THE NON-INFALLIBLE MORAL TEACHING OF THE CHURCH

THE CHURCH has always claimed the authority to teach in the name of Christ. This authority is given to the Pope and to the Bishops in union with him. It is their duty to hand on the Christian message and keep it intact. The duty of the rest of the faithful is to follow this teaching. The Latin term used to express this following is *obsequium religiosum.*[1] This is not an easy term to translate into English but in general it has been taken to mean *religious assent.*

The use of the word *assent* implies that it is the human intellect that is engaged. Following Church teaching is not just a matter of obedience to a superior or observance of law, that is, of acting in a manner in accord with some precept or legislation. Obedience and observance are basically a matter of the will and external execution of a command but do not necessarily imply intellectual engagement, at least on the level of assent.

It is quite true that if obedience or observance are to be human acts at all, there must be an understanding of what is commanded. But it is possible to observe a law or command without agreeing with it. And it is execution primarily that obedience and observance of law call for. If one does what is commanded either by an authority or by law, he is fulfilling his basic obligation. He may or may not agree with the command given. In other words intellectual assent is not in itself the response called for by this kind of authority. In fact, intellectual assent as such is not and cannot be required by law. When it is given, it is the *magis.*[2]

[1] Vatican II, The Church, n. 25. *Documents of Vatican II,* Austin Flannery, O.P. (New York: Costello, 1975) 379.

[2] For a full treatment of intellectual obedience see the letter on the virtue of obedience of St. Ignatius Loyola, especially n. 9 ff. *Rules of the Society of Jesus,* (Woodstock: Woodstock Press, 1956) 65 ff.

We do not mean to imply that agreement with a law or command is irrelevant. There is good reason to believe that continued observance or obedience is intimately related to agreement with a law or precept. Where there is conflict, observance may be very difficult, and may not survive at all. What we are saying is that a precept or a law aims primarily at performance, not at assent. Agreement will indeed be desirable, but as a guarantee of performance. In itself it is not a requirement of obedience or observance.

But assent is the proper response to teaching. So teaching differs from a precept or a law in this respect. Obedience or observance is the response to the latter, and these may be given with or without intellectual assent. But when one is dealing with teaching, assent is called for.

From the above it is clear that in claiming the authority to teach, the Church is claiming a power which even civil governments do not claim. Civil government has ruling or governing power; it makes no claim to teaching authority. So it cannot require intellectual assent to its demands. And the same is true of other human organizations, even those of a religious nature. Authorities in them may have ruling or governing power of some kind, but this is the limit of their authority.

There are, of course, many teachers in our world. Anyone who imparts information or knowledge to another is a teacher. Ordinarily, however, the title is reserved to those who have a certain competence in the field in which they teach and are teachers by profession. The claim of the Church goes beyond this kind of teaching, even when the teaching is in the area of theology. It is the claim to teach in the name of Christ.[3] This makes the teaching of the Church different from other teaching.

It must be admitted that when one is dealing with teaching, especially moral teaching, more than an intellectual response is called for. Assent to teaching must have an impact on conduct. In fact a precept may be connected with teaching or

[3] Vatican II, The Church, n. 25. Loc. cit.

implied in it. Thus, the Church may teach that adultery is wrong. The commandment *Thou shalt not commit adultery* stems from this teaching. Assent will be without its full meaning if it is not reflected in one's conduct. In the area of Church moral teaching what is called for is not only acceptance of Christian teaching, but also following the Christian way of life.

Two points must be made in reference to Church moral teaching. Simple implementation of a teaching is not enough. If one does not accept the truth of the teaching, he is not responding properly. On the other hand, failing to carry out a teaching, that is, a precept based on some teaching, does not necessarily mean a lack of assent. So conduct failure does not necessarily imply dissent to Church teaching. In this regard one must be careful not to overinterpret conduct polls regarding a particular teaching, concluding that conduct failure implies dissent. Such a judgment would frequently be unwarranted.

Ordinarily any teaching calls for assent. A teacher, of course, may present opinions purely for purposes of discussion, but when he or she is imparting knowledge, either factual knowledge or truths based on such knowledge, assent is usually expected. The assent given to a teacher who communicates some knowledge may be based on evidence or it may be based on the reasons given, or it may be based on authority. Often, at least in the beginning of one's intellectual life, authority may be more operative than reason, and sometimes even when minds are more mature, although reasons may be offered, they are accepted because of the authority of the teacher. To what extent we are ever free from authority in this sense may be quite debatable. Even when we think we are being most rational, our motivation may be considerably influenced by authority. That authority or motivating force may be the reputation for competence of the teacher, or it may even be the kind of authority that other influences exercise, e.g., peer pressure, media or cultural influence, etc.

When we are dealing with the teaching authority of the Catholic Church, the assent called for is a *religious* assent. The reason for this is not only that we are dealing with religious (or moral) truth, but especially the fact that the basis for the underlying authority and assent is the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The authority of hierarchical teaching is not based solely on the competence of that authority in any particular field. Neither is it based on the religious expertise the hierarchy may enjoy. The reason for this authority is the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the claim to this guidance that makes Church teaching unique. This claim is founded on Christ's promise of assistance to His Church. This basis for the teaching authority of the Church was reiterated clearly in Vatican II.[4]

A key reason for its uniqueness is the reliability which the guidance of the Holy Spirit gives Church teaching. With conspicuous guidance of this kind Church teaching enjoys a reliability which no human teacher can have. This is true not only of infallible teaching but also of teaching which cannot claim this prerogative. Since such teaching (non-infallible) may constitute the bulk of Church teaching, this reliability is of the greatest importance. It gives the faithful an assurance they cannot have even from the most reliable human authority.

To gauge the level of Church teaching one must study the circumstances surrounding its exercise. The top level of any Church teaching, moral or otherwise, is indeed infallible teaching, whether this is done by the Pope himself, or by the Bishops in union with him either in council or scattered throughout the world. This teaching is clearly free from error. It is relatively easy to identify teaching as infallible when one is dealing with defined doctrine. Apart from definitions, however, it may not always be easy. The next level of teaching is non-infallible teaching, and this in turn may have different levels of authority behind it. Perhaps the highest level of this kind of teaching is that which the Church considers morally

[4] The Church, n. 25. Loc. cit.

certain and which carries with it an obligation on the part of the faithful not only to assent but also practice.

In speaking of Papal teaching Vatican II advises that one can judge the mind and will of the Pontiff regarding a particular teaching from the character of the documents, the frequent repetition of the same doctrine and from the manner of speaking.[5] And this would be true of Conciliar teaching as well as the ordinary teaching of Pope and Bishops. One can grant that not all non-infallible teaching will carry the same weight.

Our concern here is with the moral teaching of the Church. I do not think anyone would rule out the possibility that Church moral teaching might be infallible. And I think a strong case may be made for the infallibility of some moral teaching. On the other hand, it is conceded that much moral teaching is non-infallible. Since it is with the status of this kind of teaching that we are concerned, we will not deal with infallible teaching or try to decide which moral teaching is infallible and which is non-infallible. We will simply accept non-infallible moral teaching as a given.

The teaching authority of the Church extends to faith and morals. The source or object of this teaching is revelation and whatever is necessary " to religiously safeguard or faithfully expound it." It is generally admitted that this includes moral norms derived ultimately from natural law. The Church claims authority to teach in this area because even though it is not revelation, it is necessary for the Christian way of life. So even in this teaching the Church claims the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

One may ask why a special religious teacher is needed in regard to precepts of the natural law which presumably are accessible to reason. If one were speaking only of very general principles of the natural law, a special teacher might well be superfluous. These may be available to reason. But when one is dealing with more specific and more remote conclusions, it

[5] The Church, n. 25. Loc. cit.

is not as easy for reason alone to acquire accurate knowledge. Thomas Aquinas told us long ago that these may not be known by all with accuracy.[6] So if we are to know them, we may need help. Vatican I assigned as a reason for revelation the fact that some truths which are theoretically accessible to reason cannot easily be known with certainty and accurately by all men.[7] It is easy to see how some moral truths would fall into this category. And since traditional norms are frequently under attack and new moral problems are constantly arising, the continued guidance of Church teaching is needed for the same reason.

One of the encyclicals of Pius XII pointed to the atmosphere of sin in which we live as a reason for the difficulty in arriving at moral truth in certain areas.[8] This atmosphere not only makes it difficult to implement certain moral norms but even to arrive at them or apply them objectively to concrete cases.

So Church teaching must play a role in the moral life even though many moral truths may be theoretically accessible to human reason. It should be added that the basic function of such teaching may be to add authority to a norm rather than provide further natural reasons. One cannot expect then that such a teaching will be more patent to reason after teaching than it was before. Nor can one conclude that when a truth does not become obvious and compelling after Church teaching, the teaching itself is erroneous, or at least less likely to be true. Rather one has the assurance that the guidance of the Holy Spirit is behind it.

We have already pointed out that there may be different levels of non-infallible teaching. Certainly one of the indications of the authority of a particular teaching is the fact that it is made obligatory. While this may not be a clear sign that a teaching is infallible, it is a sign that the Church is morally

[6] Summa Theologiae, I-II, q. 94, a. 4.

[7] Dei Filius, Cap. 2, De revelatione. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, Denzinger-Schoenmetzer, n. 1786.

[8] Humani generis, n. 2. *Papal Encyclicals*, 1939-58, Claudia Carlen, 175-85.

certain about the teaching.[9] Otherwise an obligation would not be justified. It may be true that the obligation looks to the execution of the teaching as well as to assent, but as pointed out, teaching is aimed basically at assent. The Church could not impose an obligation on the faithful to follow a teaching unless it was certain of the truth it expressed. In discussing moral norms which are of obligation, then, one is dealing with Church teaching which is certain. We are confining discussion to this kind of teaching. We are not directly concerned with anything the Church might propose as an ideal.

The Church can, of course, impose an obligation on the faithful apart from teaching. This would be an exercise of its power of governing or ruling.[10] The faithful could fulfill such an obligation even though they might not agree with the wisdom behind the precept. But we are dealing here with obligations that stem from teaching, and as pointed out above, imply prior assent to the teaching.

The question that might naturally come to mind is whether the Church can legitimately demand assent to and implementation of teaching which is not infallible. More explicitly, does the possibility of error, which is not excluded in this teaching, make this teaching so unreliable that it could not be a legitimate source of obligation?

I do not think anyone would explicitly take the position that reliability is limited to infallible teaching. If this were true, since no claim of infallibility is made for any other kind of communication of knowledge, there would be no security in human intercourse. The fact is that everyone accepts as reliable information and teaching which is not considered infallible but in which error is a possibility. Thus we trust the judgment

[9] Magisterium, Francis A. Sullivan, S.J., (New York: Paulist Press, 1983) 146.

[10] In imposing obligations on the basis of ruling power an authority must also be morally certain of the need. The difference between ruling authority and teaching authority in imposing obligations is not in the requirement of certainty. As pointed out, the difference is that teaching authority requires assent as well as implementation.

of physicians, lawyers, and people who have other competences even though we do not attribute to them infallibility in any sense.

We do this because we realize that there is a wide gap between the possibility of error and actual error, and that there are ways in which the occurrence of error can be reduced to a rarity and even to non-existence. We realize, for instance, that the more competent a person is in particular area, the less likely is error to be present in his judgments. In fact, fallibility does not imply actual error. At least theoretically, a person who is fallible can be free from error. All fallibility says is that one can make a mistake; it does not say that he actually does. And we consider a person who is fallible reliable precisely for this reason, that, although error is possible, it will occur rarely, if at all. And we know that we will be better off and our chances of avoiding error will be much better if we follow the judgment of such people than if we rely on our own relatively uninformed judgments.[11]

So it is reasonable to put our trust in those who have competence in certain areas, at least when we do this freely. Thus we prudently rely on doctors and lawyers, even though they make no claim to infallibility. It is reasonable to do the same with Church teaching even when it is not infallible. And the Church can make assent to and implementation of this teaching obligatory. Teaching does not have to be infallible to be a basis for obligation. It is sufficient that it be certain. If more were required, there would be no way to justify civil legislation. So when the Church is certain of the moral norms it teaches, it may impose an obligation to assent to and observe them. Although the possibility of error is not ruled out in this teaching, error, at least for the most part, will not actually occur because of the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This gives the one who follows Church moral teaching a security which no purely human competence or authority can give.

[11] Cf. Bruno Schuler, S.J., "Bemerken zur authentischen Verkundigung des kirchlichen Lehramtes," *Theologie und Philosophie*, 42 (1967) 534-51.

If indeed the Church is not certain of some norm, it could not impose an obligation to follow it. The Church cannot impose an obligation on the faithful to follow probable opinions as such. And where there has been question only of such opinions, the Church has traditionally allowed freedom.

What about the possibility of dissent from non-infallible moral teaching?[12] If error is possible in this kind of teaching, it must also be admitted that dissent is possible. But just as there is a wide gap between the possibility of error and actual error, there must be a similar gap between the possibility of dissent and legitimate actual assent. And certainly since error does not necessarily occur in non-infallible teaching, neither will dissent be necessary. Non-infallible teaching can be just as free of error as infallible teaching. The difference between the two is not in the actual presence of error but only in the possibility. It is conceivable that the body of non-infallible teaching in the Church would actually be free from error. There would be no place for dissent in this happy situation even though it would still be possible.

A very false impression regarding dissent might arise from the atmosphere in which we are living today. There is so much talk about the right to dissent and even actual dissent that one easily gets the impression that dissent can be as common and as legitimate as assent. From what we have already said, this can hardly be true.

It should be stated clearly that the right to dissent does not make actual dissent legitimate. In fact, *rights* language may not be very useful in this issue. It may indeed be misleading.

[12] Since this article is focused on the reliability of non-infallible teaching, our interest in dissent is limited to it as a response to this teaching. Promoting dissent publicly and protesting Church teaching go beyond the parameters we have set for the article. Suffice it to say that since they are even more problematic than simple dissent, they could not be handled adequately in a brief space. Dissent in itself involves only the good of the dissenter. Promoting dissent and protesting teaching involves the good of other faithful as well as the good of the teaching Church herself. The Church cannot be complacent about these activities.

If I own a house, I may have a right to burn it down, but ordinarily it would be a very stupid thing to do. It can be rather simplistic to attempt to justify some act merely by appealing to a right. One can do wrong without violating rights. As we have already pointed out, the right to dissent does not automatically make actual dissent legitimate. The legitimacy of actual dissent depends on the existence of actual error more than on the right to dissent. So whatever one may want to say about a right to dissent, the legitimacy of dissent is tied to the existence of error. If there is no error, there can be no legitimate dissent, even though a teaching is non-infallible and the theoretical possibility of error is not ruled out.

Another curious aspect of the current atmosphere of dissent regarding moral teaching is that it is all in the direction of more liberal norms. Looking objectively at the whole issue of non-infallible teaching and its vulnerability to error, one would tend to expect that error might occur just as readily on the side of teaching being less strict than it should be as well as of being too strict. Yet the bulk of the dissent is against teaching which is on the strict side. This makes one wonder to what extent dissent may be related more to a desire for freedom than a desire for truth.

In commenting on the frequency of dissent it will be important to determine how one legitimately concludes to error in non-infallible Church teaching? If the Church herself either expressly or implicitly accepts a dissenting opinion, one can clearly conclude that the contrary opinion was erroneous. Some point to the Declaration on Religious Liberty vis-a-vis the state as an instance of an express change in Church teaching.[13] Acceptance might also be implicit if the Church over a long period of time failed to respond to dissent. But in the absence of such acceptance, it is not so easy to conclude legitimately to erroneous teaching. In other words, even though the dissent may bring to light aspects of the problem

[13] Vatican II. Flannery, 799-812.

that were not previously considered, if the Church continues to teach what it has taught it is more difficult to be sure that the teaching is erroneous.

Sometimes the *sensus fidelium* is appealed to in support of dissenting opinion. It is indeed a fact that the Council credited infallibility *in believing* (not in teaching) to the faithful where in union with their Bishops all believe in some truth of faith or morals.[14] And even where a lesser consensus might be involved, although it would not warrant the above conclusion, it is something that would have to be reckoned with. If dissent is frequent in the sense that many do not agree with a particular teaching, the dissent should certainly be taken into consideration. But what *Familiaris consortio* says about the *sensus fidelium* should be attended to here.[15] One must be sure that it reflects the faith before one can confide in it. The faithful may be subject to other influences, and their opinion in a particular area may reflect these influences rather than a *sensus fidei*. Numbers will be significant only if they reflect a *sensus fidei*. If they reflect some other influence, they tell us nothing about the truth of Church teaching, and may even lead us astray So. while the *sensus fidelium* can be a legitimate source of religious truth, it will be so only when it reflects a *sensus fidei*. Ultimately, the one who is empowered to teach must decide this.

Indeed, when the Church teaches something as certain and binding, there is an initial presumption of truth in favor of this teaching since it has the guidance of the Holy Spirit. As pointed out, this guidance gives it a reliability which no purely human agent can claim, no matter how competent. So the teaching enjoys a presumption of truth which no other kind of teaching can claim. The burden of proof would rest on the shoulders of the person or persons who would deny some Church teaching or propose some substitute. Their judgment

[14] The Church, n. 12. Flannery, 363.

[15] The Apostolic Exhortation on the Family, n. 5. *Origins*, 11, 28-29 (1981) 440.

or norm would have to be certain to overturn the presumption in favor of Church teaching.

The unique reliability of Church teaching derived from the guidance of the Holy Spirit, besides offering a guarantee against the error of a particular teaching, will also make legitimate dissent a rare, if ever, phenomenon. Frequent dissent is simply incompatible with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the reliability of Church teaching which depends on this guidance. Even in purely secular matters we would not trust the kind of guidance we would get from a teacher who was frequently wrong. It would be much more imprudent to rely on such an incompetent guide in spiritual matters.

Legitimate dissent must consequently be rare. It follows that if one dissents frequently from Church teaching, even non-infallible teaching, he is questioning not only the truth of a particular teaching. He is throwing doubt on the reliability of this kind of teaching. Already pointed out, frequent error is incompatible with the reliability of the teacher. And in the case of Church teaching, where this reliability is believed to depend on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it raises questions about the validity of this belief.

I think one would also have to conclude that a person who dissents frequently from non-infallible teaching on the basis of natural reason no longer makes this teaching his *regula fidei.* He accepts it only when he agrees with it. His criterion of truth in this area is not Church teaching but his own reason.

The dissent one hears of today does not ordinarily involve total denial of a particular teaching. Thus no one will simply maintain that there is nothing wrong with adultery, or that there is nothing wrong with abortion. The dissent, with perhaps some exceptions, is aimed largely at hard cases. Those who dissent are not satisfied with a solution of such cases which allows for mitigated guilt. They would like to argue that such cases are morally permissible. So they dissent from Church teaching to the extent that it includes such hard cases.

Yet it is precisely because of the hard cases that the guidance

of the Church is needed and helpful. It is in these areas particularly that the ability of the individual to make objective judgments may be subject to the greatest interference, and therefore less reliable. One might well dispute the need for Church teaching in cases where the application of the norm is easy. So if one simply restricts the reliability of Church teaching to such cases, he would have great difficulty justifying it at all. One who teaches dissent to Church teaching in difficult cases is questioning it precisely in those areas in which it is most useful and needed. He is really questioning the usefulness of this kind of teaching.

In this context the problem of exceptions to Church teaching arises. Does one who makes an exception to Church teaching violate this teaching? Or is this consistent with assent? Here we are not dealing, at least directly, with the possibility of error but with the possibility that moral norms are limited in their extension. Obviously, if a teaching is open to exceptions, assent to it will be limited to this extent. This is not an issue into which we can go thoroughly, but it is safe to say, I believe, that although some moral norms are open to exceptions, the Church has traditionally taught that such things as adultery, premarital sex, deliberate killing of the innocent, are absolutely wrong. In other words, they are not open to exceptions.

There are some today who take the position that all moral norms are open to exception.[16] They argue that this is true even of moral norms taught by the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They contend that it is impossible for moral norms to cover all possible cases, since it is impossible to foresee all possible circumstances in which a particular norm might be applied. So every norm must be open at least to this ex-

[16] Those who subscribe to this position are frequently called proportionalists, since their general principle is that material moral norms will yield to a proportionate reason. They deny that there are moral absolutes *ex objecto*. At the most these objects constitute ontic evil. A moral judgment can be made only when all the elements of the act are considered. An act will be considered morally evil only when all the ontic evil in the act outweighs the good.

tent. It must allow at least for some possible though unforeseen exception of the future.

On the theoretical level one might well dispute the need to consider all possible circumstances before establishing an absolute norm. But even if one were to admit this position, I do not think this admission would affect the absoluteness of some Church moral teaching. Even those who hold that all norms must be theoretically open to exception admit that some moral norms are practically absolute. In other words, even though theoretically these norms must be open to exceptions for so-called proportionate reasons, in practice no such reasons appear. So these norms are practically absolute.

I think that one would at least have to admit that the moral norms which the Church teaches as absolute fall into this category. One who would allow an exception to such a norm would be denying that the norm itself was practically absolute. He would be saying then that this norm was erroneous to the extent that it claimed to include this case. Practically speaking, he would be dissenting from the norm to this extent.

In other words, the acceptance of absolute norms in Church teaching is not inconsistent with a metaethics which maintains that all norms are open theoretically to exceptions. So no one can deny the absoluteness of Church teaching on this basis. If it is claimed that the Church is in error, it is done on the basis of the person's own estimate of the existence of a proportionate reason, not on the basis of the method itself.

To argue against some absolute teaching, one would have to assume that his reason is one which the Church had never considered in the past. So it would have to be something entirely new. It would also have to be new in the sense that it is totally unlike anything the Church might have considered and rejected in the past. Nor would it be sufficient for the difference to be one of degree. It would have to be such that one would be dealing with a specifically different act.

In discussing the issue of dissent some attention should be given to the relation between non-infallible teaching and con-

science. What is the role of conscience in dealing with non-infallible teaching? In general, there would seem to be no difference between the role conscience plays in non-infallible teaching and the one it plays in infallible teaching. It is the function of conscience to discern whether a particular act in prospect falls under a moral prohibition or not. It is not the role of conscience to determine whether a particular norm is true or not. This must be done on a different level. If the person dissents from a particular teaching, the role of his conscience will then be to use the norm he accepts to determine whether the act is permitted or not. There is no strict conflict between conscience and norm. The conflict is rather between Church teaching and the norm the person considers true.

It is not the role of conscience to make exceptions to norms. To be valid and legitimate, an exception must be built into the norm itself. The function of conscience is merely to determine whether the conditions for making the exception are verified in an act under consideration. It is not empowered to make an exception to a norm. If a norm is absolute, conscience must follow it. . . . or else adopt a norm which allows the exception the person wants to make.

Sometimes a plea is made that a person cannot in conscience observe a particular teaching. The person may be involved in what appears as a conflict between the duty reflected in the teaching and another duty, and may decide that he should follow the latter. This should not be confused with exception-making. The norm he uses does not make what the person does good; it simply removes guilt when in good faith he does something wrong.

To summarize, then, we tried to show that the non-infallible moral teaching of the Church which we have been discussing (morally certain and binding), although not immune from the possibility of error, may be free from actual error, and is a reliable source of truth. Indeed, due to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it is, apart from infallible teaching, the most reliable source of religious and moral truth we have. Since it is

morally certain, this teaching enjoys a presumption of truth. It thus puts the burden of proof on one who would deny some Church teaching, and it will be overturned only by certainty of error. If it occurs at all, error must be rare. Frequent error is incompatible with the reliability of such teaching and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit which accounts for it. Dissent, if it is to be legitimate, must be based on proof of error, and must be rare. Frequent dissent is incompatible both with the reliability of Church teaching and the guidance of the Holy Spirit behind it. If one dissents frequently, he undermines both and makes his own reason rather than Church teaching his *regula fidei.*

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AQUINAS'S FOURTH WAY AND THE APPROXIMATING RELATION

THERE IS, IT CAN BE SAID, at least one troublesome premise (to some, unacceptable) in each of the Five Ways recorded by Aquinas in the *Summa Theologiae* (*S.T.*, I, q.2, a.3, c.). Three of the Ways, i.e., the First and the Second and the Fifth, have a premise which describes God—Prime Mover (Primum Movens, quod a nullo movetur), First Efficient Cause (Causa Efficiens Prima), Intelligent Orderer (Aliquid Intelligens, a quo omnes res naturales ordinantur in finem), respectively—in a way which falls short of a proper or adequate (unmistakable, unquestionable, unique) identification of God. That is, it is not necessary that the Prime Mover be God, or that the First Efficient Cause be God, or that the Intelligent Orderer be God. For, whatever else God is, God is the Creator, and the Prime Mover is not. And neither is the First Efficient Cause; nor is the Intelligent Orderer. This happens because the empirical point of departure of each of these three Ways gives the causality of the Prime Mover, of the First Efficient Cause, and of the Intelligent Orderer an effect and a scope which make it impossible to identify them with the effect and the scope of the causality of the Creator.

