which is the " metaphysical " arena of being and becoming, and that aspect of the philosophy of nature concerned with obtaining a proper definition of change, it becomes quite clear that Darwin is in one camp, essentially and primarily speaking, while the advocates of a non-reductionistic evolutionary world-view are in another.

Those advocates of punctuated equilibriumism who believe they are not substituting one theory for another, but only revamping an essentially unchanged theory, go astray, I suspect, because they fail to realize that for Darwin not only is there no unity to species but that there is no unity to individual organisms either. According to authentic Darwinian doctrine, natural selection operates on the *parts* of the individual organisms, not on the whole organism.

This is most clearly seen in Darwin's fairly late work *The Variation of Animals and Plants Under Domestication*, which first appeared in two volumes in 1868 and in a second edition in two volumes in 1874. In chapter 12 of volume 1 Darwin enters into the " wonderful " subject of inheritance. Today of course his provisional hypothesis of " pangenesis," developed later in volume 2, is no longer taken seriously. Be this as it may, though, the main point to be observed is the way in which he proposed to defend its very possibility, that is, the foundation upon which Darwin attempted to rest his case.

At the beginning of chapter 12, Darwin states that " If animals and plants had never been domesticated, and wild ones alone had been observed, we should probably never have heard the saying, that ' like begets like '." [15] As far as Darwin can see, no two individuals are ever identically the same. Offspring *appear* to be like their parents in many ways, but it is not even theoretically probable that this should be the case in reality.

[15] *The Variation of Animals and Plants Under Domestication*, 2 vols., Appleton, N.Y., 1897, Vol. 1, p. 445.

Saying that it is, claims Darwin, is merely a projection into nature of the breeder's own confidence that superior or inferior parents generally produce superior or inferior offspring. Yet, even to talk about the status of an offspring in this way "shows that the individual in question has departed slightly from its type." [16]

Darwin continues his discussion of heredity in volume 2. In chapter 27, in his attempt to account for the marvellous facts of heredity, Darwin proposes a view of inheritance founded upon a yet more fundamental fact of nature, namely, that all living organisms are composed of many, many minute parts, each of which can act independently of all others. True to his desire for uniformity in his explanatory laws, at the beginning of chapter 27 Darwin quotes Whewell to the effect that hypotheses are often of great service to science and then proceeds to state his pangenesis hypothesis: "that every separate part of the whole organisation reproduces itself." [17] This one hypothesis, he thinks, will be sufficient to account for the whole wonderfully complicated phenomenon of inheritance.

Near the end of Part I (dealing with the observed facts of heredity) of chapter 27, Darwin asserts categorically that there is a functional independence of the elements or units of a body. This is something upon which all knowledgeable physiologists agree. According to Claude Bernard, each organ has its own proper life, its own autonomy. And even more fundamentally, according to Rudolf Virchow and Sir J. Paget, each cell of the body lives a life of its own. Darwin himself is in full agreement with such a view of the body. It can even be used as a basis of explaining the way in which the use and disuse of parts can be passed on to new generations. Says Darwin, by way of some examples:

The domesticated rabbit becomes tame from close confinement; the dog, intelligent from associating with man; the retriever is taught to fetch and carry; and these mental endowments and bodily

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 446.

[17] *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 350.

powers are all inherited. Nothing in the whole circuit of physiology is more wonderful.[18]

Part II takes us yet deeper into the cell. Everyone admits that cells reproduce by self-division. In addition to this, though, supposes Darwin, the cells, " throw off " minute grains or granules which disperse throughout the whole system of the organism, and which are also capable of self-division. These minute particles, called " gemmules " by Darwin, are the real explanatory principles in the process of transmitting traits and characteristics from one generation to the next. " Hence," claims Darwin, " it is not the reproductive organs or buds which generate new organisms, but the units of which each individual is composed." [19] In addition, " the number and minuteness of the gemmules must be something inconceivable." [20] But this should not surprise anyone, considering how small are the molecules which make up the being of any ordinary substance. His gemmules may be hypothetical, but atoms and molecules are not. On the basis of data supplied by Sir William Thomson, reports Darwin, " my son George finds that a cube of 1/10,000 of an inch of glass or water must consist of between 16 million millions, and 131 thousand million million molecules." [21] Even supposing, continues Darwin, that the molecules forming organic substances are much larger than those constituting inorganic ones, we can still see that the real causal agents for the existence and functioning of the parts of any organic being must be many indeed.

What Darwin has to say here, in his attempt to account for heredity, is perfectly consistent with his whole world-view, as well as with the age in which he lived. It was a time when, in England at least, atomism as a philosophy of nature was

[18] *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 367; cf. p. 388. On 19th century cell theory see Wm. Coleman, *Biology in the Nineteenth Century*, Wiley, N.Y., 1971. Although biased in various ways, see also E. Mayr, *The Growth of Biological Thought*, Harvard U. Press, 1982.

[19] *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 370.

[20] *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 373.

[21] *Loc. cit.*

by and large taken for granted. In earlier philosophies of nature, as for example in the case of Aristotle, each species is a definite kind or type, an incarnation, divided up into many individuals, of an "idea." Under such circumstances to talk about a change of species or the transformation of one species into another was nonsense. It would literally involve a logical contradiction in terms.

Not so for Darwin. On his own premises there could be no real unity to individuals, much less to species. In Darwin's context of Newtonian atomism, events among *substantive* entities simply cannot happen, because there are no substantive entities above the microcosmic level. Darwin admits as much when writing to Asa Gray, on 21 December 1859, about the possibility of an American edition of his *Origin of Species*. Darwin tells Gray: "I think it of importance that my notions should be read by intelligent men, accustomed to scientific argument [read: those up on physics], though *not* naturalists. It may seem absurd, but I think such men will drag after them those naturalists who have too firmly fixed in their heads that a species is an entity."

In reality there are no such things as entitative species. There are only temporary collections of individuals, which in turn are only temporary collections of atoms. Whereas ordinary naturalists would want to work with whole creatures, Darwin wants to work with the parts of organisms, and with their most minute parts at that. One species will change into another if and only if it can be gradually rebuilt characteristic by characteristic and trait by trait. The old-fashioned naturalist would not understand such a thing; the modern mathematical physicist would. Hence Darwin's somewhat peculiar instructions to Gray.

This same doctrine can also be seen in Darwin's view of necessity and chance in nature, although this is often not well understood by some of his commentators. According to Howard E. Gruber, for instance, in the Darwinian philosophy of nature order has to be produced by a random process mov-

ing in an irregular fashion. Both the orderly and the disorderly aspects of the world have to be explained together and simultaneously as part of one process. " In the long run," declares Gruber, " it was the chanciness and irregularity of Darwin's system of nature that proved to be the most difficult point in his theory for the religious community." [22] The religious leaders of the time, thinks Gruber, could accommodate themselves to some sort of gradual change hypothesis, but what they could not swallow under any circumstances was the idea that the order in the world was the result of a " conglomeration of chance events." [23]

On this point, however, what he says is just the reverse of the actual situation. What Darwin meant by chance was absolute determinism. What the religious leaders could not accommodate was a completely deterministic materialistic universe in which there is no room for the freedom of either God or human beings. To the religious leaders, chance as a *vera causa* was acceptable. The traditional Aristotelian-Scholastic notion of chance as the unpredictable crossing of two relatively independent chains of events, such as two people, each going his or her own way, meeting by " accident " in the shopping plaza, was quite acceptable to a long line of traditional Judaeo-Christian theologians.

What Darwin was talking about, however, was quite different. As is clear from his early notebooks, by chance Darwin meant an ignorance of the completely determined material causes underlying the event in question. In his " M " notebook, for instance, pages 69 to 74 [24], Darwin makes it clear, at least to himself, that everything in the universe must operate according to fixed laws. This includes, as well, all activities of all creatures. What we call chance events, and in some cases free will acts, are merely signs of ignorance on our part concerning the underlying causes of the events. This *must* be the case,

[22] H. E. Gruber and P. H. Barrett, *Darwin on Man*, Dutton, N.Y., 1974, p. 200.
[23] *Loc. cit.*
[24] See *ibid.*, pp. 278-279.

not because it is based upon some internal subjective feelings we may have on the subject (which feelings, as Darwin says in an 11 December 1861 letter to Asa Gray and elsewhere, are an unsafe guide to the truth), but based upon a deduction from the fundamental material structure of the universe.

The same approach to chance occurs in an 11 July 1861 letter from Darwin to his cousin Frances Julia Wedgwood, who had just published an article on the boundaries of science in the July issue of *Macmillan's Magazine*. Is every little thing that happens on earth a part of God's deliberate design and purpose? asks Darwin. He says that he cannot believe so. To illustrate his point he says that if the common rock pigeon is worked upon by artificial selection we can produce the pouter pigeon or the fantail pigeon. Now is this to be regarded as something preordained from all eternity? Of course not. So, if anyone admits, as he or she must admit, that these varieties or variations " are accidental, as far as purpose is concerned (of course not accidental as to their cause or origin), then I can see no reason why he should rank the accumulated variations by which the beautifully adapted woodpecker has been formed as providentially designed." What Darwin is telling his cousin is that in the world of physical reality nothing really occurs by accident. Everything has a cause, which, if known, renders everything perfectly predictable.

Thomas Henry Huxley reinforces this same line of thinking in his " On the Reception of the ' Origin of Species '," contained in Volume 1 of Francis Darwin's *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin* (1898). Among the chief criticisms leveled against Darwin, states Huxley, is that mere chance is substituted for providential design. But, responds Huxley, don't people recall that when Darwin says " spontaneous " he means only that he is " ignorant of the cause "? What other scientific meaning could chance possibly have? Huxley continues: " Do they believe that anything in this universe happens without reason or without a cause? . . . The one act of faith in the convert to science, is the confession of the universality of order and the

absolute validity in all times and under all circumstances, of the law of causation." To believe otherwise is to believe in mere superstition. In opposition to the false faith in freedom, and chance as a *vera causa,* Huxley pits the modern faith in determinism. This modern faith, though, is not blind. It is reasonable, claims Huxley, because it is always confirmed by experience; and experience, he notes, is the only trustworthy foundation for action. Consequently, Huxley, sounding very much like a proto-pragmatist, can reject the orthodox religious community's charge that evolutionary doctrine depends entirely upon chance. Indeed, the accusation is so false that its complete opposite is the truth.

Darwin's attitude is confirmed in a more subtle way when he sometimes uses the term " chance " in its common sense, that is, Aristotelian, meaning. In a letter to Asa Gray, dated 22 May 1860, he states that he is *not* contented viewing the whole wonderful world, including human nature, as the result of brute force. " I am inclined," he goes on, " to look at everything as resulting from designed laws, with the details, whether good or bad, left to the working out of what we may call chance. Not that this notion *at all* satisfies me." While in a letter to William Graham commenting on Graham's new book *The Creed of Science: Religious, Moral, and Social* (1881), dated 3 July 1881, Darwin tells Graham that " you have expressed my inward conviction, though far more vividly and clearly than I could have done, that the Universe is not the result of chance. But then with me the horrid doubt always arises whether the convictions of man's mind, which has been developed from the mind of the lower animals, are of any value or at all trustworthy."

Putting aside the fact that this is a strange way for a scientist to talk, since, if we are to take his words seriously, Darwin would be hard pressed to explain why his own convictions about evolution are to be accepted while contrary convictions are to be denied, his use of the word " chance " in at least these two contexts seems to be different from that in other, more sci-

entifically formal, contexts. In the first passage Darwin indicates that he has considered a possible compromise with a more traditional religious interpretation of divine design and has rejected it.

Why can't we have, a more traditional theologian might ask, a universe governed by laws deliberately designed by an all-good and wise creator, but which, because of the way in which everything is divided up into substantial entities, each pursuing its own goals, allows for the accidental crossing of paths in what would be called a true chance event? Although " foreseen " by God such events would not be " caused " by God. In this way, God, who remains all-powerful, allows these events to occur, even though some of them turn out to be harmful to the creatures involved. Put otherwise, even though there are constant laws in nature, and even though the same causes will have the same effects (putting aside the possibility of a miracle), it is not true to say that *everything* that happens must have some predictable material cause. Within orderly nature, therefore, there is still much room for variation and a certain amount of disorder without contradicting the perfection of God. In this way chance can be objectively real without being a substantial agent.

Darwin, though, was not happy with such an idea. Just a month previous to his letter to Gray, that is, in April of 1860, Darwin had written to Charles Lyell about their (Darwin's and Lyell's) " quasi-theological " controversy. He asks Lyell: " Do you consider that the successive variations in the size of the crop of the Pouter Pigeon, . . . have been due to ' the creative and sustaining powers of Brahma? ' In the sense that an omnipotent and omniscient Deity must order and know everything, this must be admitted; yet, in honest truth, I can hardly admit it." In a postscript Darwin adds that such questions must ultimately be beyond the scope of the human intellect, along with issues such as predestination and free will and the origin of evil. Darwin, it seems, was so tied to the notion that if God orders anything God must order everything that he could not

imagine a situation in which God knew everything but did not order everything in detail.

In his letter to Graham the same attitude is expressed. In the Aristotelian approach to causality chance is always secondary; it can never predominate. Chance can never bring order out of disorder. Quite the contrary; chance is the cause for much of the disorder that exists in the world. Consequently, as Darwin seems to recognize, the universe, which is law-abiding and well ordered, could not have arisen by chance. However, Darwin is careful to note, this is only an inward conviction which we are not allowed to trust. Thinking such thoughts may itself be the result of a hidden series of iron-clad laws stretching back into prehuman times. He could, after all—one recalls—be determined by nature to delude himself into thinking that things could have arisen by a combination of divine will, and chance as a *vera causa!* It's no wonder that Darwin was constantly in a " muddle " over these theological issues.

III. *Gradualism and Human Nature*

We shall of course be told that the doctrine [of the absolute determinism of everything in nature] is not meant to apply to the conduct of men. Yet the bodily motions are physiological operations. If these latter be blind, so are the motions. Also, men are animals. Surely, the whole fight over evolution was about this very latter point.[25]

Darwin may have been in a muddle, but there is no reason why we should be. In Darwin's hierarchy of reality, first and foremost comes the scientific world-view of atomism, the foundation for all else. Next comes what immediately follows from this world-view, namely, the way in which everything that happens in nature takes place according to constant, determined, smooth curves of change.[26] In such a system of the world

[25] A. N. Whitehead, *The Function of Reason,* Beacon, Boston, 1958, p. 14.

[26] A denial of teleology is *not* a necessary consequence of this world-view. What Darwin consistently did was to deny final causality in the *details* of organic development, but not in the sense of an overall and comprehensive direction to

there is no room for leaps and jumps and discontinuities in nature. Gradualism is of primary importance, not secondary significance. For Darwin this meant being *able* to explain change (and the consequences of change, especially physical and moral evil) in a completely naturalistic fashion, without recourse to God or miracles or the like. Then and only then does he become interested in natural selection as a *means* for change; in natural selection as a " god " which creates. In this sense, therefore, Gould is right in claiming that we can tamper with the mechanism of natural selection and still remain Darwinian.

Darwin himself does not hesitate to tell his friends this very thing. As he says in a leter to Gray, dated 11 May 1863, he is very disappointed in Lyell for not being more definitive on the subject of whether or not he (Lyell) agrees with his special theory of evolution. However, Darwin continues, " When I say ' me,' I only mean *change of species by descent.* That seems to me the turning point. Personally, of course, I care much about Natural Selection; but that seems to me utterly unimportant, compared to the question of Creation *or* Modification."

Earlier, on 6 March 1863, Darwin had written to Lyell on the same subject. Darwin expresses disappointment over the fact that Lyell had not spoken out clearly either for or against the doctrine of common descent with modification via natural selection. Are species, and especially the human species, specially created by God or are they not? This is the key issue. The means by which naturally generated species come into existence is of secondary importance.

It's the talk of " leaps " that really concerns Darwin, because such talk may be interpreted to mean that God is directly involved in the creation of each species. And Lyell, in his *The Antiquity of Man* (1863), wherein he continued to leave

creation. Further to this see F. F. Centore, " Mechanism, Teleology, and 17th century English Science," *International Philosophical Quarterly,* 12, 1972, pp. 553-571, and Dov Ospovat, *The Development of Darwin's Theory,* Cambridge U. Press, N.Y., 1981.

open the door to the scientific possibility that human nature, even if nothing else in the biosphere, had "jumped" into existence via a special creation, only made Darwin "groan." Darwin writes to Lyell: "I should have been contented if you had boldly said that species had not been separately created, and had thrown as much doubt as you like on how far variation and natural selection suffices [to explain speciation]." Regardless of what Lyell himself may have privately believed about the origin of species, it is clear that Darwin's chief concern is not with the exact mechanism of the transmutation of species but with the world-view underlying such transmutations.

A further confirmation of the primary need for gradualism in authentic Darwinism occurs when we find him writing to Ridley on 28 November 1878, about six years after the sixth and final edition of the *Origin*, that a certain Dr. Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800-1882; a convert to Anglo-Catholicism from a Huguenot background, and for several years closely associated with Keble and Newman in the Oxford Movement) was mistaken if he thought that the *Origin* had any relation whatsoever to theology. "I should have thought," states Darwin, "that this would have been evident to any one who had taken the trouble to read the book, more especially as in the opening lines of the introduction I specify how the subject arose in my mind." [27]

Although somewhat forgotten today, in his own day Pusey was a highly influential thinker. During the summer of 1878, according to his biographer Henry Liddon, Pusey, a canon of Christ Church and Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University of Oxford, decided to tackle the question of the relationship between science and theology. To this end he composed a long sermon which he intended to deliver in Saint Mary's Church on

[27] See *The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin: Including an Autobiographical Chapter*, ed. by Francis Darwin, 2 vols., Appleton, N.Y., 1898, Vol. 2, pp. 411-412. The subject arose in his mind, claims Darwin in the Introduction, by a strictly inductive process in the best Baconian tradition. See on this R. A. Richardson, "Biogeography and the Genesis of Darwin's Ideas on Transmutation," *J. of the History of Biology*, 14, Spring 1981, pp. 1-41. This lengthy article includes an excellent set of bibliographical references.

Sunday, 3 November 1878. Two days before that date, however, being in poor health, Pusey asked Liddon to read the sermon for him, which Liddon did.

A brief notice of Pusey's sermon—along with articles about the American cotton market, the growing conflict between England and the Ameer of Afghanistan, bank failures, performances of Gilbert and Sullivan's *H.M.S. Pinafore* and *The Sorcerer*, the Church of England Temperance Society, the English and American disagreement over fishing rights off the coast of Newfoundland, the agitation in Italy, "The Eastern Question" (Germany versus Russia), and the football scores—was printed in *The Manchester Guardian* on 5 November 1878. That Pusey's words should have warranted any space at all is an indication of his stature at the time. The notice, datelined Monday, begins: "Dr. Pusey's sermon, which was yesterday delivered for him by Dr. Liddon, had been looked forward to with great interest, it being known that the composition had cost the venerable [he was 78] author some months of such labour as in his present state of health he is able to give." Under the circumstances it is no wonder that Darwin was concerned about his remarks.

As we learn from Liddon, in response to a complaint from Dr. Rolleston, a professor of physiology in Oxford, Pusey wrote to Rolleston on the Tuesday after Easter in 1879 saying that his (Pusey's) comment in his sermon about our souls and minds coming from the "pithecoids" was meant solely as a rhetorical remark and should not be taken seriously. It does, however, clarifies Pusey, seem to be the view held by many evolutionists, especially those under the influence of Darwin's *Descent of Man* published some seven years earlier. "The theory of Evolution," Pusey continues, "seems to me one of the threatening clouds of the day. I fear that it will wreck the faith of many. It is very fascinating to a certain class of minds, and seems already to be a sort of gospel."[28]

[28] Henry Parry Liddon, *Life of Edward Bouverie Pusey, D.D.*, 4 vols., Longmans Green, London, 1893-1897, Vol. 4, p. 336.

As we can see from Pusey's letter to Rolleston, in 1879 it was still not crystal clear what Darwin himself thought about the relationship of humans and apes in terms of origins. Did the human *body* descend from the apes while the human *mind* was a creation of God? Darwin's own words allowed this sort of ambiguity to continue. Pusey says to Rolleston that it seems inconsistent within the Darwinian theory to suppose that the body developed gradually via evolution while the mind was a sudden creation by God. They should both be explained either one way or the other, and the essential point of the Darwinian theory seems to call for gradualism in all things.

As far as Darwin's own theological views are concerned, Pusey sees him as doing nothing to stop the spread of evolutionary doctrine as a new religion. In this regard, thinks Pusey, Darwin is effectively in league with Ernst Haeckel (1834-1919) in Germany. Pusey tells Rolleston:

> I do not myself see the slightest difference between Darwin and Haeckel, except that Darwin assumes a First Cause, who, all those aeons ago, infused the breath of life into some primaeval forms, and has remained inactive (if, indeed, He is supposed to be a Personal Being) ever since.[29]

As Pusey strongly hints here, Darwinism may well be a throwback to some more primitive and pagan form of religion. Clearly, though, in both his sermon and in his explanatory letter, Pusey sees Darwin in a religious context. We should not be surprised, therefore, if those who knew of Pusey's charges should be interested in Darwin's response.

The only possible way out of this situation would be for Darwin to maintain both his mechanism and a spiritualism simultaneously, as was done by so many other scientists since the reintroduction of atomism into Europe in the later Renaissance. Why not, after the fashion of Descartes, Boyle, Hooke, Newton, and so on, have both an atomistic body *and a spiritual soul?* Yet this is exactly what Darwin refused to allow.