The two remaining ways, though providing a description of God which quite properly or adequately identifies God—Self-Necessary Being (Ens per se necessarium), Most a Being (Maxime Ens), respectively—make an analytic claim which is troublesome (to some unacceptable), in any case difficult to understand. In the Third Way, it is the analytic claim that ". . . si . . . omnia sunt possibilia non esse, aliquando nihil fuit in rebus;" and in the Fourth Way, it is the analytic claim that

". . . [si] . . . magis et minus dicuntur de diversis secundum quod appropinquant diversimode ad aliquid quod maxime est . . ., . . . est . . . aliquid quod est verissimum et optimum et nobilissimum . . . et . . . maxime ens."

There are three parts in the argument of the Fourth Way,[1] and it is the first of these which is difficult to understand. The first part moves from the observed existence of the more and the less good, true, noble, etc. to the concluded existence of the most good, true, noble, etc.—the *simpliciter* good, true, noble, etc., as it is called in the *Contra Gentiles* formulation of an argument (*S.G.*, I, cap. 13) which is similar to (though also quite different from) the Fourth Way of the *Summa Theologiae*.[2] The second part argues that the most true or *verissimum*

[1] It will be of help to the reader to have the text of the Fourth Way in hand, and to have its three parts explicitly distinguished.

Quarta via sumitur ex gradibus qui in rebus inveniuntur.

First part: Invenitur enim in rebus aliquid magis et minus bonum, et verum, et nobile: et sic de aliis huiusmodi. Sed *magis* et *minus* dicuntur de diversis secundum quod appropinquant diversimode ad aliquid quod maxime est: sicut magis calidum est, quod magis appropinquat maxime calido. Est igitur aliquid quod est verissimum et optimum et nobilissimum,

Second part: et per consequens maxime ens: nam quae sunt maxime vera, sunt maxime entia, ut dicitur *II Metaphys.*

Third part: Quod autem dicitur maxime tale in aliquo genere, est causa omnium quae sunt illius generis: sicut ignis, qui est maxime calidus, est causa omnium calidorum, ut in eodem libro dicitur. Ergo est aliquid quod omnibus entibus est causa esse, et bonitatis, et cuiuslibet perfectionis: et hoc dicimus Deum.

[2] Whereas the Fourth Way uses the approximating relation to move to the existence of the *Maxime Ens* from the fact that there are *real things* which are more and less, the way of the *C.G.* uses the approximating relation to move to the existence of the *Maxime Ens* from the fact that there are *propositions* such that one is more false than the other (and so, less true than the other) more puzzling still than the Fourth Way.

Here is the text of the *C.G.* argument:

Potest etiam alia ratio colligi ex verbis Aristotelis. In *II* enim *Metaphys.* ostendit quod ea quae sunt maxime vera, sunt et maxime entia. In *IV* autem *Metaphys.* ostendit esse aliquid maxime verum, ex hoc quod videmus duorum falsorum unum altero esse magis falsum,

(already concluded to exist in the first part) is most a being or *maxime ens*. The third part argues that the most a being or *maxime ens* (concluded to exist in the second part) is the cause of the being, the goodness, the truth, the nobility, and the like, in all else, including the more and the less which constitute the point of departure of the Fourth Way in the first part of the argument. And so, the Fourth Way argues that the existence of the more and the less true requires the existence of the most true, which (qua most true) is also most a being, and which (qua most a being) is the cause of the existence, the goodness, and the like, of all else, i.e., of the more and the less. The *existence* of the thing called the most, it is to be noted, is established *before* it is argued that the most is a *cause*. This is troublesome; and, if not troublesome, then certainly difficult to understand. For it is not clear how the existence of the most is established; since, as it appears, it is *not* established by an appeal to *causality*. What is there about the more and the less (one is led to ask), other than its being the effect of the most (argued in the last part), which enables Aquinas to conclude to the existence of the most (in the first part)?

It is our intention, in this brief paper, to try to render the first part of the Fourth Way a bit less troublesome, a bit less difficult to understand.

Let us look more closely at the first part of the Fourth Way. "Magis et minus," writes Aquinas, "dicuntur de diversis secundum quod appropinquant diversimode ad aliquid quod maxime est." What exactly is he doing here? He is pointing out that different things *are said* (*dicuntur*)—notice "are said"—to be such that some of them are more and others less good, true, noble, and the like, *according as they approximate*, or approach, in different ways something which is the most (or *simpliciter*) good, true, noble, etc. But, since Aquinas im-

> unde oportet ut alterum sit etiam altero verius; hoc autem est secundum approximationem ad id quod est simpliciter et maxime verum. Ex quibus concludi potest ulterius esse *aliquid quod est maxime ens*. Et hoc dicimus Deum.

mediately concludes: "*Est* igitur aliquid quod est verissimum et optimum et nobilissimum," i.e., since he immediately concludes that *there exists* something which is truest and best and noblest, he is also pointing out that 1) different things *are said* to be such that some are more and others less, *because* they *are*—notice "are"—such that some are more and others less, and 2) that these things could not *be* such that some are more and others less, *unless there exists* something which is the most, in relation to which the more and the less are precisely the more and the less they are, *according as they approximate* that most in different ways. He is saying that things which exist, and which are more and less, are more and less precisely according as they approximate a most; and could not exist as approximating a most unless the most they approximate is an existing most. Or, more briefly, things which approximate a most cannot approximate a most unless there *is* a most which they approximate. And indeed, Aquinas himself makes this point explicitly, though in another place—in his commentary on the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle: ". . . non esset aliquid affinius vero vel propinquius, nisi esset aliquid simpliciter verum." (*In IV Metaph.*, lect. 9, n.659): ". . . there would not *be* anything which is *closer to* the true, i.e., *more* true, than something else, unless *there existed* something which is *simply* true."[3] What is there about the approximating relation which enables Aquinas to draw the conclusion that what is approximated—and what is approximated is what is

[3] But here, *Metaphysics*, Bk. IV, 1008 b 31—1009 a 5, Aristotle presents his seventh argument against those who claim that contradictory *statements* are simultaneously true; or, as Aquinas puts it, against those *qui dicunt contradictoria simul esse vera* (*In IV Metaph.*, lect. 7, n. 611). And so, the statement of Aquinas just quoted (from *In IV Metaph.*, lect. 9, n. 659) is about the *truth of propositions* (as is the argument of the *C.G.* quoted in footnote 2), *not* about the *truth of things*. The Fourth Way, on the other hand, is talking precisely about the *truth of things*.

It is to be noted that the reference made to Aristotle *Metaphysics*, Bk. IV, in the *C.G.* argument quoted in footnote 2 is to Aristotle's seventh argument against those who claim that contradictory *statements* are simultaneously true.

maxime or *simpliciter*—must exist, if there exist things which are more and less, and which (qua more and less) approximate it? This is the troublesome question, the difficult question, to which the analytic claim of the first part of the argument of the Fourth Way gives rise.

* * *

What, if anything, has been suggested by way of trying to clarify what goes on in the first part of the Fourth Way?

1. There is the suggestion of Harvanek (*A.C.P.A. Proceedings*, 1954, pp. 207-212) that the Fourth Way moves from the more and the less to demonstrate the existence of a most, and "prior to any appeal to causality" (p. 211),[4] "by a kind of natural dialectic of the mind" (p. 210). In this natural dialectic, it is explained, the mind "in its recognition of grades . . . implicitly asserts the existence of a *maximum* at the end of an ascending scale" (p. 210)—a *maximum*, one wants to clarify, in the sense of a *simpliciter* or an absolute, beyond which there can*not* be a more. What this is saying appears to be the following. To recognize that there are things such that some are more and others less is to recognize that these things (i.e., the some more and others less) are such that something more perfect than any of them is *in principle* possible. And to recognize this entails recognizing as in principle possible, though implicitly, something so perfect that a more perfect is *in principle impossible*. That is, "the mind naturally judges greater and less according to some standard or norm" (p. 211)—i.e., a most, or a *simpliciter*, or an absolute. But then, continues Harvanek, the mind moves on *beyond that* to judge that the standard or norm (the most, the absolute) *must actually exist*, and just because the mind has judged greater and less in relation to the standard it has recognized *as in principle possible*.[5] But, one can ask, Harvanek reflects: ". . . does it follow the norm then necessarily

[4] It is important, it is to be noted, to keep this priority in mind.

[5] This is saying that, if there *is* something than which a greater is *possible*, then there *must be* something than which a greater is *impossible*. And this, it appears to be saying, is demanded by the *approximating relation*.

exists?" (p. 211), just because the natural dialectic of the mind has judged it to exist; and precisely for the reason given?, i.e., because the mind has judged greater and less in relation to (i.e., as approximating) a most (an absolute, a standard, a norm) recognized *as in principle possible? If* Aquinas actually argues in this way, one will still have to make clear, Harvanek suggests—without himself attempting to make it clear—exactly how the natural dialectic which takes place *in the mind* actually demonstrates the *real* existence of an absolute, and prior to any appeal to causality (p. 211). Here, by noting that the existence of an absolute is demonstrated *prior to any appeal to causality*, Harvanek puts his finger on the troublesomeness of the approximating relation which figures in the first part of the Fourth Way. And he attempts to resolve this troublesomeness in terms of the natural dialectic of the mind which he describes. But, this resolution adds a problem—that of showing how one can pass to the conclusion of the *real existence* of that most or absolute from one's *understanding* of more and less in relation to one's *understanding* of a most.

2. There is, secondly, the suggestion of Maritain in *Approaches to God*,[6] that what is operative in Aquinas's argument from the more and less to the existence of a most, and prior to any appeal to causality, is a self-evident principle which "expresses in an entirely general way the logical requirements of the concept of comparative relation" (p. 53), namely the proposition: "Every series composed of a more and a less connotes a most" (p. 53), a proposition with "supra-empirical and unconditional universality and necessity" (p. 53). To say that the more and less connote a most means that "wherever there exist degrees (wherever there is a more and a less) it is necessary that there exist, somewhere, a supreme degree or a maxmium (a most)" (p. 50). The connoting is a connoting with respect to the *existence* of a most. But, one must ask, exactly what sort of connoting is this connoting? That is, in

[6] Maritain, Jacques. *Approaches to God*, translated from the French by Peter O'Reilly. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1954.

virtue of what in the more and the less do they (the more and the less) connote the existence of a most, and precisely what is it in the most which gets picked out by the connoting? The most cannot be picked out *as the cause* of the more and the less, since causality is not operative until the third part of the argument. How then does the most get picked out? Simply as *what the more and the less approximate.* And, in virtue of what in the more and the less do they (the more and the less) connote the existence of a most? Simply in virtue of the *fact that, as more and less, they approximate.* The most emerges *not* as the cause of the more and the less, but simply as *what is approximated* by the more and the less. What is it that the most does (if " does " is the word?) for the more and the less, in being that which they approximate? Nothing—if " doing " means *acting as an efficient cause.* All that the most " does " is to be there *as what is approximated* by the more and the less.[7]

A comparison may be helpful. (This comparison was suggested by Maritain's noting that the proposition " Every series composed of a *more* and a *less* connotes a *most* " is a necessary and self-evident proposition of the same logical type as *the principle of causality*—which Maritain formulates as follows: Everything which is contingent is caused—i.e., known of itself *per se secundo modo.* See p. 53; and p. 21, note 1). To be contingent is to be caused. And so, if there is something contingent, there must exist a cause or causes on which the contingent thing depends. Moreover, if there is something contingent, there must exist a cause which is an *uncaused* (and uncausable) *cause.* Similarly, to be more and less is to approximate something—not just anything at all, i.e., not just something which is a *more,* but a *most.* And so, if there are more and less, there must exist a most which the more and the less approximate. That is, there must exist an approximate*d*

[7] That is, the more and less, qua more and less, *approximate.* The most, qua most, *is approximated.*

which does not (and cannot) approxim*ate*.[8] A contingently existing thing cannot exist unless there exists an *uncaused cause* on which it depends. Similarly, it seems, what exists as approximating (i.e., the more and the less) cannot exist unless there exists an *un*approximating approximat*ed* (i.e., a most) which it approximates. This, it appears, is what is required by the concept of " comparative relation," i.e., by the concept of the approximating relation, at least as Maritain seems to understand it. Moreover, Maritain's understanding of the comparative or approximating relation makes it sound very much as if the most emerges, in the first part of the Fourth Way, as an *exemplary* cause (vs. an *agent* cause).

3. There is, thirdly, the suggestion of Brady (*The New Scholasticism*, 1974, pp. 291-232) that the Fourth Way moves from the existence of the more and the less to the existence of a most precisely by appealing to causality. *Not* to *agent* causality, but to *exemplary* causality. Brady notes that " the purpose of the first part of the text [of the Fourth Way] is to ascend from the affirmation of the degrees of existing to the affirmation of the maximal being, the *exemplary cause* [my italics] of all graded beings " (p. 229). Agent causality does function in the Fourth Way, but in its last part, i.e., in the part in which Aquinas argues that the most a being (*maxime ens*), precisely qua most a being, is the *cause* (agent cause) of the existence, and of the goodness, and the like, of the more and the less. Writes Brady, agreeing with L. Charlier: ". . . the second part [what I have called the *third*, or *last*, part; see above p. 2] of the text . . . [of the Fourth Way] . . . deals with the *procession* [my italics] of creatures from God, the first *efficient cause* [my italics] . . ." (p. 229).

In order to make Brady's suggestion clearer, let us ask the question: What exactly is it that the first part of the Fourth Way tries to explain—in the sense in which the First Way tries to explain the fact of motion; or the Third Way tries to

[8] That is, an *un*approximating approximat*ed*; a most, a *simpliciter*, an absolute.

explain the fact of the existence of things for which it is possible to be and not to be? And let us ask further: How would Brady answer this question? As follows, it seems: The first part of the Fourth Way tries to explain the fact that the existing things which we experience are *like* one another, while being *unlike* one another—*like* one another in being good, in being true, in being noble, in being in existence, etc.; *unlike* one another in that some are better than others, truer than others, more noble than others, etc. And in proposing what he takes to be the Fourth Way's explanation of this fact, Brady makes it quite clear that the explanation is *not* in terms of the *agent* cause (as it is in the other four Ways), for graded beings are *not* being seen, in the first part of the Fourth Way, *as proceeding from* something, but simply *as imitating* something, simply *as being more or less like* something. And so, the explanation is in terms of the *exemplary cause*. What proceeds from something cannot proceed, unless that from which it proceeds exists. Similarly, things that are more or less like something cannot be more or less like something, unless that which they are more or less like exists.—Or, if there are two things, one of which is less good, the other of which is better, they are such that the less good is less like the best; and the better, more like the best. But, this cannot be, unless there exists something which is best, which the better and the less good are more and less like.—Or, the better and the less good cannot be the better and the less good, unless each, in its own way, is a copy of the best. And so, if there exist a better and a less good, there must exist a best, as that which they copy, i.e., as that which is their *exemplary* cause.

4. There is, fourthly, the suggestion of Sister M. Annice (*The Thomist*, 1956, pp. 22-58) that the first part of the Fourth Way is an *implicit* demonstration, moving from the observed existence of an "ascending scale of perfection" (p. 26), i.e., from the observed existence of the more and the less, to the concluded existence of a maximum, a most, which is seen as both efficient cause and exemplary cause, but primarily and

especially as efficient cause (p. 58). The perfections in the things characterized as the more and the less are transcendental rather than univocal, i.e., they are features which belong to the things we experience because they exist and have an essence, rather than being the features contained within their essences (p. 27). In this implicit demonstration, there are two steps. In the first, the mind sees the ascending scale of perfections, i.e., the more and the less, as pointing to a maximum, viewed as the ultimate measure of the more and the less. The mind sees that the more and the less, or the better and the less good, entail somehow the existence of a best, not just any sort of best, but a best such that none better is in principle possible, the *Maxime Ens* (p. 25; pp. 27-37; p. 57). In the second step, the mind penetrates more deeply, and sees the more and the less as limited and participating; then sees the limited and participating as necessarily dependent, not on just any sort of cause, but on an unlimited and unparticipating cause, the *Maxime Ens* (p. 25; pp. 37-44; p. 57). Moreover, it is to be emphasized, according to Sister M. Annice, that the explicit goal of this implicit demonstration is to provide a concept, that of the *Maxime Ens,* which is to be used in the explicit demonstration which Aquinas offers in the closing lines of the Fourth Way, i.e., when he argues that the *Maxime Ens,* precisely because *Maxime Ens,* is the cause of the being, the goodness, the truth, the nobility, and the like, of the more and the less. Here, too, in the explicit demonstration, as in the implicit demonstration which has preceded, the *Maxime Ens* emerges as both *efficient* cause and *exemplary* cause, but primarily as efficient cause. Writes Sister M. Annice as she brings her study to a close:

> The *quarta via* does not seem to be strictly completed until we have shown that the transcendental perfection of being and its properties found in essentially varied degrees in creatures, are unexplainable apart from an absolute Maximum, Subsistent Perfection as their proper (*per se*) *efficient Cause* [my italics]. The consideration of the *exemplary Case* [my italics], while *not necessary to the primary proof* [my italics], is helpful in understanding better the whole theory of participated perfection (p. 58).

5. There is, fifthly, the suggestion of Van Steenberghen (*Rivista di Filosofia Neo-scolastica,* 1978, pp. 99-112) that the Fourth Way is inspired, quite clearly, by the Neoplatonic metaphyics of participation, i.e., by the view that all things not God participate in the subsistent Being of *one* God (exemplary causality), the *one* God who is *also* the Creator of them all (efficient causality), in spite of the Fourth Way's explicit reference to Aristotle alone. This is by way of contrast to the Platonic view that things participate in a *number* of *different* subsistent Exemplars, in a *plurality* of *different* subsistent Ideas, no one (or group) of which has creative power. The difficulties in interpretation to which the Fourth Way may give rise are due, according to Van Steenberghen, to the excessively concise way in which it is formulated, leaving its point to a great extent implicit and imprecise and incomplete. And this, not only with respect to its point of departure, i.e., the existence of the more and the less (*magis et minus*), but also with respect to both of its basic principles: 1) "Magis et minus dicuntur de diversis secundum quod appropinquant diversimode ad aliquid quod maxime est" (in which *exemplary* causality is at work), and 2) "Quod dicitur maxime tale in aliquo genere est causa omnium quae sunt illius generis" (in which *efficient* causality is at work). Accordingly, notes Van Steenberghen, the concise formulation of the Fourth Way ought to be provided with a background, with the details, which will help make its point more explicitly, more precisely, more completely. To this end, Van Steenberghen undertakes a study of St. Thomas's commentaries on the *Liber de Divinis Nominibus* and the *Liber de Causis,* both of which are clearly Neoplatonic works . Though neither of these two commentaries treats the problem of the existence of God in an express way, notes Van Steenberghen, both contain details which are extremely valuable for a proper exegesis of the Fourth Way (hence the title of Van Steenberghen's article, "Prolégomènes à la 'Quarta Via'.").

With respect to the point of departure of the Fourth Way,

the Neoplatonic metaphysics of participation helps make clear, notes Van Steenberghen, what kind of perfections Aquinas has in mind in speaking of goodness, truth, nobility, and the like. These are perfections which, like the perfection of being, can be possessed in diverse degrees, so that the participants form an ascending scale or hierarchy. This excludes the so-called " univocal " perfections which are not capable of more and less; a thing cannot be more or less a man, more or less a triangle. But a thing can be more or less good, true, noble, and the like. These are transcendental perfections, perfections which belong to all things, just because they exist and have an essence, essence being the measure of their being, their goodness, their truth, their nobility, and the like. This is a point stressed by Sister M. Annice as well (see above p. 25).

With respect to the first basic principle, i.e., " Magis et minus dicuntur de diversis secundum quod appropinquant diversimode ad aliquid quod maxime est," the Neoplatonic metaphysics of participation helps make clear that " quod maxime est " is an *absolute* maximum, and *not* a relative one; that is, something so great in goodness, in truth, in nobility, in being, etc., that none greater is in principle possible. The maximum, here, is a perfection in a pure, and therefore unlimited, state; a perfection which is received by its participants, and limited in them, according to the measure of their essences. Such a maximum must be either a transcendental perfection (i.e., one found in all things, just because they exist and have an essence), e.g., goodness, truth, nobility, beauty; or a simple perfection (i.e., one not tied *of itself* to the finite realm or to the realm of material things, though not found in all things). e.g., wisdom, knowledge, life.

With respect to the second basic principle, i.e., " Quod dicitur maxime tale in aliquo genere est causa omnium quae sunt illius generis," the Neoplatonic metaphysics of participation helps make clear that the absolute maximum is the *one and total* agent cause, the *one creative* cause, of all the things which are *magis et minus,* i.e., of all the participants.

As Van Steenberghen brings his article to a close, he notes the following:

In the light of the doctrine of participation abundantly developed in the *Expositio super Librum de causis,* the sense of the Fourth Way cannot be in doubt. Among the perfections which we discern in the world, there are some which are possessed in diverse degrees, all limited. These degrees of limited perfections imply a reference to absolute perfections, to absolute maxima: this is the *principle of participation.* Moreover, the maximum (absolute) in a determined order is the cause of all the participants: this is the form of the *principle of causality* which we have encountered most often in the *Expositio* of St. Thomas as well as in the *De causis* itself.[9]

And though Van Steenberghen writes the immediately preceding with respect to Aquinas' commentary on the *Liber de Causis,* it is quite clear that it applies to Aquinas' commentary on the *Liber de Divinis Nominibus* as well.

Among the perfections as we discern in the world we experience, there are some which are had by things in diverse degrees, all limited. These are the transcendental and the simple perfections. This ascending scale of limited perfections implies a reference (an approximating reference, to use an expression Van Steenberghen does not use) to perfections which are absolutes, to *maxima* which are absolutes. That is, if there are *magis et minus* of the transcendental and simple sort, there must be an *absolute* of the same sort. This is the *principle of participation,* focussing on a cause in the sense of an *exemplar.*

[9] "A la lumière de la doctrine de la participation abondamment développée dans l'*Expositio super Librum de causis,* le sens de la *quarta via* ne saurait être douteux. Parmi les perfections que nous discernons dans l'univers, il en est qui sont possédées à des degrés divers, tous limités. Cet étagement de perfections limitées implique référence à des perfections absolues, à des maxima absolus: c'est le *principe de participation.* D'autre part, le maximum (absolu) dans un ordre déterminé est la cause de tous les participants: c'est la forme du *principe de causalité* que nous avons rencontreé le plus souvent dans l'*Expositio* de S. Thomas comme dans le *De causis* lui-même." (Van Steenberghen, Fernand. "Prolégomènes à la 'Quarta Via'," *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-scolastica,* Vol. 70 (1978), p. 112).

Moreover, the absolute maximum in a given order is the cause of all the participants in that order. This is the *principle of causality*, focussing on a cause in the sense of an *agent*. More briefly, the more and the less require the existence of an absolute most, of one absolute most, as their exemplary cause, and this one absolute most is also their one agent cause.

6. We have five suggestions [10] with respect to clarifying what goes on in the first part of the Fourth Way, i.e., in that part which moves from the observed existence of the more and the less to the concluded existence of a most.