[29] *Loc. cit.*

If this fact is not crystal clear in his public works it certainly is in his private notes. For example, on page 84 of his "M" notebook (1838) Darwin declares that the origin of man is now proved, and that "metaphysics" must now flourish. "He who understand[s the] baboon would do more toward metaphysics than Locke."[80] To understand Darwin here we must first understand one aspect of the history of philosophy up until Darwin's time. Beginning with Francis Bacon in England and René Descartes in France, the tendency in modern philosophy has been to separate physics and metaphysics. Physics would study, according to both thinkers, the natural world of matter in motion, while metaphysics would handle those aspects of reality which are beyond the realm of the physical. These other areas are the soul, angels, and God. This approach was continued by John Locke (1632-1704), who said that it was possible to have, and that we in fact do have, a direct and immediate knowledge of our own souls, a rather extreme view, and one which even someone such as Saint Thomas Aquinas did not hold. Locke's view was later attacked by David Hume, who denied that we know ourselves as thinking spiritual substances. In agreement with Hume, and also with Comte, who greatly influenced him in these matters, Darwin is now saying that if we want to understand the human soul we should view it as gradually emerging from the lower biosphere. Viewing the soul in supernatural terms is wrong. In other words, "metaphysics," or the study of the spiritual aspects of life, is best advanced by viewing such things from the naturalistic-materialistic-deterministic point of view. Only then can "metaphysics" flourish.

The point that Darwin wants to make is that the transition from the animal soul or mind to the human soul or mind is a gradual one. It is, nevertheless, an ascending one. This can be clearly seen in the differences between animal and human intellectual powers. It can also be seen in the moral sphere. Just

[80] Gruber and Barrett, *op. cit.*, p. 281.

as there has been a gradual ascension in the area of human thought so there has been one in human morality. In his " M " notebook, pages 122 to 124, Darwin emphasizes the way in which moral habits have changed over the centuries. Revenge and anger, useful to animals in the wilds of the jungle, are now giving way to the higher virtues of civilized human beings.[31]

However, says Darwin, our knowledge of virtue does not come from some innate set of ideas fixed in a pre-existing soul as Plato taught, but from the life experiences of our animal ancestors transmitted to us, with great modification, over the eons of semihuman and human development. So it is that the " moral sense " has arisen out of the past. From the laws of the jungle, based on crude animal instincts, we have advanced to the " golden rule " of modern times. From the confused idea of " ought " as held by primitive peoples, taken in conjunction with the notion of some necessary cause, such as God, to bolster and support it, we have arrived at the Sermon on the Mount.[32]

* * * * *

How, then, can anyone claim that gradualism is not really essential to an authentic Darwinian special theory of evolution? To Darwin's way of thinking, it was even more essential than the particular mechanism of natural selection, because it was a necessary consequent of the most essential thing of all, his reductionistic materialistic philosophy of nature. Consequently, without gradualism Darwin is truly and totally dead. To deny gradualism, at least as far as the universe can be observed above the microcosmic level, is to deny reductionistic materialism, that which was *most* central to Darwin's whole outlook, scientifically speaking. Put otherwise, Gould is not, as he seems to think, dealing with two versions of Democritus, but with the world-views of Democritus and Hegel, or perhaps Aristotle—a substantial difference either way. By all means, " Let us continue to praise famous men," [33] as Gould recommends. But

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 289.
[32] *Ibid.*, pp. 290, 295.
[33] S. J. Gould, *art. cit.*, p. 386.

while we are at it, who will give a cheer for Ptolemy, or raise a glass to Becher and Stahl? [34]

F. F. CENTORE

St. Jerome's College
Waterloo, Ontario

[34] The history of science presents us with several cases of theories which looked good for a long time before they died. Darwinism is gong the same route; but let's not think that Gould is alone on the road. R. Dawkins, for example, still doesn't seem to be able to make up his mind about the meaning of Darwinism (see *The Extended Phenotype,* San Francisco: Freeman, 1982). Emphasizing the minute subdivisions of organisms in order to explain the advent of new speces without immediate providential guidance *is* Darwinian. However, the notion of protecting one's close relatives because of their genetic nearness to you is not. Given the main advantage of sexual over asexual reproduction (it supplies nature with a more varied pool of traits from which to make its selection), *over*-population is good; *i.e.,* having many offspring, each of which is not so well cared for, is better than having a few which are highly protected and cared for. Dawkins seems more interested in justifying the immortality (the preservation of what already is) of species than the changing of species. This is deadly to Darwinism.

REMARKS ON A THEOLOGICAL PROGRAM INSTRUCTED BY SCIENCE *

ON OCCASION WE ENCOUNTER a piece of writing that displays relentless personal honesty. Frankness governs both what the author says and what he refuses to say. Likely critics or admirers are denied undue influence during the course of composition. Such writing commands our respect even if we disagree with assumptions made or conclusions drawn. We may respect for example the work of both a believer like Bonhoeffer and a nonbeliever like Camus. This virtue sometimes finds expression as well in a distinctive body of writing occupying a rather mobile position between orthodoxy and atheism. Its distinctiveness derives from the way it attempts to join together critical and constructive commitments. On the critical side, it is prepared to assess inherited religious beliefs by the standards of intelligibility accepted by the wider contemporary culture, and to abandon, modify, or reinterpret such beliefs accordingly. In our culture of course the standard frequently employed is knowledge amassed by the scientific method. On the constructive side, not all religious beliefs are discarded as the projections of a prescientific culture. Many are held to represent more than incidental wisdom set in a framework that is itself systematically illusory. They depict, often profoundly, recurrent features of the human condition, and provide guidance for the attitudes we should adopt and policies we should follow.

An example of this kind of writing is R. M. Hare's "The Simple Believer." [1] Hare's praise of Braithwaite applies to his

* James M. Gustafson, *Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective.* Volume I, *Theology and Ethics.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

[1] In *Religion and Morality,* eds. Gene Outka and John P. Reeder, Jr. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor, 1973), pp. 393-427.

own case: "His sincerity, and his refusal to take refuge in the evasions and the obscurities that are the occupational disease of those who write in this field, compel admiration." [2] Hare repudiates all efforts to perpetuate an orthodox body of Christian beliefs more or less intact, as if current scientific findings were irrelevant to such beliefs. He is willing to jettison belief in petitionary prayer and the afterlife, for instance. While prayer remains important (in a sense left unspecified), its object is no longer a God who intervenes, even mysteriously and without empirical verifiability, in this world as we know it. And he regards the statement "that we shall survive the death (the literal death) of our bodies" as "meaningful, but unbelievable." [3] Parts of the major Christian creeds must thereby be revised or rejected. Yet Hare declines simply to walk away from Christianity or cease going to church. His own constructive side has mainly to do with morality. He explicitly agrees with orthodox Christians about most moral matters, and shares a nonfalsifiable faith that the world is so constituted that the moral life will not be proven futile. In weaving together critical and constructive commitments, Hare commends an overall strategy of natural selection. He thinks the majority of modern educated persons in the West cannot be intellectually content to remain in an orthodox enclave, and is confident that "Christians will prove at least as adaptable in the future as they have in the past." [4]

James M. Gustafson has now given us a work which matches Hare's in its conspicuous honesty: *Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective,* Vol. I. The theocentric views Gustafson defends often differ crucially from Hare's chastened Kantianism. But on the matters I identify above, striking affinities appear. Gustafson too assigns a necessary role to scientific findings in assessing traditional religious beliefs; he is prepared to revise or reject many beliefs, including petitionary prayer, the afterlife,

[2] *Ibid.,* p. 407.
[3] *Ibid.,* p. 419.
[4] *Ibid.,* p. 420.

and some others contained in the creeds; and he remains dedicated to the institutional church. We have the advantage in this case of a book-length defense that attends to a great deal of explicitly theological material. The volume then is indisputably important. Furthermore, it is written by someone whose previous publications and teaching have proven to be widely and deservedly influential. Yet part of the book's significance is that it breaks the pattern of Gustafson's prior publications. It does not address a specific topic, a single issue, or the state of a scholarly discussion already in progress, but displays his own critical and constructive commitments over a range of foundational topics in theology and ethics. To write such a book takes courage.

My own indebtedness to him, massive and longstanding as it is, will find only meager attestation here. I want to pay him the respect of a critical struggle with what I take to be some of the book's central and distinctive claims. A lengthier discussion could profitably pursue various topics I set aside.[5]

I

A red thread running through the entire volume is an attack on the persistent human tendency to justify religions by the personal benefits they bring their adherents. Most of us, he alleges, take an interest in religion if and only insofar as it serves our self-preoccupied pursuits. Yet, however widespread this tendency happens to be, he claims that an " instrumental

[5] Here are two examples. First, as Hare is confident in the ability of Christians to adapt continuously to altered circumstances, Gustafson insists that variation, selectivity, and " retrieval " in theology are in any case strictly inevitable, that only ignorance (invincible or culpable) prevents persons from recognizing this fact, and that no theologian " ought to be limited by commitments to historic creedal formulations " (163). Such insistence would need careful scrutiny. And it might be usefully compared and contrasted with traditionalist attempts to distinguish the " substance of ancient doctrine " from its transient and variable formulations. Second, Gustafson argues very persuasively that the notion of " respect for persons " should include much more than a reverence for their autonomy (e.g., 291). But we may defer consideration of specifically ethical questions until the second volume (to be subtitled *Ethics and Theology*) appears.

use of cultic activity and religious language is simply wrong" (23). The tendency reflects an anthropomorphic concentration on the human species as the quintessential object of God's care and concern. We grossly inflate the significance for God of our personal triumphs and defeats.

Ready targets abound for telling criticism. Let me append to Gustafson's overall indictment one example of what I take him to reject. Consider Benjamin Franklin's prayer, which he composed for his own use:

> O Powerful Goodness! bountiful Father! merciful Guide! Increase in me that Wisdom which discovers my truest Interests; Strengthen my Resolutions to perform what that Wisdom dictates. Accept my kind Offices to thy other Children, as the only return in my Power for thy continual blessings.[6]

It seems unlikely that the continual blessings Providence bestows diverge markedly from Franklin's personal appraisal of what fulfills his truest interests. Moreover, his capacity to extend his kind offices to others in gratitude is not in doubt. No great reversal—from attending to self to serving God—is explicitly envisaged. If Franklin's posture is as sanguine as it seems, proponents of a theocentric perspective surely have reason to object.

Gustafson offers two warrants for rejecting this anthropocentric concentration. The first is religious and theological. Such concentration betrays a deficient awareness of divine power and order, neither of which is "so clearly oriented toward the well-being of individual persons and even toward the species as seems to be assumed" (92). Our presumption that our human interests and projects are necessarily or automatically God's is denounced in the name of an *affirmative belief* in divine power and majesty. Gustafson prefers the Reformed tradition in theology because it affirms with special force a theo-

[6] *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, ed. Leonard W. Labaree, et al.* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), p. 153. Cf. the discussion of this prayer in another context in J. R. Pole, *American Individualism and the Promise of Progress* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), esp. pp. 12-14.

centric turn: "God does not exist simply for the service of man; man exists for the service of God" (342). Calvin and Jonathan Edwards are cited often and well to demonstrate the tradition's theocentric perspective. Subjected to deep criticism then are all those views which assume that our own best interests as we conceive them are what God is unfailingly concerned to promote. For Gustafson, true religion offers only those consolations which "come from a deep spiritual consent to the divine governance" (20).[7]

The second warrant is scientific. It has chiefly to do with *negative reasons for moving away* from human self-centeredness. Theology should reckon with the immense time- and space-spans within which, we know now, human life emerged. Though persons may reasonably disagree about the precise theological import of scientific findings in many cases, they should see how decisively the findings, at a minimum, "undercut a self- and species-interested conviction that the whole has come into being for our sake" (268). Gustafson himself thinks the findings "indicate that of all possible things that could develop many did, and many did not; that if there was divine 'foreknowledge' of human life, there was no particular merit in bringing it into being through such an inefficient and lengthy process" (267). The human race is not demonstrably the *telos* of any of it.

II

At a very general level, Gustafson's book will sensitize many readers to the portentous elements in so much religious thought and expression: smugness masked as faith, wishful thinking as hope, self-absorption as love. Crucial questions arise, however, when we ask what specific parts of the Christian tradition Gustafson is prepared to retain or reject, and why. Sometimes anthropocentric concentration possesses so much explanatory force for him that he employs it to reduce complex motives and concerns in the theological tradition to one and only one, name-

[7] Gustafson takes pains to distinguish consent from resignation (e.g., 232).

ly, our self-centered desire for personal benefits. For example, he is prepared to confute the express intentions of the Roman Catholic tradition and Karl Barth.

> Surely no Roman Catholic would say that God was made for man; that would be blasphemy of a high order. Yet the tradition assumes, as does most of the Christian tradition, that the purposes of God are finally for the benefit of human beings. That *might* be a way of saying many of the same things that one could say if God were made for man (92, italics added).
>
> Barth's ethics are as theocentric as any in this century; they require that persons hear and obey the commands of God.... Nonetheless, the commands of God are primarily in the service of man (95).

But these sweeping charges contain unclear formulations. What is the status of the " might " in the first quotation?—Are they in fact " many of the same things " or are they not? Are we being asked never to take the express intentions of the tradition at face value, or only to recognize that they may be put to corrupt, egocentric uses? And how can Barth's ethics be truly theocentric if the commands of God are in the end primarily in the service of human beings? Is there no distinction left between a theocentric account of human need and an anthropocentric account because the former merely disguises the latter? Or does Barth simply fail in execution always to adhere to his own theocentric intentions?

The answers to such questions matter enormously because a large number of traditional beliefs hang in the balance, beliefs that articulate in a considered, cumulative way the tradition's express intentions. How many beliefs central to Christianity *must* be modified or abandoned, if anthropocentric concentration is really to be overcome? I shall argue that in some cases Gustafson abandons certain beliefs unnecessarily, and in others he claims more than he consistently can. At least if we consider the religious and theological warrant alone, much of his attack could allow him to retain more beliefs than he does. Yet he sometimes wants to retain certain beliefs which his own version of the attack disallows.

Moreover, I think the relation between the two warrants never comes clearly into focus. Since they obviously lend very different kinds of support, it is wise to treat them separately. In the case of the religious and theological warrant, I shall contend that much of the attack on anthropocentric concentration could viably proceed without the severe restrictions Gustafson places on agential concepts predicated of God, and that occasionally he violates these restrictions himself (sections III-VI). To show this will require us to attend to specific beliefs, beginning with divine agency itself. Gustafson's rejection of the afterlife will afford a transition point, for here the scientific warrant is brought in to decide the matter (section VII). Natural science will be seen to have veto power over other traditional beliefs as well, though only if we bracket one puzzling passage (section VIII). By way of summation, I shall offer a final remark about the risks inherent in his program (section IX).

III

Divine agency. Gustafson breaks with the Reformed tradition at the point where it conceives God as "an agent in ways similar to those of the human agent" (179). Why does he do so? A major reason is his fear that the analogy of human agency is especially subject to anthropocentric corruptions. So he accompanies even a grudging approval with a warning:

> If the analogy of personal agency is appropriate to use to construct imaginatively a view of God, it does not necessarily follow that the intention of that agent is so exclusively toward "humanization and personalization" (266).

This seems fair enough. But who among those who ascribe personal and purposive predicates to God claim that it *does* necessarily follow? Gustafson himself acknowledges at one point that to employ "the model of personal agency" to refer to God "does not necessarily require that the divine intentions are directed to human beings as the supreme object of creative and redeeming activity" (269). This acknowledgment seems

entirely correct. But it means that his fear of anthropocentric concentration does not suffice by itself to debar all use of conceptions of God as an agent of intentional actions. So far then his attack permits greater room for maneuver than he is prepared to utilize.[8]

Gustafson proceeds instead to stipulate the following severe restrictions. Any use of the analogy of human agency for talk about God

must be developed with great circumspection. Insofar as the analogy leads us to assert that God has intelligence, like but superior to our own, and that God has a will, a capacity to control events comparable to the more radical claims made for human beings, the claims are excessive (270).

To avoid excessiveness Gustafson offers an account of religious dependence and gratitude which eschews all concepts that personalize God. He countenances the use of "personalized symbols," but not "the theological construction of an anthropomorphic divine agency," and agrees finally with Tillich "that we can be personally related to the divine governance without conceiving of God as a person" (271).[9]

But by electing so to eschew, I think Gustafson narrows

[8] He chooses not to discuss in any detail analogical thinking with respect to human and divine agency, for example, though he admits its theological importance (179). I regret this decision. A rich tradition of such thinking exists and some of it might have served him well, given his acknowledgment I identify in this paragraph. Personal predicates such as "loves" are used to fix the reference of "God" not because they fit at all adequately, but because they appear indispensable for what the tradition has wanted to say. See, e.g., I. M. Crombie, "The Possibility of Theological Statements," *Faith and Logic,* ed. Basil Mitchell (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1958), pp. 31-83; Richard Swinburne, *The Coherence of Theism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), pp. 50-84. See also the powerful case for thinking of God as an agent of intentional actions in Thomas Frederick Tracy, *God, Action, and Embodiment: A Study in Philosophical Theology* (New Haven: Ph.D. dissertation at Yale University, 1980). This will appear soon as a book, to be published by Eerdmans.

[9] Cf. this statement: "If anything at all can be predicated of God, then the concept of 'personhood' *has* to be predicated of him." Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith,* trans. William V. Dych (New York: Crossroad, 1982), p. 74 (italics added).

what can be said about our dependence itself (ironically perhaps, given his stress on divine power). We can no longer depend on God for gifts or resolutions which themselves assume divine agency, and yet which only God is in a position to bestow. Consider the matter of forgiveness, about which I shall say something more in a moment. Many have held that our efforts to forgive one another on our own authority, however religiously and morally vital, remain only partially valid and efficacious. They lack finality precisely because we are imperfect creatures. Our judgments can err, our trustworthiness and credibility prove incomplete. God's verdict alone saves us from perpetual self-accusation, if anything can. Or consider the claim that the conditions of our existence present difficulties which we, left to our own devices, find intractable. Reinhold Niebuhr advances such a claim:

> The hope of the resurrection . . . implies that the condition of finiteness and freedom, which lies at the basis of historical existence, is a problem for which there is no solution by any human power. Only God can solve this problem.[10]

In short, can anything other than a divine agent issue a final verdict or solve such a problem?

IV

To illustrate in more detail how far Gustafson's restrictions extend and also how he exceeds them from time to time, let us recall Franklin's prayer. And let us agree that its " timbre " is indeed susceptible to theocentric criticism. The attributes of God Franklin extols appear nonetheless traditionally nonproblematic, i.e., God's power, goodness, bounty, fatherhood, mercy, and guidance. Gustafson can without excessive difficulty join with Franklin in extolling the first three (on God's goodness, see especially 271-72). The latter three give more trouble, though in instructively divergent ways.

[10] Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man,* vol. II (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), p. 295. For a more detailed discussion of this passage see Gene Outka, *Agape: An Ethical Analysis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), pp. 172-74.

Fatherhood. Gustafson locates speech about God as "Father" under the general heading of an "anthropomorphism that has characterized Christian theology, and probably all religious myths and doctrines in which the ultimate power is personified" (170). "Father" is less objectionable than "intelligence, will, intention, and purpose" because it is more clearly confined to the status of "metaphor" and not correlated so specifically to the being of God (179). Yet this confinement seems to mean that the term lacks any genuinely referential capacity when applied to God. While Gustafson is cryptic on the general subject of metaphor and symbol, he does observe in another context that "*only* metaphorically can we say that we forgive ourselves"; "forgiveness is always an expression or an act of another" (250, italics added). To call God "Father" as Jesus does (276) is similarly to speak, one must presume, "only metaphorically."

Once again, it is hard to see that the campaign against anthropocentric concentration requires such confinement. Consider an instance of "first-order" religious language, or as Gustafson prefers, the language of piety with its fitting stress on the affections. As a Jew, Martin Buber obviously does not treat the relation of father and son in the gospel of John in simple accordance with the author's own confession; yet he calls it "the Gospel of the pure relationship," a paradigmatic depiction of how God and the human person may interact. Buber strives for a right religious interplay between the points of difference and continuity in the relation between God and the human person: "the two partners of the primal relationship that, from God to man, is called mission and commandment; from man to God, seeing and hearing; between both, knowledge and love."[11] Whatever problems obtain with this sentence, anthropocentric concentration is not, religiously and theologically, the key to them. For his account remains irreducibly relational: both God and human beings may engage in

[11] Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), p. 133.

personal interaction in suitably different ways. It is never on its own terms a one-way process, focusing exclusively on "humanization and personalization." To believe that such interaction is possible need not lead inexorably to the conclusion that the human species is the quintessential object of God's care and concern. But the possibility does assume some agential capabilities on both sides.

Gustafson preserves a place for personal interaction between human beings, and the capacity for agency it demands. His case for interaction and against a "rigid determinism" owes much in his account of "the social self" to H. Richard Niebuhr.[12] But the crux lies in his departure from Niebuhr "on a theological point. For Niebuhr, God is 'acting' in all actions upon us. He had more confidence in the agency model of God than I have" (273). Gustafson's confidence has eroded so far that it is natural to ask: in his scheme, can God *act* in any proper sense?

Mercy. Gustafson acknowledges that "in piety one aspect of the ultimate power is construed to be mercy, forgiving love" (250). How shall we understand this construal? He appears surprisingly receptive to "historic tradition" at one point:

> Consent to and cooperation with the direction of the powers that order life involve both consent to being *forgiven,* reconciled, and renewed, and consent to being *forgiving,* reconciling, and renewing. The historic tradition provides symbols of the merciful and reconciling love of God that are experienced in human occasions of forgiveness and reconciliation (250).

Notions of mercy, forgiveness, and desert find their natural home in relationships where the parties *intentionally* elect to waive justified grievances, reestablish ties broken by blameworthy deeds and uncaring omissions, attend to attitudes and actions voluntarily acquired and done. Does it make sense to say God is merciful or can forgive without assuming concepts of agency Gustafson has formally excluded? Moreover, I alluded earlier to Gustafson's insistence that forgiveness can-

[12] H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Responsible Self* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963).

not in fact occur without an expression or action of another person (250). But how can his program allow for it on the part of God? Here he seems to claim more than he consistently can. The " powers that order life " may be *indifferent* to our personal deserts; they may provide plentiful *de facto* possibilities to us irrespective of our specific moral or immoral performances. For such gifts we may be grateful. Yet why should we feel forgiven by the divine governance? How is it possible to locate some definite expression or act of God which makes this feeling appropriate?