The first, that of Harvanek, describes this movement as a movement of the mind " prior to any appeal to causality," as a kind of natural dialectic of the mind moving from the less good to the better, and then from the better to the best possible, i.e., the best beyond which there can be none better; then judging that this best must actually exist, just because the mind has understood the less good and the better in relation to the best. Though this suggestion describes the movement as prior to an appeal to causality, it seems to mean prior to an appeal to *agent* (*efficient*) causality. For the natural dialectic of the mind which this suggestion describes, along with the judgment that the best possible actually exists, seems to point (though not explicitly) to an appeal to *exemplary* causality, inasmuch as the best possible is called a standard or a norm in reference to which the less good and the better both are, and are understood to be, the less good and the better.

The second suggestion, that of Maritain, like the first, makes it quite clear, though not explicitly, that the movement from the existence of the more and the less to the existence of a most does *not* appeal to *agent* causality. And though Maritain does

[10] We could perhaps have considered suggestions other than these five, even in addition to these five. But, it is not our intention here to do a history of the commentaries on the first part of the Fourth Way. Our intention in considering *these* five—and they serve our purpose extraordinarily well—is simply to put ourselves into a position in which we can render the first part of the Fourth Way just a bit less troublesome, just a bit less difficult to understand.

not explicitly mention *exemplary* causality, his suggestion that this part of the Fourth Way is based on the self-evident principle that "Every series composed of a *more* and a *less* connotes a *most,*" along with his explanation of the workings of this connoting, principle, seem to be saying that, in his view, this part of the Fourth Way makes an appeal to exemplary causality. For, *no* one of these things, notes Maritain, which are more or less good, true, etc. is unto itself the reason for its goodness, truth, etc., simply because each is more or less. Only that which is a most in such a way that there can be none better, none truer, etc. is unto itself the reason for its goodness, its truth, etc. (p. 51). Which seems to be indicating that the goodness, truth, etc. of the more and the less has its reason, in some way, in the goodness, truth, etc. of the best possible, truest possible, etc., inasmuch as it connotes that most by *imitating* it, by *approximating* it. And so, the best possible seems to be functioning as an *exemplary* cause.

The third suggestion, that of Brady, states *explicitly* that the movement from the existence of the more and the less to the existence of a most appeals to *exemplary* causality. The "plenitude of being," i.e., the *Maxime Ens* of the Fourth Way, is the *exemplar,* Brady states; the *Maxime Ens* is "imitated differently by all the degrees of existing," and it completely satisfies the tendency of the intellect to affirm a most, as what is imitated, simply because being is intelligible (p. 232; p. 228). It is the intrinsic intelligibility of being, according to Brady—i.e., the resistance of being (in any attempt to explain the *grades* of things) to all contradictions, which contradictions he notes on pp. 221-222—that requires the *existence* of the *Maxime Ens* as the "ultimate reason" explaining the fact that the existing things we experience are *graded* things. And this *ultimate reason* emerges *not* as an efficient (agent) cause, since the graded things we experience are *not* being viewed, in the first part of the Fourth Way, as *proceeding from* their cause (things proceed from an efficient cause), but rather as *imitating,* as *being measured by,* their cause (things imitate, are

measured by, an exemplary cause), as being more and less in approximative reference to a most.

The fourth suggestion, that of Sister M. Annice, states *explicitly* that the movement from the existence of the more and the less to the existence of a most appeals both to *efficient* (*agent*) causality and to *exemplary* causality, though *primarily* to efficient causality; and that the Fourth Way makes this appeal twice, first only implicitly, then explicitly—*implicitly*, as it argues: ". . . *est* igitur aliquid quod est verissimum et optimum et nobilissimum . . . et . . . maxime ens [quia magis et minus dicuntur de diversis secundum quod appropinquant diversimode ad aliquid quod maxime est]. . .;" *explicitly*, as it argues: ". . . ergo est aliquid quod omnibus entibus est *causa* esse et bonitatis et cuiuslibet perfectionis [quia quod dicitur maxime tale in aliquo genere est *causa* omnium quae sunt illius generis]. . .".

The fifth suggestion, that of Van Steenberghen, argues that the movement from the existence of the more and the less to the existence of a most is to be understood by an appeal to certain details of the Neoplatonic metaphysics of participation which Aquinas develops in his commentary on the *Liber de Divinis Nominibus* and in that on the *Liber de Causis*.—The things that are more and less are to be understood with respect to their transcendental perfections (and their simple perfections too, if they have any; though these are not explicitly mentioned by Aquinas in his point of departure).—The transcendental (and simple) most (or maximum) is to be understood as an *absolute* maximum, rather than as a relative one. An absolute maximum is one so great that none greater is in principle possible. Things that are more are closer to the absolute maximum; things that are less, further removed from it. Approximation, here, is in terms of participation; the more and less are copies of *one* subsistent Exemplar. The more and the less form an ascending scale in which the higher the member, the closer the approach to the maximum.—In *quantitative* contexts, by contrast, in which there *can be no* absolute maxi-

mum, e.g., in the context of numbers, things are more and less in approximative reference to a unit, which is always less than any of the more and the less; indeed, there is nothing less than this measuring unit by which the measuring unit itself is to be measured. The greater (or more) is further removed from the unit; the smaller (or less), closer to the unit. Approximation, here, is not in terms of participation; the more and the less are *not* copies of a measuring unit which is an exemplar; they are rather constituted out of addition of the unit to itself. The more and the less form an ascending scale in which the higher the member, the further the remove from the measuring unit. Notes Van Steenberghen:

> . . . the more and the less in the context of numbers, for example, are not said in relation to the greatest number, which neither is nor can be, but rather in relation to the unit; the size of a man is not measured in relation to the largest man, but in relation to the unit of largeness, which is for us the meter.[11]

The five suggestions just summarized confirm, and make clearer, " diligenter intuenti," what was in some way clear at the outset, namely, that both *exemplary* causality and *agent* causality find a place in the Fourth Way. And a return to the text of the Fourth Way, in the light of these five suggestions, will confirm " diligenter intuenti " that it is *exemplary* causality which functions (though without explicit mention) in the Fourth Way as it argues to the existence of a most, i.e., the *Maxime Ens*; and that it is *agent* causality which functions (though without explicit mention) in the Fourth Way as it argues that the *Maxime Ens*, already shown to exist, is the *cause* of the being, goodness, and the like, in all else, i.e., in the more and the less.

7. One thing remains to be done in this brief consideration

[11] ". . . le plus et le moins dans les nombres, par exemple, ne se disent pas par rapport au plus grand nombre, qui n'existe pas et ne peut exister, mais par rapport à l'unitè; la taille d'un homme ne se mesure pas par rapport à l'homme le plus grand, mais par rapport à l'unité de grandeur, qui est our nous le mètre." (Van Steenberghen, *art. cit.*, p. 106).

of the first part of the Fourth Way, with the hope that it will become less troublesome, less difficult to understand. It remains to make clear, at least briefly, what *exemplary* causality is, in order to help make clear, if possible, what it is about (what there is in the nature of) the more and the less of the Fourth Way, which reveals them to be effects requiring the existence of God, the *Maxime Ens*, as their only possible *exemplary* cause. This is perhaps a good way to pursue the question put above (p. 3): What is there about the approximating relation which enables Aquinas to draw the conclusion that what is approximated—and what is approximated is what is *maxime* or *simpliciter*—must exist, if there exist things which are more and less, and which (qua more and less) approximate it?

What, then, is an exemplary cause? An exemplary cause is a pattern (a design, a blueprint, a standard). A cause, generally, is that on which something else, the effect, depends in some way or other. An *exemplary* cause is that on which something else, the effect, depends in a special way, i.e., in the way in which a *copy* or an *instance* depends on a *pattern* (design, blueprint, standard. Decio Hall, for example, is a copy or instance of the blueprint conceived by one or more architects. Without the blueprint of which Decio Hall is a copy there could not be a Decio Hall. Of course, other things are required as well, such as bricks and mortar and glass, as the materials; and such as workmen, to put the materials together (using the blueprint as a guide). An exemplary cause is *one* of several kinds of cause on which an effect depends.

What, now, is it in the more and the less of the Fourth Way which reveals them to be effects in need of God as their only possible *exemplary* cause? Or, what is there in the more and the less which reveals them to be copies or instances of a standard, a standard which must be, cannot be anything but, the *Maxime Ens* of the Fourth Way?

Let us begin by considering an example. We are examining two model airplanes, and we notice that one of them is a con-

siderably better model than the other. What does this imply? Quite clearly, that the model which is the better one is a more faithful copy of something which is a standard or a pattern for these things. And, of course, if the better one is a more faithful copy, the other is a less faithful copy. And so, *both are copies.* This is saying, quite clearly, that if there are two things, one of which is a better something (whatever) than the other, then there must be some third thing, the standard or the pattern, which is better than the first two, and of which the first two must be copies.

Apply this, now, to the first part of the Fourth Way. We observe the things we experience, and we notice that men, for example, are better, truer, more noble things than trees. And so, men are more faithful copies of something which is a standard or a pattern for these things. Of course, if men are more faithful copies, then trees are less faithful copies. And so, *both are copies.* Thus, if men are better things than trees, there must be some third thing, the standard or the pattern, which is a better thing than men and trees, and of which both men and trees must be copies.

What, now, is to be said about this third and better thing, the standard? Since it is the standard, can it also be a copy of some *prior* standard? But, if there are standards for standards, then, it seems, there can be no standard at all. Moreover, if there cannot be a standard for a standard, then the standard cannot be better or worse.

The conclusion seems to be that if there are things which are better and worse (more and less), then there must be a best (a most) such that there can be none better. For the better and the worse (the more and the less must be copies, and copies are copies of a standard, and a standard must be the best (the most), in the sense that none better is possible.

The Fourth Way is concerned with the transcendental perfections of the things we experience, i.e., with features which the things we experience have in common with all existing things, just because they exist, and as existing, have an essence.

Though goodness (value), truth (knowability) and nobility (independence)—the perfections explicitly mentioned in the first part of the Fourth Way—belong to all existing things, just because they exist, and as existing, have an essence; *not* all existing things have the *same grade* of goodness, truth and nobility, because *not* all of them have the *same grade* of *essence*. This is why men, for example, are better, truer, more noble than horses; horses than trees; and trees than stones. The graded diversity of their goodness and truth and nobility is rooted in the graded diversity of their essences. But, each essence determines for the thing which has that essence the same grade of goodness, truth and nobility, all three. For example, the goodness, truth and nobility, all three, of a man are of the *same* grade, i.e., of the *human* grade, because all three are rooted in the *same* essence, i.e., *human* essence.

Since there are things which are more and less good, true and noble, all three; there must be something which is most good, most true, most noble, all three, such that there can be nothing better, nothing truer, nothing more noble. For the more and the less must be copies, and copies are copies of a standard. Moreover, since a standard cannot have a standard, a standard must be the most possible, cannot be anything but the most possible. The most possible is the only possible standard—with respect to transcendental (and simple) perfections. This, it appears, is the *Maxime Ens* of the Fourth Way. This, it appears, is how the approximating relation enables Aquinas to conclude that the *Maxime Ens* exists, as the only possible *exemplary* cause of the more and the less.

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THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES IN AQUINAS

IN THIS PAPER I discuss principally the claim of Aquinas that the divine attribute which is the formal constituent of the divine nature is *esse*. I also discuss the consequent attribute of simplicity, with some reflections on this relation of consequence. I conclude with some remarks on philosophical realism in general, which I take to be the necessary background to this theory or, as I argue, discovery.

* * *

In St. Thomas's *Summa Theologiae* we are confronted first, not with a study of the attributes of God, but with Five Ways of knowing that God exists. Strictly consequent upon this, there are then two basic movements of thought upon which, to mix the metaphor, the next structure after the Five Ways, that of the attributes, is laid.

The first step is to find just one attribute which can be put forward as the formal constituent of the divine *natura*, its *essentia* (this will be the so-called metaphysical essence, since the real divine essence is one with the simple and hence constituentless divine nature). This is come upon through an immanent logic arising strictly out of conclusions reached through the Five Ways, and is in fact subsisting existence, *ipsum esse subsistens*, often called Being, confusingly, since this translates *ens* as well as *esse*. If it were not this there would be unexplained composition in God, at least between His nature and His act of existing.

The second step is then to derive whatever attributes can be strictly deduced from this conception of God as subsistent *esse*, while a subsidiary step is to divide these into what commentators later called entitative and operative attributes. The first step identifies the nature of God with His *act* of existing,

actus essendi, stressing that as pure act He is not in any genus, not to be grasped in an abstract idea, even though the theory of the attributes must go on to say He *is* truth, *is* goodness and so on. The saving grace of these attributions, however, is that they do not imply limitation, even though it is a general principle of the Thomistic interpretation of things that form is what places a limitation on being, so that in being a man I cannot be an elephant.

Of course the necessary infinity of these absolutely simple perfections entails that each of them is really identical with the divine nature, itself identical with His *esse*, His *actus essendi*. There can only be one reality in God, understood as the infinite. But my intention here is not to run through all the well-known arguments yet again.

Thus that God, any God, must be subsisting Existence, I take to be well established. We can't have a divine essence capable of *receiving* existence, and for God to be love, say, He has first to *be*. I can make no sense of saying that this is merely chosen as appropriate to our way of thinking. I would rather say it thinks itself, once we 'let being be' (Heidegger's inspired definition of thinking).

Of course God is not being identified with *ens in commune*, that almost cynical error of pantheism. God is identified with His *own* act of existing, proper to Him alone. Since this is, as divine, an act without limitation, we *then* go on to say that this cannot be an existence shared with any other existing, that God must exist in a uniquely eminent way, that that act of existing which He himself *is*, is transcendent. In the *sense* in which God exists, nothing else does, as the doctrine of analogy should bring out rather than obscure.[1]

Nonetheless, we need to enquire into the significance and implications of it being just existence which is the formal attribute

[1] Cf. Leo J. Elders, *Die Metaphysik de Thomas von Aquin*, I, Salzburg 1985, p. 133: 'Das *ens commune* ist das geschaffene Seiende . . . Gott fällt nicht unter das *ens commune*: Er ist das ganz Andere, von dem wir wohl wissen können, daß Er ist, nicht aber, was Er ist.'

of the divine nature, something to which both Kant and Aristotle seemed to deny the status of a formal property. The reason, after all, that it is not a formal or delimiting property is that it comes into everything. For to classify is to exclude, as even Russell's class of all classes excludes the individuals which are members of the particular classes.

But something which comes into everything is just what we would expect to be the formal characteristic of God. '*Non aliquo modo est, sed est, est*'.[2] This is why God gives existence to all things, in every moment; God is that being our thought requires as doing characteristically this, in very truth. Existence is His proper effect, bringing it about that there *are* beings. Why does God uniquely bring things into existence, create, unless because He stands in a uniquely close relation to His own infinite existence, that of an identity?

This means, though, that it is in their various acts of existence that things resemble Him, if they do at all. These acts however differ supremely from His own, though, in that they are all effects, which He, first and infinite cause, in no sense is. But it is then that actual being which is the link with or trace of God in our world. 'There can, it seems to me, be no feature of the universe which indicates it is God-made. What God accounts for is that the universe is there instead of nothing'.[3] I would merely qualify this by saying it is what God accounts for most formally or properly. The Fourth Way of Aquinas indicates, to my mind validly, how infinite Beauty must account for beauty.[4]

From the first St. Thomas distinguished a thing's *actus essendi* from the truth of the mere statement that that thing exists, though he was of course clear that it does have to be true that a thing exists if it is to have *esse in rerum natura*.[5] If he had not made this distinction, he would have concluded

[2] St. Augustine, *Confessiones* XIII, 31, 46.

[3] Herbert McCabe, O.P., 'God: I—Creation', *New Blackfriars*, Oxford.

[4] Nonetheless I would want to see beauty as a distinguishing trait of any possible being, a lack of beauty as a lack of being.

[5] Cf. *De Ente et Essentia*, V.

from his identification of God's essence with His *actus essendi* that it is true that God exists, substantially the move of the ontological argument he consistently rejected.

To appreciate what it means for God to be that act of existence which is the cause of all other acts of existence we need to appreciate just where this rather philosophical notion, *actus essendi,* fits and does not fit into ordinary experience and discourse. Or, rather, in the light of what we have said, for God to be God, transcendent *and* immanent, the *actus essendi* of things will have to be their central, profoundest aspect, not some rather abstruse metaphysical property.

If, for example, we were to divorce the *actus essendi* sense of being, to be, from more ordinary uses of that verb as it comes, at least implicitly, into every predication, we would lose that connection of the divine actuality with our commonest assertions which we have said is just the sort of *general* connection a fundamental divine attribute needs to have. Such a divorce, that is, would rob the theory of the corroboration we would expect to find if, on other grounds, we have found that theory to be true. It would prevent us from appreciating its significance.

Unfortunately, whereas St. Thomas's theory of *esse,* the dynamism of the universe, reaches into his account of the judgment, that distinctive activity of all our thinking, and hence into his account of the copula 'is', modern logic, in its routinely formalistic post-Fregean autonomy, takes a different path, one which precludes appreciation of these things. But if existence is ignored at the lowest level, it does not appear in its true light at the highest, but becomes remote.

When I wrote just now that 'it has to be true that a thing exists if it is to have *esse*' I implicitly put on a comparable level having *esse,* i.e. existing or being, and something's *being true.* Now of course these are the two senses of *est* St. Thomas distinguished, *actus essendi* and *veritas propositionis.*[6] But

[6] *De Ente et Essentia,* I: 'Ens per se dicitur dupliciter . . .' *Summa Theologiae* Ia, 3, 4 ad 2um. Cf. Theron, 'Esse', *The New Scholasticism,* Spring 1979.

there is no reason to think that in making a distinction one wishes to declare a term hopelessly equivocal. In that case we would be left wondering why just the verb 'to be', *esse*, is used for the copula in predication generally. No weight need be given to the fact that it is omitted in certain languages, since a request for elucidation would almost certainly bring it into play. Why do we say God is love and not, unless with totally different sense, God loves love, i.e. why can't 'loves' function as copula?

Of course it is true of the copula or what Geach calls the 'there is' sense [7] that we can use it to say there is blindness in a given eye (a given eye is blind) where no *actus essendi* is involved *in rebus*, just as we can say that man is a species. But this does not mean that no *actus essendi* is involved *tout court*.

What does St. Thomas mean by his talk of signifying the truth of a proposition? He tells us:

'Dicitur *esse* quod significat veritatem compositionis in propositionibus, secundum quod *est* dicitur copula'.[8]

The copula, that is, signifies the identity in reality of what the intellect joins in its 'second operation', judgment. Predication, as a linguistic act, is based on unity in the real, and by its nature refers to existence, not abstracted or prescinding from it, and the copula, far from being a meaningless verbal connective, is the sign of that. It may be that the logician does not consider existence directly but all the same he does consider a mental intention which of its nature is directed to existence. To forget this is to risk talking about predicates in an artificial and misleading way, as when Kenny says of *esse commune* that it is 'a very general, very fundamental predicate which is part of the nature of everything.' [9] To speak of

[7] G. E. M. Anscombe & P. T. Geach, *Three Philosophers*, Oxford 1961, pp. 88ff. Geach seems wrong in arguing that 'Aquinas's views underwent a change' on *esse*. (See note 6.)

[8] *In I Sent.* 33, 1 ad 1. It *signifies* truth even in a false proposition. Cf. St. Anselm, *De Veritate*, c. V.

[9] Anthony Kenny, *The Five Ways*, London 1969, p. 90.

a predicate's being part of something's nature is symptomatic of confusion of logical with metaphysical categories, for if anything it is part of the nature of *sentences*, not things.

The copula signifies the identity in reality of what the intellect joins, bringing together what the abstraction intrinsic to our mode of simple apprehension ('first operation' of the mind) had taken apart. By the same token it signifies the *act of being* in the intellect of the composite produced in the judgment, which shows the essential relatedness, unity even, of the two senses of *est*.

Of course the thing known, the existence of which (the *esse*) the copula signifies (we are talking about the ordinary sentences of discourse), is not necessarily found in the *real* order. The existence is signified in whatever order it is found, real or mental. '*Nec oportet quod semper respondeat sibi esse in re extra animam, cum ratio veritatis compleatur in ratione animae*',[10] as in the example 'man is a species' or 'John is blind.' In a false proposition existence will be signified as being where it is not in fact found, or as not being where it is.

'Qui dicit "homo est albus" *significat* hoc esse verum'.[11] It is the *existence* of the identification which is the judgment, the whole act of being of which is to be true, *ens* in the *sense* of *verum*, which *est* indeed signifies here. Even false judgments are true in the sense of not being lies. Aquinas means what he says. Again,

> 'Cum enim dicimus aliquid esse, significamus propositionem esse veram, . . . sicut dicimus quod Socrates est albus, quia hoc verum est'.[12]

In saying that Socrates is white we *also* signify that the sentence we use is true. At the same time there is an *actus essendi* of the proposition in our mind, though it be wholly intentional. This is why Kant's contrast of noumenon and phenomenon could never be absolute, as Sartre realized.

[10] *In I Sent.* 19, 5, 1 sol. ad 5.
[11] *In IX Met.* 11, n.1914, my emphasis.
[12] *Ibid.* V, 9, n.895.

Conversely, it is not just true *to say* that Socrates is white; it is true that Socrates is white. The mental intentions of their nature intend what is beyond themselves, but since they *do* have this nature, they have also their *own* esse.

Nor does this stress on the meaning of the copula lead to the 'two name' theory of predication Geach seems to see as the only alternative to the Fregean function and argument account,[13] provided one take in the *formal* nature of predication, as opposed to the *material* mode of signifying of the subject of the sentence. The realities signified as subject and predicate 'are not identified because of what they are but because they happen to exist in a common subject'.[14] They are not *simply* one.

On this view then the meaning of the copula is rooted in the *primary* meaning of *is* as used to identify the act of existence a thing has. Since for a dog to exist is for it to be a dog it is quite in order for the statement that a dog is or exists (*est*) to expand into the statement 'this is a dog' by way of predication, signifying here a substantial form, and transformation of 'is' into the copula, in those languages where it is explicit. That is to say, since *forma dat esse* (for a dog to be is for it to be a dog) the predication of the form (as of anything else) does not so much make use of a quite new sense of 'is' which is, the only one that logic can recognize as legitimate'[15] as reflect rather the primary existential meaning of 'is' in the real order as it is to be found in the logical order of thought. These are indeed two orders and we must always distinguish the logical relation of subject and predicate from the ontological relation of supposit and essence. As St. Thomas says, *differt compositio intellectus a compositione rei.*[16] Thus it is that

[13] Cf. Geach, *Reference and Generality*, Ithaca and London, 1962; this point is well discussed by Henry Veatch, 'St. Thomas's Doctrine of Subject and Predicate,' *St. Thomas Aquinas (1274-1974), Commemorative Studies*, Toronto 1974.

[14] Robert W. Schmidt, *The Domain of Logic according to St. Thomas Aquinas*, The Hague 1966, p. 229.

[15] Anscombe & Geach, *op. cit.*, p. 91, citing Russell's view.

[16] *Summa Theologiae* Ia, 85, 5 ad 3um.

a predicate term 'does not prescind from the designation of matter'.[17] Otherwise we would have to say that the sentence 'Prime matter never has any form at all' was self-contradictory, if we claim that the predicate does not merely signify formally an analogy, but in all cases *gives the form*, and this is indeed Geach's position.[18]

So even if there *may* be point in saying the copula has no sense in logic, it was quite misleading to say it has no sense at all. It is only because all created things, situations, relations, etc., have besides their essence an act of existence as a constituent of their being, that it makes sense to affirm the identity of both in God, so that His *actus essendi* is the formal constituent (i.e. the *metaphysical* essence of a simplicity in reality beyond all constitution) of His being. Here we use 'formal' yet again in a transferred or analogical sense, as explaining why He is beyond all forms, *actus purus*, creating as His proper effect that *esse* which is, *inter alia*, the actuality of every form,[19] but not definitionally the act of a form, as Kenny [20] misrepresents this passage, as if *esse* were dependent upon a form. There can be *esse* without form, in this sense, and when St. Thomas says *omnis res habet esse per formam* he is speaking of the *esse* of material things. For there is also the question of the *esse* of the form itself, as is clear in the case of the subsistent forms or angels.