Guidance. Guistafson writes that " the only good reason for claiming to be Christian is that we continue to be empowered, sustained, renewed, informed, and judged by Jesus' incarnation of theocentric piety and fidelity " (277). Christians find their guidance here. Gustafson's own Christology is derived primarily from the narratives of the synoptic gospels and not from Revelation, Hebrews, or many themes within the Pauline corpus (275). These narratives

> powerfully show what human life, in fidelity to God and in openness to his empowering, can and ought to be—a life of courage and love grounded in an object of piety and fidelity that transcends the immediate objects of experience. They make clear the costs of such piety and fidelity, as well as their beneficial consequences for others. . . . His teaching, ministry, and life are a historical embodiment of what we are to be and to do—indeed, of what God is enabling and requiring us to be and to do (276).

This seems to me a compelling statement. Though it treats Jesus as an exemplar of fidelity and not also an object of faith, much of it could be affirmed by the orthodox as well as the liberal. Yet here too, it is difficult to interpret an object that transcends the immediate objects of experience, that empowers, or enables, and requires, and that remains nonetheless bereft of personal agency. The active verbs cannot transgress the bounds of personalized symbolism. Presumably then: openness to empowering cannot lead to knowledge and love; enabling cannot mean sanctifying grace in the historic sense [13]; re-

[13] " Grace " of any sort drops out as a topic of theological discussion.

quiring cannot mean the issuing of divine commands. In what then does the guidance actually consist? Can Jesus's exemplarity be more than a courageous consent to the powers that impinge upon him, powers governed by a transpersonal "One beyond the many," at shattering cost to himself and with great blessings for others? These assuredly are not small things. But how does *God* enable and require by means of them? What is shown or disclosed except a straightforwardly natural model which we are enjoined to imitate?

V

Salvation. One critical result of Gustafson's theological program is that the "salvation of persons" is displaced "as the principal point of reference for religious piety and for the ordering of theological principles" (112). Too often, heretofore, he believes, concern about salvation has served to give license to anthropocentric preoccupations. For this reason, the displacement he proposes comes as no surprise. What is uncertain is whether salvation remains a legitimate point of reference *at all.* We are told that "God's power and order are not clearly oriented toward the well-being of individual persons" (92). If "well-being" overlaps materially with "salvation," then does the latter effectively drop out altogether? A similar unclarity appears when we consider the claims Gustafson makes about God to support his proposal. One sentence stands out: "The salvation of man is not the chief end of God; certainly it is not the exclusive end of God" (110).[14] Which writers in the tradition have held that the salvation of human beings is either *the* exclusive or *the* chief end of *God?* Who is in a position *in via* to pronounce? And how far does the denial extend? As it reads, it stops short of saying that God is not concerned *at all* with the salvation of persons. But the burden of the whole volume renders concern about salvation "idling"—it ceases to do

[14] Here I am indebted to a graduate seminar meeting at Yale on April 21, 1982, and to Ronald Feenstra and Jean Porter in particular, for questions posed about the book on that occasion.

essential theological work. Gustafson says: "The chief end of man may not be salvation in a traditional Christian sense; it may be to honor, to serve, and to glorify (celebrate) God. . . ." (113) *Must* a choice be made? That Gustafson regards them as alternatives reflects above all perhaps his unwillingness to ascribe a place to divine agency, without which a hope for salvation loses much of its point in any case.

VI

Petitionary prayer. Gustafson allows an ongoing place for "meditative prayers"; they remain meaningful even when "expressed in a traditional language" (318). Petitionary prayers are not similarly acceptable. Perhaps Gustafson has no alternative but to disallow them, given his beliefs about the deity. But once more, he conflates this reason for disallowance with his attack on anthropocentric concentration. So we read: "Those interpretations of prayer . . . that claim that God will intervene particularly in the course of events to fulfill the self-referential requests of a petitioner are in error" (318). Is an interpretation of prayer as petitionary and not only meditative acceptable when someone utters a request that is not self-referential? I think not. The point is this. Someone who believes in petitionary prayer remains at liberty to join with Gustafson in protesting against excessive self-referentiality and the like (though also to be wary of a high-mindedness which cannot accommodate ordinary human needs). But more is at stake for such a believer than such excesses. For him or her, some of God's attributes presuppose agency. God *can* intervene in the particular course of events, and sometimes God *does.* Not that God *must* intervene: it would be sheer human arrogance and folly to suppose prayer *forced* God to do something God would otherwise not do.[15] Geach clarifies this claim:

> . . . Unless it is *sometimes* true that God brings about the course of events in a way that he would not had he not been asked, peti-

[15] I owe this clarification to Christopher Morse.

tionary prayer is idle; just as it would be idle for a boy to ask his father for a specific birthday present if the father had made up his mind what to give irrespective of what the boy asks. And if the course of events may go this way or that according to what is asked of free choice by the petitioner, then it is contingent.[16]

What divides Geach from Gustafson is not that one indulges willy-nilly in self-referential requests and the other does not. Rather, they differ about what belief in God may fittingly include, and about God's relation to the world.

VII

The afterlife. A self-centered quest for personal benefits is also alleged to explain much of the human interest in an afterlife. Gustafson writes: "doctrines of life in the next world, or of eternal life, in part function to resolve the problem of assuring believers that religious piety finally is beneficial" (17). And later:

> . . . the pious must be assured that there are rewards, benefits, for their piety. They will profit. It is a small step, taken by much of Christianity, to the assertion that the assurance of a heavenly reward for virtue, including the "virtue" of faith, is a reason for being virtuous (184).

One can grant that this small step is often taken in fact. But again, the anthropocentric explanation seems to oversimplify the reasons and motives for holding the belief in question. A friend told me once that he regarded the belief in heaven and hell as immeasurably consoling because it presupposed some final realm of perfect justice. Dante, Thomas More, and Kierkegaard all attracted him not because he supposed them to be right on many of their specific judgments but simply because they believed that such justice obtained *somewhere*. It was the thought of justice *per se* which drew him, the notion of some unbreakable link between accountability and a personal rela-

[16] P. T. Geach, *Providence and Evil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 118-19, italics added.

tion to God,[17] some hope for a future that was not arbitrary from the religious and moral point of view. He claimed to prefer the prospect of hell to that of oblivion, a religious and moral order which damned him to the absence of this order altogether. Thus he would be overjoyed to share the belief in an afterlife. But he could not, on scientific grounds. I think he would have regarded the charge that he was after personal benefits as trivializing his sense of incalculable loss.

Gustafson himself acknowledges that, in the case of the afterlife too, the explanation centered on personal profit is not exhaustive, that, for example, " the ethics of the Reformed tradition do not make the eternal reward the motive for moral activity " (183). He likewise holds that the theological stakes could not be higher respecting the belief itself: for Augustine, Calvin, and Edwards a belief in eternal life beyond our present bodily existence is indispensable—he thinks that without it their theologies crumble into incoherence (182). Whatever he personally wants, he accepts this result. These theologies must dissolve for scientific rather than religious or moral reasons. Like my friend and like Hare, he finds the statement that we shall survive the literal death of our bodies meaningful but now unbelievable.

If one is agnostic about eternal life, or *indeed believes that there is no evidence from our bodily natures to sustain it,* this critical move in the argument for God's justice and benevolence toward human beings is not possible (183, italics added).

The formulation of theology and ethics in this project, then, must develop a position in which life after death is not necessary (184).

VIII

Gustafson's verdict on the afterlife shows how deeply the findings of modern science as he interprets them cut into his

[17] The link I think he had in mind includes " a sobering sense of being responsible and answerable not merely to himself or to society or to an impersonal moral law, but to a hidden personal being who is a moral Sovereign, whose wisdom is perfect, and whose demand for obedience is unqualified." Donald Evans, " Differences between Scientific and Religious Assertions," *Science and Religion,* ed. Ian G. Barbour (London: SCM Press, 1968), p. 105.

theological program. Certainly he does not endorse positivist claims about science. He admits than even in science "it is difficult to be emancipated from prior understandings of reality or from cultural biases" (125). Scientific explanations as well as religious and moral symbols and theories are "socially interpreted and socially tested" in particular communities and historical periods (124). Nevertheless, the development of the natural sciences has achieved a notable "measure of consensus on the part of persons from different cultures and of different political and religious beliefs" (125). Science is "the least culturally bound arena of modern cultural activity"; "there is, no doubt, a progression in natural scientific work that is not matched in the social sciences, in philosophy, and in theology" (125).

More than anything else of course, the results of this progression count decisively against anthropocentric concentration. The studies of astrophysicists and others indicate that "a *finis,* a temporal end," awaits the life we know. "*If it were not for that knowledge,*" we might reasonably continue to ascribe the special status to the human species that characterized traditional Western thought (83, italics added). But no longer can we do so. Every trace of "a Ptolemaic religion in a Copernican universe" (190) should be banished.

The afterlife is then for him one such trace. Tied closely to it is eschatology. Gustafson agrees with Troeltsch:

> "As the beginning was without us, so will the end also be without us." . . . We may not be able to say what the end will be, but, as Troeltsch stated, it will not be the Apocalypse of traditional Christian thought. . . . The biblical eschatological symbols or the contemporary Christian developments of them are not sustainable.[18] (268)

[18] Cf. an account which accepts that the end is indeed inevitable, but which continues to affirm another kind of apocalypse involving, one assumes, some type of personal restoration: "It is as easy (and as difficult) to believe in God after Mendel and Muller, as it was after Darwin or the dust of Genesis. Religious people have never denied, indeed they affirm, that God means to kill us all in the end, and in the end He is going to succeed. Anyone who intends the world as

Indeed, every religious belief seems equally vulnerable to scientific assessment, including what can be said substantively about God. He summarizes:

> . . . " God " refers to the power that bears down upon us, sustains us, sets an ordering of relationships, provides conditions of possibilities for human activity and even a sense of direction. The evidences from various sciences suggest the plausibility of viewing God in these terms. (264)

The " sense of direction " must be carefully circumscribed. The presence of order and ordering does not justify " belief in a Designer. At most we might say that a ' governance ' is occurring " (262). Is Gustafson's account of " governance " more scientifically plausible than Bertrand Russell's despairing sketch of " the world which Science presents for our belief "?

> Amid such a world, if anywhere, our ideals henceforward must find a home. That Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins—all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand.[19]

From these grim conclusions Gustafson draws back, at least in part. Some prevision may remain (recall his phrase, " if there

a Jew or as a Christian . . . goes forth to meet the collision of planets or the running down of suns, and he exists toward a future that may contain a genetic apocalypse with his eye fixed on another *eschaton*. . . . In no case need he deny whatever account science may give him of this city, this history, or this world, so long as science does not presume to turn itself into a theology by blitzing him into believing that it knows the one and only apocalypse." Paul Ramsey, *Fabricated Man: The Ethics of Genetic Control* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), pp. 27-28.

[19] Bertrand Russell, *Mysticism and Logic* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor, 1957), p. 45.

was divine foreknowledge of human life"); not all is chance. What is clear is that any debate between Gustafson and Russell would have to be carried on by appealing to evidence supported by scientific findings.

Or is it entirely clear? One passage in Gustafson's book seems to go in another direction altogether. He itemizes what various religions share in this way:

> They share some common recognitions of the human circumstance in relation to that which is beyond human control. They share certain affections and dispositions toward whatever is—moments of awe, reverence, fear, gratitude, guilt, and liberation. However they articulate *that which is beyond the means of scientific investigation and proof,* they nonetheless sense the reality of its presence. This is the moment, the time, and the point at which the religious consciousness moves beyond what radically secular persons feel (135, italics added).

The possibility of sensing the reality of a presence which science cannot assess is one for which the bulk of the volume does not prepare us. It might permit us in principle to consider cases we thought debarred, e.g., Donald Evans on the fundamental differences between religious and scientific assertions,[20] or Barth on the inability of the inductive sciences to grasp the essential nature of the human creature.[21] That the scientific warrant does so much decisive theological work for Gustafson suggests that the passage may be a momentary lapse on his part. I nonetheless find it surprising, perplexing, and intriguing. And that is always a good point on which to end one's consideration of specific texts.

IX

It is often illuminating to ask about a theological scheme: which views and conclusions does its author especially fear, and take the greatest pains to avoid? One thinks of Barth's preoc-

[20] Evans, pp. 101-103.

[21] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics,* III/2, trans. Harold Knight, *et al.* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1960), esp. pp. 12-13.

cupation with Feuerbach's projectionist analysis of religious beliefs, and Barth's own tireless effort to prevent the reduction of theology to anthropology. I fear less than Gustafson does the risks of anthropocentric concentration and have suggested that some may be avoided without abandoning divine agency. I fear more than Gustafson does the risks lying in wait for the specifically theological part of his own undertaking. Sometimes the scientific warrant takes him beyond a theological affirmation which he elsewhere shares with H. Richard Niebuhr: that we should have faith in " the one reality beyond all the many," against which there is no defense, the void, the slayer, the enemy, the last power, the friend; and that we should struggle for this faith with our reason, our experience of frustration and death, our intuition, and our moral commitments, even while we refuse to claim certain religious knowledge and we relativize the importance of all things finite, including ourselves.[22] Sometimes, that is, the following exhortation seems for Gustafson to exhaust the matter: consent to the divine governance *simply by* consenting to the order of the universe as science makes it known to us, and exercise to the full your limited human agency along the way in loving interaction with other human agents. At these times, the book renders a theistic doctrine of God otiose.

Gustafson's formidable attack on religion as the gospel of egocentric human fulfillment should occasion gratitude and serious reappraisal. That divine agency is jeopardized in the process also occasions, for me at least, regret and lamentation.

GENE OUTKA

Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut

[22] H. Richard Niebuhr, " Faith in Gods and in God," *Radical Monotheism and Western Culture* (New York: Harper, 1960), pp. 114-126.

RECENT SACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY: A REVIEW DISCUSSION *

THIS SURVEY OF SOME recent writings in sacramental theology focuses on issues of methodology: the directions being taken by contemporary systematic reflection on the Christian sacraments, the relation of sacramental theology to other areas of theology, the impact of liturgical studies on sacramental studies, and aspects of pastoral practice. Consideration of the proposals of recent writers also provides the occasion for suggesting something of the shape contemporary systematic study of the sacraments ought to take given the present state of discussion.

I

Almost two decades ago Matthew O'Connell described the shift then underway in American sacramental theology as resulting in part from the newly promulgated Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of Vatican II and in part from the translation into English of continental authors (especially Rahner and Schillebeeckx). Under the influence of these (and other factors) there was a shift

* The books discussed are: Regis Duffy, *Real Presence: Worship, Sacraments and Commitment* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1982); Francis A. Eigo, ed., *The Sacraments: God's Love and Mercy Actualized* (Philadelphia: Villanova University Press, 1979); Tad Guzie, *The Book of Sacramental Basics* (New York/Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1981); Joseph Martos, *Doors to the Sacred: A Historical Introduction to Sacraments in the Catholic Church* (New York: Doubleday, 1981); Colman O'Neill, *Sacramental Realism: A General Theory of Sacraments* (Wilmington: Wm. Glazier, 1983); R. Kevin Seasoltz, *New Liturgy, New Laws* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1980); Juan Luis Segundo, *The Sacraments Today.* Vol. Four: *A Theology for Artisans of a New Humanity,* trans., John Drury (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1975); Michael J. Taylor, ed., *The Sacraments: Readings in Contemporary Sacramental Theology* (New York: Alba House, 1981), Raymond Vaillancourt, *Toward a Renewal of Sacramental Theology,* trans., Matthew O'Connell (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1979); George S. Worgul, *From Magic To Metaphor: A Validation of the Christian Sacraments* (New York/Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1980).

away from the traditionally expressed synthesis of *de sacramentis in genere* to a new theology of the sacraments framed in terms of personalist and existential philosophies and centering on Christ as the primary and fundamental sign (sacrament) of God's love as experienced in the life of the Church (also itself a sacrament of the presence of God). In this new theology the language of ontology generally yielded to that of encounter and union. In addition the distinctive moments of the mystery of redemption in Christ—his life, passion, death and resurrection— were seen as unified in the one mystery of redemption, a mystery experienced in a privileged way through the sacramental life of the community of Christ, the Church.[1] What O'Connell offered as the new insights of sacramental thinking in 1965 may be said to be the working assumptions and foundation for much of the work represented in recent literature on sacraments.

Precisely these points are at the heart of Raymond Vaillancourt's *Toward a Renewal of Sacramental Theology*. After a sketchy account of the liturgical renewal and a set of questions which liturgy poses for the discipline of sacramental theology, a consideration of the relationship of Christology, ecclesiology and anthropology to sacraments forms the central part of this book. Fielding a synthesis of sorts, Vaillancourt reiterates his basic thesis that sacraments are signs: of a Church which reveals, actualizes, and celebrates the revelation of God, of Christ, who through the Church reveals, makes real and celebrates the mystery of God as incarnate in humanity, and of human persons who discover who God is, who allow themselves to be transformed by God, and who celebrate the mystery of God in communion with the Christian assembly (123). While there is little that is original in Vaillancourt's discussion (and one might well criticize some over-simplification in his review of the historical evolution of the liturgy and sacramental theology) his book contains some helpful pastoral applications inspired by the theology of the sacraments (especially with reference to the requirements for sacraments, 81-83).

In a more strictly theological vein the developments summarized by O'Connell are deepened and explored in two essays by Kenan

[1] Matthew O'Connell, "New Perspectives in Sacramental Theology," *Worship* (1965), 196-206.

Osborne: "Methodology and Christian Sacraments," in a collection edited by Michael Taylor, and "Jesus as Human Expression of the Divine Presence: Toward a New Incarnation of the Sacraments" in a volume edited by Francis Eigo. In "Methodology and Christian Sacraments" Osborne provides a good account of the place of the humanity of Christ in sacramental activity and offers helpful ways of expanding a too restricted notion of sacraments based on the "human phenomenon" involved in sacraments. Christ's humanity is *the* sign of God's self-communication to us; it is the "original sacrament." The Church, as the extension of Christ, is the "ground sacrament." He states: "The basis of a christological approach is this: only within the context of the humanness of Jesus as the original sacrament does the sacramentality of the Church take on meaning and reality, and only within the context of the twofold sacramentality of the humanness of Christ and the Church itself do the individual sacraments find their significance and function" (46). Further, the thrust of the phenomenological approach "is to focus on a wider dimension of interpersonal activity than that circumscribed by a particular sacrament" (48).

If Osborne's first essay is a good starting point for considering the renewal of method in sacramental theology, his second specifies better the interrelationships of the Christological and phenomenological aspects. Sacramentality always involves a relational factor: a sacrament is always *of* something *for* someone. It in is this sense that Christ may be said to be the sacrament of God's active love *for* all people. Relying heavily on Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Ricoeur (among others) Osborne discusses the notion of "Christ as sacrament," and offers significant questions and observations which clarify this over-used tag. "The hypostatic union means more than mere relationship; it means that the relationship between the humanness of Jesus and the divine dimension is constitutive of the very humanness of Jesus" (52-3). "The real presence of Jesus . . . comprises both the real presence of Jesus' humanness as a phenomenon: he reveals himself to others from himself; but also his real presence as appearance, or the manifestation and announcement of that order which cannot come directly into revealment" (53). Since human reality is fundamentally bodily reality and often operates at an unthematized, non-reflected, non-verbal, pre-

or un-conscious level, these aspects cannot be excluded from the real bodily presence of Jesus's humanity. It is this presence that is operative in sacraments. Since sacramental reality has been expanded to include the humanities of Jesus and the Church itself (notions he treats with some precision) Osborne argues that the scholastic definition of sacrament based on sign and cause is inadequate. Osborne's contribution to the discussion is to consider the meaning of the sacramentality of Christ and the Church in the context of an understanding of the sacraments that is fundamentally phenomenological in orientation.

That the notion of Christ as sacrament can be reviewed and clarified from a biblical perspective is the thesis of Donald Senior's essay in the Eigo collection entitled " God's Creative Word at Work in Our Midst: The Mystery/Sacrament of Divine Love from Genesis to Jesus." Treating the Logos in John's Gospel in the light of the biblical understanding of the creative word and of the intervention of God in history, Senior contends that " the cosmic stature of Jesus Christ and his roots in creation and history ensure that this Johannine view of the world is 'sacramental.' All of created reality and all of human history ultimately reveal a God of love because at the center of that world is Jesus, God's only Son. And, therefore, access to this bracing vision is through faith in Jesus " (21). This vision is shaped and shared in the celebration of the sacraments.

To the important essays by Osborne and Senior, Edward Kilmartin adds a significant contribution in this collection in " A Modern Approach to the Word of God and Sacraments of Christ: Perspectives and Principles." Kilmartin argues persuasively that " strictly speaking, the Church is not the continuation of the Incarnation as such. There is a world of difference between the personalization of the human reality by the Logos in the Incarnation and the gathering of a New People into Christ through the Spirit " (68). Hence, the Christocentrism of some contemporary writing on sacraments is brought into relief and adjusted by a greater (and necessary) emphasis on the relationship between Logos and Spirit Christology and the role of the Spirit in sacraments, as experienced in the Church through Christ. This essay clarifies the relationship of Christology, ecclesiology and anthropology to sacraments by delving more deeply into the tradition of the Church's experience

and teaching on sacraments, especially because "partial syntheses of theologians of the first rank are being substituted by their followers for the more comprehensive, if imperfect, scholastic treatise" (63). Kilmartin focuses accurately on the limitations as well as the contribution of the traditional synthesis of sacramental theology and attempts to amplify the important classical categories.

Another author who would like to recover some of the depth of the former synthesis is Colman O'Neill. While offering helpful explanations and corrections of Aquinas's sacramental theology in his *Sacramental Realism* O'Neill is critical of newer approaches. With regard to the place of Christ, the Church, and human involvement in sacraments, he favors the objective language and categories found in the Thomistic synthesis.

While some recent treatments of the sacraments may have overplayed or misused what O'Connell termed new perspectives on sacramental theology, the kind of work by authors like Kilmartin and Osborne show how significant these perspectives can be for sacramental theology.

II

Five years ago Monika Hellwig reviewed the state of sacramental theology and maintained that this branch of theology in the narrower sense had disappeared.[2] Hellwig's evaluation touched on a number of theological and liturgical areas. She maintained that sacramental theology was influenced by contemporary notions of grace, by rediscovery of the wider historical and cultural context of the theological enterprise,[3] by inquiry into the theological and liturgical meaning of the rituals themselves, by developments in the understanding of ministry, by the significant (though comparatively recent) advances in ecumenical dialogue, and by questions about the relation of sacraments to the lives of the participants. Hellwig thus identified many of the issues contained in the literature under review.

[2] Monika K. Hellwig, "New Understanding of the Sacraments," *Commonweal* 105 (June 16, 1978), 375-80.

[3] An attempt to situate the Thomistic teaching on sacraments (of initiation) within an historical and liturgical context is Nathan Mitchell, "Dissolution of the Rite of Christian Initiation," in *Made, Not Born: New Perspectvies on Christian Imitation* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1976), pp. 50-82.

Recent developments in the theology of grace have influenced sacramental theology. Specifically a re-examination of the relationship between the sacred and the secular [4] and an emphasis on the immediacy of the divine presence in the situations of human life have led to approaches to sacramental activity which ground the human encounter with God in ordinary situations of daily life. As Michael Taylor writes in introducing his collection of essays:

> Grace is not only or mainly effected in the sacraments; grace "happens" wherever human life is lived and celebrated authentically. This is not to say authenticity is endemic to the nature we inherit from Adam. No, our humanity needs redemption, it needs grace. We must be born again of the second Adam where grace abounds. But human nature *has been redeemed* and grace in Christ is always available to it (ix-x).

Essays by Rahner (especially), Crichton, Empereur, and Osborne exemplify an approach to sacraments inspired by this understanding of grace.

There are some difficulties with this approach to grace and sacraments. The incarnation and the redemption of all humanity in Christ do not entail that all of human life is free from sin and exempt from evil. One ought to avoid an overly-optimistic view of humankind after the Incarnation, even of that part baptized into Christ. Sacraments clearly help in the disclosure and discovery of the relationship between the human and the divine, and the state of redemption in Christ. We need to experience the sacredness, power and mystery of God through and in Christ in the sacramental rites themselves, for in these actions we grow in the life of God, in grace.

The work of Kilmartin is a model of the kind of method that should be employed for understanding the larger context within which the traditional treatises on sacraments should be placed. Among other areas of sacramental theology his consideration of the number of the sacraments is a good example of this method.[5]

[4] This point is repeatedly stressed in Karl Rahner's approach to sacraments; see, "Considerations of the Active Role of the Person in the Sacramental Event," in *Theological Investigations*, Vol. XIV, trans., David Bourke, (New York: Seabury, 1976) 161-184

[5] See E. Kilmartin "A Modern Approach . . .," pp. 79-93.

Other writers—like Joseph Martos and Tad Guzie—react to the restrictiveness of the parameters of sacramental theology and want to establish new contours for the discipline. While Martos deals extensively with individual sacraments in the major part of his work, the introductory section on " sacraments in all religions " (9-29) and his conclusion on " sacraments and the future " (527-531) contain overly facile judgments implying that whatever leads to the sacred (and therefore is a " sacred door ") is sacramental. Martos appeals to the work of Eliade and van Gennep at this point, but the reader would be well-advised to consult the originals themselves to discover more helpful ways of approaching Christian sacraments. In addition, the book is flawed in its main section because of oversimplifications of the theology and historical evolution of sacraments. For example, when speaking about initiation Martos emphasizes the theology of infant baptism and speaks in less theological and more liturgical terms (in describing the rite) of adult initiation. The bibliography on initiation is largely preconciliar and notably neglects to cite Aidan Kavanagh's *The Shape of Baptism* and Hugh Riley's *Christian Initiation.* In the section on the Eucharist Martos is content to repeat oversimplifications about " Catholic " and " Lutheran " doctrines on real presence and sacrifice without acknowledging the significant advances in historical research (both in Europe and in the United States) in delineating more accurately the areas of real disagreement and convergence. Reference to the published results of official ecumenical dialogues on the eucharist is conspicuously absent. Also, to draw attention to Jungmann's *The Mass* as opposed to *Missarum Sollemnia* is curious precisely because some have observed that the former is unrefined in its treatment of the relationship between eucharist and sacrifice.[6] The absence of footnotes and clear documentation throughout diminish the usefulness of Martos's book as a presentation of sacramental theology.

If Martos can be faulted for a selective use of historical studies of the sacraments, Guzie ought to be chided for the barest review of them. Indeed, Guzie is so concerned with emphasizing the " human dimensions " of sacraments that at times, like Martos, he offers an approach to these sacred realities that differs from what can be

[6] See, for example, the review of Nathan Mitchell, *National Catholic Reporter,* October 15, 1976, 13.

regarded as a recognized form of sacramental theology. Guzie's " definition " of a sacrament is very general. In it he avoids the notion of seven rites of the Church and neglects the important role of the Spirit in both liturgical celebration and theological elaboration. Guzie states: " A sacrament is a festive action in which Christians assemble to celebrate their lived experience and to call to heart their common story. The action is a symbol of God's care for us in Christ. Enacting the symbol brings us closer to one another in the Church and to the Lord who is there for us " (53). The language offered here contains implicit reference to Guzie's overall intention: to provide a popularized and catechetical approach to the sacraments. But the craft of religious education is better served by a more substantial approach to the issues Guzie raises. To reduce the question of the number of sacraments to a situation where we find it " more useful to think in terms of sacramental categories " (66) and then naming them initiation, the breaking, healing and ministry is unique.[7] This approach to the number of sacraments coupled with Guzie's definition and an overly horizontal notion of grace are among the most significant defects in a book treating " sacramental basics." In delineating the bases of a contemporary approach to sacramental theology one ought also be more careful about the historical evolution and the meaning of the Church's sacramental rites themselves.

For examples of an historical approach to determining the wider context within which to evaluate the traditional understanding of sacraments, the essays by Aidan Kavanagh and Charles Gusmer on initiation and anointing in the Taylor collection (81-94; 225-240) are helpful. Although briefer, the essays by Jared Wicks on marriage (183-191) and Zoltan Alszeghy on penance (217-224) are equally insightful and useful. Indeed even from a pastoral point of view Alszeghy's paper offers more substance and insight than Guzie's contribution on penance in the same volume.

Another aspect of the Church's traditional teaching on the sacraments that helps fill out its wider context is that provided by the study of Canon Law relating to the sacraments. While many con-

[7] For an example of a skillful handling of the Church's tradition on sacraments see Yves Congar, " The Notion of 'Major' or 'Principal' Sacraments," *Concilium*, Vol. 31, *The Sacraments in General* (New York/Glen Rock: Paulist Press, 1967), pp. 21-32. This essay is particularly helpful when dealing with the ecumenical issue of the number of sacraments.

temporary treatments ignore Canon Law (as do most works cited here) a real contribution toward developing a contemporary synthesis relating Canon Law and the theology of the sacraments is offered by Kevin Seasoltz in *New Liturgy, New Laws.* After providing a brief review of the liturgical movement from World War II to Vatican II, Seasoltz describes the postconciliar implementation of the reformed liturgical rites. In what are particularly trenchant chapters Seasoltz delineates the canonical significance of conciliar, papal, and curial pronouncements (169-181), the contemporary agenda for sacramental and liturgical reform in liturgical adaptation, indigenization, and particular law (182-201) and the important pastoral principles involved in "fidelity to law and fidelity to pastoral needs" (202-211). The book's conclusion contains an extensive bibliography on liturgy, Canon Law and sacramental theology. Seasoltz states: "In order that the official documents of liturgical renewal might be situated in their proper theological and historical context, and consequently be more accurately interpreted, the following pages seek to provide an overview of significant theological and historical developments in the liturgy during the years that immediately preceded, spanned, and followed the Second Vatican Council" (5). Seasoltz has admirably succeeded in accomplishing what he set out to do. The combination of juridical, liturgical and theological aspects of the sacraments as revised by the Council combined with Seasoltz's careful approach to their integration makes this a uniquely valuable book.

While Seasoltz has accomplished a formidable task for the postconciliar era, other theologians and liturgists have been at work at trying to recover and underscore the relationship between liturgy and sacramental theology: *lex orandi, lex credendi.* Besides the earlier cited essay by Kilmartin, there are unfortunately only sketchy efforts toward this end contained in the books under review. Others engaged in this recovery include Aidan Kavanagh,[8] Geoffrey Wainwright,[9] David Power,[10] and Peter Fink.[11] Although

[8] *The Shape of Baptism* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Co., 1978).

[9] *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine and Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980). See also David N. Power, "Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life," *Worship* 55 (1981), 61-69.

[10] *Ministers of Christ and his Church: The Theology of the Priesthood* (London: G. Chapman, 1969). See also, "Cult to Culture: The Liturgical Foundation of

there is as yet no consensus about the way to express the relation of liturgy to sacramental theology, the insights gained from each can contribute to an integral theological understanding.[12] These efforts (mostly on individual sacraments) offer hope that continued progress will be made to join these disciplines in a systematic approach to sacramental theology.

When liturgy is taken seriously as a starting point for developing sacramental theology, such factors as myth, symbol, gesture, ritual, language and communication come to the fore as matters deserving inquiry and attention. In dealing with such issues George Worgul in *From Magic to Metaphor* relies on the writings of Husserl, Blondel, Lonergan, Tracy, Erikson, Brinkmann and Fransen among others. Worgul's contribution is more methodological than synthetic. But some authors are treated so summarily that only some acquaintance with primary sources will permit the reader to assess Worgul's appeal to other works. Even Worgul's conclusion "Celebration: Toward a Revised Sacramental Model" (201-222) is better explicated by his mentor Fransen.[13] The book's main defect is that the findings of other disciplines are juxtaposed rather than integrated with sacramental/liturgical method.

A similar juxtaposition of disciplines without sufficient integration weakens Regis Duffy's *Real Presence*.[14] Asking "why is there so much worship and so little commitment?" (xii) Duffy uses "life-cycle" and "faith stages" research to understand the pheno-

Theology," *Worship* 54 (1980), 482-495; "Two Expressions of Faith: Worship and Theology," in *Liturgical Experience of Faith,* Concilium, Vol. 82 (New York: Herder and Herder, 1973), 95-103; "Unripe Grapes: The Critical Function of Liturgical Theology," *Worship* 52 (1978), 386-399.

[11] See, for example, "The Sacrament of Orders: Some Liturgical Reflections," *Worship* 56 (1982), 482-502.

[12] Evidence of this is the fact that at the January, 1983, Meeting of the North American Academy of Liturgy Geoffrey Wainwright gave an address on liturgical theology which was followed by responses by Aidan Kavanagh (RC), David Power (RC), Frank Senn (Lutheran) and Lionel Mitchell (Episcopalian).

[13] See Piet Fransen, "Sacraments as Celebrations," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 43 (1976), 151-170.

[14] Much of what is contained in this book is found in a summary form in his essay in the Eigo volume "At Table With Jesus: Sharing? Remembering? Thanksgiving? Dying? Obeying? Living? Sending?", pp. 111-142. In many ways a better statement of the issues covered in the book; especially well argued are the sections on justification and understanding *ex opere operato.*

mena involved. While the work of Fowler and Erikson can contribute to the study of the sacraments precisely because their methodology encourages us to deal with the sacraments as experienced phenomena, their findings are much controverted within their own discipline and hence afford less than secure bases to support a challenging or innovative approach to sacramental practice. Furthermore, Duffy is so concerned to elicit verifiable responses from those engaged in sacraments that he clearly downplays the obvious notion that liturgical celebration is always for the imperfect who need to renew commitments and covenants offered by God "again and again." [15] To be sure, the author relies on scriptural evidence (largely as interpreted by German exegetes) and liturgical rites to support a pastoral approach to the sacraments. Duffy's discussion of self-justification (chapter 2) and presence (chapter 4) is helpful in this regard.

Where former systematic treatments of sacrament emphasized the role and presence of a validly ordained minister for sacramental validity, recent treatments speak more often about the community which celebrates and (where treated at all) the functions of the ordained on behalf of the assembled community at worship. Few of the authors reviewed here have taken on the responsibility of evaluating the traditional notions of *in persona Christi/ecclesiae*—matters closely bound up with sacramental theory and practice and clearly requiring attention. Guzie offers the following inadequate generalization: "Originally the sacrament of orders referred to one's belonging to a collegial body which has a particular ministry in the church" (which ministry is left unexplained or unexplored) and "in the middle ages" an individual was set apart at ordination and given the "power to forgive sins and make Christ present at Mass" (68). He then goes on to describe other forms of ministry meriting attention in sacramental theology today. Generalizations which neglect to account for the role of the ordained ministry leave a vacuum which gets filled by the individualism of assumptions with "power" as a dominant notion,[16] or by a sense of

[15] However, Duffy does offer a disclaimer later in the book which tempers some of the bite in his major thesis; he states "we are not discussing the commitment of perfect people, but the need of imperfect people to be committed" (134).

[16] On the question of the relationship of "power" to ministerial structures in the Catholic Church see David N. Power, "Sacraments: Symbolizing God's Power

mission and ministry totally separate from notions of ordination or validity.

Fortunately, Kilmartin presents a balanced synthesis in which the community of the Spirit is seen as the locus in considering the ordained who acts, according to the tradition of Catholic sacramental teaching, *in persona Christi*. Kilmartin states: "As servant and representative of the one Church which exists in many places, he represents in a special way Christ who is the source of the unity of the Church. But he does so since he acts in the name of the whole Church united in faith and love" (92). "Since the sealing of the Spirit makes possible the active participation of all members of the Church, the priest can function only as a concrete sign of the faith of the whole community" (91). Again, a synthetic essay like Kilmartin's offers a helpful way to begin a reconsideration of the theology of ministry and its relation to sacramental theology in general.[17]

An emphasis which characterizes recent writing in sacramental theology concerns the impact of liturgical rituals on the celebrating communities and the requirements of adult Christian education in sacramental life. The pastoral import and meaning of sacramental activity are clearly the central focus of Vaillancourt's work as well as Duffy's. But among the works under discussion here Juan Segundo's is the one most concerned with the meaning of liturgy for the community arising from the experience of adult formation programs. The structure of his book shows the pedagogical intent where theory is joined with "clarifications" in the text and the appendices contain questions for discussion and a collection of pertinent texts from the Second Vatican Council as resources. This volume is one of five—each with the same format and aim—to come out of the Peter Faber Center of Montevideo. Segundo argues repeatedly that sacraments are means, not ends in themselves. "A community gathered around a liberative paschal message needs signs which fashion it and question it, which imbue it with a sense of responsibility and enable it to create its own word about man's history. This is precisely what the sacraments are—

in the Church," *Proceedings of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Convention*, Catholic Theological Society of America 37 (1982), 50-54, 65-66.

[17] See Kilmartin's insightful commentary on *Dominicae Cenae*, the 1980 Holy Thursday Letter of Pope John Paul II: *Church, Eucharist and Priesthood* (NY/Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1981).

and nothing else but that. Through them God grants and signifies to the Church the grace which is to constitute it truly as such within the vast human community" (99).

The ecclesiological foundation for Segundo's approach is the *communidades de base.* An overriding pastoral concern throughout tries to break down the sacred/secular dichotomy that, he maintains, has plagued much conventional understanding of sacraments and ecclesiology. His communitarian and theological foundations are helpful and appropriate. But his approach to sacraments is ultimately too functional. Further, there are difficulties with substituting the category of "liberation" derived from sacraments for the category "efficacious" to avoid inappropriately magical notions of God, grace and the Church. He states:

> The Christian sacrament is not made for our "spare time." It is a rhythmic, dialectical dimension of societal and historical activity. It is the community's way of reactivating and deepening our interpretation of, and commitment to, the historical process geared toward man's liberation" (59).

Are not sacraments also meant to lead their recipients to encounter the mystery of God through Christ in the Spirit? Are they not also moments of grace in and through which we are sought by God and in seeking Him are endowed again with God's life, justice and peace? At times Segundo is so swept up with a functional and pedagogical approach to sacraments (largely remedial in content) that other equally important dimensions are obscured. Hence, while generally helpful as a corrective in a pastoral situation plagued by quasi-magical notions of the sacraments, Segundo's work needs qualification. Furthermore, in using the documents of Vatican II as important sources for education, the author seems one-sided in that he most often quotes *Gaudium et Spes* and only rarely mentions *Lumen Gentium* or *Sacrosanctum Concilium.* In addition, Segundo can be faulted for offering a static notion of liturgy and sacraments where (apparently) fixed and unchanging rituals are to be used to engender greater attentiveness to Christian living or to tasks of liberation. This is all the more disappointing in a work from Latin America where important advances in liturgical acculturation and indigenization have occurred. Segundo's work would have benefited from the recent research being done on "popular religion" and the relationship between sacra-

ments and "rites of passage" in various cultures. Liturgists and sacramental theologians are coming to understand that what may well have been called non-liturgical devotions or "superstitious" rites in fact disclose areas of piety and devotion that ought to be appreciated and understood. Hence Segundo's opening section on processions and popular approaches to baptism (3-7) might well have been more nuanced and the faith and devotion of those participating more obviously respected and explored.

III

Clearly the observations and predictions of both O'Connell and Hellwig about contemporary approaches to the sacraments have proven to be prophetic. Conventional sacramental theology has to some extent been transcended, opening the way (as evidenced in the works reviewed) for newer approaches to the study of sacraments. This is not to say that the evolution of the discipline of sacramental theology has led to a new synthesis. Hence there can be no summary of "contemporary sacramental theology." What is offered by way of conclusion is a sketch of the elements that ought to be included in a contemporary approach to sacramental method.

Respect for and deep probing of the Church's *tradition* of teaching on the sacraments must play an essential part in such a synthesis. This would include emphasis on scriptural and liturgical data as primary foundations both for the experience of the sacraments and for their meaning in the life of the Church. A careful review of the historical evolution of sacramental rites and theories is an essential here. Clearly the elaborations of sacramental theology in the patristic era and in the Thomistic synthesis deserve careful exploration.

Closely allied with the place of the tradition is a renewed understanding of the relationship between sacramental and other areas of theology, specifically the theology of the Trinity, of the Church, of grace and of eschatology. Eschatology has enjoyed a certain revival in recent work on sacraments [18] but it certainly ought to be more emphasized in the future. Recent emphases in ecclesiology

[18] The work of G. Wainwright is useful in this regard: *Eucharist and Eschatology* (London: Epworth Press, 1971). For the Thomistic approach to this aspect of sacraments see *ST* 3a, 61, 3-4.

and in particular on the theology of the universal Church as a communion of local churches are welcome indeed and ought to find a place in delineating the ecclesiology of sacraments. Also, the role of the Trinity (as distinct from that of Christ alone) in sacraments requires greater attention as does the kind of pneumatology proposed by such authors as Mühlen.[19]

Given the important place which varying philosophical frameworks have played in the elaboration of sacramental theology, greater attention to a "relational ontology"[20] as well as an orthopraxis approach to sacraments is important today.[21] In addition, the disciplines of anthropology, sociology and psychology deserve a prominent place in considering sacramental method.[22] With regard to the liturgical dimension of sacramental theology, pride of place ought to be given to the theology of the Word,[23] as well as to symbol,[24] ritual,[25] myth, language,[26] and metaphor.[27] Where

[19] *Una Mystica persona: Die Kirche als das Mysterium der Identität des Heiligen Geistes in Christus und den Christen: Eine Person in vielen Personen* (Munich: F. Schoningh, 1967).

[20] I am indebted to E. Kilmartin for this term.

[21] See Stephen Happel, "The 'Bent World': Sacrament As Orthopraxis," *Proceedings of the Twenty-Fifth Annual Convention,* Catholic Theological Society of America 35 (1980), 88-101.

[22] See, among others, Matthias Neuman, "Self-Identity, Symbol, and Imagination: Some Implications of Their Interaction for Christian Sacramental Theology," *Studia Anselmiana 64, Sacramentum 2: Symbolisme et Théologie* (Rome: Editrice Anselmiana, 1974), 91-123, and Bernard Bro, "Man and the Sacraments: The Anthropological Substructure of the Christian Sacraments," in *The Sacraments in General, Concilium* Vol. 31 (New York: Paulist Press, 1967), pp. 33-50.

[23] For a helpful approach that offers a way to deal with sacramental issues ecumenically from the perspective of the Word see Karl Rahner, "What is a Sacrament?" *Worship* 47 (1973), 274-284.

[24] For a particularly helpful liturgical and dogmatic approach see David N. Power, "Symbolism in Worship: A Survey," *The Way* 13 (1973), 310-325; 14 (1974), 57-66; 15 (1975), 55-64; 15 (1975), 137-146.

[25] Many liturgists rely on the work of Victor Turner in this regard. For an evaluation of this approach see Mary Collins, "Ritual Sylmbols and the Ritual Process; The Word of Victor Turner," *Worship* 50 (1976), 336-346.

[26] See Herbert McCabe, "Sacramental Language," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 43 (1976), 91-203; S. Happel, 'Orthopraxis;" William Shea, "Sacraments and Meaning," *American Ecclesiastical Review* 169 (1975), 82-89; and Peter Fink, "Three Languages of Christian Sacraments," *Worship* 52 (November, 1978), 561 575.