It is only if our philosophy allows for the miracle of existence in created things, that dynamic being in which Hannah Arendt shrewdly says ideology is never interested,[21] that we show ourselves as seeing point in making this act in the case of God the creator His supreme attribute, identical with His essence, so that He alone does not exist in this or that way, but is existence itself, not, though, as if bound by a nature, since He *is*

[17] *On Being and Essence* (tr. Maurer), Toronto 1968, ch.2, n.13.

[18] See note 13. Cf. St. Thomas, In I Perih. 10, n.23, 'Praedicatum est *quasi* pars formalis enuntiationis' (my emphasis).

[19] 'Omnis formae', *Summa Theologiae* Ia, 3, 4.

[20] See note 9.

[21] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 1958, p. 469.

His nature. 'His nature is one with His sovereign liberty of selfhood'.[22]

A more complete misunderstanding is to dismiss the theory of the subsistent divine *esse* as 'Platonic Idea of a predicate which is at best uninformative and at worst unintelligible'.[23] Although the predicate, *esse*, 'is applied . . . in its abstract form', what is signified is not an abstract idea but something which God is, i.e. a reality. No reference to Platonic parallels can obscure this. The *act* of being which God is, is a *subsistent* essence, since God and His act of being are one and the same. So, differently from the case of the angels, this essence *is* its subsistence, and existence (which is what this essence is), if subsistent, is not the idea of existence. God, by definition the author of our thought, is beyond all conceptual determinations if He is anything at all. An idea exists in a mind. But here we have a being which *is* being, a mind which is being, and the source of all minds which frame ideas. That the idea resembles the divine reality with respect to its absoluteness is not surprising, since it is in this respect that thought and spiritual life approach nearer to God, Himself spirit, than do material things. But a Platonic idea could not create worlds, persons, and all that is actual.

Such a being, indeed, is one *quasi omnem formam intellectus nostri excedens*.[24] Existence is an *act*, not a form at all. Maritain [25] quotes Cajetan:

'*the infinite being* transcends in itself what would be the *idea* of being on the impossible hypothesis that the latter subsisted according to the Platonic conception . . . God is subsistent Goodness as He is subsistent Truth and subsistent Being itself, but the Idea of Goodness, of Truth and of Being, if it subsisted in a pure state, would not be God'.[26]

[22] Words of Bishop B. C. Butler.

[23] Kenny, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

[24] St. Thomas, *De Potentia*, VII, 5, ad 13.

[25] Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, p. 17 (note 2), p. 280.

[26] Cajetan, *In I Sum. Theol.* 3.9, I, n.vii and 13, 5, n.vii.

Kenny repeats his charge in his later, influential booklet, *Aquinas,* in the Past Masters series. But if ' to *be* simply is to continue in possession of a certain form ' (this is supposed to paraphrase *omnis res habet esse per formam*) how can Aquinas declare that God, who is not in any genus, paramountly exists? The right comment on Kenny's work might seem to be that it at least shows that Aquinas can't be approached sympathetically from the viewpoint of a thoroughgoing essentialism.

* * *

The identity of essence and existence in God at once evokes the attribute of absolute simplicity, beyond that of any conceivable creature. Indeed, ' there are many ways of showing that God is altogether simple '.[27] This simplicity though, is in obvious tension with the whole notion of a plurality of attributes. Yet, as St. Thomas argues, ' all these perfections belong to Him *in virtue* of His simple being ',[28] for ' every perfection is a perfection of existing, for it is a manner in which the thing exists that determines the manner of its perfection. No perfection can *therefore* be lacking to God '.[29]

Even when we come to the theology of the Trinity in the *Summa* we find that the plurality of persons, once proposed by divine faith to the understanding, is largely argued for *from* the divine simplicity; in particular is this so of the separate personality of the Word. For the reason offered by Aquinas that the Word proceeds as personal from the act of divine understanding, unlike the *verbum* in our human case, is that the divine mind (and essence) is identical with the *act* of divine understanding, i.e. it is *because* of the simplicity that there is a plurality of persons:

' intelligere divinum est ipsa substantia intelligentis . . . Unde Verbum procedens procedit ut eiusdem naturae subsistens; et propter hoc proprie dicitur genitum et Filius.[30]

[27] St. Thomas, *Summa Theologiae,* Ia, 3, 7.
[28] *On Being and Essence,* V, 3 (cf. note 17).
[29] *Summa Theologiae,* Ia, 4, 2 (Blackfriars translation).
[30] *Ibid.* Ia, 14,4; 34, 2 ad lum; all of 34; also 27, 2 ad 2um.

Yet only *verbum*, unlike *intellectus, intelligere, intuitus* etc. is said *personaliter* in God, because it signifies *aliquid ab alio emanens*, but *ad intra*.[31]

We are inclined to see this as anthropomorphic because we forget that St. Thomas's account of thought, like the tag quoted from Heidegger, is not got from a particular human experience, but puts thought forward as ' a manner of *esse*, which accordingly there is nothing to hinder our ascribing to God, even though we have no concrete knowledge of the Divine Life ',[32] since He has all the perfections of *esse*. It is only material beings which are not knowers, and I would say we *have to* ascribe thought to God.

We have then clearly established the formal priority of the attribute of *esse* in God, with simplicity following as the most immediate consequence. Is this, then, as a matter of logical priority, merely ' from our point of view '? [33] We have argued it is not, though of course it certainly is our point of view. We come at the truth, but we have to come at it in our abstracting and reintegrating way.

Thus to affirm that God's essence and attributes are one and the same [34] is not to affirm the terms are synonyms or *mean* the same. What is identical *in re* can be diverse *in ratione* and words, after all, only signify things by way of thoughts.[35]

If we hold that the mind can know truth, does not distort, but *sees* what it sees, that *omne ens est verum*, even though the natures of things which themselves appear in the mind are found there *alio modo*, differently, from how they are found in things (a fact of which the mind is well aware, or may become so), then diversity *in ratione* alone represents something we

[31] *Ibid.*, Ia, 27, 1 ad 2um.

[32] Anscombe & Geach, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-121.

[33] As, for example, B. Gaybba suggests; ' God as Love ', *God and Temporality*, New Era Conference, Fort Lauderdale, Dec. 82. But *esse* and simplicity seem to include even in their *rationes* a transcendence of the possession of attributes, as love does not.

[34] As in the *Summa* Ia, 40, 1 ad lum.

[35] ' Non significat rem nisi mediante conceptione intellectus ', Ia, 13, 4.

might refer to as the *logical* structure *of the thing* (really simple) as intentionally present in our mind, and not just of our 'conception' of it (as if there were two existences which have to 'correspond', rather than two manners of existing, real and intentional, of the one reality), this being an epistemological interference, characteristic of modern logic in my opinion, which would force us on to an infinite regress of conceptions of conceptions. It is indeed a matter of what we have to *say*, but then it always is, and our unhindered thought ceaselessly bends our language to its requirements as it 'lets being be'.

So if our minds see logical priorities in God then these logical priorities are *there* to be seen, after the manner of our seeing to be sure, as what we might call epistemic effects of the divine simplicity, and this is a true seeing as far as it goes:

'Cognoscat Deum ex creaturis, format ad intelligendum Deum conceptiones proportionatas perfectionibus procedentibus a Deo in creaturis: quae quidem perfectiones in Deo praeexistunt unite et simpliciter'.[36]

It is a matter, then, of striving not after mere appropriate description, but after truth. Nor are the distinctions we make 'artificial'.[37] Mental distinctions do not at all imply separations in the things considered, and not only in talk of God. It is one of the great merits of Aristotelian philosophy and Thomistic theology to have insisted on this. Thus it can be and is certainly intended to be literally true, for example, that *opus . . . divinae iustitiae semper praesupponit opus misericordiae, et in eo fundatur,*[38] even granted the divine simplicity. Indeed that truth, just like the truth of His simplicity, tells us something real and practically important about God, exciting praise and gratitude from His worshippers, as a merely artificial categorial scheme never could do, down the ages.

* * *

[36] *Ibid. eodem loco.*
[37] Gaybba, *op cit.*
[38] *Summa Theologiae*, Ia, 21, 4.

When Platonism is called realism what is meant is that it teaches that the universals or 'ideas' alone are real. Thomas, in the same misleading taxonomy classed as a 'moderate' realist, actually teaches the reality of both the world and ideas, and, supremely, of God. That he teaches the reality of ideas, concepts, judgments etc. I hope my discussion of the copula has emphasized, while to say of God that He is existence itself, besides being true, as I claim, is the strongest way of affirming Him as the ultimate, final reality.

We don't hear much today of the perennial war between idealism and realism. Idealism, after all, has variously mutated into linguistic analysis, where one talks more of the correctness of predicates than the truth of things, or phenomenology. By the same token not much is written in philosophy about prayer, though this is a basic, historically entrenched human activity. For there is, I find, a close analogy between prayer and realism. The man who raises his mind and heart to God knows he thereby surrenders control, since the immanent logic of any idea of God entails He is *in no way* in our power. Thus prayer is often described as *waiting* on God. There is nothing else one can do, transcendent being being what it is. He approaches, we make straight the path.

So the realistic philosopher stands at the opposite pole to conceptualist ideology, which manipulates ideas to change men and the world but is, we saw, 'never interested in the miracle of being.' St. Thomas's affirmation of God as *ipsum esse subsistens* is in fact an affirmation of reality with its ultimate consequence of an absolute spirit to whom all is known and who is *not we*. 'The soul has learned everything,' said Plato,[39] and he meant something true which idealism has perverted. But in Aquinas the soul, though *capax Dei* (the core of Plato's insight), has still everything to learn, and prayer and study turn out, in consequence of this supreme entitative attribute of *esse*, to be natural companions. To an idealist the dignity of

[39] *Meno*, 81D.

being *capax Dei* is unintelligible. Autonomous, he is lord even of his 'explanatory models'. Alas, his kingdom is pure desert, his thought as nourishing as a desert island disc to a marooned sailor. It would be better to be, with the realist philosophers, a 'doorkeeper' to the massive house of the existent actual.[40]

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[40] Cf. Psalm 83(84): in one version verse 11 reads, 'I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than dwell in the tents of the ungodly.' The allusion in the previous sentence is to the BBC program, 'Desert Island Discs'.

ST. THOMAS ON THE NATURALISTIC FALLACY

Introduction

THE PROBLEM OF THE naturalistic fallacy, or the claim that value and ought-judgments are not factual or 'is' judgments, has been a lively one this century, ever since Moore coined the term 'naturalistic fallacy'.[1] This debate has died down rather, especially in analytic philosophy, but it has flared up again among students of St. Thomas. This is largely because of the controversial interpretations of Grisez and Finnis.[2] In a recent and commendable article Janice Schultz has gone over these interpretations and developed some serious criticisms.[3] She rightly points out that for St. Thomas judgments about human goods can be theoretical and not just practical, and that they are practical and have prescriptive or imperative force only on the presupposition of some act of will underlying them. Grisez and Finnis want to say that reason is practical and makes prescriptions of its own nature and not on the presupposition of some prior act of will, and that the grasp by reason of human goods is always practical and never just theoretical. I will not repeat Ms. Schultz's arguments here, though I will use them later on. What I want to do in this article is to locate her arguments and contentions in a different context—not the context of the interpretations of

[1] *Principia Ethica*, Cambridge, 1903, p. 10.

[2] The main works are Finnis's *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1980; and Grisez's article, 'The Frst Principle of Practical Reason: a Commentary on *Summa Theologica* Ia IIae, q.94 a.2.' *Natural Law Forum*, 10, 1965, pp. 162-201. Other references are handily collected in an article by Janice Schultz, 'Is-Ought: Prescribing and a Present Controversy', *The Thomist*, vol. 49, Jan. 85, no. 1, pp. 1-2.

[3] As cited in the previous note.

Grisez and Finnis, but that of the naturalistic fallacy debate as this developed from Moore to Hare. My reason for wanting to do this is that this debate uncovered a series of important features of good and Ought that must be incorporated into any moral theory, naturalist or non-naturalist, if that theory is to be at all adequate. While modern proponents of naturalistic ethics have tended to play down or ignore these features (largely because they point in a non-naturalistic direction), St. Thomas did not. His moral theory is superior as a result, and can indeed be said to constitute a model for all defensible naturalistic ethics. This can best be seen if his theory is expounded as a response to the points about good and Ought made by non-naturalists. The first part of this paper is therefore an attempt to state the key theses of non-naturalism; and the succeeding parts attempt to expound St. Thomas's position in response to them.

The Naturalistic Fallacy

As Moore first coined the name 'Naturalistic Fallacy' and initiated the debate about it, one should begin with him. According to Moore, the naturalistic fallacy is a fallacy concerning the idea of goodness. Goodness, he said, is a simple, unanalysable notion, like yellow or red and the fallacy is committed when people try to define or analyse it.[4] This is because when they do try to define it they always identify it with some natural or observable property (as pleasure), and good is not such an object. It is a non-natural property that is unique and peculiar to itself.

There are two parts to this claim. The first is that good is indefinable, the second is that it is something non-natural. Moore endeavored to establish the first point by means of the so-called open-question argument. Whatever definition one proposes for good it is always possible to ask of the definition whether it is itself good. For instance, if one defines good as pleasure or what promotes the greatest happiness, it is always

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 6ff., and chapter 1 *passim*.

possible to ask, with significance, whether pleasure or what promotes the greatest happiness is after all good. But this would be impossible if this were a definition because then the question would not be significant. Good would just *mean* 'pleasure' or 'what promotes the greatest happiness', and the question whether pleasure or what promotes the greatest happiness is good would not be a significant or open one; it would be answered in the asking. Since this result will always happen whatever definition one proposes for good, good must be indefinable.[5]

Precisely what this argument really achieves has been a matter of dispute.[6] That it establishes something about good seems clear enough, but whether it establishes that good is a simple indefinable property is another question. Those who followed Moore have generally conceded that he did hit on some error or fallacy about good, but they have formulated it differently because they rejected his own theory about the nature of goodness (as will be shown shortly).

The other part of Moore's claim was that good was a non-natural property, as opposed to yellow and red which were natural properties. What Moore meant by 'natural' he did not make very clear, but he does say natural things or properties are observable, the objects of experience, real existents and the subject matter of the sciences.[7] It appears, in fact, that (like many before and since) Moore equated the natural with the scientific and the scientific with the value-free; hence good could be no part of the natural.

With this claim of Moore's about nature most of his successors were in agreement. What they objected to was the claim that good was some property whose presence one could somehow know. There were three reasons for this. The first concerns the way we know this supposed property of good. Moore said we intuited it but did not explain what sort of

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 11-17.

[6] Hudson, *Modern Moral Philosophy*, London, Macmillan, 1970, pp. 69-87.

[7] *Op. cit.*, pp. 38, 40-1.

thing this intuition was.[8] The intuition was, of course, posited on the grounds that goodness was a property, and a property of a peculiar sort (a non-natural sort), and that hence there must be some special faculty we possessed for knowing it. But this was too much like begging the question. Since whether good was a property was itself at issue, some independent proof of the existence of intuition was required, not an appeal to the supposed property of goodness itself. Besides the recourse to intuition seemed fatally subjective. If different people claim to have different intuitions about what is good, as is the case, then there will be no way to arbitrate between them.[9]

The second concerns the fact that good has some connection with action. It has a certain 'magnetism' or moving force, for one is generally moved to pursue what one thinks good.[10] Moore was completely silent about this feature of good. He assumed it as a fact but failed to give any explanation of it. And indeed it was not at all clear how a thing's possession of Moore's simple unanalysable property should have any necessary connection with what it concerns us to do.

Thirdly, Moore held good to be an independent property that stood on its own, like the property yellow or red, and that was identifiable as such. But this could not be the case. A comparison of good and yellow showed that good was always dependent on other properties by reference to which it had to be understood. For instance, it is clearly legitimate to say that x and y are exactly alike save that x is yellow and y is not. But it is not legitimate to say that x and y are exactly alike save that x is good and y is not. If x is really good while y is not, this can only be because x and y differ in some other respect. If x is a strawberry it will be good, say, because it is red and juicy, and y will be bad because it is not.[11]

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 148.

[9] Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, Pelican Books, p. 140-1.

[10] Stevenson, *Facts and Values*, New Haven, 1963, p. 3.

[11] Hare, *Language of Morals*, OUP, 1952, pp. 80-1, 130-1. For all three criticisms of Moore see Warnock, *Contemporary Moral Philosophy*, London, Macmillan, 1967, pp. 15-17.

This last feature of good was called 'supervenience' and it is in terms of it that one can understand better the point that Moore was getting at in his argument about definitions. Good is supervenient in the way indicated because it always follows or is tied to ('supervenes' upon) other properties, but it is nevertheless not the case that it just signifies these properties or just means these properties. A certain strawberry S is good because, say, it is red and juicy. But if 'good' just means here 'red and juicy', then this assertion would collapse to 'S is red and juicy because it is red and juicy', and that is *not* what was originally meant. In other words good always signifies something more than the properties because of which it is predicated; it is never reducible to these properties alone.[12]

The question that, of course, then arises is how to explain the 'something more' of good. Moore's answer was rejected because, as was said, it appealed to an unexplained kind of knowing, did not account for the moving force of good, and did not explain how good could be a property necessarily tied to other properties. The solution that was adopted by emotivists and prescriptivists (the two main schools that followed Moore) was that good was not a property at all, or not an object of cognition, but served to express attitudes or volitions or prescriptions. To say something was good was not a way of asserting something about it; it was a way of expressing one's approval of it, or of commending it. Good was more properly a volitional than a cognitive term.[13] According to this theory, therefore, the naturalistic fallacy is committed when one tries to analyse value-judgments in factual or cognitive terms.

The advantage of this solution was that it met at once all the objections raised against Moore. The 'something more' was now explained, not as an independent property, but as an

[12] Hare, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-6.

[13] For Stevenson's 'emotive' meaning, see *Ethics and Language*, Yale University Press, 1944, p. 37ff; for Hare's 'prescriptive' or 'evaluative' meaning, see *Freedom and Reason*, Oxford University Press, 1963, pp. 22ff., 198.

attitude to or a commendation of certain other properties; the connection with; action was immediate because good already expressed a volitional commitment; the unexplained kind of knowing was avoided because there was nothing to know—making predications of goodness was all a question of willing, not knowing. This solution also had the advantage of leaving intact the claim that the natural and real are the province of value-free science.[14] The facts of a thing never include goodness, because goodness is an attitude towards or a commendation of facts, not itself a fact.

This then is an account of the naturalistic fallacy as it appears in the principal protagonists, and it can be seen that it breaks down into a number of separate claims: the claims about supervenience, about the value-free character of facts or the natural, about knowledge, and finally about the connection between good and action. These claims may all be summed together under the headings of the two distinctions by which the naturalistic fallacy is also and usually characterized: the fact/value distinction and the is/ought distinction. According to the first it is said that values are not facts or knowable properties of things, but something over and above them; and according to the second it is said that statements of what is the case are not injunctions about how one should behave, and hence, since value-judgments involve such injunctions, that they are not statements of what is the case. The first distinction may be taken to embrace the first three claims just listed and the second to embrace the last.

Of the theories to explain these features, the prescriptivist and emotivist seem the most powerful and the most attractive, for they explain them all through one basic contention, namely that ' good ' expresses something volitional, not cognitive. This element of volition becomes the something more of supervenience, explains by its absence the value-free character of sci-

[14] Stevenson was particularly keen on stressing this claim, *Ethics and Language*, p. 2ff.

ence, removes the need to appeal to some special kind of knowing, and is the connection between good and action. In these theories the fact/value and the is/ought distinctions turn out to be just different ways of expressing one and the same distinction.

St. Thomas was not a prescriptivist or an emotivist. He gave a cognitive analysis of good. This means that either he has some other way of accounting for the features of the naturalistic fallacy just listed; or his theory does not stand. It also means that for him the fact/value and is/ought distinctions are not the same distinction, and that one explanation will not solve both together. For granted that his analysis of good will account for supervenience and so on, it will not yet account for how knowledge of this good will lead to action. The examination of his theory must therefore fall into at least two parts.

St. Thomas on Facts and Values

Perhaps the key to understanding St. Thomas on this question is what he says about knowledge. Those who say naturalism is a fallacy tend to limit knowledge to the directly observable or the scientifically verifiable. St. Thomas extends knowledge to being, the whole of being or being as such. This, he says, is the proper object of mind. What we know when we know or reflect upon some sensible object is not just the sensible or quantifiable properties, but the reality or existence of the thing and and its properties. The fact that things *are,* this is what impresses itself on the mind; and what the mind knows in knowing anything about a given reality is some aspect or way of its being. Even scientists in observing and knowing facts, or quantifiable data, are knowing some dimension of being—some real actuality.[15]

To understand the scope of the objects of knowledge, therefore, it is necessary to consider being and its divisions. Ac-

[15] *De Veritate,* q.1, a.1.

cording to St. Thomas there are two basic ways of being, or ways of considering being: the way of the categories and the way of the transcendentals (St. Thomas did not use this term, but it expresses his meaning well enough). The categories are specific ways in which things are, ways that are distinct and separate from each other, while the transcendentals are general ways in which things are, ways that, so to say, overlap and include each other.[16]

Let us take the categories first. There are several of these because it can be seen on reflection that a thing's being must be viewed according to several quite separate differentiations. It is clear, for instance, that a horse exists or has being first of all when viewed as a self-subsistent reality, that is, as an entity that exists in and by itself and not as the modification of another thing. Then, equally clearly, the horse exists as modified in certain ways, as being so colored or so shaped or so big or as occupying such a place. It is evident that these ways of being are different and distinct from each other. A horse does not cease to be a horse when it changes its color or its position. Nor does it change its color when it changes its place. Yet it would have to if these kinds of being were the same. Classically there are ten such categories (those listed by Aristotle). St. Thomas accepts Aristotle's listing but it is not necessary for my purpose to go into the details. It is sufficient to recognize that there are some such categories or special ways of being, not how many or what they are.

The so-called transcendentals are understood by contrast with the categories. They are not specific or distinct ways but rather general ways of being, ways of being that belong to, or are common to, all the other ways of being. They are, as is said, coterminous with the whole of being, not confined to one special sort as with the categories. For just as being is itself common to all the categories (each category is a way of being of the thing) so are these others. St. Thomas numbers six trans-

[16] *Ibid.*, q.1, a.1; q.21, a.1. My remarks in the following paragraphs are elaborations from the thought of these articles.

cendentals in all, starting with being as the first of them. The others are thing, one, something, true and good. Just as each category is, as such, a being, so it is, also as such, each of these others as well. It is not necessary to expound St. Thomas on each of these transcendentals. It is enough to expound what he says about good. However, to get a grip on what is meant by a transcendental, and how a term that expresses a transcendental functions, it will be preferable to begin with 'one'. 'One' is perhaps the easiest of the transcendentals to understand, and seeing how it behaves will enable us better to see how 'good' behaves.

That 'one' is a transcendental means that it serves to express an aspect of being that is common to all being everywhere, and is not confined to some one category. For instance, whiteness expresses the being white of a thing and this being white is a special mode of being; it belongs to what is called the category of quality. But oneness is not like that. Being one is something that every being and mode of being is just as such—whether substance or quality or any of the others. So a horse is one in being a substance or self-subsistent reality, for it is one substance; its color is one in being a colour for it is one colour, its shape is one in being a shape for it is one shape. But a horse is not white in being a substance; it is white by the addition to it of the being white. The oneness of something, therefore, since it cannot be some addition to its being, must just be the very being of the thing itself. A horse is one just as and just because it is a horse, while it is white not just as and just because it is a horse but by the addition to it of the further determination or category of whiteness. It is this that explains why the particular oneness of each thing differs according to the thing in question. The oneness of a horse is not the oneness of a color, or the oneness of a thought, because the being of a horse is not the being of a color or of a thought.

If all this is so then there is a crucial difference between what happens when 'one' is predicated of a horse and when 'white'

is. 'White' expresses a distinct sort of being over and above the being of the horse, and it is this additional being that is understood when 'white' is predicated. But 'one' expresses just the being itself of the horse; it does not express any further being whatever. This, however, cannot entail that 'one' just means what 'horse' means. To say a horse is a horse is not to say a horse is one. 'One' evidently says something more than 'horse' says. Since this something more cannot be some additional being (as it is in the case of white), it must just be a consideration or aspect of the very being of the horse, but a consideration or aspect that is not expressed by the term 'horse' itself. This consideration or aspect is, according to St. Thomas, the aspect of undividedness. To say a horse is one is to advert to the fact that the horse is, in its being, undivided. The horse is this just by and in itself, but this is not expressed by the term 'horse' on its own; it is expressed by the term 'one'. Since every being and mode of being, substance, quality, and so on, is undivided in its being in the same way, 'one', when predicated of them, indicates this undividedness, which the subject terms themselves do not indicate. To put it in other words, 'one' expresses the same being as the subject term of which it is predicated—because it takes its being from the subject term—but not the same idea—because it expresses the idea of the undividedness of this being.[17] In this sense 'one' is supervenient to the subject term, because it follows its being, and yet expresses a something more, the something more, not of an additional property, but of a certain consideration or respect of that being. Thus 'one', as analysed by St. Thomas, has the features that are characteristic of supervenience.

It is evident from this that as St. Thomas held good to be a transcendental he held it to be supervenient in the way discussed in the previous section. Consequently his theory of good cannot be accused of committing the naturalistic fallacy in the sense that it ignores supervenience. This is important

[17] Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, 1003b22-5.

because St. Thomas, unlike prescriptivists and others, explained this supervenience cognitively, not volitionally. The example of 'one' shows that this is possible, for 'one' despite its supervenience is a cognitive term. So it is, according to St. Thomas, with good. This now needs to be investigated.

St. Thomas groups good along with true because, he says, the sort of something more these terms express arises not when one considers a being with respect to itself (as in the case of undividedness), but when one considers it in connection with something else. The something else in the case of true is mind, and in the case of good it is desire. Truth expresses the being of a thing with respect to the cognizing and judging mind. What the mind judges in a judgment is not something other than the being that is judged (for that would be to fail to judge it); it judges just that being as such, and declares that it is as it is. Truth, says St. Thomas, expresses the being of a thing along with the idea of 'this is how being is', that is to say along with the idea of a judgment that so it is. This consideration arises from the being of a thing itself, not from some addition of being to it, and it is a consideration that involves reference to the judging mind.

Good is similar to true. It involves reference to desire. Good expresses the idea that the being of a thing, just as such, responds to or fulfills desire for that being. It expresses how that being, just as such a being, is a fulfilment and completion of whatever is directed to it as to an object of desire. Good expresses being along with the idea of end, goal or fulfilment.

This is perhaps most obvious in the case of our own conscious desires. When we desire something, a strawberry say, what is it that we desire in it, or what is it that makes us call it good or desirable? Nothing other than the fact of its being a strawberry, and a strawberry of a certain sort—red, juicy, etc. The strawberry is not good by the addition of some further property to it; it is good just by being what it is, because just by being what it is it is the fulfilment of our desire of it. Thus

the goodness of a red juicy strawberry is just its being red, juicy and a strawberry, though considered along with the idea of a reference to desire, namely that just in being what it is the strawberry is such as to satisfy a desire for it as what it is.

This account of good explains quite neatly the supervenience of good. According to St. Thomas's category/transcendental distinction good is a term that follows or is tied to ('supervenes' upon) the being of a thing (with its properties) and yet expresses the something more of a reference to desire. So the predication of good is not a tautology nor is it the predication of some special property of its own. It is the predication of a certain consideration of the being of the thing, not a further addition of being to it.

This explanation of the supervenience of goodness is evidently a cognitive explanation. To say good is being considered along with a reference to desire is to say that good is, as such, an object of knowledge or cognition. This leaves one to ask, therefore, how this allows for the value-free character of science and what kind of knowing it requires (the other two parts of the naturalistic fallacy to consider here).

That it is possible to consider how things are without considering their goodness is an implication of the above analysis of good. If good is being taken under a certain consideration, then to set that consideration aside is to set goodness aside. According to St. Thomas this is typical of mathematics for mathematics does not consider things in their moving, that is with respect to the ends or goals towards which they are as such beings tending.[18] Modern science is heavily indebted to mathematics in its method since it aims to be quantitative. It is not surprising, therefore, if it ignores the goal-directedness of things, or the teleology of nature. Of course it may be protested that nature is not teleological. To this one may say two things in reply. First, teleology for St. Thomas does not imply consciousness, which is usually what is most objected to

[18] *Summa Theologiae* (S.T.), Ia, q.5, a.3, ad 4.

in teleology. It expresses the idea that things in a state of motion or change are things on the way to becoming something (or ceasing to be something if they are decaying), and the something they are becoming is the goal or end of that becoming. This is not contrary to the evidence of nature, since nature is precisely an organised whole of moving or changing things. Second, if one wishes to deny teleology to nature and on this ground to accuse St. Thomas of committing the naturalistic fallacy, then the ground of one's criticism has shifted. It is no longer a criticism based on logic, but one based on physics or one's view of nature. If naturalism is a fallacy it will only be because it is first an error about the nature of nature. But whether this view of nature is an error or not is a question that belongs to another sphere that cannot be dealt with here. It is enough to state what St. Thomas's position is, for that shows how his theory relates to the problems and how they do or do not constitute problems for him.

The question of knowledge is more easily dealt with. The way we know good is the way we know any other being or reality, that is, by the mind. Just as we recognize that things are through reflection on the evidence of the senses, so we recognise that the being of things so recognised has the aspect of goodness when viewed as the object of appetition or as a goal. There is nothing peculiar about this sort of knowing, or if there is it is something that attaches to our knowing of being and things in general, including the knowing one finds in science. Thus difficulties on this score cannot be supposed to be exclusive to cognitive accounts of good.

St. Thomas on the Is and the Ought

If St. Thomas' theory of good can answer the other elements of the naturalistic fallacy, it would seem not to be able to answer the question about good and action or the Is and the Ought. This is because it is a cognitivist theory and the is/ought distinction seems fatal to all cognitivist theories. The claim is that value-judgments are action-guiding and hence en-

tail or involve ought-judgments or judgments that indicate what one should do. But ought-judgments are not statements of what is the case, nor can they follow from statements of what is the case. Consequently value-judgments cannot be statements of what is the case.

The puzzle that is being got at here might be put, not just in terms of the relations between certain judgments, but also in terms of the relations between thinking and willing, and the question becomes how can thinking move one to desire or will something. The implication of the is/ought distinction is that this cannot happen. Thinking and willing belong to different spheres. If thinking did affect one's choices it could only be because one was already committed or engaged towards what one was thinking about. For instance if seeing that x is y makes one choose x, this could only be because one was already committed in favor of y; thinking by itself cannot create a commitment or desire *de novo*. The is/ought distinction thus directs one to the question of the inter-relationships between thinking and willing or desire. There are thus two angles to the Is/Ought problem: the angle of judgments and the angle of the relationship between different faculties. St. Thomas's answer embraces both.

In St. Thomas' theory the key to understanding this puzzle, as to understanding the previous ones, is a correct understanding of goodness. This is the 'bridging' concept between thinking and desire. For, according to St. Thomas, good is in both spheres, and not just in one as prescriptivists and emotivists assume. This is because good is the sort of cognitive concept it is. Understood cognitively good is being as object of desire, and hence this one and the same consideration of being is an object for both thought and desire at once. But if the object is the same, the approach to it is not. Thought takes good as something to consider and know, desire takes it as something to pursue and get, and the move from thought to desire turns on this fact: the object is one, but the orientations towards it are different. According to St. Thomas the mind moves desire

by presenting it with its objects, namely goods. The mind conceives some good and this conception of good then becomes a focus for desire. So just by the fact that thought and desire are what they are, and that they share a common object, the move from thinking a good to desiring it becomes readily intelligible. What the one conceives and knows, the other comes to desire. This is a natural process that arises just because thought is what it is and desire is what it is.[19]

One must note, however, that this move from thought to desire finds its explanation in desire, not in thought. Unless desire were as such ordered to the good no amount of thinking about good would move one to desire. To make this clearer one may consider the analogy of sight, for the visible is to sight as the good is to desire. No amount of visible things would make the eye see if the eye were not already in itself ordered towards the visible as its object.[20] In this sense one may concede a certain truth to the claim that thinking does not move desire unless one is already committed to what one is thinking about. This is because the commitment to good on the part of desire has to be presupposed to any act of desiring (as the commitment to truth on the part of the mind has to be presupposed to any act of knowing). But this commitment is not an explicit act of desire; it is the structure of desire as such which belongs to it whether one is desiring anything or not (as it is the structure of the eye to be ordered to the visible whether an act of seeing is taking place or not). Moreover nothing about this commitment requires one to deny that good is something cognitive; it is just that this commitment is a commitment of desire.

This then is the way St. Thomas explains how (theoretical) thought can move to desire. It answers the objection of Grisez and Finnis that no theoretical truth can move to desire. Theory can do this by presenting desire with its objects. But

[19] *Ibid.*, Ia IIae, q.9, a.1.
[20] *Ibid.*, q.10, a.1, 2.

Grisez and Finnis, along with most non-naturalists, are right to hold that it is not theory as such that explains this fact; they are just wrong to suppose that therefore theory cannot move desire at all. This is because they forget the fact of desire and its natural orderedness to good;[21] and hence that what theory naturally grasps as a truth, desire naturally grasps as an object of pursuit.

Given this account it is possible to see how the move from thought to desire begins with an Is, namely the Is of goodness. And here one can see how St. Thomas's position relates to the other angle of the Is/Ought problem, the angle of judgments. The question is how to get from an Is-judgment to an Ought-judgment. The first part of the answer has already been given, namely how one gets a desire of good from a theoretical statement that x is good. The rest of the answer lies in noting how desire, once focussed on some good presented to it by thought, turns back on thought and moves it to a different kind of thinking, namely practical thinking. Practical differs from theoretical thinking in its end, that is to say in its orientation. The end of theory is truth and of practice it is action, for in practical thinking one thinks in order to discover what to do. Action, however, proceeds not just from thought by itself but only from thought with desire (or possibly desire alone in the case of passions), since we act because we desire to act. Hence practical thinking is thinking informed by desire, or thinking set in the service of desire.[22]

It is of some importance to understand the structure of this thinking. It is thinking that takes good as its starting point, since action is for the sake of some good. But it approaches this good not from the angle of theory but from that of desire; its orientation to good is that of desire. Thus the starting point of practical thinking is not so much good as the desire of good; or in other words it begins with desire and its func-

[21] Schultz, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.
[22] *S.T.*, Ia, q.79, a.11.

tion is to reason out how to act to satisfy desire. The first principle of practical thinking must therefore reflect this priority of desire, and according to St. Thomas it does so in the form of an ought or a gerundive. The first principle is 'Good is to be pursued or done'. This 'to be' is a sort of 'ought', so one may say that for St. Thomas practical thinking begins not with an Is but with an Ought. It does not derive this Ought from some prior theoretical Is; it does not derive it at all, but rather begins with it, for it is what first constitutes it as practical thinking. This does not mean that the Ought springs up from nowhere; rather it comes from desire, for Ought just expresses at the level of reason the orientation to good of desire.[23]

This does not mean either that an ought-judgment is not a judgment of reason but something volitional. On the contrary it is a judgment of reason for it is a judgment about what to do in order to attain some good. Ought just expresses the order of action to some good, and says that the action is due in view of that good (there is no categorical Ought for St. Thomas as there is for Kant; for St. Thomas Ought is always subordinate to some good).[24] The only thing to note in the case of practical oughts is that they are made from the point of view of desire. It is this that gives to these truths about the order of action to good the element of prescription or their imperative force.[25]

Practical thinking may therefore be called Ought-thinking, and the point of this thinking is to discover by reasoning what to do here and now in order to satisfy the desire which set practical thinking going in the first place. In this sense it proceeds from a first or fundamental Ought about good to particular Oughts in the here and now. Here there may indeed be a process of logical deduction but it is a deduction from

[23] *Ibid.*, Ia IIae, q.94, a.2; q.3, a.4, ad 3; q.9, a.1; q.17, a.1.

[24] *Ibid.*, q.90, a.2.

[25] *Ibid.*, q.17, a.1. I think that the view I express here about Ought is not too different from that expressed by Schultz, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-3.

Ought to Ought (not from Is to Ought). There is for St. Thomas no logically valid move from Is to Ought. There is nevertheless a move from Is to Ought but it is understood not in terms of logic but in terms of theory of mind. What one has to understand is how the first Is-thinking about what things are good (made at the level of theory) gives rise to desire of good and how this desire of good in turn gives rise to another kind of thinking, practical or Ought-thinking. And understanding this is understanding the interrelationships between thinking and desiring, not points of logic. The gap between Is and Ought is for St. Thomas both there and not there. It is there in the sense that there is no move of logic from one to the other, and it is not there in the sense that there is a move from one to the other, but it is a move that involves a to-ing and fro-ing between the faculties of thought and desire.

This is how for St. Thomas an assertion of value, as that x is good, can both be a theoretical or descriptive truth and yet be a guide to action or give rise to prescriptions about what to do. For the recognition of good moves desire and desire then moves thought to think about how to get this good. Prescriptive or practical judgments thus begin in a fundamental Ought and in an act of volition, but this Ought and volition are themselves founded on a more fundamental grasp of good by theoretical mind as an aspect of the being of things. This is how St. Thomas can be a naturalist about value, that is deny the fact/value distinction, and a sort of non-naturalist about prescription, that is maintain the Is/Ought distinction. The subtlety of this position relies on the way he relates the Ought back to the Is *via* an analysis of thinking and desiring.

Conclusion

This concludes my account of the thinking of St. Thomas as it relates to the problems of the naturalistic fallacy. It can be seen how this account copes with the puzzles while still remaining fundamentally naturalistic. Predications of value are genuine predications, or are genuine descriptive judgements,

and yet are supervenient and allow a place for a value-free science. Also these predications, without being themselves prescriptions or imperatives, allow for prescriptions and imperatives because of the input of desire. This keeps the Is/Ought distinction while drawing its non-naturalist sting. No contemporary account keeps such a balance between the conflicting positions over the Naturalistic Fallacy.

One can also see from all this how this position differs from the Grisez/Finnis position. They lack the analysis of the relations between thought and desire and that is why they deny predications of good can be theoretical and why they assert that mind is practical or prescriptive of its own nature rather than because of the input of desire. But these claims are not necessary to make sense of good and Ought, nor do they reflect the genuine thought of St. Thomas. I hope that much is clear from what has been argued above.

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ROBERT ORFORD'S ATTACK ON GILES OF ROME

IN TWO PREVIOUS ARTICLES, I tried to demonstrate how Robert Orford drew upon the thought of Giles of Rome in order to formulate his own explanation of hylomorphism and the so-called real distinction between essence and existence.[1] Orford, it will be remembered, was one of the earliest disciples of his colleague St. Thomas Aquinas, and-more important- is the first Thomist we know of who turned to Giles in order to gain an understanding of these basic philosophic problems, and who wove Giles's ideas into his own elaboration of what he took to be St. Thomas's position regarding them.

In view of this recognition of Giles as an appropriate guide to a Thomist grasp of these issues, it is surprising to find among Orford's works the *Reprobationes dictorum a fratre Egidio in primum Sententiarum.*[2] The *Reprobationes* is a strange document. In it, as I shall show later, Orford seeks every opportunity to find fault with Giles. Indeed, his criticisms, hardly ever of any substance, are at times so "picky" they cause the reader to wonder as to his real purpose in writing them down in the first place.

In this article, I shall review the historical context of the *Reprobationes* and try to show what it was about Giles of Rome that so irritated the Dominican Orford.

The early catalogues contain no more than two entries for

[1] See F. Kelley, "The Egidean influence in Robert Orford's doctrine on Form", *Thomist*, 47, 1, January, 1983, pp. 77-99, and "Two early English Thomists: Thomas Sutton and Robert Orford vs. Henry of Ghent", *Thomist*, 45, 3, July, 1981, pp. 345-387.

[2] This work is extant in one manuscript, viz. *MS. Merton 276, fol.* 20ra-50ra. It has been edited by A. Vella: *Robert d'Orford Reprobationes dictorum a fratre Egidio in primum Sententiarum*, Paris, 1968.

Orford.[3] However, from references he made in his extant writings, viz., *Sciendum, Contra dicta Henrici* and *Reprobationes*, we know the titles at least of some of his other writings. As one might have expected, Orford wrote commentaries on the books of the *Sentences*. In addition to the references to these commentaries he mentions also a *De unitate formae, Super 2 de sommo et vigilia, Super 6 de Metaphysica* and *De generatione*. We know of Orford's part in certain disputed questions and of his sermon in 1293. Finally, we have offered our reasons elsewhere for attributing to him the opuscule entitled *De natura materiae et dimensionibus interminatis*.[4]

From the mere fact that Orford saw the necessity of writing against Giles of Rome in defense of St. Thomas Aquinas, one might have thought that in Giles one had found an antagonist of the Angelic Doctor. For a long time Giles was taken to have been not an adversary but rather a stout defender of his teacher, St. Thomas.[5] The picture of Giles of Rome as the loyal Thomist, the legend as it has more recently been labelled, derived in no small measure from the erroneous ascription to him of the work which is in fact Richard Knapwell's, viz. *Correctivum corruptorii 'Quare'*.[6] Once this mistaken ascription had been corrected and further study was done, mainly by E. Hocedez, Giles no longer appeared as having been the staunch and loyal Thomist of the legend. On the contrary, Hocedez says of him:

Gilles décidément n'est pas le thomiste, dans le sens profond du mot, qui s'est donné Thomas pour Maître et guide de sa pensée:

[3] For a full account of what the catalogues have under Orford's name, see A. Vella, "Robert of Orford and his place in the scholastic controversies at Oxford in the late xiiith century" (Oxford Univ. B.Litt. thesis 1946), *MS. B.Litt.*, c. 30, vol. 1, Bodleian Library, pp. 12-27.

[4] See F. Kelley, "The Egidean influence", pp. 90-96.

[5] See F. Lajard, "Gilles de Rome", *Histoire littéraire de la France*, 30 (1888), pp. 421-566.

[6] "Nous croyons que ce qui a le plus contribué à faire de Gilles le disciple 'devoué du docteur Angélique, c'est la fausse attribution qu'on lui a faite du Defensorium", E. Hocedez, "Gilles de Rome et Saint Thomas", *Mélanges Mandonnet*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1930), p. 402.

peut-on même lui donner le titre de disciple? Il paraît plutôt comme un élève jaloux de sa liberté et qui veut affirmer sa personnalité.[7]

However, while loyalist is no longer the right epithet, adversary is hardly appropriate either. That is to say, an 'adversary', in a strict sense at least, would be the fitting decription for one whose main if not sole purpose in writing a given treatise would be to discredit the ideas of another. If the term be taken in this stricter meaning, one would not be called an adversary of another on the grounds that he found occasion to disagree, even often, with another. Thus, while Robert Orford was an adversary of Giles of Rome in his *Reprobationes*, Giles was not in the strict sense an adversary of Aquinas in his commentary on the first book of the *Sentences*. The title of Giles's work was not *Contra Thomam in primum Sententiarum*, nor would any such equivalent have been the appropriate one.

It is important for our purposes to place emphasis on this point, for when Robert Orford took up his pen against Giles of Rome, it was not the case that he was doing quite the same thing as he had done previously in his *Correctorium corruptorii Sciendum*[8] against William de la Mare. The latter, by anyone's measure, was indeed an adversary of Aquinas. The sole aim of William's work, as its title implied, was to set right what he took to be the serious mistakes running throughout Aquinas's chief writings. Giles of Rome on the other hand, in the work Orford attacked, was simply delivering his lectures on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, in accord with University custom.

After having studied under the direction of St. Thomas during his second Paris regency in the years 1269-1272, Giles continued his studies under another master whose name we do not know. He was a bachelor in theology in 1276-1277, and it was

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 389.

[8] This work was edited by Glorieux: *Le Correctorium Corruptorii 'Sciendum'* (Paris, 1956).

at that time Giles produced his commentary on the first book of *Sentences*.[9] When he gave these lectures, the young Giles was in the words of Hocedez, 'jaloux de sa liberté', and felt free to disagree with anyone, including his illustrious teacher, whenever he deemed it suitable.

In fact, Giles's belief in the right of freedom he enjoyed in holding and expressing philosophical and theological opinions was so strong that it caused him a temporary exile. Sometime between Stephen Tempier's condemnation of the 219 propositions and his death, which is to say between 7 March 1277 and 3 September 1279, certain of Giles's teachings were officially examined and judged to have been erroneous. Rather than repudiate these errors, as ordered to do by the Paris authorities, he sought out new arguments in their defense. The young scholar's refusal to submit to Tempier's demand resulted in his having to leave Paris. The record of all this is preserved in a letter dated 1 June 1285 from Pope Honorius IV to Randulf, Tempier's successor.

As we know, although our beloved brother Giles of Rome, a member of the Order of the Hermits of St. Augustine, some time ago while he was studying at Paris, said or wrote down certain things which your predecessor the late bishop of Paris Stephen upon his own scrutiny and that carried out at his request by other masters of the theology faculty, demanded that he (Giles) recant, he (Giles) did not do so, but rather tried to defend these things with various arguments . . .[10]

Even after a few years had passed, Giles looked back on Tempier's repressive measures (in this case against Aquinas) as a sorry chapter in the history of the young University.

. . . many may well judge that all those articles were not condemned in a proper manner. For I was at Paris myself, and I can testify without any fear of error that many of those articles re-

[9] See Mandonnet, "La Carrière scolaire de Gilles de Rome", *RSPT*, 4 (1919), pp. 480-499, and Hocedez, "La condamnation de Gilles de Rome", *RTAM*, 4 (1932), pp. 43-58.

[10] *Chart. Univ. Paris.*, i. p. 633.

sulted not from the advice of the masters, but from the captiousness of a few.[11]

It is not clear what precisely were the doctrines which caused Giles his trouble with the Paris authorities. It is possible, even inviting, to think it may have had something to do with his defense of the unity of form.[12] His treatise *Contra gradus formarum,* written probably just before his condemnation, could well have accounted for the move against him, especially in view of its excessive denunciation of the plurality thesis as a heresy.[13] Against this hypothesis, however, is the fact that Godfrey of Fontaines was able to say in *Quodlibet III,* q. 5 (1286) that in Paris it was safe to uphold the unity of form.

But I say only this: the thesis that in man there exists only a single substantial form can be upheld as probable.[14]

In *MS. Vat. lat. 853,* which contains the *Quodlibet* questions of Henry of Ghent, there are notations on the bottom of certain folios which refer to points of doctrine for which Giles was reproved. The first note, on fol. 3r, in connection with Henry's position in *Quodlibet 1,* q. 8, that the world could not have been created *ab aeterno,* says:

This opinion is strengthened by the judgment of the masters determining in the seventeenth and final article (secundo) against Brother E. on book one of the *Sentences.*

Hocedez interprets the note to mean that this point, i.e., the possibility of creation *ab aeterno,* was the subject of two articles in the list against Giles, viz., the 17th and the final one.[15]

[11] Aegidius Romanus *In II Librum Sententiarum* (Venice, 1482), d. 32, q.2, a. 3.

[12] See Mandonnet, " La Carrière scolaire ", pp. 484-491.

[13] " Therefore to posit several forms appears repugnant to the Catholic Faith . . .; the thesis of a plurality of forms, as we have shown, seems to stand contrary to the Faith rather than in its favor, and this we have endeavored to show ", P. 1, cap. 2 (Venice, 1502), *fol.* 201v (conclusion).

[14] *Les quatre premiers Quodlibets de G. de Fontaines,* ed. DeWulf-Pelzer (Louvain, 1904), p. 197.

[15] See Hocedez, " La condamnation de Gilles de Rome ", pp. 42ff.

The word *secundo* means this was the second of two such lists, the first having been drawn up by Tempier and the second by his successor which served as the basis for Giles's recantation. Another note on the bottom of fol. 8r says that the next to last article against Giles concerned his doctrine on the will:

> . . . that proposition, for which brother E. was censured, viz. that there is no malice in the will unless there is error or some lack of understanding in the reason—and it is the next to last article levelled against him.