[27] See Mark Searle, "Liturgy as Metaphor," *Worship* 55 (1981), 98-120.

these latter components of the liturgical experience have been recently revived for systematic study by liturgists their relationship to sacramental theology should not be downplayed. In addition, the dimensions of liturgical ministry and ministries and the role of the ordained need to be incorporated into a systematic elaboration of sacraments. The fact that liturgy essentially involves an appreciation of the biblical categories of "actualization" of the paschal mystery (as opposed to the somewhat problematical "reenactment" or even "representation") and that this notion involves memorial and corporate identification ought to be emphasized as well.[28] The emphasis, in contemporary liturgical reform, on the variety of the presence(s) of Christ should find a prominent place in sacramental theory The relation of Canon Law to sacramental theology, especially for understanding what is enshrined in by the new Code of Canon Law, requires systematic reflection.[29]

The ecumenical context and agenda for the Roman Catholic Church ought to be clearly evident lest sacraments be regarded as Roman Catholic experiences alone (if only by default), or ecumenism be undertaken as an isolated study. The directives of the Decree on Ecumenism of Vatican II,[30] the valuable contribution of recent bilateral consultations on sacraments,[31] and the worldwide agenda of ecumenism evident in multilateral consultations should be acknowledged and underscored.[32]

That sacramental theology involves persons who ought to be ever more deeply committed to living the Christian life requires that the spirituality of sacraments be a factor in developing sacramental theology. Recent work provides a spur to relocating liturgy and ritual within the important context of living the Christian

[28] For an early, though still helpful, approach to relating these insights to the theology of sacraments see Bastiaan van Iersel, "Some Biblical Roots of the Christian Sacrament," *Concilium* 31, *The Sacraments,* 5-20.

[29] See Michael J. Himes, "The Current State of Sacramental Theology as a Background to the New Code," *Canon Law Society of American Proceedings* 42 (1980), 60-77.

[30] Decree on Ecumenism, nos. 10-11.

[31] See, among others, the texts of agreement and position papers from the American Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue: Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry.

[32] See the "Lima Statement" of the World Council of Churches, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry,* Faith and Order Paper No. 111 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982).

life.[33] With regard to the more strictly pastoral aspects of sacraments, the notions of conversion and commitment signified in sacraments need to be addressed. More urgent and specific is the question of the relationship between faith and sacrament and the presuppositions (and "requirements") for appropriate sacramental involvement, in order to avoid both rigorism and leniency in the administration of the sacraments.[34] Essential in reviewing the faith/sacrament problematic is a theological point of view so that what is intended by and signified in sacraments is made the focus in discussions of "readiness" and not merely acceptable standards for coming to and celebrating these sacred rites.

The works reviewed here attest to a growing interest in and seriousness about sacraments, and to a widening horizon within which to do sacramental theology.

KEVIN W. IRWIN

Fordham University
Bronx, New York

[33] See, for example, Mark Searle, ed., *Liturgy and Social Justice* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1981).

[34] With regard to the issue of faith and sacrament in initiation see Francis J. Buckley, "The Right to the Sacraments of Initiation," *Catholic Mind* 77 (1979), 17-37; Paul Vanbergen, "The Baptism of Infants of 'non satis credentes' Parents," *Studia Liturgica* 12 (1977), 195-200. For an approach to other sacraments besides initiation using the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults as a model for how to deal with the faith-sacrament question see "To Speak of Sacraments and Faith Renewal," Rochester Diocesan Guidelines, *Origins* 10 (1981), 673-688.

BOOK REVIEWS

Collected Philosophical Papers. By G. E. M. ANSCOMBE. University of Minnesota Press, 1981. Vol. I: *From Parmenides to Wittgenstein.* Pp. 141. $25.00 cloth; $9.95 paper. Vol. II: *Metaphysics and the Philosophy of Mind.* Pp. 239. $32.50 cloth; $11.95 paper. Vol. III: *Ethics, Religion and Politics.* Pp. 161. $27.50 cloth; $10.95 paper.

For some time now Elizabeth Anscombe has been a major figure in the world of British philosophy. She was born in 1919. She studied at Oxford, where she took a First in Greats. Later she taught at Oxford; and in 1970 she became Professor of Philosophy at Cambridge University. It is hard for any generation of philosophers to know which of its members will be read and admired in years to come. I should suppose, however, that Professor Anscombe's work stands a fair chance of surviving for a long time to come. It is often arresting, illuminating, and profound. It is less tied to contemporary debates than is the work of many modern writers. And its range of interest is surprisingly wide. Professor Anscombe has made important contributions to the study of the history of philosophy. And she has things to say of philosophy of mind, philosophy of action, causation, ethics, and religion. We are also indebted to her for helping to make available much of Wittgenstein's writings, few of which were published in his lifetime.

So we must be grateful for the appearance of these *Collected Philosophical Papers.* And the volumes are especially welcome since they bring together, for the first time, the bulk of Professor Anscombe's literary output. She is the single author of only two short books: *Intention* (Oxford, 1957), and *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus* (London, 1959). The rest of her work has so far been scattered in various collections and periodicals. Having so much of it together, as we now have, will help a lot of people who want to get to know it in a convenient way.

Presumably because of her role as one of Wittgenstein's literary executors, Professor Anscombe is commonly and primarily associated with Wittgenstein. And readers of Wittgenstein will quickly note 'family resemblances' between his work and that of Professor Anscombe. But I do not see that she needs to be called a 'Wittgensteinian', as she has been called by some. The label suggests a shared doctrine, or set of doctrines, while Professor Anscombe is clearly prepared to tread where Witt-

genstein could not. And if she shares anything with Wittgenstein (who was her friend and teacher) it is more a method or style of philosophizing than anything else. Both have an almost child-like capacity to be struck by apparently simple questions, which they pursue in a way that shows how difficult some simple questions can be. And both seem keenly aware that philosophical loose-ends cannot always be tidied up, that there are always more questions, that philosophical systems can be deceptive. There is plenty of argument in Wittgenstein and Professor Anscombe; but one would be hard-pressed to find in the work of either a neat and polished world-view. And so it is, indeed, with many of the greatest philosophers. Any responsible teacher of philosophy will realize how hard it is to summarize the positions of the really important philosophers of the past. In dealing with these, in attempting to expound them, one is fighting to do justice to the subtlety and imagination of people whose thoughts are often moving backwards and forwards in fits and starts. Even such an apparently tidy thinker as Descartes is arguing with himself as he goes along. And his own assessment of the strength of his competing arguments is something his interpreters need to bring out. The ability to succeed in this area is itself the sign of philosophical competence, and it is significant that, in a recent *Festschrift* in honor of Professor Anscombe, Anthony Kenny declares: "One thing which I learned from reading Wittgenstein with Miss Anscombe was to have an enormous respect for the genius of Descartes" (*Intention and Intentionality*, ed. Cora Diamond and Jenny Teichman, Brighton, 1979).

Descartes, in fact, gets little mention in the present collection, though his view that 'this I' is not a body is considered in 'The First Person' (Vol. II), which offers the suggestion that 'I' is not a referring expression. But several of Professor Anscombe's papers do show how sensitive she can be to the way in which philosophers are not easily pigeon-holed since they are wrestling with puzzles rather than laying down a series of dogmas. A good example is 'The Question of Linguistic Idealism' (Vol. I), which is an admirable antidote to the simplistic assertion, so often made, that Wittgenstein was just a 'relativist'. Professor Anscombe indicates why "we should not regard the struggling investigations of *On Certainty* as all saying the same thing" (p. 130), though they sometimes seem to be doing just this. And she shows how Wittgenstein's statements move in what is often called a 'conventionalist' direction, without it being true that Wittgenstein can be called, without qualification, a relativist. Her argument is that Wittgenstein steered clear of 'linguistic idealism', which she describes as the view that essence depends on (is created or constituted entirely by) linguistic facts. 'Essence is expressed by grammar. But we can conceive of different concepts, i.e. of language without the same grammar. People using this would then not be using language

whose grammar expressed the same essences. However, they might not thereby be missing anything that we realize' (p. 115). That is what Professor Anscombe wants to say, and she takes this conclusion to be neither idealistic nor crudely empiricist. Her procedure, then, is to show that the conclusion was accepted by Wittgenstein and can be seen to emerge in *On Certainty*. And this is true. In *On Certainty* it is not said that 'the language game' guarantees that one knows something; but specific possibilities of being right or wrong also appear to be seen as only intelligible in the light of suppositions, or beliefs, or what is agreed to be known, which may not be universally accepted.

In her Introduction to Volume II, Professor Anscombe explains that her 'first strenuous interest in philosophy was in the topic of causation". As I have indicated, this interest has remained with Professor Anscombe, and it ought now to be said that its fruits are well displayed in her papers, especially in "Causality and Determination", "Times, Beginnings and Causes" (both in Vol. II), and "'Whatever has a Beginning of Existence must have a Cause: Hume's Argument Exposed'" (Vol. I). These, too, are usefully exegetical (largely with respect to Hume); but I should argue that their main value lies in the fact that they establish some substantial points about causation which have been widely ignored or unseen. Professor Anscombe shows, for instance, that statements like '*A* was caused by *B*' are not necessarily true (not true of necessity) because, or are not intelligible only on the assumption that, some general law holds, or because some general laws hold, in accordance with which *A* must follow given *B*. The contrary view, which admittedly has been variously expressed, is deeply embedded in philosophical writings and in ways of talking not exclusively associated with philosophers. But it is very questionable since, for example, as Professor Anscombe argues, (a) one can understand a causal statement without knowing that some necessity accounts for the statement being true, (b) to identify causation with necessitation is to ignore the fact that 'causality consists in the derivativeness of an effect from its causes' (Vol. II, p. 136), (c) to believe that all events are determined by antecedent conditions is gratuitously to suppose a theory of determinism as a tool for helping one correctly to describe what happens, and (d) an effect may be produced by a particular cause, but this does not show that "it could not, or would not, have been produced by something else in the absence of this cause" (Vol. II, p. 145). Professor Anscombe also shows why one can challenge the view that something can begin to exist without a cause. She tellingly asks how one can know that something which one says has begun to exist somewhere has in fact *begun* to exist at that place (Vol. II, pp. 160 ff.). Hume may be interpreted as arguing that something can begin to exist without a cause since one can "imagine something's coming into existence without a cause". But, as

Professor Anscombe rightly observes this argument is just unconvincing: "For if I say I can imagine a rabbit coming into being without a parent rabbit, well and good: I imagine a rabbit coming into being, and our observing that there is no parent rabbit about. But what am I to imagine if I imagine a rabbit coming into being without a cause? Well, I just imagine a rabbit appearing. That this *is* the imagination of a rabbit coming into being, and without a cause is nothing but, as it were, the *title* of the picture. Indeed I can form an image and give my picture that title. But from my being able to do *that*, nothing whatever follows about what is possible to suppose 'without contradiction or absurdity' as holding in reality" (Vol. I, p. 98).

These observations are, of course, relevant to well-known questions in natural theology. And Professor Anscombe's comments on causation have, in fact, been used by natural theologians in defence of the rationality of belief in God. Thus, for example, William Lane Craig appeals to them in *The Kalām Cosmological Argument* (London, 1979), according to which the universe must have had a beginning in time, and this must have been caused by something analogous to a choosing person. Professor Anscombe does little herself to develop her thoughts in the direction of natural theology, and this one can only regret. In "Times, Beginnings and Causes" she says that "the conception of a beginning of the world" leads one into an area of inquiry "where it is indeed very difficult not to flounder and flail about, gasping for breath and uncertain of talking sense" (Vol. II, p. 159). And this is true enough. But one can still wish that Professor Anscombe had done more than she has to flounder and flail in this perplexing area. She could so obviously do much to raise the reputation of philosophy of religion, modern writers on which commonly fall well below the philosophical standards set by Professor Anscombe. But she has not made much effort to publish in the field, and her self-confessedly religious papers in this collection are few and rather slight. These are "On Transubstantiation" and "Faith" (both in Volume III). The first was originally published as a C.T.S. pamphlet, and it certainly meets the demands of brevity and simplicity which must be met by such a work. But its tone is rather negative, and it would have been good to see Professor Anscombe meditating at some length, and in more positive or imaginative terms, on the Eucharistic symbolism and the significance of saying that Christ is present in the Eucharist. The paper on faith begins with some sour comments on recent statements by Roman Catholics (Professor Anscombe is herself a Roman Catholic), and then trails off into a not very helpful discussion of believing someone. Professor Anscombe writes of Christian faith as a matter of believing God, which is fair enough. But how can one get into the state of believing God? Professor Anscombe raises the question; yet nothing much comes of her doing so.

Here one would like to see her engaging with theologians who have written in depth about Christian faith, its nature and origin. I should particularly like to know how Professor Anscombe thinks we can determine what the Christian faith is.

But if Professor Anscombe cannot be judged to have contributed significantly to philosophy of religion, her contribution to moral philosophy has been notable. The present collection contains some of her thoughts on the subject, including those of "Modern Moral Philosophy", which is a very well-known paper, ahead of its times and firm in its rejection of the style of philosophizing about ethics prevalent in the work of British writers of the 1950's and earlier, and now under threat partly, I think, as a result of Professor Anscombe's influence, though effectively carried through by her husband, P. T. Geach, and by other writers like Philippa Foot, many of whose impressive essays are, incidentally, now available in a collection called *Virtues and Vices* (Oxford, 1978). Both Professor Anscombe and Mrs. Foot challenge the is/ought distinction (which is not a simple one) as it can be found in Hume and his successors, of which R. M. Hare is still the one with which to reckon most seriously (see his new book *Moral Thinking,* Oxford, 1981). And both Professor Anscombe and Mrs. Foot encourage us to attend to pre-Humean discussions and theories in which special attention is paid to the virtues. Professor Anscombe's view is that much moral thinking has been badly affected by a failure to observe the way in which "ought" is used outside a law-conception of ethics, remnants of which are unappreciated for what they are. "It is", she says, "as if the notion 'criminal' were to remain when criminal law and criminal courts had been abolished and forgotten" (Vol. III, p. 30). I think this is a particularly fruitful idea, and it is interesting to see how something like it seems to provide the impetus in Alasdair MacIntyre's *After Virtue* (London, 1981), which notes at the outset how "all those various concepts which inform our moral discourse were originally at home in larger totalities of theory supplied by contexts of which they have now been deprived" (p. 10). MacIntyre's arguments cannot be identified with those of Professor Anscombe; but her influence on his work is evident, and, at one point (p. 51), explicitly acknowledged.

There are many essays in this new collection of which I have said nothing. But the collection's general value should, I hope, be clear. Yet prospective readers of Professor Anscombe need to be warned that she is often hard to follow, and that studying her may sometimes prove an effort. Even professional philosophers have acknowledged this fact, as, for example, does Mary Tiles in a review of Professor Anscombe's papers printed in the *Times Literary Supplement* for April 30th, 1982. Tiles confesses that "there are papers in these volumes which, after a first reading, remain largely impenetrable to me". And I can say the same,

as, no doubt, can many others. But I have also found that what in Professor Anscombe's work first seems opaque can, in time, become clear and then exciting. And that experience squares with that of others. In the *Festschrift* referred to above, Professor Richard Jeffrey of Princeton quotes from "Aristotle and the Sea Battle" (Vol. I), which considers *De Interpretatione,* IX. Jeffrey writes of the quotation he uses: "That struck me as gibberish when I first read it". Yet, as he goes on to say, the light dawned later. I am reminded here of the Preface to the *Philosophical Investigations,* where Wittgenstein says: 'I should not like my writing to spare other people the trouble of thinking. But, if possible, to stimulate someone to thoughts of his own'. Perhaps the best single comment on Professor Anscombe's papers is that, if they are sometimes obscure, they are nearly always stimulating.

BRIAN DAVIES, O.P.

Blackfriars, Oxford

Ockham's Theory of Propositions: Part II of the Summa Logicae. Translated by ALFRED J. FREDDOSO and HENRY SCHUURMAN with an Introduction by A. J. FREDDOSO. Notre Dame/London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980. Pp. viii + 212. $20.00.

This welcome addition to the growing number of English translations of classical medieval philosophic texts continues that of Ockham's monumental *Summa Logicae,* a work of paramount importance for an understanding of the philosophy of language and the highly developed logic that had appeared by the first part of the 14th century. Part I of this *Summa* dealt with terms and has been translated earlier by M. Loux together with two introductory essays. Unlike Loux's volume, the present translation is based on the critical edition by Philotheus Boehner, Gedeon Gal, and Stephen Brown, published by the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University in 1974.

In addition to the translation, the volume includes a valuable introductory study (almost a third of the book) by Freddoso entitled "Ockham's Theory of Truth Conditions". Boehner had suggested that in chapter 2 of Part II of the *Summa* Ockham intended to define "true" in regard to propositions in terms of whether or not subject and predicate supposit for the same thing. As several critics have pointed out, this can hardly be the case, since, for one thing the definition would not apply to even the simplest negative propositions. It seems more probable, Freddoso argues, that Ockham accepted something like Aristotle's definition in *Meta-*

physics, IV, 7: "To say of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not, is true". What Ockham really set out to do was to determine the conditions under which various types of propositions actually fulfill that definition. Freddoso's study essays to set forth the main outlines of that theory.

Suggesting that Ockham's account of truth conditions is in part motivated by his rejection of extramental universals or even Scotistic common natures, Freddoso aims to show Ockham's main concern was to develop a theory of predication that presupposes the existence only of individual substances and qualities. Unlike Geach, who characterized Ockham's theory as one of the most catastrophic mistakes in the history of logic, Freddoso is more sympathetic. Whatever its limitatioins, he insists, Ockham's account is worth serious study, particularly in view of the renewed interest among contemporary philosophers in the theory of truth conditions. In section 2 of his essay, Freddoso gives an admirable account of Ockham's notions of signification and supposition, which are essential to understanding his theory of predication. He calls attention to the limitations of equating supposition simply with the notion of reference or denotation, and explains clearly the difference between personal, simple and material supposition, and how it functions in Ockham's account of the truth conditions of simple predications.

Arguing for the need to take supposition as a primitive term, Freddoso points out that it plays an analogous role to that of satisfaction in contemporary semantic theory. Beginning with an analysis of present-tense non-modal propositions in chs. 3-6, Ockham goes on in ch. 7 to deal with the complexities of past and future tensed statements. Ockham's complete account of modal propositions, however, is scattered throughout various portions of the *Summa*. Freddoso, in one of the most lengthy and valuable sections of his study, essays to sketch at least its basic features. Among other things, he points out the difficulties that stem from Ockham's refusal to assume that propositions *de necessario* and *de possibili* exist necessarily and eternally (as Freddoso is willing to do). Section 6 of his essay deals with the account of exponibles, and section 7 with hypothetical propositions (conditional, disjunctive, causal, temporal and local).

The fact that one so familiar with Ockham's logical theory has coauthored the translation gives one confidence in its accuracy. Not only Ockham scholars, but historians of philosophy or logic, then, should find this translation as well as Freddoso's balanced and perceptive essay of considerable interest.

ALLAN B. WOLTER

The Catholic University of America
Washington, D.C.

Does God Have a Nature? (*The Aquinas Lecture: 1980.*) By ALVIN PLANTINGA. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1980. Pp. ii + 146.

Among the divine attributes important for Christians and other theists is God's aseity, which Alvin Plantinga in this excellently crafted book initially glosses as God's "uncreatedness, self-sufficiency and independence of everything else" (p. 1); "all things depend on him, and he depends upon nothing at all" (p. 2). But the existence of abstract objects, according to Plantinga, poses problems for belief in God's aseity. "[P]roperties, propositions, numbers and states of affairs [for instance] . . . are objects whose non-existence is quite impossible" (p. 4). God cannot be said to create them, since they are beginningless; and since their non-existenec is impossible, they do not seem to depend on God in any other way either. But if such objects are parts of the world which God just has to accept, their existence appears to impugn God's aseity. The problem is made more acute by considering God himself. If God has a nature, that is, if he has some properties essentially, then it is not within his control whether or not he has those properties. "So God's having a nature seems incompatible with his being in total control" (p. 8). In the history of philosophical theology, nominalism, possibilism, and the doctrine of divine simplicity have been presented as solutions to this problem.

Nominalism attempts to solve the problem by denying the existence of abstract objects such as properties and propositions. Plantinga argues that there are a number of difficulties with nominalism as a solution (one of them, he says—p. 85—is its obvious falsity), but chief among them is the fact that nominalism is simply irrelevant to this problem, which remains even if we pare our ontology down to concrete objects only. On Plantinga's interpretation of it, the doctrine of God's aseity is the doctrine that all things, including all truths, are up to God. Given that interpretation, the problem with God's aseity is not really addressed by nominalism. Although nominalism denies that properties, divine or otherwise, have independent existence, certain propositions about God's nature nonetheless remain necessarily true; and these truths are not within God's control. Therefore, even if nominalism were correct, there would still be truths about God's nature which are not up to God and which consequently impugn his aseity.

Possibilism attempts to solve the problem by claiming that God has no nature; all truths, including truths about God himself, are up to God. Much of Plantinga's discussion of possibilism is occupied with the question of whether Descartes was a possibilist. Plantinga concludes that he was and that he held a somewhat confused version of possibilism, an in-

consistent mixture of "limited possibilism" (the view that some truths are necessary though God could have made them otherwise) and "universal possibilism" (the view that there are no necessary truths, only contingent ones). Plantinga argues that contrary to appearances universal possibilism is a coherent position. And he maintains that, of the traditional solutions to the problem of God's aseity, universal possibilism is the only one really relevant to the problem because it alone puts everything, including all truths, within God's control.

As for the doctrine of divine simplicity, on Plantinga's view, it is like nominalism in that both positions, besides their other flaws, have the overriding failing of irrelevance to the problem since according to each of these putative solutions some truths are not up to God.

The strategy of Plantinga's own solution to the problem is the mirror image of that of nominalism. Nominalism attempts to resolve the apparent incompatibility of abstract objects and God's aseity by denying the existence of abstract objects. Plantinga attempts to resolve it by denying God's aseity. At the beginning of his last chapter he asks his "final question": "should we follow Descartes in giving full sway to the sovereignty-aseity intuition, thus denying that God has a nature?" (p. 126); and his answer is 'No'. He concludes by maintaining that God does have a nature and that "necessary truths about . . . [abstract] objects are not within his control" (p. 146).