These are the only clues we have thus far as to what were the complaints against Giles which led to his condemnation. There was very likely a list of articles and the doctrines contained in them related to Giles's commentary on the first *Sentences*.[16]

Five years or so after his courageous stand of conscience, if that is what it was, Giles came to think differently about the overriding importance of freedom of thought. From the letter of Pope Honorius IV we know that Giles eventually saw that the humble thing to do, and the wise thing as well, was to tender his recantation of past obstinacies:

> Recently however, while in residence at the Holy See, he (Giles) humbly presented himself ready to take back, in accord with our recommendation, those things he said or wrote which should be taken back.[17]

The Pope, with compassion for such a humble gesture, determined it to be only fitting that the act of repudiation be made in the same place where the errors had been advanced, viz., Paris:

> We however, in accepting his humble offer and moved by a spirit of sympathy for him, have thought it more fitting and useful that the aforesaid items be more appropriately recanted in the same

[16] 'On dressa une liste, assez longue, des prétendues erreurs relevées dans l'enseignement de Gilles de Rome, particuliérement dans son Commentaire sur le premier livre des Sentences", *ibid.*, p. 57.

[17] *Chart. Univ. Paris.*, p. 633.

place where they were inappropriately put forward in words and writing.[18]

Honorius then ordered the Paris authorities to convene for the special purpose of accepting Giles's recantation, and urged Nicholas, the chancellor, to expedite Giles's promotion to master of theology:

> . . . we have ordered him (Giles) sent back to you, mandating by apostolic letter your fraternity, as well as our beloved brother master Nicholas chancellor of Paris along with all the other masters of the theology faculty both regent and non-regent abiding in Paris, called together for this special purpose and moving forward with their counsel regarding the aforesaid—the brother named (Giles) revoking these things in the presence of all, and especially those things your previously mentioned predecessor commanded him to revoke—to see to his prompt achievement of the licence, by our authority, inasmuch as following divine guidance you, with the agreement of the majority of these masters, will see that this profits the catholic faith and is useful for studies at Paris.[19]

Giles recommenced his lecturing at Paris in the autumn of 1285 shortly after having agreed to the terms laid down by the authorities regarding the abjuration of his youthful mistakes of doctrine. Two years later, in 1287, he became master.[20]

The foregoing sequence of events helps us to understand Robert Orford's *Reprobationes contra Eguidium*. There can be no doubt that this Oxford Thomist appreciated the significance of Giles's ' process of growth ' at least as well as Mandonnet or any other later observer could do. At roughly the same time that Knapwell and the other first generation Thomists at Oxford were feeling the increased ecclesiastical repressive measures, Giles of Rome was beginning to redeem the voucher he had earned as a reward for his recantation. Failure to take this

[18] *Ibid.*

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] Mandonnet probably echoes the thoughts of many when he says: "Je ne sais s'il faut appeler une victoire ou une défaite l'accession de Gilles de Rome à la maîtrise parisienne, dans les conjonctures que nous avons signalées," *op. cit.*, p. 493.

parallel of events into account makes it much more difficult to understand why it was Orford attacked Giles's early work in the way that he did as an anti-Thomist piece.

Indeed, the record shows that Giles held Aquinas in the highest regard as a profound thinker. William of Tocco relates Giles's sentiments through the testimony of his close friend, James of Viterbo:

> The same brother James also told the witness that brother Giles of Rome, doctor of sacred theology, of the order of Augustinians, often said to him in conversation at Paris: brother James, if the friars Preachers had wished, they could have been the wise and intelligent ones and we the idiots—(i.e.) had they not handed over to us the writings of brother Thomas.[21]

Of those who made bold to criticize Aquinas's writings, Giles is reported to have said:

> And those who scrutinize writings, failing to grasp the meaning of what they judge, carry out their work stimulated only by envy—flies, leaping at the light, while they argue about things they do not understand, they are blinded by the light—and do not appreciate the truth unknown to them.[22]

In addition to this testimony, we know that Giles was one of the first to write a treatise in defense of a thesis as typically Thomist as the unity of form.[23] If it be said that, although Giles defended the thesis, his explanation varied from what Aquinas had actually taught on the subject, one might recollect that Richard Knapwell, hardly a critic of Aquinas, thought enough of Giles's work to have drawn upon it in putting together his own defense of the unity of form.[24] Indeed, Knapwell would not go as far as Giles did in the defense of this Thomistic thesis. For whereas Giles had said in his *Contra*

[21] *Acta Sanctorum, Martii*, i, p. 714 (n. 83).

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 672 (n. 41).

[23] Giles wrote the *Contra gradus et pluralitates formarum* in 1278; see *supra*, p. (3). He was very likely motivated to write the work by the events of 1277; see Mandonnet, "La Carrière scolaire", pp. 488-489.

[24] See Callus, "The Problem of the unity of form and Richard Knapwell, O.P.", *Mélanges offerts à Étienne Gilson* (Toronto-Paris, 1959), p. 144.

gradus formarum that the opponents of the unity thesis were upholding heresy as well as philosophical error,[25] Knapwell said he himself would not go to these extremes because of those great thinkers who had supported the plurality of forms.[26]

Mandonnet found it possible to describe Giles as a Thomist, despite the fact that he disagreed with him on many points:

> Giles est un disciple de Thomas d'Aquin et l'on doit, sans forcer la note, le ranger parmi les thomistes, non pas en ce sens qu'il faille passer par lui pour aller au fond de la pensée de Thomas d'Aquin, mais en ce sens qu'il a adopté toutes les grandes thèses du docteur dominicain, et qu'il suit, même dans des détails très précis.[27]

Although Hocedez emphasizes more how Giles's thought marked a departure from that of Aquinas, still he is able to say of Mandonnet's description of the Augustinian that it is *trés juste*.[28]

It would be fruitless to argue over what label Giles most suitably wears: disciple of St. Thomas, Thomist, Thomist *sans forcer la note*, or eclectic or independent-minded Thomist, etc. The important point for our purposes is to note that of all the labels one might have selected for Giles, adversary of St. Thomas would certainly not fit him when he wrote his commentary on the first book of the *Sentences*.

From what has been said, one can understand that Giles of Rome was a somewhat ambivalent figure in the eyes of Robert Orford. On the one hand, the Giles of the first *Sentences* must have seemed more a comrade in arms than one to be attacked. Though he had departed from and criticized Aquinas often in this commentary, the criticism sprang not from any premeditated and carefully worked out design to discredit his former teacher wherever possible but from that same youthful and intellectually energetic spirit which had inspired him to resist

[25] See *supra*, p. (3).
[26] See *supra*, n.24.
[27] " La Carrière scolaire ", p. 497.
[28] " Gilles de Rome et Saint Thomas ", p. 385.

the threats of the bishop of Paris. At that time, Giles like Knapwell,[29] had shown himself prepared to suffer exile and to jeopardize his academic career rather than sacrifice his independence of mind. Though the criticisms of Aquinas were there, they were overshadowed by the deeper sense in which Giles followed the thought of St. Thomas.

On the other hand, there was Giles the opportunist, whose recantation in 1285 could well have encouraged John Pecham to carry through with his design against Knapwell at Oxford.[30] If Mandonnet is not right when he suggests this possibility, it can at the very least be said that Giles's action could not have helped Knapwell or anyone else at that time who might have had thoughts about resisting ecclesiastical pressure where theological and philosophical doctrines were concerned. It would have been only natural for Orford, the friend and colleague of Knapwell, to have seen in Giles the opportunist, an adversary; if not in doctrine, surely in other and perhaps more real terms.

This ambivalence in Orford's attitude towards Giles has left its mark on his *Reprobationes contra Eguidium*. In the work Orford is " picky." He chases down what appear to be the most trivial points in order to discredit Giles. In one case, at least, it is hard not to see some dissimulation.[31]

ORFORD'S CRITIQUE

Orford's very first criticism of Giles's commentary on the first book of the *Sentences* deals with what the theologian ought to consider as the subject, taken in its most proper and technical meaning, of the science of theology. In treating this question, Giles reveals at one and the same time his dependence on

[29] For the events relating to Knapwell's exile, see my *Richard Knapwell Quaestio disputata de unitate formae* (Paris-New York, 1982), Introd. (*passim*).

[30] " Quand nous voyons Jean Packham, archevêque, de Cantorbéry, condamner, le 30 avril la théorie de l'unité des formes, on peut croire que la rétraction de Gilles de Rome devant l'université de Paris avait dû l'encourager dans sa démarche ", Mandonnet, " La Carrière scolaire ", p. 493.

[31] See *infra*, p. (13).

St. Thomas in the way he orders his material and the freedom he deemed appropriate in going beyond his teacher. As Aquinas had done, Giles cites and rejects the views of Peter Lombard, Hugh of St. Victor, and Robert of Melun.[32] Of St. Thomas's own view, viz., that *Deus est subiectum huius scientiae,* he says that it is true as far as it goes but that more ought to be said.

> The arguments proving God to be the subject in this discipline are correct, but they do not express the whole truth. For God is the subject in this discipline, but from a special aspect.[33]

If one merely said God is the subject of theology and let it go at that, Giles felt one would not have adequately distinguished theology from the natural knowledge achieved by the philosopher in metaphysics. In order to underscore this distinction, Giles says that in theology God is the subject *sub aliqua tamen speciali ratione,* i.e., precisely insofar as God is *restaurator* and *glorificator.*

> . . . it is clear why God is not, without qualification, the subject in metaphysics. He is, however, the subject in theology, but from a special aspect. This is already clear. 'The special aspect' is explained in the following way: when we call something the subject of a discipline from a 'special aspect' what we mean is that we try to understand that subject mainly from that particular point of view. But in theology our main concern is to learn about God as our Redeemer and glorifier. Therefore, etc.[34]

Orford's reaction to Giles's discussion is illuminating, for it provides a good example of the kind of opportunity he searches out in order to find fault.[35] First of all there is a difference, albeit delicate, between what Giles said and what Orford says he said. Giles claimed that St. Thomas's statement was true, but did not express the whole truth of the matter: *verum*

[32] St. Thomas, *In I Sententiarum,* Prologue, q. 1, a. 4; *Summa Theol.,* 1, 1, 7. Giles of Rome, *In I Sententiarum,* Prologue, q. 3 (Venice, 1521), fol. 3ra-vb.

[33] *In I Sent., fol.* 3vb N.

[34] *Ibid.*

[35] *Reprobationes,* pp. 31-38.

dicunt sed totam veritatem non exprimunt. Orford has Giles saying that St. Thomas's position came closer than the other opinions to the right understanding but remained insufficient:

He says that the fourth position comes closer to the correct notion of the subject (of theology); but it does not adequately describe the subject, for it fails to say (God) is the subject from a certain aspect. And this is necessary as we have pointed out.[36]

To come close to being correct is not quite the same thing as being correct but incomplete. And whether one does or does not like what Giles added to St. Thomas's account, it is surely not the case that the latter needed any defense against someone whose only complaint was that he did not express the whole truth. One would have thought it quite sufficient for Orford or any other Thomist to have simply dismissed Giles's additional *ratio specialis* as superfluous. Aquinas had very carefully drawn the distinction between theology and metaphysics in his own comment on the *Sentences* when he stressed:

But this discipline differs from all others in that it flows from faith.[37]

Orford knew this just as well as Giles. The significant point is, however, that Giles did not take exception to anything Aquinas had said in this article. His words describing what was there were: *dicendum quod verum dicunt.* It was therefore little more than otiose for Orford to have repeated as he did the thought found in Aquinas concerning the subject of theology:

The subject of theology, however, is a matter of belief. For the articles of faith are the starting points of this discipline, and this makes it different from all other disciplines in that it flows from faith. And this, in the more basic sense, is the subject of the entire discipline, since taken in its entirety, the discipline is contained in its starting points as in a seed; that is to say, in what is believed or the object of faith.[38]

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 33.
[37] *In I Sent.*, q. 1, a. 4.
[38] *Reprobationes*, p. 34.

Still in the *Prologue* of the *Sentences,* Giles asks the customary question: *Utrum ista scientia sit practica vel speculativa.* His reply to the question is that, properly speaking, it should be described as *affectiva* rather than as either *practica* or *speculativa.* However, if pressed with the question: ' but is it *practica vel speculativa* ', he said it is more aptly thought of as speculative than as practical:

The intellect is either speculative or practical. Theology (however), properly speaking, is neither speculative nor practical, but affective. For in the main it leads to desire. Thus it is well said that (theology) is wisdom since it leads to savoring divine things rather than because it makes us understand divine things. But if the question be raised: is it more practical than speculative, or vice versa, the answer has to be, it is more speculative than practical. For godly understanding which all our knowledge, and most especially theology aims at, has more to do with blessedness than with any of our practical deeds.[39]

When St. Thomas dealt with the same question, his answer was that theology includes within itself elements justifying both descriptions, viz., speculative and practical. His final word on the matter is almost identical with what Giles had.

But it is more speculative than practical, for its leading interest is with divine not human things. It concerns itself with the latter only insofar as they lead man to the perfect knowledge of God, in which eternal happiness is found.[40]

Admittedly, there is some difference to be noted in the way these two theologians expressed themselves in this question, but the resemblance in the way their thought advanced appears to be more striking than the difference. The two men find that both of the conventional scholastic categories *speculativa* and *practica* are inadequate to describe that system of knowledge known as theology or *sacra doctrina* or *sacra pagina.* Giles's choice of the label *affectiva* was not St. Thomas's own choice,

[39] *In I Sent.,* fol. 8ra B.
[40] *Summa Theol.,* 1, 1, 4.

true enough.[41] But one should indeed be surprised to find anyone, even the most devoted follower of Aquinas, regarding such a departure from the latter's wording to be tantamount to an *impugnatio*. Robert Orford does, however, find it necessary to devote no less than seven different arguments to showing the impropriety of Giles's use of the word *affectiva*.[42]

In his reply to the question in the first distinction entitled: *Utrum frui sit actus intellectus,* Giles's conclusion is exactly the same as St. Thomas's.[43] Even Orford cannot find anything objectionable in Giles's response, for he says:

> Later he answers the qunestion, showing that fruition pertains to the will, and in this case his explanation is correct.[44]

But despite his approval of the main response, Orford takes time out to correct the way Giles responded to three of the objections he had raised. In his critique of the reply to the second of these objections, Orford goes beyond what Giles wrote down. Giles's objection was:

> Rest, and therefore enjoyment, must pertain to the dominating faculty; but it is the reason which rules over the will; hence it would follow from this that enjoyment belongs to the reason and not to the will. Furthermore, fruition bespeaks a kind of rest. But reason rules over the will, as is clear from the Philosopher in the first book of the *Politics,* and from the Master (Lombard) in the *Prologue* (to the *Sentences*) when he rebukes those who do not make the will subject to reason, and we do not say that inferior agents rest, since they move only when moved by superior (agents). Therefore reason, which must rule, is said to rest and therefore to enjoy.[45]

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[41] St. Bonaventure had said that theology was *affectiva*; see his *In I Librum Sententiarum,* Proemium, q. 3. (Quaracchi, 1882), p. 13.

[42] *Reprobationes,* pp. 46-48.

[43] St. Thomas's conclusion is: "And thus we say it is an act of will, in accord with the habit of charity, although other habits and powers precede it". *In I Sent.,* d. 1, a. 1. Giles has simply: "we say only the will, strictly and properly 'enjoys'", *In I Sent.,* d. 1, q. 1, a. 1, fol. 11vb O.

[44] *Reprobationes,* p. 49.

[45] *In I Sent., fol.* 11rb G.

In answer to this argument Giles said that there exists a kind of mutual pre-eminence between the reason and will. In one sense, reason has first place, i.e., as directive; in another sense the will comes first, i.e., as *imperans*. But if we ask which is simply speaking (*simpliciter*) first (*altior*), this question does not concern us at the moment:

> To the second argument it must be said that if the intellect is higher because it is the guide, the will is higher because it commands. And rest has more to do with commanding than with guiding. We are not, however, concerned at present with the question: which faculty is higher, all things considered.[46]

Orford's remark on the solution Giles gave amounts to chiding him for not having said more than he did. He begins by simply restating what Giles did say:

> What he says in reply to the second argument, viz. that the will is a higher faculty than the intellect, since the will and not the reason commands: it must be pointed out that there are two things to consider in 'command'. First, that which issues the command to carry something out, and this is the will. Second, that which determines and guides the other to carry out what has been commanded, and this is the work of reason.[47]

It must be noted first that Orford's restatement of what Giles had said does not read as if it were that, viz., a restatement. The words running from 'he says' (*dicit*) down to and excluding 'it must be pointed out' (*dicendum*) one would normally take as referring to what Giles had said. The *dicendum* would normally mark the beginning of Orford's own observations. Orford should have said something like *et dicit praeterea* instead of *dicendum*. As it stands, with the wrong word *dicendum*, the impression is given that here Giles had said nothing more than "the will is a higher faculty than the intellect." We cannot know for sure whether or not the confusion here was deliberate, but we can say that the result tends to insert an opposition between Giles and Aquinas where it did not exist.

[46] *Ibid.*
[47] *Reprobationes*, p. 50.

Orford then goes on to point out that Giles's response ought to have gone further by showing that the intellect is, simply speaking, superior to the will. His argument for saying the intellect is higher than the will goes as follows:

But in order to answer the second (argument) one should add that the intellect, all things considered, is superior since the essence of the soul is one and the faculties several. Now as the transition from one to many is according to some sort of ordering, then there must exist an ordering among the faculties of the soul; and in any natural ordering the more perfect are prior to the less perfect, even if by the sequence of generation the ordering is reversed. Since therefore, according to the natural ordering, the intellect takes precedence over the will, it follows of necessity that the intellect is the higher faculty, all things considered. In support of this idea there are other arguments in the *Response to the Corruptor*.[48]

The reading of this argument makes one think that perhaps Orford ought to have imitated Giles and said nothing more than 'this question does not concern us at the moment'. From his concluding remark: 'In support of this idea there are other arguments in the *Response to the Corruptor*', we see that Orford was thinking about other opponents of Aquinas as he attacked Giles of Rome.

In the fourth distinction a question arises concerning the propriety of language when speaking about the Trinity. Is it the proper thing to say 'God generates another God' (*Deus genuit alium Deum*) At the end of his response, Giles says there are some who distinguish meanings which might be assigned to the word *alium*.

Some, however, distinguish the word 'other'. If it be taken substantively, then the statement is true. And the sense is: 'He generates another Who is God'. If it be taken adjectivally, then it is false, for in this case the sense is: 'He generates another God, that is, He generates a different God'. But since we ought to use words the way most people do, and as this distinction is not cus-

[48] *Ibid.*, p. 51. This statement is verbally identical with what we read in *Sciendum*, p. 149; another indication of identity of authorship.

tomary, in agreement with the Master (Lombard) (I say) both should be rejected.[49]

In his comment on the same question, Aquinas had virtually the identical thought:

But there are others who distinguish this (proposition): 'He generates another God', for the word 'other' can be taken substantively or adjectivally. If it be taken adjectivally then the statement will be false, because it will introduce a diversity in the term 'God'. If substantively, then the construction is one of apposition, and the sentence will be true. Here the sense is: 'He generates another (God) Who is God'. But since we do not find adjectives in the masculine gender as substantives, and especially when they have annexed substantives, thus it is that the aforementioned distinction appears not altogether valid—unless perhaps, the participle 'being' is taken as implied, so that the sense is: 'another (being) God'. But this is indeed stretching matters. Thus, in company with the Master (Lombard), it should be said that both are false.[50]

Indeed we should have to say that in this question Giles of Rome was doing nothing other than repeating almost to the word what his teacher had written. If one's purpose were to discredit Giles by showing how he departed from St. Thomas, this would appear to be the last place one would have cited. One can only wonder, therefore, why it was that even here Orford finds it necessary to caution Giles's reader that the *aliqui* he mentioned in his commentary on this question, who had ineptly drawn the distinction between the substantive and adjectival meanings of 'other', did not include St. Thomas.

Be careful to note here, when (Giles) says: 'some make a distinction', this cannot apply to brother Thomas. For in part one, q. 209, in the reply to argument four, afterwards he (Thomas) shows that the (proposition) 'He generates another God' is false when the word 'other' is a substantive and the word 'God' is taken in apposition with it. And he (Thomas) goes on to say: but this is an improper way of speaking and should be avoided lest there be given the occasion of error. [51]

[49] *In I Sent.*, d. 4, q. 2, a. unic., fol. 32vb P.

[50] *In I Sent.*, d. 4, q. 1, a. 3.

[51] *Reprobationes*, p. 79.

To show this he need not have directed the reader to Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*;[52] his commentary on the *Sentences*, which we have just cited, would have sufficed.

At all events, it could not be clearer that both Aquinas and Giles were referring to the same source when they used the term *aliqui*, and it is no less clear that Giles of Rome in agreement with St. Thomas rejected the suitability of distinguishing between the two meanings of 'other'. Either Robert Orford did not understand this, which is hard to imagine, or else he deliberately tried to interpret Giles as having insinuated something, which insinuation is not at all evident.

In distinction III, part ii, q. 3, a. 2, Giles asked the question: *Utrum anima sit suae potentiae*.[53] His answer to the question was that the powers of the soul cannot be thought of as identical with the soul itself:

> And thus it is clear that the soul is not identical with its faculties, so that the faculties are the very substance of the soul.[54]

The reason for his conclusion is that only in God do perfections exist with no admixture of potentiality. In the creature, all perfections including the powers of the soul must be thought of as having some measure of potentiality. Indeed, it was by so saying that the scholastic theologian insisted on the profound distinction standing between God and His creation.

> It must be said that all perfections found in the creature are shared perfections. And thus they are not purely actual, but have about them a degree of incompleteness. Because of this incompleteness we can speak of their generic aspect; because of the degree of actuality (or completeness) we speak of their specific aspect. For in every case the 'species'—which adds the completing element to the 'genus'—has the aspect of actuality. Thus it is that nothing is created as 'species' without at the same time taking on an aspect of 'genus'. In the first (i.e., God) alone, where perfections exist in an infinite degree, do the 'species' exist under the aspect

[52] See *Summa Theol.*, 1, 39, a. 4, ad 1um.

[53] *In I Sent.*, fol. 27vb.

[54] *Ibid.*, fol. 28ra.

of pure actuality without having the aspect of ' genus ', since they lack all incompleteness.[55]

But the required imperfection in the powers of the soul has the effect of placing them in the category of accident, and excludes them from the category of substance. Therefore, Giles concluded: the powers of the soul are not to be identified with the substance of the soul, nor is it possible for us to predicate the soul of its powers ' except in a certain way '.

Since, therefore, the faculties of the soul are a species of ' quality ', for they are ' natural faculties ', of necessity, they remain in their generic classification, i.e. ' quality '. But if they were identical with the soul itself, they would be ' substance ', for the soul is substance, as is shown in the second book of *De anima.* It is not therefore possible for the soul to be predicated in every way of its faculties essentially and directly, except in a certain manner.[56]

The last words of Giles here: ' except in a certain manner ', were a necessary addition for him, and for any other scholastic of that time, because of the awkward fact that St. Augustine had said something which seemed to them to warrant the contrary conclusion, viz., the powers of the soul are indeed identical with the very essence of the soul:

' the mind, knowledge, and love are in the soul substantially, or to say the same thing, essentially '.[57]

Giles referred to this idea of Augustine in his first objection:

And it seems they are. For Augustine (says) in his sermon *De imagine:* the soul is the intellect; the soul is the will; the soul is memory. But this could not be so unless it were identical with its faculties. Therefore, etc.[58]

The weight of authority accruing to Augustine's words is indicated by the fact that, whereas Giles had spent a mere eighteen lines of text to reach his basic conclusion to the question,

[55] *Ibid.*

[56] *Ibid.*

[57] *IX De trinitate,* c. 4 (PL 42, 963). Another formulation of this idea is found in book X of the same work: " memory, understanding, and will are one life, one mind, one essence ", c. 11 (col. 983).

[58] *In I Sent.*, fol. 27vb.

he needed no less than eighty-three additional lines to practice his exegesis on these words which appeared to contradict that conclusion.