The weakest part of the book, I think, is the section on divine simplicity; but the views Plantinga expresses there have been elaborately and convincingly rebutted by William Mann in "The Doctrine of Divine Simplicity" (forthcoming *Religious Studies*). I will confine myself here to some remarks on Plantinga's interpretation of God's aseity. Plantinga feels that, except for possibilism, all attempts to preserve God's aseity fail because they leave some truths outside God's control; but since he finds possibilism wildly counter-intuitive, he takes the only remaining route and admits that some truths are not up to God, thereby in his own view denying God's aseity. He is forced to such a position by an interpretation of aseity which is, I think, at least too stringent and perhaps unintelligible.

Consider again universal possibilism, which Plantinga thinks does preserve God's aseity. According to universal possibilism

(P) God has power over all truths.

But what about (P) itself? Is the truth of (P) itself up to God? If it is not, then there is at least one truth which is not up to God. If it is, then

(PP) it is possible that God does not have power over all truths; and this is equivalent to saying

(PP1) there is a possible world (accessible to the actual world) such that in it God does not have power over all truths.

On the view of logical necessity which Plantinga himself has argued for as

based on our common intuitions,[1] (PP1) is true in all possible worlds and so is necessary. Consequently, either (P) is not up to God or (PP1) is not up to God; in either case there is at least one truth which is not up to God.

But, of course, possibilism is committed to denying our common intuitions about necessity, and so it would deny also that (PP1) is necessary. So, for example, in explaining limited possibilism, Plantinga says, "In fact there are no such possible worlds [in which God denies that $2 \times 4 = 8$]; but God could have brought it about that there were some. . . . God affirms (30) ['$2 \times 4 = 8$'] in every world accessible from the actual world. There is a possible world W, however, in which he does not affirm [the necessity of (30)] . . . and if W had been actual, then there *would have been* a possible world W* in which God affirms the denial of (30)." (p. 109)

There are two problems with this way of denying the necessity of (PP1), I think. In the first place, it abandons the logical system for modality which Plantinga himself considers based on our ordinary intuitions,[2] but its own central claim is a modal one: for God all things are possible. If we give up our ordinary intuitions about necessity and possibility, what shall we substitute for them to understand and evaluate the modal operator in the claim 'For God, all things are possible'? I have no idea, and universal possibilism does not tell us. But secondly, even if there were no problem interpreting modalities, the contingency of (PP1) would not vitiate my point.[3] (P) says that all truths are up to God, and (PP) is

[1] See his defense of S5 in *The Nature of Necessity* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1974), pp. 51-54.

[2] The denial that (PP1) is necessary amounts to the claim that there is a possible world w_1 accessible to the actual world such that in w_1 (PP1) is false. (PP1) says that there is a possible world w* accessible to the actual world in which God does not have power over all truths. For (PP1) to be false in w_1 requires that w* not be accessible to w_1. But in that case either the symmetry or the transitivity (or both) of the accessibility relation between worlds does not hold. Hence the denial of the necessity of (PP1) requires abandoning at least S5. Plantinga's general remark that there are some possible worlds which do not exist but could have been created is even stronger. According to that remark, in every world accessible to the actual world God affirms (30), but there is a possible world W accessible to the actual world such that if W had been actual there would have been a world W* in which God denies (30). So W is accessible to the actual world and W* is accessible to W, but W* is not accessible to the actual world. Hence the transitivity of the accessibility relation fails and S4 also has to be abandoned.

[3] It seems to me that we could frame a version of (PP1) whose necessity even a possibilist could not deny, namely,

(PP1') There is a possible world, either accessible or not accessible

really just an iterated version of (P), saying that it is up to God whether all truths are up to God. In denying the necessity of (PP1) we are in effect just reiterating (P); we might read the denial of the necessity of (PP1) as

(PPP) It is up to God whether it is up to God whether all truths are up to God.

And we can go on in this way indefinitely. But at some point, whether at (PPP) or soon afterwards in the sequence, we can no longer give any meaning to these iterated versions, and they collapse into (P). What does it mean to say that it is up to God whether it is up to God whether all truths are up to God except that all truths *whatsoever* are up to God? Hence, on universal possibilism, whether we accept or reject the necessity of (PP1), it is not possible to deny that all truths are up to God, and so it follows that there is one proposition whose truth is not up to God because it cannot be falsified, namely, the proposition that all truths are up to God. The truth of the proposition that all truths are up to God, then, entails its own denial, namely, that there is one truth which is not up to God. Among other things, this result shows that possibilism is on a par with nominalism and the doctrine of simplicity as regards the point at issue: none of them can show that all truths without exception are up to God.

The universal possibilist can make one last move in an attempt to avoid this result, I think. He might claim that (P) *is* falsifiable because (PP1) is true even if it is not necessary; there is a possible world w* in which God does not have control over all truths. Now this objection on the part of the universal possibilist is ambiguous. It might mean

(PP2) God has chosen to limit his power in w* (either by choosing to actualize w* or by making some appropriate choice in w* itself or both).

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to the actual world, such that in it God does not have power over all truths. If (P) is not necessary, then (PP1′) must be true; and if it is true, it must be true at all possible worlds and hence necessary. In this case, the necessity of (PP1′) is sufficient to show that the truth of (P) entails its own denial; and on the face of it, this shows that (P) is incoherent. As far as I can see, there is only one way in which a possibilist could deny the necessity of (PP1′). As a last resort, he could maintain that there is no possible world, accessible or otherwise, in which God does not have total control over all truths but that (P) is nonetheless not necessary because (LR) God could have created different possible worlds, in one of which (PP1′) *would have been* true. This claim denies the necessity of (PP1′) at the cost of introducing a modal operator, namely, the 'could' of (LR), for which no interpretation can be given in possible world semantics. This result reproduces one of the general points of my review, that possibilism is either incoherent or else unintelligible and hence not provably incoherent.

If (PP2) is what the objector means, however, then he has not succeeded in denying the basic idea behind (P), as we can show him by refining (P). What (P) means, after all, is that God can control even truths about himself and therefore he can limit his own power permanently if he chooses to do so. So we might make (P) more precise in this way:

(UP) God has power over all truths unless he chooses permanently to limit his power.

The existence of a world such as w* is no counter-example to the truth of (UP). Suppose, however, that the possibilist's view of w* is stronger than (PP2) suggests. Suppose his point is rather that w* is a world in which universal possibilism is false. This means, I take it, that

(PP3) there is a possible world w* in which God has a nature and has certain properties essentially (such as the property of being constrained by the laws of logic).

If (PP3) were true, it would show that (P) is after all falsified. But to say that God has certain properties essentially is to say that he has those properties in *all* worlds in which he exists; and this claim contradicts the central claim of universal possibilism, namely that God has no definite set of properties (in any worlds other than w* or a set of worlds like w* in the relevant respect). Therefore, on the face of it, a defense based on (PP3) is not open to the possibilist, on pain of contradiction; and my attack on possibilism stands.

The problem, however, is that contradiction is no pain for the possibilist. It is open to him here and at other points in my argument to respond simply that for God contradictories can be true together; it is possible for God to have a definite set of properties in all possible worlds in which he exists and also not to have that set of properties in all the worlds in which he exists. The sort of argument I have been making would ordinarily be sufficient to demonstrate the incoherence of the position under attack; it would entitle us to conclude the incoherence of the claim that God has control over all truths, so that an inability to control all truths would in no way impugn God's greatness. But the case of universal possibilism is complicated because it is committed to denying the necessity of the law of non-contradiction, and it is hard to know what could conceivably count as demonstrating the incoherence of such a position without also begging the question of the necessity of the laws of logic. It is simpler to show that universal possibilism is unintelligible; and perhaps that is the only sort of attack that can be pressed home against possibilism.

On Plantinga's view, we can demonstrate that a position is unintelligible by showing that it involves concepts beyond our grasp (p. 118). According to universal possibilism, " God has infinite power if and only if every

proposition is within his control" (p. 118); and, Plantinga says, "None of the concepts involved here is beyond our grasp" (p. 118). But Plantinga's claim seems to me false. In the first place, universal possibilism is or entails the claim that all propositions are possible. But since possibilism is committed to rejecting our ordinary understanding of necessity and possibility, I do not know how to understand the modal claim central to possibilism. Secondly, if, as I have tried to show, God's infinite power entails both that all truths are up to God and that there is a truth which is not up to God, then I for one cannot grasp the concept of God's infinite power. Finally, and most importantly, on universal possibilism, the concept of God itself becomes unintelligible. On this view, God has no nature, and there is no property he could not have (p. 127). God is the sort of being, then, who could be both omnipotent and powerless, morally perfect and wicked; he is such that he could know he does not exist (pp. 127-28). But if this is the account universal possibilism has to give of God, I cannot grasp the concept of God and I do not believe anyone else can either. Like the descriptions 'a square circle' or 'a married bachelor,' 'God' on the possibilist account is a familiar expression but what it is supposed to call to mind is inconceivable.

Plantinga claims that universal possibilism is the only intelligible position which preserves God's total control over all truths. I have argued against both parts of his claim, maintaining that universal possibilism does not leave the truth of all propositions up to God but that in any case it is not intelligible. On Plantinga's view of the alternative solutions, then, there is no intelligible position which preserves God's aseity. Such a conclusion seems to me to suggest that Plantinga is interpreting aseity with mistaken rigor. The doctrine of God's aseity is the doctrine of God's self-sufficiency. To interpret aseity to mean that God must have total control over all truths changes the doctrine of aseity from a belief in God's self-sufficiency to a belief in God's self-lessness; aseity interpreted as total control over all truths plainly is incompatible with having any nature (except perhaps the incoherent or unintelligible nature of being in control of all truths). But why should we interpret aseity in this way? It is reasonable to think that independence of others contributes to an entity's greatness, but why should we think that independence of oneself (if such an idea is even intelligible) would do so? If God has certain properties essentially so that truths about himself are not within his control, neither his uncreatedness, nor his self-sufficiency, nor his independence of other things is imperilled; and these are the terms in which Plantinga originally explains aseity. It is true, of course, that God could not have a nature unless certain propositions were true, but it does not follow that God is dependent on such truths unless we can show some sort of conceptual priority of these truths over God; and it is hard to see how

we could do so since God is a necessary being. (Indeed, it is the necessity of some truths which makes Plantinga feel that they cannot be dependent on God and so helps raise the problem of aseity in the first place.) Supposing that God's aseity is impugned unless all truths including those about God's nature are up to God seems to me on a par with supposing that God's omnipotence is impugned if he cannot create a stone so heavy he cannot lift it; in both cases the missing ability which is thought to impugn a divine attribute has an incoherent or unintelligible description.

On the other hand, accepting Plantinga's interpretation of aseity is possible only at the cost of giving up at least one other divine attribute, because aseity understood in Plantinga's sense is incompatible with immutability. Indeed, if God has aseity in Plantinga's sense of the word, then in some possible world God does not have aseity and, for all we know, that possible world may be the actual world. And something similar can be said for any divine attribute, so that Plantinga's interpretation of aseity is incompatible with the conviction that God in the actual world has any of the attributes traditionally ascribed to him.

So if God has a nature and is constrained by the laws of logic, there are some truths which are not up to him; but this is no defect in his *self*-sufficiency. On the other hand, if God is not constrained by the laws of logic, then he can control all truths; but only a mutable being which can have any property whatever can have control of this sort, and we cannot give an intelligible description of such a being. The price for requiring aseity to be taken as power over all truth is an unintelligible concept of God, or at the very least a concept of a God who is not loving, perfectly good, or even consistent, in any ordinary sense of those words, and with whom no personal contact is possible, whether in prayer, worship, or afterlife. It makes no sense to worship such a God, and it is impossible to admire him. If the idea behind the insistence on God's aseity is to prevent limitations on God's greatness, the interpretation of aseity as control over all truths is self-defeating.

There remains a philosophical problem concerning the compatibility of God's aseity and the existence of abstract objects; but if we understand God's aseity as his self-sufficiency rather than as his total control over all truths, the traditional doctrine of divine simplicity (which Plantinga dismisses too quickly as Mann has shown) seems to me a sufficient solution.[4]

ELEONORE STUMP

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Blacksburg, Virginia

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[4] I am grateful to Marvin Belzer, Norman Kretzmann, Gerald Massey, and Alan McMichael for their helpful comments on an earlier draft of this review.

God or Christ? The Excesses of Christocentricity. By JEAN MILET. New York: Crossroad, 1981. Pp. x + 261. $12.95 (Translated by John Bowden from *Dieu ou le Christ?* Paris: Editions de Trevise, 1980.)

The fundamental putative insight on which this book is based is that Christianity is a religion with two polarities: belief in God and belief in Christ. Each polarity is typologically characterized at the beginning of the study. Belief in God, or theocentricity, involves a faith which concentrates on a transcendent Supreme Being, a morality which values obedience and the maintenance of order, a concept of authority which is strongly hierarchical, a liturgy which has a predilection for the magnificent and the "triumphal," a spirituality which favors contemplation, and a type of political action which supports paternalistic structures. Belief in Christ, or christocentricity, has opposing traits: a faith historically rooted in Jesus Christ, love-centered morality, charismatic authority, intimate liturgy, action-oriented spirituality, and critical, reform-minded political activity. After describing how the two polarities were kept in tension through the dominance of theocentricity from the 4th to the 17th centuries (the first three centuries are somewhat vague), Milet delineates the emergence of christocentricity from its beginning in Ignatius of Loyola's emphasis on the humanity of Christ to its triumph and extreme forms in the death of God and liberation theologies of our own day. His basic thesis throughout this historical review, which comprises the bulk of the book, is that christocentricity has been carried to unfortunate excess; the book ends with a call for a redress of the balance in favor of theocentricity. (In the imaginative last section, the symbol of renewed balance is the altar, once again turned 'towards God' rather than the congregation, with the sacred mystery veiled not by wrought iron grilles but by the more contemporary technology of laser beams).

Of the myriad problems which this work presents, the gravest is that of its fundamental premise. To dichotomize God and Christ, to set 'them' up as two polarities, to call on believers to choose between faith in one and faith in the other endangers the heart of the Christian reality, of the Christian experience supported by Christian theory that God and Christ while distinct are yet one. To Milet's "For it is God who is to be sought for himself and in himself—and not Christ" (231) must be counterposed the "God was in Christ" of Scripture, the "homoousios" of Nicaea, the "vere Deus/vere homo . . . in una persona" of Chalcedon, and the basic Christian conviction which has perdured through the centuries that in dealing with Jesus Christ one has to do with the God who is the one, true, and good God. Christian faith is not simply faith in God, but in

God who has shared our lot, our history, and thereby redeemed us. If Christian faith is bi-polar, the polarities are those of the divine and the human, or of transcendence and history, with the unity of both centered in Jesus Christ. It is nothing short of the destruction of the entire Christian message to separate—or worse, oppose—God and Christ.

The methodology of the book is likewise problematic. The author, neither a sociologist nor a psychologist, uses a method of "social psychology" without ever delineating its principles or criteria. How can his claims be checked? His repeated assurances that he is an objective, impartial observer, assurances which this undefined method reputedly allows, are belied not only by the fact that there can be no presuppositionless observation but also by the explicit option which he has made for the theocentric polarity. In effect, this is a book critical of certain characteristics of the contemporary Church but ingenuously cast in the guise of an impartial study.

While not a theological work (ix), this study ventures into heavily theological territory. From this angle the project is marred throughout by the author's ignoring (unwittingly or not) virtually all recent biblical, patristric, and systematic christological scholarship. What is one to say of a work in which Old Testament exegesis is drawn from studies done in 1929 and 1931; in which New Testament exegesis is naively uncritical; in which the understanding of Jesus Christ relies on old apologetic textbooks; in which certain thinkers of the Patristic period are stereotyped; in which the theocentricity present in the christologies of such thinkers as Rahner and von Balthasar is dismissed as not "significant" to the observer? The lack of command of the research done in these theological fields serves to strengthen the God/Christ dichotomy while further limiting the book's usefulness.

Other problematic characteristics are also in evidence. Generalizations abound ("theologians say") without the requisite footnotes which would support them. The concept of God employed is monolithic, showing no signs of being intrinsically Triune. Not only excesses but the entire stance of those who advocate a liberating praxis in solidarity with the oppressed is critiqued, while an insulated unawareness of the seriousness of both the Marxist challenge and the problematic of suffering in the world is displayed. A competitive model of the relation between God and humanity uncritically governs the analysis (e.g., "the church will be the house of God and no longer that of the Christian people" [231]). The Jewish religion is caricatured in traditional, now discredited fashion. Sexist language is used throughout, while typographical errors (111, 137, 139, 185, 247) are likewise distracting.

In the end, one is unsure about what this author is really driving at. Is he mainly cautioning against the kind of christology which reduces all

to anthropology in such wise that it loses the sense of the transcendent? (Doubtful). Is he writing to oppose the way in which Vatican II and its resultant reforms have affected the life of the Church? (More likely). I suspect that the actual hidden agendum of this work is the defense of metaphysical philosophy (the author is a philosopher, after all), and that 'God' and 'Christ' are code words, respectively, for the classical philosophical approach to truth through natural reason based on order and the dialectical approach to truth through history. If this is so, it is a legitimate purpose. But the cause which the author espouses is ill-served by the unfortunate choice of the metaphors 'God' or 'Christ' to embody or carry his argument. Given his admission that the "observations" of excesses on which his work is based are drawn mainly from the Church in Western Europe and explicitly not from North America, one wonders why the publishers chose to bring out this work in translation.

ELIZABETH A. JOHNSON, C.S.J.

Catholic University of America
Washington, D.C.

The Hidden Center. Spirituality and Speculative Christology in St. Bonaventure. By ZACHARY HAYES, O.F.M. New York: Paulist Press, 1981. Pp. x and 225. $7.95.

This study in the christology of St. Bonaventure and in the spirituality of the Seraphic Doctor is characterized not so much by any novelty which the author contributes to either field as by the clarity with which he presents the speculative and spiritual dimensions of Bonaventure's christology and their harmonious blend. Hayes does not claim to resurrect and present a medieval synthesis as applicable to today's situation; rather he believes that a dialogue with an integral theological synthesis of the past can be instructive for the contemporary search for a christology which need respond to the exegetical, doctrinal, spiritual, and cosmic demands of today's theology. It is precisely the author's purpose, therefore, to disclose the major outlines of Bonaventure's reflections on the personal and spiritual experience of Christ and to examine these in relation to his doctrinal and speculative christological reflections and finally, and perhaps most important, to be attentive to the coherence of the two (page 4). Moreover, since Bonaventure's spirituality is essentially one of the imitation of Christ, Hayes considers Bonaventure's success at integrating the speculative and spiritual as particularly exemplary (page 5). The imitation-model of spirituality has often fallen prey to a simplistic process of moral-

izing, void of any meaningful basis, but because Bonaventure's christology blends the metaphysical and ethical import of the Christian experience it offers values fundamental to an imitation of Christ. This is the value of Hayes's study, namely, his demonstration that what is imitable in Christ is such because of its perennial meaning in every person's relationship to self, world, and God. And the strength of Hayes's work lies primarily in chapters six and seven where he considers first (chapter six) the synthesis of Bonaventure's understanding of the imitation of Christ while it was being assaulted in the mendicant-secular conflict and secondly (chapter seven) the grounds for such an imitation, the reality of mankind's fulfillment and redemption in the person of Jesus Christ.

The opening chapter of Hayes's work presents the groundwork of the author's purpose. After giving a general presentation of the basic elements of Bonaventurian metaphysics (emanation, exemplarism, and reduction) and a description of his anthropology with a particular accent on the effects of sin, the author posits the need for Christ as the center of reality and history in which the metaphysical order can be deciphered and through whom the moral or historical order is rectified in grace. To use images characteristic of the Seraphic Doctor's thought, the center is in reality the guide (exemplar) along the journey, for Christ is the central point in the movement of the descent (emanation) of reality from God and in its ascent (reduction) to its origin.

The second chapter begins with the simple affirmation that spirituality is the realization of an individual's ascent to God which amounts to an imitation of Christ, the acceptance and following of Jesus as the guide for the journey. It is refreshing that Hayes turns to Bonaventure's *Commentary on St. Luke*, whose potential is only beginning to be discovered, to describe the life of Christ and how that life is paradigmatic for all Christians, particularly the fundamental virtues of the evangelical life: humility, poverty, obedience, and love. Hayes introduces a general discussion of grace at this point as the means by which Bonaventure understands how in fact the conformity (deiformity) of the individual to Christ, the model, can be realized.

Chapters three, four, and five concern the classical, speculative considerations of the hypostatic union as found primarily in Bonaventure's *Sentence Commentary*. Hayes's presentation is thorough and reflects the the breadth of the treatment which was required of these scholastic commentaries. The third chapter concerns the ontological dimensions: the subject of the union, the human nature of Christ, and the union *itself*. The fourth chapter deals with the mystery of grace in the hypostatic union and thus treats Mary, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the communication of grace to Christ's human nature. Chapter five is a presentation of the psychological elements of the union: Christ's human knowledge and will as well as the questions of freedom and suffering.

It was during the mendicant-secular conflict at the University of Paris in the second half of the Thirteenth Century that the very nature of the mendicants' way of life, their understanding and practice of the imitation of Christ, was called into question. In chapter six Hayes presents the mature reflections of Bonaventure as he responded to his opponents in his *Disputed Questions on Gospel Perfection* and *Defense of the Mendicants,* not simply defending a Franciscan position, but the very possibility and foundation of any imitation of Christ whatsoever. A blind and absolute imitation of Christ was untenable; the solution was to lie in the assertion that, although every action of Christ was for our instruction, not all was for our imitation (IV *Sentence Commentary* d. 3, p. 2, a. 3, q. 1, resp.). Hayes demonstrates how Bonaventure develops this principle, particularly in the *Defense of the Mendicants,* where he distinguishes Christ's activities according to six categories, of which only one includes that which need be imitated to perfect one's life. The author clearly shows how Bonaventure's spirituality of the imitation of Christ was oriented towards those fundamental values which shaped one's relationships with oneself, the world, and God, namely the virtues of humility, poverty, obedience, and love. Moreover, Hayes exposes how Bonaventure saw the integral link between christology and anthropology, i.e., how the Incarnation as condescension reveals the proper understanding of the meaning of human life. In the same way that the Incarnation was a condescension of the divine Word and revealed God's love for mankind as humble love, so our response to God must assume the same form of humble love. Humility is the starting point and in fact is the necessary point of departure, for humility alone disposes a proper understanding of reality in itself and in history. Humility with respect to the order of nature acknowledges the contingency of all created being which calls for a response of gratitude. Humility with respect to the order of grace acknowledges the moral poverty caused by sin and must evoke a response of sorrow. The imitation of Christ, the Word incarnate, is the key to Bonaventure's spirituality, for it integrates the individual into the reconciliation effected in the Incarnation and recreates man in meaningful accord with himself, the world and God.

In chapter seven Hayes offers an exposition of Bonaventure's soteriology. The ultimate explanation of an individual's imitation of Christ as having salvific value is to demonstrate how Christ himself is truly Savior and Redeemer. Here Hayes discusses four previous studies in Bonaventurian soteriology: Guardini (Romano) *Die Lehre des heiligen Bonaventura von der Erlösung:* Düsseldorf, 1921; Silić (Rufinus) *Christus und die Kirche,* Breslan 1938; Gerken (Alexander) *Theologie des Wortes,* Düsseldorf, 1963; and Hülsbuch (Werner) *Elemente einer Kreuzestheologie in den Spätschriften Bonaventuras,* Düsseldorf, 1968. Hayes agrees with Gerken in his fundamental criticism of Guardini and Silić in their dis-

rupting the synthetic nature of Bonaventure's soteriology and in their creating an opposition between and undue emphasis to either the Anselmian satisfaction theory to the detriment of the meaning of the Incarnation (Silić) or to the physical-mystical theory which underscores redemption as a recreation and re-ordering of reality through the reintegration into the mystical body of Christ while misunderstanding the importance of the cross (Guardini). Gerken presented two theories to describe Bonaventure's soteriology: reparation and completion. His idea was not to oppose the theories but to see them as complementary, and Hayes sees Hülsbuch's thesis in basic agreement with Gerken.

Hayes goes a step beyond Gerken as he maintains the necessity to respect the synthetic character of Bonaventure's thought and avoid any multiplicity of theories. He thus proposes Bonaventure's soteriology as the theory of redemptive completion. He sees Bonaventure's view of the world as being simultaneously incomplete ontologically, i.e., short of its potential, and damaged morally, i.e., fallen through sin. Bonaventure's theological reflections on the Incarnation were in response to the world as it was: fallen and incomplete. The Incarnation was to manifest and bring about the completion of God's self-diffusive love, and the process included the satisfaction for sin. Hayes arrives at his view in seeing Bonaventure's understanding of sin in itself as a violation of the very personhood of the Son. The Second Person of the Trinity as Son was to be the equal similitude of the Father. All sin is precisely the attempt to usurp the position of the Son, to become this equal similitude. Thus the disorder of the moral order in sin struck at the proper ordering of all reality (the Second Person of the Trinity as Eternal Word). The continuous diffusion of God's goodness in creation needed to rectify sinfulness, and the satisfaction for sin being this rectification was an integral element in the Incarnation. Hayes re-examines Bonaventure's soteriological texts and sees in the Incarnation the principle of reduction at work which operates simultaneously on the level of completing creation and on the level of grace, the reparation of sin. In the Incarnation the Son takes to himself all of creation and re-establishes the ontological order disrupted by sin. Hayes calls Bonaventure's soteriology simply *redemptive completion*. Moreover, insofar as the Incarnation brings about the ascent of all humanity to God, on the individual, spiritual level it corresponds to the hierarchizing of the soul. As satisfaction for sin the Incarnation is purgation, as the manifestation of the exemplary life it is illumination, and as the uniting of divine life to our own it is perfection.

In the final chapter the author presents the historical and metaphysical centrality of Christ as Bonaventure's response to two challenges of his later career as Minister General and as a frequent visitor in Paris: the spirituals within his Order and the Latin Averroists at the University of

Paris. Here Hayes exposes Bonaventure's final reflection in his *Collations on the Hexaemeron* where Bonaventure affirms the necessity to find Christ as the center of history (in opposition to the spirituals), as the center of wisdom (in opposition to the philosophers) and as center of the Church; a center to be found at the intersection of the beams of the Cross.

"Bonaventure's Christology appears as a clear case of a religious experience opening itself to reality in the widest sense possible through theological reflection (page 217)." Hayes succeeds in demonstrating the harmonious blend that Bonaventure achieved in his speculative and spiritual christology. He shows that the religious experience of the imitation of Christ by which the Christian accepts and places Christ at the center of life and reality is meaningful and authentic because in fact Christ is the center of reality and in him mankind is saved and life acquires meaning. Bonaventure's speculative understanding of the person of Jesus Christ and his comprehension of man's redemption in Christ, collective and individual, were two currents in the theology of St. Bonaventure at the service of one another's development and growth. Hayes's book is a manifestation of the author's extensive knowledge of Bonaventure's christology and his ability to communicate that knowledge in a maner clear and comprehensive to beginners and those familiar with Bonaventurian thought. It is a valuable contribution to the study of christology, particularly, Bonaventurian christology.

THOMAS REIST, O.F.M. Conv.

University of Fribourg
Fribourg, Switzerland

History of the Church, Vol. 10: The Church in the Modern Age. Edited by HUBERT JEDIN, ET AL. New York: Crossroad, 1981. Pp. xxi + 867, with notes and index. $37.50.

This the last in the ten-volume series has twenty-four collaborating authors, three editors, one translator, two prefaces, one by Jedin and Repgen for the 1979 German edition, one by Dolan for the English edition after Jedin's death in 1980. It contains four pages of abbreviated titles of sources and forty-five pages of bibliography for its twenty-five chapters which are organized into three sections according to Jedin's dominant theological method and interpretation of church history.

Church history is the history of salvation. "All collaborators were united in the faith in the One Holy Catholic Apostolic Church, united in the conviction that church history, including the ecclesiastical history of the contemporary period, must follow historical method. In selection and

evaluation we have held to the principle which Joseph Ratzinger very recently formulated: 'On the one hand, the Church must never be separated from its concrete manifestation, but on the other hand, it must also never be entirely identified with it" (preface xiii). What follows in the three sections of this volume is a faithful account of the implementation of this principle of interpretation of ecclesiastical history over the past sixty years.

Section one, on the institutional unity of the universal church, in six chapters, deals with the visible institutional structure of the church through four pontificates over sixty years. The concrete manifestation of the church is documented in its statistics; in the lives and work of Benedict XV, Pius XI, Pius XII and John XXIII, its four popes; in the diplomatic activity, concordats, and external policies of its popes; in the convening of, and the promulgation of the decrees of, its twenty-first ecumenical council, Vatican II; in the promulgation, development, and interpretation of canon law from 1917 to 1974, its legislative acts; and finally in its policy of concordats from 1918 to 1974.

In section two the diversity of the inner life of the universal church is developed through nine chapters. Here the authors' faith vision and theological methodology compel them to interpret the events of church history as they faithfully reflect the holiness, apostolicity, and catholicity of the church during this era. Chapter seven carefully and comprehensively documents and develops the central social teachings of the church establishing the social principles of christian personalism, subsidiarity, solidarity, and the common good culminating in Paul VI's formula "Development, the new Name for peace" (p. 259). The remarkable theological developments in this period are objectively and sensitively elucidated in Chapter eight. One is overwhelmed with the massive German influence in theological developments and indeed this pervasive German characteristic dominates this volume to such a degree that it constitutes the one major flaw of the work. In chapter nine the Church's spirituality is reflected by the spiritual developments within the religious orders from whence originated the budding liturgical movement, a plethora of devotions to Jesus, Mary, and the Eucharist, culminating in the "working day sanctity—and the 'little way' of Therese of Lisieux" (p. 336). Chapter 10 wrestles at length with the rise and fall of vocations during these war-torn sixty years. The reality and acceleration of the secularization process and the changed outlook of the modern Catholic demanded a corresponding change in training for the priestly ministry in this new world situation. The treatment is very German in its outlook. What is said is a thorough, candid analysis but what is left unsaid leaves this reader frankly disturbed.

The succeeding six chapters of this section are remarkable for their depth of research and capacity to consolidate material precisely and con-

cisely without sacrificing clarity and objectivity. The authors are at their best. Chapter XI synopsizes the fortunes of the old orders and the development of new communities with a compendious statistical summary of their life and activity. The story of these servants of the church in the upheaval of wars and under certain totalitarian regimes is one of unparalled heroism, as exemplified by Maximillian Kolbe (p. 375). They reflect the life of the Church (p. 377). Only in Poland do religious vocations continue to flourish. Vatican skill has contributed to engendering in Iron Curtain countries a minimum of religious toleration and freedom of worship. There are no religious houses in China and North Korea, while Albania boasts of the total extirpation of religion. Chapter 12 is a comprehensive discussion of worldwide Catholic educational systems focusing on the Declaration on Religious Freedom and the conscious duty Catholics have which is somewhat different from the teaching of the previous era which simply obliged Catholic Christians in conscience to send their children to Catholic schools. Non-church, mixed, or neutral schools were forbidden to them in canon 1374 and by "Divini Illius Magistri", no. 79 (p. 386). In North America and Germany the success of Catholic education was so great that a German Protestant attributed it to the "binding of the consciences of Catholics". Chapter 13 details the growth of journalism and the media in the Catholic Church with a candid critique of the media's shortcomings. It concludes that the decline in Catholic journalism is concomitant with a decline in regular mass attendance (p. 436). In their documentation of six decades of charitable works inside and outside the Catholic Church the authors have amassed a vast array of statistics, organizations, and individuals in chapter 14, describing the growth of small isolated movements and national groups culminating in the vast international organizations of "Caritas Internationalis" and the Church's relationship to world organizations such as ECOSOC, UNICEF and FAO. This is the genesis of the theology of human development as enunciated in the pastoral Constitution, Article 86 and the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, Article 8. "Thus were the principles originally formulated and practiced in the North Atlantic world accepted for the Universal Church" (p. 458).

In the final two chapters of this section, the authors break new ground methodologically and historically for themselves and for their readers, and they form the highlight of this section, if not the book itself. In chapter 15 the history of the ecumenical movement is summarized from its inception in the 19th century Protestant Christian movements to its culmination in the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam, 1948, and Nairobi, 1976. In this clear, concise, candid, well-documented account, the reader will appreciate both the sincerity of the non-Catholic Christian communities' efforts in their struggle toward Christian unity and the later

Roman Catholic Church's problems with its doctrinal views on ecumenical union. The Roman Catholic Church has subsequently entered into dialogue with diverse ecclesial communities to explore areas of common agreement and to clarify differences. Anglican and Roman Catholics, consequently, "in the Windsor statement of 1971 came to an essential agreement on the doctrine of the Eucharist, and in 1973, to a basic consensus on office and ordination in the Canterbury Statement" (p. 472). The Dissident Eastern Churches, chapter 16, fills a lacuna in the historical consciousness of most Catholics vis à vis the Eastern Churches. This is a comprehensive well-documented contemporary study of the Eastern Churches themselves, their relations with each other, the contacts established between Rome and them, and their cultural and political significance. For purposes of information, study, or sheer interest this chapter is the highlight of the entire volume and serves as fitting conclusion to section two.

Section three, which discusses the Church in individual countries throughout the last nine chapters, is a logical continuation of the ecclesiological historical methodology of the authors, the concrete manifestation of faith of the Church in the microcosm. While the authors are to be commended for their attention to detail and comprehensiveness, their enterprise is here fraught with danger and shortcomings, since no national group will be totally satisfied with the manner in which its faith story is narrated either by an outsider or in the context of such a global enterprise as this. The very particularity of this subject matter makes selection of material seem arbitrary and erodes the sympathy of the reader and the credibility of the account. Despite these difficulties the authors have masterfully discussed the last nine chapters under these categories:

Language: German Speaking area, English Speaking area;

Political and National Grouping: Benelux countries, Italy, France, Spain and Portugal;

Continents: Latin America, The Young Churches in: Asia, Africa and Oceania.

The authors further described the Churches in these areas under the following categories: *The geographical extent of the churches; the demographical content of the churches; the ecclesiastical organization of the churches; the educational systems of the churches; the social, political and liturgical activities of the churches.* North American readers may find much to be desired in this section.

Despite a tendency to portray "Church" in hierarchic, formalistic, legalistic, institutional, and centralist terms rather than as Servant, Deacon, Covenant, Community or God's People as did Vatican II, this book is an invaluable contribution to Catholic Scholarship and will be an indispensable reference for church historians. It is a faithful and comprehensive account of the deeds of the official Church, collapsing sixty

years of global activity into 867 pithy pages; a prodigious feat of painstaking research coherently formulated and faithfully articulated.

WALTER J. BILDSTEIN

St. Jerome's College
University of Waterloo, Waterloo

Unfehlbarkeit und Geschichte: Studien zur Unfehlbarkeitsdiskussion von Melchior Cano bis zum I. Vatikanischen Konzil. By ULRICH HORST. Walberberger Studien der Albertus-Magnus-Akademie, Theologische Reihe, v. 12. Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald-Verlag, 1982. Pp. xxxiv + 262. DM 44.

The Dominican scholar Ulrich Horst has spent over a decade working on the history of the doctrine of papal infallibility. A series of articles and a book, *Papst-Konzil-Unfehlbarkeit,* which appeared as Vol. 10 in this same series in 1978, have prepared the way for the present publication.

The book consists of seven more or less related studies. Four of these treat the infallibility teaching of individuals whose works constitute significant landmarks in the development of the doctrine: Melchior Cano (1509-60); the patristic scholar Pietro Ballerini (1698-1769); the future pope Gregory XVI, Bartolomeo Cappellari, (1765-1846); and Cardinal Filippo Guidi (1815-79) who made an important address at Vatican I. The other three studies are of a summarizing nature. Chapter 2 gives briefly the teachings of a number of Dominican theologians of the 17th and 18th centuries. Chapter 5 describes views of Gallican supporters, principally those who lived in the period 1750-1850. Chapter 7 is an overview which treats the whole development of the teaching on infallibility from the 13th century through Vatican I with extended treatments of St. Thomas and Pietro Olivi (both in dialogue with Brian Tierney) and of the period preceding Vatican I (in dialogue with August Hasler).

Although these seven studies were not conceived as a single integrated work, still the author manages to give us a sense of the overall development of the doctrine of infallibility from 1250 to Vatican I by drawing on the fruits of his detailed research (published here and previously) and by the judicious use of secondary sources. The historical development of the teaching on papal infallibility is closely intertwined with that on the primacy. The initial stage of that development took place on the practical plane in the struggle of the Franciscans to secure the establishment of their ideals as conformable to the Gospel. Thus, Bonaventure stressed the presence of the fullness of juridical power in the pope as the source from

which all other Church officials derived their powers. In using this power Pope Honorius III had sanctioned the Franciscan rule; if he had erred in so doing, he would have led the whole Church into error; but this is impossible. In effect, Bonaventure had illustrated in a concrete case the operation of papal infallibility; but he did not name it, specify its specific object, or articulate the conditions of its exercise.

St. Thomas did not use the terminology of papal infallibility; yet he evidenced a development culminating in ST II-II, 1, 10, a text which states that the pope is the one to determine the essential articles of faith and that when he does so all are bound to accept his determination *inconcussa fide.* This is "a first statement of what would soon become the theological idea, and, six centuries later, the dogma of the infallibility of the Pontifical *magisterium*" (Congar).

Pietro Olivi (1248-98) contributed key distinctions regarding the exercise of binding papal teaching. Most importantly he distinguished two kinds of *inerrabilitas.* The first is an unconditioned and essential *impossibilitas errandi* which pertains to the universal Church. The second is an *impossibilitas errandi per alterum* which pertains to the pope. To the degree that the pope concretizes in an expression the primary *inerrabilitas* of the universal Church, he is without error. Should he fail to teach the belief of the universal Church, he would lose the *inerrabilitas.* Thus Olivi initiated not the movement which led to Vatican I (as Tierney claims) but the counterforce which through many centuries combatted an independent papal infallibility.

In the 14th and 15th centuries theological discussion on the relationship between pope and council concentrated on the realm of juridical authority. Yet with regard to the exercise of papal infallibility the common teaching *implied* that the pope *had to* seek the counsel of the cardinals or the universal Church. However, the eventual victory of pope over council in the area of jurisdiction just before the Reformation led the papal supporters to extend papal supremacy to the area of teaching. Here the fundamental position was articulated by Cajetan (1469-1534), who declared that in a definition of belief the pope as an individual, bound by no conditions from without, transcends himself in such a way that his decision becomes absolute and attains an irreversible quality.

Cajetan's view did not meet with universal acceptance. Vitoria (1485-1546) said that for an irreformable decision the pope must *facere quod est in se,* that is, he must use the human means such as consultation and prayer which are necessary to attain the truth. Cano, Vitoria's student, accepted the *facere quod est in se* and passed on what was to become the standard Dominican teaching. Further, he agreed with Olivi and a long tradition that the pope could be a heretic and that in fact some popes had been such. However, in the light of the memory of conciliarism and the

threat of Protestantism, papal supporters increasingly saw in the conditions for the exercise of infallibility a loophole by means of which one could always practically deny a papal teaching. One had merely to claim that some essential condition had not been fulfilled. Hence, as the 16th century wore on, papal supporters, led by Jesuits such as Bellarmine, more and more denied the necessity of any conditions. At the end of this development even the long-held view that the pope could err as a private teacher was denied.

Meanwhile the old counterbalance to the pope, the council, was effectively being replaced by the bishops scattered throughout the world. At the end of the 16th and throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, Gallicanism and its variants flourished, with Bossuet (1627-1704) as its most scholarly proponent. External juridical conditions limiting the exercise of papal infallibility were expressed: the Roman See or the Roman succession of bishops, not the individual popes, was infallible; a pope had to obtain the consent of the whole Church and its bishops before issuing an infallible decree. In the face of a growing theological shift of teaching authority from the center to the periphery of the Church, and as a result of the actual use by papal opponents in the theological controversies springing up in the 17th and 18th centuries of the loophole furnished by the conditions, the dwindling group of papal theologians, usually Romans, stressed a quasi-absolute notion of papal infallibility. By and large these later papal supporters were of an inferior caliber, although the noted patristic scholar Pietro Ballerini made a valiant attempt in the second half of the 18th century to construct a more synthetic view of papal infallibility by founding his theory on basic positions held steadfastly by the two opposing camps.

In 1799 Bartolomeo Cappellari published a view which made the pope practically an independent source of infallible truth which he passed on to the Church. At a time when such a papal view was theologically dead this work seemed like a dying gasp. It proved to be prophetic, and it took on the air of a programmatic declaration when its author became pope Gregory XVI in 1831. The key occasion for the resurrection of the papal view was the rise of the secular state in the wake of the French revolution. The bishops, once closely allied to the political rulers in national churches, now found themselves isolated. Rome was no longer the adversary but the hope of freedom. In this climate theological opinion gradually began to shift in the area of infallibility. In successive editions of textbooks and in local councils one began increasingly to find views supporting papal infallibility, even an infallibility without conditions.

It was this shift in views throughout the Church which made possible the effectiveness of papal and curial pressure in favor of the definition of papal infallibility at Vatican I. Unfortunately, the definition was made

in a situation in which the majority, influenced by the weight of the Gallican and conciliar heritage, viewed conditions for the exercise of infallibility as loopholes by means of which papal opponents could avoid accepting papal decisions. To require the use of means such as seeking the views of the bishops was seen as requiring a vote on a proposed papal teaching. The classic Dominican notion that viewed the conditions as necessary aspects of the *process* by which the pope ascertained the truth living in the Church was lost. When Cardinal Guidi defended the old notion on the council floor, his speech was misunderstood as "more Gallican than the Gallicans." Only a future that is open to aspects of the truth contained in both the papal and the Gallican positions can give us a more balanced teaching.

This brief and excessively simplified summary cannot do justice to what is, so far as I am aware, the best overall treatment of the development of the teaching on papal infallibility from Thomas to Vatican I. The author's grasp of individual theologians makes his generalizations easy to accept. In this connection, his criticism of August Hasler's summary of the situation leading up to Vatican I is devastating; Hasler's grasp of particulars leaves much to be desired. Moreover, Horst's knowledge of the long history of the question through his control of primary and secondary sources coupled with his possession of a philosophical and systematic mind enables him to grasp significant aspects of the texts he studies. Thus his careful examination of Pietro Olivi's work appears to indicate that Brian Tierney's earlier much acclaimed study on Olivi overlooked some key theological distinctions. I await Tierney's response to Horst's detailed challenge (pp. 219-34). In addition, Horst has a sense of the influence on theological opinion of the surrounding ecclesiastical and secular worlds, and this prevents his exposition from becoming a mere recital of views in theological tomes. Further, the author has no axes to grind. His foremost objective appears to be the understanding of the past and not the overthrow of a present ideology. Finally, his careful analysis of Cappellari's position in *Il Trionfo della Santa Sede e della Chiesa* fills a long-neglected need.

My criticisms are minor. The book has an index of authors, but it lacks an index of subjects (or a detailed table of contents) which would permit the easier tracing of certain themes. Because the work was not planned as a whole, the reader is often annoyed by unclarified references to the views of authors who have not been discussed. Sometimes such authors are treated later in the book, either in detail or cursorily; sometimes they are not treated at all. Bossuet and Vitoria are so important that they should have been given an overall treatment, however brief, in one place; instead they are mentioned in lines here and there throughout the book. A good bibliography complements the work and unlike many German

books it includes non-German works. Horst might have included George Wilson's *Corporate Human Activity and Divine Assistance in the Process of Infallible Definition: The Leading Dominican Theologians from 1450 to 1650* (unpublished dissertation at the Pontifical Gregorian University, 1963). F. X. Bantle is misspelled in most places as F. X. Bantele.