Thomas Aquinas had dealt with the same general question, viz.: *Utrum anima sit suae potentiae,* in very nearly the same way as Giles did.[59] There are some differences to be noted in their main responses, but these differences are of such minor import that even Robert Orford could find nothing worth mentioning. As he had done previously, Orford turned his attention to what Giles had in his response to the first objection in order to find fault. The objection itself, as we have just seen, was a reference to the statement of St. Augustine. In his reply to the objection, Giles simply referred back to his lengthy exposition in the main response to the question:

'. . . it must observed that the soul is called these three, or these three are called the soul, in the way mentioned.[60]

After having noted briefly how he had dealt with the words of St. Augustine, Giles summarized what Thomas Aquinas had said in his commentary in this manner:

We perhaps could say, as some do, in their explanation of predication, that in the first instance there are three distinct types of totalities, viz., universal, integral, and potential.[61]

The first, i.e., the 'universal whole', is predicated of its parts according to a full and complete sense, in the way, e.g., that 'man' is predicated of Socrates or Plato. The second type of 'whole', viz., integral, cannot be predicated of any of its parts in any way whatever. We do not, e.g., say the 'paint is house', or the 'nails are house'. The third type, the 'potential whole', is a more subtle concept which the scholastic used when thinking about entities endowed with an array of diverse operations. For example, the single entity 'dog' has multiple 'powers'; that of walking, that of eating, that of seeing, etc. Thus whilst the predication 'the dog is a seer' might be appropriate as far

[59] *In I Sent.*, d. 3, q. 4, a. 2.
[60] *In I Sent.*, fol. 28rb.
[61] *Ibid.*

as it goes, it does not express all that a dog is, or more properly 'can do' (*non secundum totam virtutem*). However, such a predication, in the scholastic's view, did capture and carry the essence of dog, smuggled across as it were, by virtue of the particular 'power', in this case 'seeing'. Thus the potential whole (dog) is contained in its parts *secundum essentiam sed non secundum totam virtutem.*

> Or we might say as some do that the 'whole' is threefold: universal, integral, and potential. The universal 'whole' is present in each of its parts by its essence and power, and thus it is predicated of them in every way. But the integral 'whole' is present in its parts neither by its power nor by its essence, and thus in no way can it be predicated of them. The potential 'whole' lies between these other two, for it is present in its parts by its full essence but not by its full power. And thus we can say that the soul is predicated of its faculties in a certain manner, since it is a potential 'whole' with respect to them.[62]

Aquinas chose this subtle understanding of predication in order to justify St. Augustine's statement: 'the soul is intellect, will, and memory'. When Augustine said the soul is understanding, or the soul is love, we should not interpret him to have meant that the soul is *intellectus* or *amor* by way of complete equivalence (*ut totum universale de partibus suis*), but rather in the sense that the soul has among its powers those of understanding and willing.

Giles thought that, if one followed Aquinas's mode of exegesis here, one would have to allow for such statements as: 'the soul is corporeal seeing, or hearing, or touching', and these sorts of statements are not acceptable. Thus, concluded Giles, his own way of saving Augustine is safer (*magis tuta*) than the way Aquinas chose.[63]

The extent of Giles's departure from Aquinas in all this is anything but substantive. He even granted that one might explain the matter as Aquinas had done (*vel possumus dicere, ut*

[62] *Ibid.* In addition to the place noted in his commentary on the *Sentences*, St. Thomas also treated this matter in the *Summa Theol.*, 1, 77, a. 1, ad 1um.

[63] *In I Sent.* fol. 28rb.

quaedam distinguunt, . . .), but he feels his own path is *magis tuta.*

To charge Giles with having refuted Aquinas here (*illud improbat*Q, as Orford did,[64] is to have used the word 'refute' in an unusually broad meaning. The slightest expression of hesitancy regarding the formulation adopted by St. Thomas, even though this hesitancy be couched in terms suggesting that, although the formulation is not preferred it nonetheless retained its acceptability, is taken by Orford to be tantamount to a refutation. The *improbatio,* Orford says, is easily resolved. For, whereas Giles had said *non conceditur* to making statements like 'the soul is corporeal vision' or 'the soul is hearing', Orford counters with a flat *concedo,* insisting that such statements are in good order.

But this is easily answered. For I grant that the visual and hearing faculties are identical with the soul. Indeed, all the faculties, both sensitive and intellective, are one with the soul, as in their cause and essence—for all of them flow from one and the same root.[65]

Once having assured his reader that Giles had no reason to hesitate over our making such statements, Orford continues, explaining why it is that these statements are, in fact, *minus propria:*

Memory, understanding, and will exist in the soul as in a subject, and not merely as in a root or cause—however, this is not true of the sense faculties, (for the latter exist as in a subject) in the *toto coniuncto* (i.e., in the substance composed of body and soul). And thus it is that when the soul is separated from the body in death, (the sense faculties) continue to exist (in the soul) only virtually, not actually. Hence, to say: 'the soul is vision, hearing, and touch' is less fitting than to say: 'the soul is memory, understanding, and will'.[66]

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[64] "But he refutes (him) claiming that in this way it would be proper to say things like: the soul is vision, hearing, and touch, since with respect to all of these (the soul) is also a potential whole. But we cannot allow for this", *Reprobationes,* p. 75.

[65] *Ibid.*

[66] *Ibid.*

Orford's quibble here amounts to this: Giles had said that such statements are improper; they are not improper, they are merely *minus propria.* This sort of discussion, one feels, could hardly qualify as a high water mark in scholastic theology.

There is one instance wherein Robert Orford uses William de la Mare in order to correct Giles. In article III, of his *Correctivum fratris Thomae,* William objected to what St. Thomas had said in his commentary on *Ium Sententiarum,* d. VIII, q. 3, a. 1. The text of Aquinas in question is:

> The claim that whatever is moveable by another calls for something moveable by itself is true when we are speaking of a chain (of moveables) found in one and the same class. For according to the Philosopher: all mobile things are traced back to a first, which he describes as moved in and of itself, for it is made up of two parts—one moving and the other moved. But this series (comprising the moveables and such a 'first') requires in addition an original source which is utterly immobile.

As Knapwell and Orford pointed out in their correctoria,[67] St. Thomas did, in fact, later deny that heavenly bodies have souls. But in the place just quoted from St. Thomas's commentary on the *Sentences,* William de la Mare's reading appears to be a justifiable one. In that place, William charged, Aquinas had fallen into the error of so many of the philosophers by saying that the heavenly bodies have souls.

For one thing, William observed, the idea of animated heavenly bodies is contrary to the teaching of St. John Damascene and Dionysius. For another, were we to accept such an idea, we should have to confess that the souls of these bodies ranked higher in God's scheme of things than the souls of men. But Holy Writ teaches us that the opposite is true.[68] Therefore, St. Thomas, along with all those philosophers who proposed the doctrine of animated heavenly bodies, was saying something contrary to Christian belief.

In his defense of Aquinas against this criticism by William

[67] See *Le Correctorium Corruptorii 'Quare'*, ed. Glorieux (Kain, 1927), p. 371, and *Sciendum,* pp. 312-313.

[68] See William de la Mare, *Correctorium fratris Thomae* (published in *Quare,* p. 370).

de la Mare, Orford points out that the Angelic Doctor, in the place referred to in the first *Sentences,* was not presenting his own view; on the contrary, he was merely reporting what Aristotle had said:

> . . . in saying this he is merely recording an opinion. Thus, in presenting this matter, he does not say the first in the chain of moveables is made up of moving and moved parts, as if he were giving us his own view. Rather, his words are: according to the Philosopher, all mobile things are traced back to a first, which he describes as moved in and of itself, for it is made up of two parts—one moving and the other moved.[69]

Giles of Rome, in the course of his comment on the same distinction in the *Sentences,* also advanced the notion of animated heavenly bodies:

> The primary heavenly bodies have life as a result of their inherent moving principles, which are called their souls—for though they do not derive their very existence (from these souls), they are, however, moved by them.[70]

In his critique of Giles, Orford shows none of the benignity of interpretation evidenced earlier in his *Sciendum* when he explained how St. Thomas ought to be understood when he spoke of animated heavenly bodies. And it must be said in all fairness to Giles, that the occasion for interpreting him kindly was there, for he had taken the trouble to point out that, although the heavenly body did, in fact, draw its *motus* from the *motor,* it did not take its *esse* from the same *motor.* Therefore, if the term *anima* be used of this *motor* with respect to the heavenly body, it would have to be an extended meaning of the term. For in the mind of every scholastic of this time, the *anima* was considered to be an intrinsic and substantial principle which conferred *esse* on the entity of which it was said to be the *anima.* Consequently, at the very least, it might have been said of Giles's statement: 'the heavenly bodies are animated', that the animation was quite different from any other kind of animation.

[69] *Sciendum,* p. 338.
[70] *In I Sent.,* fol. 48vb.

Orford, of course, was not looking for ways to excuse Giles. On the contrary, just as William de la Mare had done to Aquinas, Orford looked for things to say against the idea expressed by Giles. And it is interesting to note that in order to discredit him Orford could do no better than bring forward the very arguments used by William against Aquinas. Thus, when the *corruptor* fashioned these arguments against St. Thomas, Orford's reply had been: the arguments miss the mark, for he did not mean what some may have thought him to have meant, and this of course is clear to anyone reading his words closely (*patet igitur intuenti verba sua*).[71] The *corruptor's* arguments must have made a deep impression on Orford, however, for he paraded them later almost to the word when Giles of Rome dallied with the idea of *corpora caelestia animata.*[72]

Finally, it is significant to note that, whatever else might have been said about Giles here, he was surely not attacking St. Thomas, and therefore we can say that Robert Orford had more in mind when he wrote the *Reprobationes* than merely to defend his model, St. Thomas.

Robert might have been the first but he was certainly not the last man who tried to indicate where and how Giles of Rome differed in his doctrine from Aquinas.[73] As recently as 1950, P. W. Nash has given us his thoughts on the subject.[74] While Nash's study does not bear the title *Egidius Romanus, ubi impugnat St. Thomam,* it could easily have done so. It is interesting to compare Nash's attempt with Orford's. Whereas Orford went through Giles's work page by page in search of trouble spots, Nash works out from a single leading concept which he thinks he has found at the 'heart of Giles' metaphysics', i.e.,

[71] *Sciendum,* p. 338.

[72] See *Reprobationes,* p. 91.

[73] Pelster says that Orford's *Reprobationes* was the "erste Schrift gegen das erste Buch des Aegidius von Rom", "Thomistische Streitschriften gegen Aegidius Romanus", p. 166.

[74] See "Giles of Rome, Auditor and Critic of St. Thomas", *Modern Schoolman,* 28 (1950-1), pp. 1-20, and "Giles of Rome on Boethius' 'Diversum est esse et id quod est'", *Medieval Studies,* 12 (1950), pp. 57-91.

'his doctrine of *esse* in the constitution of the individual'.[75] To the degree that Nash's critique of Giles has merit, to that same degree does it suggest a failure on Orford's part to have grasped the deeper sense in which Giles disagreed with St. Thomas.

Nash's very first choice of Egidian texts to support his thesis is in the commentary on the *Ium Sententiarum,* d. VIII, q. 1, a. 2.[76] Here the question under discussion is: *Utrum in Deo sit compositio esse et essentiae,* and, as he points out, Giles here cited Aquinas at some length from *De potentia,* q. VII, a. 2, and took him to task for his manner of argument and for the way he had wrongly 'rested his case on the *Liber de causis*'. Nash finds much significance in Giles's criticism of St. Thomas in this place, using Giles's text as an important building block in order to discover 'the heart of Giles's metaphysics,' which marked the deepest level of Giles's opposition to Aquinas.

An evaluation of Nash's thesis would carry us away from our present purpose, but we can say that Giles did, in fact, make a far more serious challenge to Aquinas here than in any of the places noted so far where Orford had seen fit to take up and refute Giles's attack on Aquinas. As it happens, Orford also made note of Giles's remarks on St. Thomas's doctrine in the question entitled *Utrum in Deo sit compositio esse et essentiae.*[77] But he did nothing more than merely note it. After having quoted Giles's critique of St. Thomas at some length, Orford had only this to say:

> We should note here that the position he refutes is brother Thomas's in the *Quaestio De potentia,* chapter 7, 2.[78]

Orford's failure to say anything here by way of objection to Giles's understanding of *esse* is not surprising, for as I have shown elsewhere Robert had found merit in Giles's doctrine.[79]

[75] "Giles of Rome, Auditor", p. 3.

[76] See "Giles of Rome on Boethius", pp. 63-91. Virtually the whole of Nash's study is an extended analysis of the implications of Giles on d. 8. See also, "Giles of Rome, Auditor", for a short summary of the same, pp. 3-9.

[77] *Reprobationes,* pp. 96-97.

[78] *Ibid.,* p. 97.

[79] See my "Two early English Thomists", pp. 355-360.

It is surprising, however, to find Orford quoting Giles at such length in *Reprobationes* without any word of comment. One might have expected him, in the light of his approval of Giles on the matter, to have simply ignored the discussion, especially in a work designed to impugn the Augustinian.

CONCLUSION

From what we have seen of the *Reprobationes,* we can say that Robert Orford showed himself to have been most loyal to the cause of Thomism. There appears to be little evidence, however, of his having worked his way into the center of any substantive questions with personal and independent analysis. This appraisal of Orford's work against Giles is not unlike what Vella says in the concluding remarks of his study:

> The doctrinal teaching . . . reveals Robert as a keen controversialist and a loyal follower of Aquinas. Orford did not aim at originality. His own intention in criticizing the opponents of St. Thomas was to restore the genuine thought of his Dominican Master distorted by critics, who were urged, in Robert's opinion, more by jealousy than by love of truth.[80]

But Vella's review of Orford's criticisms is kind to the point that he fails to take note of how " picky " they often were. There were differences, to be sure, between the thought of Giles of Rome and Aquinas which Orford identified, and Vella explains some of these quite well. But there was more behind Orford's criticism of Giles than these differences. In any case, the *Reprobationes* was not an important piece of scholastic theology. More striking to the reader than the quality of theological and philosophical argument in the work is the author's understandable ill feeling toward's Giles of Rome, and his zeal in the cause of Thomism.

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[80] Vella, " Robert Orford and his Place ", p. 194.

HERMENEUTICS OF HISTORY IN THE THEOLOGY OF EDWARD SCHILLEBEECKX

A SIGNIFICANT UNDERLYING issue in recent discussions of the writings of Edward Schillebeeckx, whether in academy or church, is the fundamental question of theological method. In his contemporary work, Schillebeeckx has shifted clearly from dogma to human experience as the starting point for theological investigation, a move in which he is certainly not unique. The growing "consensus in theology"[1] which views the theological task as a critical correlation between the Christian tradition and contemporary experience takes a unique shape, however, in each theologian's work.

How is Schillebeeckx's developing theological method to be characterized and evaluated? Is his new approach to theology hermeneutical or political or both?[2] Has Schillebeeckx abandoned the earlier metaphysical and phenomenological foundations of his thought or is Thomas Aquinas still the secret mentor of his contemporary writings?[3] Does Schillebeeckx

[1] See *Consensus in Theology?*, ed. Leonard Swidler (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1980).

[2] David Tracy's distinction of hermeneutical from political theologies is inadequate in describing Schillebeeckx's "hermeneutics of history" since Schillebeeckx's designation of the theological task as hermeneutical includes an explicit political-critical dimension. See Schillebeeckx, *The Understanding of Faith* (New York: Seabury, 1974), esp. ch. 6-7. See also "*Theologisch Geloofsverstaan Anno* 1983" (Baarn: H. Nelissen, 1983). For Tracy's distinction see *The Analogical Imagination* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), pp. 74-75.

[3] In his review of Schillebeeckx's *Christ*, Leo O'Donovan observed that "Schillebeeckx's real master here is still probably Thomas Aquinas, whose theological realism he is transposing into a critical and practical historical language." ("Salvation as the Center of Theology," *Interpretation* 36(1982), p. 196). The transportation from metaphysical to historical categories does involve, however, a major philosophical shift as Schillebeeckx notes in *Jesus:*

implement the narrative-practical theology he applauds or does he remain a theoretician?[4] How does dogma fit into his present theological method, if at all?

That last question has been of particular interest to Schillebeeckx's critics. More than one author has contrasted his contemporary writings with his earlier dogmatic works. Jean Galot, an outspoken critic of Schillebeeckx's recent theological writings, acclaimed *Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God* as an outstanding work of sacramental theology in accord with the traditional doctrine of the church.[5] Similarly, Leo Scheffczyck praised a "pre-critical phase of Schillebeeckx's theology" prior to his hermeneutical writings while describing the latter as "critically turned against the dogma of the church."[6]

An Experiment in Christology, trans. Hubert Hoskins (New York: Seabury, 1979), p. 619. The question remains whether a *theological* realism grounded in creation faith and eschatological hope does not ultimately require some sort of philosophical explanation of "the idea of anticipation of a total meaning amid a history still in the making" (*Jesus*, pp. 618-619). William L. Portier suggests that even in order to negotiate his theological appropriation of ideology critique successfully, Schillebeeckx must retain at least a minimal, fundamentally negative, realist metaphysics from his Thomist past. ("Edward Schillebeeckx as Critical Theorist: The Impact of Neo-Marxist Social Thought on his Recent Theology," *The Thomist* 48 (July 1984), pp. 361-63).

[4] The critique of Johann Baptist Metz, *Faith in History and Society* (New York: Seabury, 1980), p. 79, n.5: "None of the important modern Christologies take this practical structure of Christology as their point of departure. In this sense, they are all idealistic and characterized by a non-dialectical relationship between theory and praxis." Metz includes Rahner, Küng, and Schillebeeckx specifically in his charge.

[5] Jean Galot, "Schillebeeckx: What's He Really Saying About Jesus' Ministry?" *The Catholic Register*, October 1983, p. 1.

[6] Leo Scheffczyk, "Christology in the Context of Experience: On the Interpretation of Christ by E. Schillebeeckx," *The Thomist* 48 (July, 1984), p. 389. See also *The Schillebeeckx Case*, ed. Ted Schoof (New York: Paulist, 1984). While the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith drew no definitive conclusions regarding Schillebeeckx's theological method in their investigation of his *Jesus* book and granted that his Christology could be interpreted as compatible with the doctrine of Nicea and Chalcedon, Schillebeeckx was admonished nonetheless to "make your *own once again* the Christology which the Church teaches its faithful" (*Schillebeeckx Case*, p.

There is no doubt that a crucial shift took place in Schillebeeckx's theological methodology in the mid-1960s; Schillebeeckx himself was the first to identify the move in a 1967 essay.[7] To understand the hermeneutical and critical shifts in his theology as turns against the traditional doctrine/dogma of the Church and as moves which are inconsistent with his earlier writings, however, is to misunderstand both Schillebeeckx's earlier understanding of revelation and dogma and his more recent theological method.

The purpose of this essay is to trace the development in Schillebeeckx's theological method. The thesis set forth here is that the shift in theological method is undergirded by a more fundamental continuity in Schillebeeckx's understanding of revelation as the encounter between God and humanity which occurs in human history. In the context of historical consciousness, the shift from a dogmatic to a hermeneutical and critical perspective is a methodological corollary of the conviction that revelation occurs in history. The final section of the essay will address limitations and unfinished dimensions in Schillebeeckx's contemporary theological method.

I. *A Dogmatic Method*

Prior to the mid-1960s the starting point for Schillebeeckx's theological reflection was the dogma of the Church. In his book *The Eucharist,* for example, Schillebeeckx criticized what he perceived as a basic methodological fault in many modern Catholic approaches to the Eucharist which began from a modern phenomenological standpoint without making clear what the dogma of the Church " demands of one as a believing Catholic." In contrast to those positions Schillebeeckx as-

28). Schoof's analysis of the proceedings shows that the methodological differences between Schillebeeckx and the CDF are central to the dispute. Cf. T. J. van Bavel, " Hermeneutische Knelpunten in een theologisch dispuut," *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 20 (1980), pp. 340-359.

[7] Schillebeeckx, " The New Image of God, Secularization and Man's Future on Earth," *God the Future of Man* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1968), pp. 169-171.

serted, "But this seems to me to be the first question that should be asked: 'What does God's word of revelation in the Church's authoritative interpretation, tell me about the Eucharistic event?".[8]

Even in this dogmatic phase of his writings, however, Schillebeeckx never identified revelation with dogma. Dogma necessarily remained "relativized" in relation to "revelation-in-reality"—no conceptual expression could ever exhaust the mystery of God's self-communicating love. Further, Schillebeeckx's fundamental hermeneutical concern for the adequate communication of the Christian mystery in every age and culture emerged already in this phase of his writings in discussions of revelation, the development of dogma, and the task of the dogmatic theologian.

A. Revelation-in-Reality and Revelation-in-Word

Schillebeeckx probed the meaning of revelation and theology and the relationship between the two extensively in a number of essays written in the 1950s and 1960s which were later collected as the first two volumes of the series Theological Soundings under the title *Revelation and Theology*. The Thomistic grounding of Schillebeeckx's approach to revelation and the theological task is clear in those essays. Like Aquinas, Schillebeeckx throughout the various phases of his writings insists that God's revelation grounds the human response of faith.[9]

[8] Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist*, trans. N. D. Smith (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1968), p. 19.

[9] At this stage in Schillebeeckx's writings, clear metaphysical and epistemological positions undergirded that theological stance. Adopting the combination of Thomism and phenomenology proposed by his Louvain mentor, Dominic de Petter, Schillebeeckx argued that it was possible for the human mind to know truth (reach reality) precisely because being gives itself to the human mind through an objective but non-conceptual intellectual dynamism. See Schillebeeckx, "The Concept of Truth," *Revelation and Theology*, Vol. II (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1968), pp. 5-29. Cf. "The Non-Conceptual Intellectual Dimension in Our Knowledge of God According to Aquinas," *Revelation and Theology* II, pp. 157-206. See also William Joseph Hill, *Knowing the Unknown God* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1971), pp. 88-97.

For Aquinas, revelation necessarily included both an objective dimension (the action of God in creation and history as recorded and handed on in "the articles of faith") and subjective dimension (the inner illumination of the mind [*lumen fidei*] by which the Holy Spirit enabled the believer to assent to what the intellect could never grasp fully as intelligible). While the assent to the articles of faith provided a necessary mediation of faith, Aquinas clearly taught that the ultimate term of faith was a spiritual union between the believer and God: "The mind of the believer terminates not in a proposition, but in a reality." [10]

Transposing Aquinas's understanding of revelation and faith into the phenomenological key of encounter between God and humanity, Schillebeeckx emphasized the dialogic character of the revelatory process.[11] The divine initiative and human response constitute two sides of a relationship of mutual self-disclosure and response (revelation-in-reality). Precisely because the human partner in this dialogue is body-spirit who comes to self-awareness through the concrete mediation of the material world and the "other," the offer of encounter with God (pure Spirit) must necessarily be mediated by concrete, visible human history if human beings are to be able to hear and respond to that offer. While all of creation and human history are revelatory of God's love for humanity, that history reaches its clearest expression in the Jewish-Christian history of salvation culminating in God's very self-expression in Jesus Christ.

The whole of history, and even salvation history, remain, however, fundamentally an ambiguous offer of relationship with God unless revelation is named explicitly in the words of the prophets, Jesus Christ, and the church. For human beings, words and concepts are necessary to mediate a true personal

[10] *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 4, a.1, reply.

[11] Schillebeeckx, "Revelation-in-Reality and Revelation-in-Word," *Revelation and Theology*, Vol. I (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967), pp. 36-62. cf. Schillebeeckx, "Faith Functioning in Human Self-Understanding," in *The Word in History*, ed. T. Patrick Burke (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1966), pp. 41-59.

encounter. While the body and actions reveal a great deal about the inner person, only the free choice to unveil one's deepest self through words (which clarify one's intentions and disclose the true meaning behind external manifestations) really " reveals " the person and allows true communication between dialogue partners as " centers of freedom." Thus Schillebeeckx concluded that relevation-in-reality and revelation-in-word are inseparable aspects of the one offer of encounter with God. Revelation-in-reality (the mystery of encounter with God) is necessarily mediated through revelation-in-word; yet revelation-in-word never captures or exhausts the fullness of the experience of revelation-in-reality.