This work is an important contribution. In unfolding the past, it unlocks future possibilities of a more developed teaching on infallibility.

PETER CHIRICO, S.S.

St. Thomas Center
Bothell, Washington

Transcendence and Immanence: A Study in Catholic Modernism and Integralism. By GABRIEL DALY. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980. Pp. xii + 254. $37.50.

In the last ten years especially, but in general ever since the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council, considerable re-thinking has come about of the whole idea of a "modernist" crisis in Catholic thought at the beginning of this century. Much of this re-thinking has centered about the person and work of Alfred Loisy. Even before the council, the French scholar Emile Poulat had begun a serious reappraisal of Loisy, but after the council others—especially from the English-speaking world—joined this reappraisal with increasingly positive evaluations. Periodical literature of the last decade is replete with reconsiderations of Loisy as exegete, apologist, theologian, philosopher of religion. In these essays many of what were once generally accepted opinions of both Loisy and modernism have been reversed or at least appreciably revised. However, with Gabriel Daly's *Transcendence and Immanence: A Study in Catholic Modernism and Integralism,* revisionist history takes a new tack and in a formidable way.

If all the attention given Loisy has made him the acclaimed though unwilling figurehead of modernism, Daly now promotes a rival claimant to that title. Daly assigns to Maurice Blondel the role of standard bearer of the modernist cause. Moreover, Daly's thesis is no brief essay or monograph on one figure but a comprehensive historical survey encompassing all the prominent figures in a conceptual schema that amounts to a daring thesis.

As the title of the book suggests, Daly sees the modernist controversy as a battle between opposing methods for doing theology. Daly uses the word "transcendence" to characterize the object-oriented, supernatural

perspective from which the late nineteenth-century scholastics did their theology. Daly labels these theologians "integralists" because their theological method made for a highly conceptual, systematic, and integrated view of theology and philosophy. Daly employs the term "immanence" to characterize the subject-oriented, historical, and existential approach to theology employed by the modernists. It is in this latter method that Daly sees the paramount significance of Maurice Blondel and the analogy that relates all the other modernist figures. Blondel's 1893 doctoral thesis, *l'Action,* is seen as the opening blast, the first signal of a general movement, and the most substantial statement of the immanentist theme. And thus the outline of the book: Chapter 1 is a description of Roman (i.e., the ecclesiastically approved and established) fundamental theology in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Chapter 2 is a description of "the Blondelian challenge" to that theology. Chapter 3 portrays Loisy's work as the more radical statement of the immanentist thesis. Chapter 4 is a specific comparison of Loisy and Blondel on the question of the relation between history and dogma. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 review, *seriatim,* the immanentist theme in Laberthonnière, von Hugel, and Tyrrell. Chapters 8 and 9 narrate the integralist response to this challenge in two phases: before and after the encyclical *Pascendi.* Chapter 10 presents Daly's conclusions.

Daly has written a highly intelligent and eminently readable book. Daly's scholarship is thorough and one of the most valuable aspects of the book is the detail with which he has researched his thesis as regards the integralists. In Daly's description of the Roman seminaries and faculties (Billot, Perrone, etc.) and the detailed description he gives us of representative figures however obscure (Lemius, Matiussi), we gain a much clearer picture of the integralists. The book's two appendices both help further to "flesh out" our image of the integralist position. One treats of Joseph Lemius, the reputed draftsman of *Pascendi;* the other contains a brief introduction to and text of the Anti-Modernist oath.

However, Daly's thesis will surely not go without challenge. And one challenge might well come from followers of Maurice Blondel. Blondel always sought to distinguish his thought from what was labeled modernist. Thus Daly is recruiting a most reluctant, indeed quite unwilling, leader for the modernist movement. And so, in order to advance his thesis, Daly must resort to two rather drastic (not to say dubious) means: he presents a very reduced portrait of Blondel and accuses Blondel of duplicity and moral turpitude. Blondel saw himself as a philosopher, and indeed in his *l'Action* he was in dialogue with the secular philosophical currents of his time. However, Daly is intent upon seeing Blondel as preoccupied with theological matters and thus confines himself to Blondel's two short works with theological themes and to reading theological motive into the rest of

Blondel's work (principally *l'Action*). What results is a severe reductionism whereby in Chapter 4 Blondel appears so cut down to size that his alleged pious obtuseness is no match for Loisy's (piety-free?) perspicacity and daring. Daly's abuse of Blondel does not end there, however.

Blondel, and his disciples after him dutifully, always shied away from the too casual identification of his thought with that of thinkers who were apparently taking a similar approach. And here, it is important to note, this caution was expressed not only with regard to those accused of modernism but as much with non-combatants such as William James. Nevertheless, Daly sweeps aside such disclaimers as mere evasive maneuvers and insists upon the unity of Blondel's work with that of the other modernists, implying that much of Blondel's characteristic density is due to "tactical ambiguities" (p. 28) rather than requisite subtletly. Here revisionist history of modernism resorts to one of the least worthy tactics of the earlier histories. Earlier in this century some advanced the thesis that Loisy was an insincere Catholic from the beginning. Daly has here effectively turned the table, saying, as it were, if it can be alleged Loisy was not entirely honest about his faith, Blondel was not entirely honest about his thought. Both Blondel's thought and motives deserve better treatment than they are accorded here.

However, beside the question of the adequacy of Daly's treatment of Blondel there is yet another more problematic aspect of this work. As with so many attempts at summarizing complex historical events in a single theme, Daly's paradigm of a confrontation between diametrically opposed ideologies is open to the criticism of its being an all-too-sharply drawn and simple formula which omits significant detail as well as, at times, substantial evidence. For example, it is arguable that between integralists and modernists there is clearly discernible a third, less ideologically self-conscious group, and it is this group that sheds most light upon the tumultuous history of Catholic theology in the first half of the twentieth century.

Daly does not consider such figures as Pierre Rousselot, Marie-Joseph Lagrange, Louis Duchesne. Each of these did at once two things: they embodied in their work the most critical scientific methods and yet remained entirely loyal to the common faith—yes, even I would concede, subservient to the magisterium and at times at great personal cost. Here method served the faith and was not so vaunted as to become an end in itself, an ideology. Surely, if Blondel must be labeled or pigeon-holed, this is the group to which he might be assigned. Moreover, it is such figures as Rousselot, Lagrange, and Duchesne who represent the perhaps less spectacular, indeed at times underground, currents that eventually flowed into Vatican II. All too often revisionist history of modernism—and Daly is no exception here—speaks as though Vatican II were the

fruition and validation of modernist thought. This is to make an unwarranted historical leap that omits the significance of the *nouvelle théologie* whose exponents were labeled "sons of obedience" to indicate the cost at which their theological labors were pursued. My emphasis upon fidelity to the magisterium is not intended to exonerate the authoritarian, fanatical, self-styled orthodoxy that characterized the magisterium earlier in this century but rather to underline a peculiar characteristic of theological work within Catholicism.

It is the contention of Edward Schillebeeckx (in his introduction to M. Schoof's survey of Catholic theology 1800-1970) that the Catholic and Reformation traditions differ in the significance accorded individual theological visions. Protestantism accords great respect especially to the more brilliant theological formulations. Schillebeeckx contends Catholicism is no such respecter of genius; far greater importance is attached to the *fides Ecclesiae*. This means that a Catholic theologian must be, if not humble, at least circumspect in his or her claims. And in this regard history offers plentiful example for imitation. Witness the self-imposed speculative discipline in Augustine's *De Trinitate*. There Augustine couches his most original and daring speculative claims amid the most obsequious disclaimers in deference to the common teaching and general piety. When Daly cites Blondel's "curious, though characteristic, mixture of diffidence and firmness" (p. 72), this could pass for a description of Augustine's method in the *De Trinitate*. Karl Rahner's conscientious references to the magisterium *vis-à-vis* his own speculations is the equivalent in effect. And Schillebeeckx's own gentlemanly but firm challenges to the magisterium in his *Ministry* . . . (1981) might be considered the most recent example of the discipline of doing theology in a manner responsive to the strongly ecclesial character of faith which characterizes Catholic Christianity.

Daly's is a stimulating and challenging thesis as any work of revisionism should be. Despite its certain flaws, one of its certain assets is the fact that Daly's work places Blondel, and not only Blondel's thought but also his pious character, at the heart of any understanding of the turmoil in Catholic theology in the early part of this century. Daly points in the right direction.

LAWRENCE B. PORTER, O.P.

Vanderbilt University
Nashville, Tennessee

Abortion and Moral Theory. By L. W. SUMNER. Princeton University Press, 1981. $16.50 cloth; $4.50 paper.

As the title suggests, in *Abortion and Moral Theory* L. W. Sumner has both a practical and a theoretical aim. His practical aim is to state and defend a "moderate" abortion policy which avoids the extremes of both liberal and conservative positions. His theoretical purpose is a defense of utilitarian moral theory. In pursuit of these aims, Sumner makes a thorough and provocative criticism of both the liberal and the conservative positions on abortion and of the moral theories he contends these positions imply.

Sumner's claims for his work are bold. First, he holds that he has shown that the positions of both liberals and conservatives are not merely fraught with difficulties but "indefensible." Second, he argues that his own more moderate view not only confirms our moral intuitions but also rests upon a "deep" defense successfully rooted in moral theory.

Sumner's "moderate" view is that both moral intuition and utilitarian moral theory suggest *sentience* (the capacity for feeling or affect) rather than *intrinsic value* or *rationality* as the criterion on the basis of which human beings ought to be accorded moral standing. This conclusion suggests in turn an abortion policy lying between liberal and conservative extremes. Since sentience occurs at some point in the middle of the second trimester, an abortion policy which allows for abortion on demand prior to some point in the middle of that trimester and yet requires a case-by-case approach after the crucial date is the most defensible one.

In developing his position, Sumner's first step is a criticism of what he calls the liberal view. As described by Sumner, liberals hold that prior to viability we are not persons with rights. Mothers, however, do have a right to control their own bodies. Abortion is, therefore, to be viewed as a private rather than a public matter. Abortion laws are viewed as unwarranted intrusions by public (and religious) authority. They are, furthermore, laws which especially disadvantage women.

Sumner's basic criticism of the liberal view is that its defenders either ignore or give unsatisfactory answers to questions concerning the moral significance of fetal development and the point in that process at which society ought to accord moral standing. As a result, liberal arguments can be used to justify not only abortion but infanticide.

This criticism is certainly not new, but Sumner's presentation of it is clear and instructive. What Sumner does not do, however, is to offer an account of why the liberal view, which is indeed subject to powerful counter arguments, has the power it does and why the counter arguments, though well-known, seem to have little power to change liberal convictions. The most probable reason is that those who hold this view have certain

more basic concerns which they feel counter arguments either do not address or threaten in an unacceptable way. In the case of liberals, what is this deep concern? It is clearly the welfare of the mother. Sumner himself certainly shares this concern, but he does not explain its power and importance for his own and for liberal conscience. As a result, his objections to the liberal position may have less power to convince than he believes.

This gap is unfortunate because, without noting their full significance, Sumner gives a graphic depiction of the social facts which not only have produced the overriding liberal emphasis on maternal welfare but also have given the notion of welfare itself an inflated rather than restricted meaning.

To be specific, in his chapter, "Morality and Utility" Sumner makes an analysis of modern society and notes, as have many others, that its salient characteristic is pluralism. Pluralistic society has no uniform view of human nature and no single view of human good. In consequence, the the individual becomes a primary focus of attention and interest. Each person comes to think of himself or herself as an individual who must obtain basic necessities so that he or she can pursue private ideals and interests and achieve personal satisfactions. Public goods become subservient to private ones. In such a society, private not public ideals, ambitions, and goals become the organizing centers of each self.

This is a bleak and incomplete portrait of the relation between individual and society. It is, nevertheless, a portrait that brings out the reasons for the overriding concern liberals have for maternal welfare. According to the liberal view, it is the pursuit of individual ideals and desires which provides the meaning of both individual and social life. Unwanted children thus pose insupportable threats to life's very meaning and purpose. These threats affect women most intimately and most directly. Until women are free from the burdens of unwanted childbirth, they will remain second-class citizens.

Given the importance of individual fulfillment, it is not surprising that people socialized in such a milieu would tend to play down questions concerning the moral standing of a fetus. Had Sumner given more attention to the sociological reasons for the liberal's overriding concern, he would at one and the same time have deepened the abortion debate, and laid the ground work for a more fruitful discussion between liberals, conservatives, and moderates. He would also have protected his own position from the socially eroding pressures of atomic individualism. If overriding concern for maternal welfare pushes liberals both to inflate the notion of welfare and to ignore or play down the moral status of a child in the womb, the same overriding concern may exert pressures that steadily erode the moral significance of Sumner's own criterion for moral standing, sentience.

Sumner's second step is a criticism of the conservative position. He directs his attack both against natural law theory upon which he claims the conservative position *always* is based and against the two most common forms of argument (repelling an attacker and double effect) used by conservatives to justify abortion when the life or health of the mother is threatened and so also to avoid the obviously counter-intuitive elements of their position.

Once again Sumner's discussion is carefully and clearly presented. The criticism of self-defense and double effect arguments is, however, far more convincing than is the attack on natural law theory. This latter discussion relies too heavily on the distinction between descriptive and prescriptive statements and upon claims of moral relativism. To both objections, powerful replies are possible and those possible replies are given little attention.

The weakest part of Sumner's attack on the conservative position, however, is his discussion of the argument from potentiality. If it is wrong to destroy potential for development by means of abortion, it is surely wrong also to do so through the practice of birth control. To support the conservative case in respect to abortion on the basis of the potential of the fetus, one must also do the same in respect to birth control.

Obviously this argument is intended to change the mind of a person who opposes abortion because it destroys human potential yet supports artificial means of birth control.

In response, it must be pointed out that there is a morally significant difference between a *possibility* and a *potentiality*. Life which might result from the union of sperm and ovum is a *possibility*. Life which has resulted from that union is a *potency*. Possibilities and potentialities are not the same thing, and one's moral obligations in respect to possibilities and potentialities are not the same. The argument that if one opposes abortion on grounds that it destroys a potency one must also oppose birth control for the same reason does not work because it collapses this vital distinction.

Sumner's final two steps involve the statement and defense of his own position. In taking these steps, he makes a number of interesting points in support of his views. Of particular interest will be his contention that sentience is a more reasonable criterion for according moral standing than is intrinsic moral worth or rationality. He makes this claim both because he believes sentience accords more with intuition (because it gives moral significance to the process of fetal development) and because it is more reasonable. It is more reasonable because, unlike intrinsic value, it is a verifiable criterion and, unlike rationality, it is sufficiently inclusive to prohibit infanticide and perhaps other forms of presently prohibited killing.

Having, he believes, established the criterion of sentience, Sumner then seeks to demonstrate significant overlaps between this more reasonable criterion and utilitarian moral theory. His aim is to provide the "deep" defense of his position promised at the beginning.

Critics will rightly object to Sumner's claim that the conflict between utilitarians and natural law theorists is a form of conflict not only between ancient and modern conceptions of human nature but also between adulthood and childhood (p. 171). They will object also to many of the specific aspects of his argument. Why is it, for example, that in the doubtful period of the middle of the second trimester, Sumner seems always to favor the interest of the mother? Why is it that he continually refers to the relation between mother and child in the womb as "parasitic"? Surely this is an uncritical and unacceptable use of metaphor. Sumner's argument also appears to allow for both eugenic abortion and euthenasia and a strong case can be made that his argument for the special moral value of human as opposed to animal sentience might well allow for the experimental use of less intelligent human beings by more intelligent ones.

These are but some of the objections Sumner's work is bound to call forth. They are objections that can be sustained. Nevertheless, Sumner is master of the many complex issues which surround this vexed issue. He investigates each one with thoroughness and he develops his own argument with patience and care. Even though it is far from clear that he has shown either the liberal or conservative positions to be "indefensible" and even though the defense of his own position contains a number of serious difficulties, *Abortion and Moral Theory* is nonetheless a book that deserves careful study and careful critical response. It is a book of which any serious student of the subject ought to take account.

PHILIP TURNER

The General Theological Seminary
New York, New York

Being and Meaning: Paul Tillich's Theory of Meaning, Truth and Logic. By IAN E. THOMPSON. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981. (Distributed by Columbia University Press, N.Y.) Pp. x + 244. $30.00.

"It is the task of this work to demonstrate in what sense Tillich's system is an example of a coherent Christian philosophy of life, and to show how it illustrates some of the typical features of the logic of belief

systems" (p. 25). The author has accomplished his task with considerable success. He shows quite convincingly that Tillich's system is better understood in light of its practical evangelical purpose, which is more the communicating of the credibility of Christianity to contemporary secular society than taking the time to validate his philosophical presuppositions as a St. Thomas Aquinas did. Dr. Thompson is predominantly positive in his interpretation of Tillich's style or use of rhetoric in his "method of correlation, "apologetic theology", or "theonomous systematics", but he does clearly critique the theoretical weaknesses of his system. Such criticism, far from disparaging the intellectual contributions of the great thinker, places them in proper perspective, particularly as they might relate to those of other systems, as Thomism, which emphasize the speculative side of truth.

In Part One of the book, Thompson seeks to show that Tillich's own critique of naturalism, supernaturalism, and nominalism is not so much a direct analysis of their philosophical inadequacies as a replacement of them with his own alternative Christian world-view. This alternative is a believing realism that attempts to combine formal abstract ontology with aspects of medieval mystical realism, e.g., the absolute as transcending the subject-object dichotomy, in order to avoid nominalism. In the second part of his work, Thompson offers a critical analysis of Tillich's metaphysics of meaning, truth, and logic. The author argues to the importance of his definition of man "as that being who is essentially concerned with his being and meaning", which is central to Tillich's thought, providing its practical and existential character. The very strengths of his system as a practical communication of the credibility of Christian beliefs and values do, however, tend to generate theoretical weaknesses. Questions concerning the precise relationships between the existential and theoretical orders of knowledge are neglected and his making the existential state of being ultimately concerned to be determinative of meaning and truth tends to make his theory of meaning, truth, and logic subjectivist and relativist. At the same time, the author insists that Tillich cannot be dismissed as an idealist.

Tillichian scholars should find Thompson's defense of his basic underlying realism convincing enough, but most of them will probably controvert the author's criticism that Tillich's doctrine of knowledge is theoretically inadequate and so not entirely free from subjectivism and relativism. While he concedes that in his quest for a new believing realism Tillich did attempt to restate ontological and epistemological realism and to respond to the demands of an existential and social realism, he failed to confront seriously scientific and technological realism. Had he been more open to the pragmatist and empiricist traditions of Anglo-American philosophy, Thompson contends, he might have received some of the theo-

retical answers, e.g., from Peirce's realism, that would have made the philosophy behind his system more complete and consistent. The author also suggests that Tillich's metaphysics of logic could have avoided idealist categories and distinctions if he had made greater use of the later medieval realists, particularly the intentional logic of John of St. Thomas.

This reviewer has found several of Thompson's assertions about the inadequacies of Tillich's doctrine of theoretical knowledge to be deserving of careful consideration. They also call for a critical examination that is beyond the scope of a relatively brief review, but are singled out for the special attention of Tillichian scholars for whom this book is apparently primarily intended.

According to the author, Tillich, unlike Aquinas, does not attempt to say *how* knowledge is knowledge as distinct from the *what* of knowledge. Although he discusses in depth the nature of knowledge on the levels of formal and final causality, he does not deal with it clearly or satisfactorily on the levels of material and efficient causality. He failed to appreciate the need for the apologetical dimension of his system to make sense of experience and our knowledge of finite beings. This failure, whether one of judgment or of nerve, was not in Thompson's opinion a result of Tillich's not being able to demonstrate how his epistemology would actually make sense of the process of knowing; rather it resulted partly from the skeptical influence of Kant and in part from his tendency to emphasize the transcendence of God at the expense of the realism of secondary causes, including the causes of knowledge in the human mind.

Like Scotus, Tillich based his realism on the paradoxical claim that we have an immediate pre-reflexive intuition of being itself which cannot be expressed in ordinary or literal language concerned with the world of appearances, but that only by figurative or symbolic discourse can the really real be expressed. Thompson thinks this extreme realism is so close to idealism as to make distinction virtually meaningless, since both hold that we cannot know or express the being of things directly or immediately. While Tillich admitted this similarity between Scotist realism and post-Kantian idealism, he did not recognize the criticisms of both from the viewpoint of moderate realism and the intentional logic of the Aristotelian tradition and John of St. Thomas.

From the vantage point of Aristotle or St. Thomas, Thompson maintains, Tillich puts the cart before the horse by making meta-logic normative for logic instead of perceiving that meta-logic is an abstraction from the distinctions of ordinary logic. "Instead of St. Thomas's argument from contingent to necessary being, we have something like a meta-logical version of the ontological argument: an argument from necessary to contingent and finite being" (p. 205).

Tillich tends to conflate rhetoric and dialectic. Consequently, according

to the author, his system lacks a clear distinction between the first-order religious communication of preaching and the second-order analysis of religious language of theology.

Thompson seems to have substantiated the above assertions sufficiently to merit the serious response of those who may not agree with him. One other charge not adequately argued by the author is that Tillich, like the Scotists and Cartesians, was not able to affirm that incomplete knowledge is nevertheless real knowledge. His *Systematic Theology* and other works do not reject as unreal knowledge that is not absolute.

One unfortunate printing error appears on p. 212 where the word "experimental" is used twice when it ought to be "experiential" once. A much more substantive mistake is found in Note 41 on p. 220 where the author erroneously attributes to Aquinas the position that angels are ". . . pure act, without . . . potentiality." Only God is pure act in Thomas's system. This notwithstanding, Thompson's book should prove effective in helping bring Tillich's system into dialogue with others like that of Thomas.

FREDERICK M. JELLY, O.P.

Josephinum School of Theology
Columbus, Ohio