B. The Closing of Revelation: Scripture, Tradition, and the Development of Dogma

While maintaining that revelation as encounter between God and humanity is offered in some way to all, Schillebeeckx in his early writings granted the Roman Catholic doctrinal claim that revelation closed with the end of the apostolic church.[12] The " constitutive " phase of revelation was complete with the Christ-event. In Jesus, God's self-revelation was final and definitive. Again, however, revelation-in-reality needed to be interpreted by revelation-in-word. Since the apostles were at the same time those who were immediate witnesses to the risen Christ and those who knew the earthly Jesus, their testimony established the continuity in the Christian confession that Jesus of Nazareth is the Risen Lord. The constitutive phase of revelation (as distinguished from the later interpretative or explicative phase) included the preparation for Christ recorded in the Old Testament, the saving mysteries of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, and the definitive statement of the mystery of redemption as found in the New Testament.

[12] In 1952 Schillebeeckx wrote that, while not solemnly defined as dogma, the doctrine was universally accepted by the normal teaching authority of the church. (" The Development of the Apostolic Faith into the Dogma of the Church," *Revelation and Theology* I, pp. 63-64.)

Although the post-apostolic church continues to live in the power of the spirit of the risen Christ, there is a unique and non-recurrent character to the personal experience and testimony of the apostles. Hence later claims to an experience of the Spirit must be measured by their fidelity to the original apostolic experience. The living tradition of the church finds its *norma non normanda* of authenticity in the apostolic church and its written tradition, the scriptures. As revelation-in-word, the scriptures function as a necessary, but incomplete, mediation of the faith consciousness of the apostolic church. As Schillebeeckx explained:

> The living reality is always richer than the written expression of this reality, at least as far as its literal and explicit meaning is concerned. But this written expression in itself contains a dynamism which embraces an inner reference to the fullness of saving truth.[13]

The fullness of the apostolic tradition can never be recorded adequately in the written word. Tradition is not some second oral source of revelation-in-word, but rather the process by which the church hands on the mystery of Christ (revelation-in-reality). Because the church passes on this deeper consciousness of faith, later generations are able to perceive the fuller meaning (*sensus plenior*) in the scriptures. They can find the " word of God " in the human words of scriptures; i.e., they discover revelation-in-reality through the mediation of the necessary, though inadequate, revelation-in-word.

The objective dynamism inherent in the mystery of revelation-in-reality which always surpasses its expression in word was also the grounds for Schillebeeckx's discussion of the development of dogma. The doctrine of revelation as closed in the period of the apostolic church would seem to preclude the possibility of later church statements introducing new formulations of the faith of the church as authentic, and even norma-

[13] Schillebeeckx, " Revelation, Scripture, Tradition, and Teaching Authority," *Revelation and Theology* I, p. 15.

tive, expressions of revelation (especially formulations which find little explicit grounds in the church's scriptures, e.g., the Marian doctrines). Yet dogma is precisely that: a new official formulation of the living faith of the church which arises in a new historical-cultural situation in response to new questions or challenges to the faith tradition.[14] Hence the dilemma: How can the development of dogma (what Schillebeeckx calls "the gradual maturing of tradition") be reconciled with the church's doctrine of the closed nature of revelation and the unchangeable character of dogma? Again Schillebeeckx distinguished revelation-in-word from revelation-in-reality. It is the "the one dogma of salvation", the unchanging mystery of God's love for humanity, which must be handed on faithfully in changing expressions and forms. In the tradition of the Eucharist, for example, the church hands on the *reality* of the celebration of the Eucharist, not only the doctrine which attempts to express the meaning of that reality in conceptual form. No concept, no dogma, not even the church's scriptures, can capture the richness of revelation-in-reality. Still conceptual formulations of the church's faith (revelation-in-word) are necessary to mediate the deeper reality of the encounter between God and humanity—"the one dogma of salvation."

C. Theological Task

Even in his early dogmatic writings, Schillebeeckx emphasized that the task of the theologian is to reformulate the faith consciousness of the Christian community. In the context of his dogmatic writings this meant that the theologian was to make explicit that which was implicit in the apostolic consciousness, to draw out the *sensus plenior* from the Scriptures, to show the connections between the doctrines of the church and the "one dogma of salvation." The theological task was

[14] Schillebeeckx, "The Concept of Truth," *Revelation and Theology* II, pp. 23-29. Cf. "Exegesis, Dogmatics and The Department of Dogma," in *Dogmatic vs. Biblical Theology*, ed. H. Vorgrimler (Baltimore: Helicon, 1964), pp. 115-45.

not to draw theological conclusions from scripture and dogmatic statements, but to rediscover and rearticulate the "living dogma" (revelation-in-reality/the encounter between God and humanity) which was the source of the church's faith, yet which could never be fully expressed in any statement of faith. Hence the dogmatic theologian was called to become

> a sacred contemplative whose attention is given, so to speak, to trying to hear in a new way, with every intrinsic relationship it can possess, the self-same word of God and so to formulate it for his own times.[15]

The theological task arises spontaneously within the dynamics of the revelation-faith encounter. While the faith consciousness of the Christian community can never be captured in conceptual form, the dynamism of the human mind prompts the theological quest for understanding. In Thomistic terms, the mind seeks to discover the intelligibility of its assent to a mystery beyond comprehension.

In his early writings, Schillebeeckx emphasized that theological reflection involves more than the hermeneutical search for meaning, more than the contemporary reinterpretation of a confessional tradition accepted in faith. Rather, the very possibility of discovering—or constructing—meaning derives from an underlying ontological basis. Reality (the inexhaustible source of meaning) gives itself to the human mind through an objective, but nonconceptual, intellectual dynamism. Human beings construct meaning only in response to the initiative of reality itself. Theology as "faith seeking understanding" seeks to move beyond the level of existential meaning to reach the underlying reality or truth (revelation-in-reality/the encounter between God and humanity).

While the theologian seeks truth and not only existential meaning, and while an implicit ontological basis grounds that quest, human knowledge nevertheless remains perspectival. Human historicity means that human beings are necessarily

[15] "Exegesis, Dogmatics, and the Development of Dogma," p. 129.

limited by their concrete historical and cultural circumstances in their perception/interpretation of reality. Hence the human "possession of truth" grows and evolves. The objective dynamism of being (known in faith as the Holy Spirit) provides the metaphysical foundation guaranteeing that human beings can know truth. Because of the finitude of human historicity, on the other hand, any concrete expression of this orientation toward truth provides only a perspective on the inexhaustible mystery of reality.

Precisely because human language and concepts are culturally conditioned, while the mystery of the Christian faith is an offer of universal salvation meant for all times and cultures, Schillebeeckx understood the theological task, even in this dogmatic phase of his writings, as a hermeneutical task. The self-same word of God needs to be reinterpreted in every age. As he remarked later in his explicitly hermeneutical writings, Catholic discussions of the development of dogma were in reality grappling with the hermeneutical question which is grounded in the problem of human historicity. Already in 1962 Schillebeeckx argued that the awareness that God speaks to concrete human beings in diverse and cultural contexts does not reduce the word of God to something merely 'relative', valid for one age but not for another:

> No matter how absolute and unchangeable is the supernatural truth, it—like every other truth—still shares, in the form it reaches in our minds, the qualities of all human things. It has the imperfection, the relativity, the possibility of development, the historical conditioning which goes with all truth as possessed by human beings.[16]

The mystery at the heart of reality can and must be approached from different perspectives, none of which is exhaustive or complete. Hence mutually complementary, but correct, insights into the same truth are both possible and necessary.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 131.

II. *The Shift to an Explicitly Hermeneutical Method of Doing Theology*

Schillebeeckx marked the year 1967 as a significant turning point in the course of his theological method. Previously he had grappled with the problem of the historical-cultural conditioning of all expressions of faith in terms of the development of dogma and the limitations of conceptual language. In the mid-1960s, however, his dialogue with United States death of God theologians and French university chaplains led Schillebeeckx to perceive a deeper theological problem: a fundamental skepticism with regard to the very possibility of revelation. No longer could the theologian presume the starting point of belief (as expressed in dogma or revelation-in-word) and merely search for new ways to express the deeper underlying reality (the " one dogma of salvation "/revelation-in-reality). Rather, Schillebeeckx concluded, the theologian must begin by listening to contemporary experience and probing the depths of contemporary culture until concrete human history itself yielded " an echo of the gospel." The revelation of God was to be found not only in the history of the Christian tradition, but also in the "foreign prophecy " coming from the experience of the contemporary world.

A. Locating Revelation: Negative Dialectics

Granting that the pluralism of contemporary philosophical viewpoints precluded a universal " natural theology," Schillebeeckx turned to " negative dialectics " to ground the theological task, suggesting that resistance to whatever threatens humanity presumes an implicit and initial grasp of what is truly human (the *humanum*). While theologians and philosophers cannot agree on what constitutes the mystery of the human and thus establish a common anthropological foundation for theology, there are certain life experiences which are so profoundly inhuman that human beings instinctively real-

ize the absence of what human life is meant to be. They cry out in protest and hope: "No, it can't go on like this; we won't stand for it any longer." [17] Through the mediation of this negative dialectic, "what should be here and now" is perceived in some vague and incipient way. It is precisely the element of positive hope in the real possibility of a better future which is the source of protest and resistance on behalf of humanity. If revelation is to be found in human experience, the task of the theologian is to plumb the depths of that experience and name the ultimate source of the hope within humanity. It is at the depths or the limits of human experience that the Creator God is to be found sustaining and empowering humanity. The fundamental mystery which Schillebeeckx earlier named as revelation-in-reality can now be named more specifically as revelation-in-history or even revelation-in-human-experience.

B. The Theological Task: A Hermeneutics of History

If Schillebeeckx's earlier methodology had been to probe the meaning of dogma in order to point towards the deeper mystery of the human encounter with God (revelation-in-reality), now the theological task was to probe concrete human experience in order to locate that same mystery there. Theology thus becomes a form of hermeneutics. That which is to be interpreted, however, is not only a sacred text or a specific tradition of faith, but the very reality of history itself. Schillebeeckx's insistence that it is *concrete* human experience which must be the starting point of theology identifies his theological method as not only anthropocentric, but also political.[18]

[17] Schillebeeckx, "The Church as the Sacrament of Dialogue," *God the Future of Man*, p. 136. For Schillebeeckx's discussion of negative dialectics see *The Understanding of Faith*, pp. 91-101.

[18] To the extent that human existence is understood in its political, social, and cultural concreteness, and not as some abstract concept of universal human experience, the anthropocentric turn in theology can be identified as a political turn. See Joseph A. Komonchak, "Clergy, Laity, and the Church's Mission in the World," in *Official Ministry in a New Age*, ed. James H. Provost (Washington, D.C.: Canon Law Society of America, 1981, pp. 185-90, for a brief discussion of the political turn in theological method.

In a key methodological essay written in 1967, Schillebeeckx explored a variety of hermeneutical theories in search of an adequate hermeneutics of history. He noted that all hermeneutical approaches to theology held a two-fold fidelity to the Christian tradition and to contemporary culture. For Schillebeeckx, however, the fundamental issue remained the involvement of theology with reality—a hermeneutical approach which remained confessional was insufficient. Distinguishing himself from both an existential hermeneutic (which de-eschatologized history and dissociated nature from history) as well as from the Pannenberg circle's hermeneutic of universal history (which in Schillebeeckx's estimation failed to recognize faith as a trans-historical element in the process of history), Schillebeeckx proposed his own version of theology as a "hermeneutics of history." Here faithfulness to the biblical tradition of faith is to be found precisely in the concrete, practical actualization of faith in a new moment of the living tradition. Because it is precisely Schillebeeckx's hermeneutical method which has come under attack, and because he gradually expanded this method to include an explicitly critical dimension, it is important in order to understand Schillebeeckx's method to clarify his understanding of the hermeneutical problem and to distinguish his approach from that of existential theology and the theology of history of the Pannenberg circle.

1. *Tradition and the Hermeneutical Problem*

The fundamental hermeneutical problem which Schillebeeckx identified earlier in his dogmatic writings is the problem of human historicity. All human experience and understanding occur within a specific historical and cultural context. The hermeneutical problem arises when one tries to understand a text or an event which arose in a different historical or cultural context. What is the meaning of the Scriptures for the life of the contemporary church? How can a fifth-century statement of Christological orthodoxy be normative for contemporary

faith? How can contemporary women and men experience salvation in and through Jesus of Nazareth?

2. *The Question of Identity in Reinterpretation: Dogma and Orthodoxy*

The hermeneutical problem is precisely that of distance—the inevitable communication gap created by two very different fields of reference. Rejecting the historicist claim that distance from the past is an obstacle to the objective interpretation of texts of history, Schillebeeckx (influenced by Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur) argued that there is a positive value to distanciation. The hermeneutical distance is spanned by the continuity of a living tradition which extends into the present. Historical objectivity is to be found in the truth of the past in light of the present because the past is available to us only via its "effective history."[19]

Since historicity is one great evolving process (we live in the present from the past toward the future), we can understand past moments in the tradition only through what Gadamer named "a fusion of horizons." Since the past is different from the present, what emerges from such a historical frame of reference is not historical reconstruction, nor return to the original context of the "text," but rather the "application"[20] of the text in the present. The historical survival of tradition requires the new appropriation of past meaning in new historical-culture circumstances. On the other hand, the past text or tradition, in its "given-ness," limits and critiques the present understanding of the interpreter. Productive creativity and a bond with the tradition interact in forming a present understanding of a text or past event.

The fundamental question which emerges in this hermeneu-

[19] Schillebeeckx, "Towards a Catholic Use of Hermeneutics," *God the Future of Man*, pp. 1-49. Cf. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd ed., trans. Garrett Barden and John Cumming (New York: Crossroad, 1982), pp. 267-74.

[20] See Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, pp. 274-278.

tical approach to the understanding of a historical text or tradition is the question of identity within reinterpretation. What guarantees that the new historical appropriation of the text or tradition is indeed a faithful, as opposed to a distorted, transmission of the tradition? At this point Schillebeeckx rejected the distinction of an unchangeable "essential element" or "kernel" from its changeable "historical husk." While in his earlier writings he spoke of the "essential dogmatic affirmation" (the *id quod*) as distinct from its "mode of expression" (the *modus cum quo*),[21] Schillebeeckx now rejected that distinction precisely because it functions only retrospectively. Only after a newer interpretation of faith has been accepted by the Christian community can the historical and cultural conditioning of earlier statements be recognized. Such a distinction fails, however, precisely in the contemporary reinterpretation of authentic faith, particularly in periods of major cultural change when a real linguistic "paradigm shift" is underway.

Earlier, Schillebeeckx had maintained that the identity of faith in its limited conceptual expressions was provided by a more fundamental non-conceptual dynamism, the noetic perspective of faith, which is an objective orientation toward saving reality. Now, however, he attended to the implications of his constant claim that revelation occurs in human history. A practical and concrete, rather than a purely theoretical or abstract, continuity is required by a historical tradition of faith.

The promise of salvation as a universal offer in history must be made available concretely in every time and culture. As a claim about the future and the God who empowers that future, the Christian faith must be "proved true" in the course of human history. Only Christian orthopraxis (discipleship or the "doing of the truth") can provide the necessary contin-

[21] Schillebeeckx, "Dogma," *Theologisch Woordenboek*, Roermond, 1952, pt. 1, col. 1079-80, and *Die eucharistische Gegenwart*, Dusseldorf, 1967, pp. 15-18. See "Towards a Catholic Use of Hermeneutics," pp. 11-13 for Schillebeeck's later rejection of this distinction.

uity in the concrete history of the Christian tradition. As Schillebeeckx wrote in 1967,

> It is not interpretation which has the last word, but orthopraxis, making everything new by virtue of God's promise. It is a question of being orientated towards the grace of the future, remembering God's promise and being active in faith and in so doing, *making* dogma true . . . ultimately it is only in and through this historical realization that dogma is interpreted authentically and that the identity of faith is, thanks to God's promise, guaranteed in continuing history.[22]

Further the universal offer of salvation must be expressed, both practically and linguistically, in the uniqueness of very different times and cultures precisely because it is a universal *historical* offer. Taking the historicity of human understanding seriously means that one can speak only in the language and interpretative framework of one's own culture and moment in history. We have no access to future ways of speaking. Neither are there universal ways of speaking.

But does this relativize all expressions of faith? No more than Schillebeeckx's earlier contention that no conceptual expression of faith ever adequately names or expresses the mystery of God in history. It is precisely because Jesus is the *universal* Savior that christianity needs to be enculturated in every different cultural reality. The living tradition of faith needs to be reappropriated in new interpretative frameworks precisely because it *is true*.[23] At the same time Schillebeeckx maintained that the historically and culturally formulations of the past were the *necessary* mediations of the truth of the stated Christian faith at that time:

> Those Christians of the past could present the faith only in the way they did present it—*for them* the dogma stood or fell with the form in which they expressed it.[24]

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[22] " Towards a Catholic Use of Hermeneutics," p. 38.

[23] Karl Rahner has made the same point in a number of essays. With regard to the doctrine of Chalcedon, see, e.g., " Current Problems in Christology," *Theological Investigations*, Vol. I, trans. (New York: Seabury, 1961), pp. 149-200.

[24] *The Eucharist*, p. 26.

The universal mystery of revelation-in-reality is available and handed on *only* through limited historical-cultural expressions. Those expressions can be named as normative within their own context since in that particular historical period, cultural context, or polemic situation, that concrete expression may be the only way to preserve the fullness of mystery of faith. As the historical-cultural context shifts, however, so too do language and meaning shift. Expressions from another cultural context need to be reinterpreted precisely in order to communicate the same truth.[25]

3. *Schillebeeckx's Hermeneutical Approach to Theology*

Schillebeeckx's own hermeneutical approach to theology becomes more clear when contrasted with the existential approach of the "new hermeneutic" theologians[26] and the hermeneutic of universal history of Wolfhart Pannenberg.[27] Fundamentally the three differ in their theologies of revelation. For Schillebeeckx, revelation does not occur as a word event in which existential possibilities are disclosed in the encounter with the text. Rather, classic texts such as the Scriptures or dogma preserve the expression of the living tradition of faith in one particular historical-cultural context. The biblical texts

[25] Cf. Avery Dulles, "The Hermeneutics of Dogmatic Statements," in *The Survival of Dogma* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday "Image Books", 1973), pp. 176-91; and Thomas B. Ommen, "The Hermeneutic of Dogma," *Theological Studies* 35 (1974), pp. 605-631.

[26] A term commonly used to refer to the post-Bultmannian efforts of Gerhard Ebeling, Enrst Fuchs, *et. al.*, who relying heavily on the later writings of Heidegger and Gadamer's works, have developed an original theology of the proclamation of the word of God as revelatory word-event. See J. M. Robinson, "Hermeneutic since Barth," *The New Hermeneutic*, ed. J. M. Robinson and J. B. Cobb, Jr. (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), pp. 1-77, cf. Robert W. Funk, *Language, Hermeneutic, and the Word of God* (N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1966).

[27] See Wolfhart Pannenberg, "Hermeneutic and Universal History," *Basic Questions in Theology*, Vol. I (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970), pp. 96-136; "On Historical and Theological Hermeneutic," *Basic Questions in Theology* I, pp. 137-81; and *Theology and the Philosophy of Science* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976), pp. 156-224.

are of unique significance because they preserve the originating moment in the tradition. Revelation does not occur primarily in the proclamation of the text nor in the event of encounter with the word, but rather in the historical experience to which the text points. Grounded in a theology of creation, Schillebeeckx maintains that grace comes to expression in historical visible form. God is active in and through human history. It is this " mystery in history " (revelation-in-reality) to which the classic texts and statements of the tradition (revelation-in-word) point.

While claiming that revelation occurs *in* history, Schillebeeckx does not adopt the Pannenberg circle's approach to revelation *as* history. According to Pannenberg, since God is the power of the future (*Macht über alles*) who will be fully revealed only at the end of history, revelation can be discovered only through a hermeneutic of universal history. Schillebeeckx, on the other hand, insists that faith functions as an " almost " trans-historical element in human consciousness by which one can transcend human historicity. The promise in history is indeed an eschatological one which will be revealed fully only at the end of history. That promise is made concretely available in human history, however, through " interpreting and doing in faith, in an act of surrender in which our progress through time may really become a gradual realization of the eschaton." [28] The revealing God is the Creator who is active in history precisely in and through the faith praxis of the Christian community.

Theology becomes then reflection on the faith praxis of the community since it is precisely there that the revelation of God is to be found. In this second hermeneutical stage of his writings, Schillebeeckx shifted the terms of the discussions from " revelation-in-reality " to " revelation-in-history " [29] and from

[28] " Towards a Catholic Use of Hermeneutics," p. 42.

[29] While there is continuity here, and A. R. van de Walle is correct in describing Schillebeeckx's theological project as a " theology of reality," the shift to history requires a break with classical metaphysics and even with

" revelation-in-word " to " the historically and culturally conditioned expressions of tradition." A living tradition of faith is preserved not by identifying and preserving some unchangeable essence within historically and culturally conditioned formulations, but by the practical and concrete actualization of the mystery of faith here and now. Hence the theological task shifts as well. Instead of seeking new theoretical formulations for unchanging kernels of meaning (the " essence " of the tradition), theology becomes reflection on, and articulation of, the mystery of faith as lived and experienced within concrete human history.

III. *The Critical and Political Broadening of the Hermeneutical Task of Theology*

Schillebeeckx shifted from a dogmatic to a hermeneutical method of doing theology precisely in order to preserve the meaning of the living Christian tradition through the effective actualization of the past tradition in a present " new moment." Both a dogmatic and a hermeneutical approach to the transmission of tradition, however, can remain purely theoretical while failing to grasp the implications of the conflict involved in the concrete human mediation of a historical tradition. A meaning-seeking hermeneutic which does not analyze critically the process and structures of communication through which the tradition has been transmitted will overlook the distortions

the phenomenological stance of de Petter, since both identified an implicit intuition of meaning-totality in every particular experience of meaning. Concrete human history remains fundamentally ambiguous: " logos and facticity stand in irresolvable tension." (*Jesus*, p. 619.). No universal total meaning is available before history has reached its conclusion both because of the utter non-intelligibility of evil and excessive human suffering, and because individual events and periods of history take on their full significance only in light of history's final outcome. Faith indeed wagers the eschatological hypothesis that human history will find its total meaning in Jesus Christ, but that hypothesis must be verified in the arena of concrete human history. On the other hand, Schillebeeckx continues to maintain that faith provides an " almost trans-historical element " in the historical process, and that faith is grounded in revelation.

which inevitably develop within a living tradition. Influenced by critical theorists,[30] particularly Jürgen Habermas, Schillebeeckx came to realize that theology's hermeneutical retrieval of the tradition must be critical as well as creative; it must include ideology critique [31] as well as effective actualization of the past in the present towards the future. Underlying his developing understanding of theology as both hermeneutical and critical are corresponding developments in Schillebeeckx's understanding of revelation and tradition.

A. Revelation

In the mid-1960s Schillebeeckx realized that concrete human history must become the starting point, not just the backdrop, for locating the encounter between God and humanity. By 1977 with the publication of *Christ: The Experience of Jesus as Lord*, he had located the revelatory encounter more precisely in human experience, developing his earlier conviction that faith and revelation cannot be separated neatly into objective offer (in history) and subjective response (in human consciousness). Rather, "revelation is an action of God as experienced by believers and interpreted in religious language and therefore expressed in human terms in the dimension of our utterly human history." [32]

[30] See *Understanding of Faith*, pp. 102-155. See also William L. Portier, "Schillebeeckx's Dialogue with Critical Theory," *The Ecumenist* 21 (Jan. Feb. 1983), pp. 20-27; and "Edward Schillebeeckx as Critical Theorist," *The Thomist* 48 (July 1984), pp. 341-67.

[31] Although Schillebeeckx grants that the term "ideology" can have the positive meaning of a symbol system which a society creates to identify and safeguard its proper identity, he uses the term primarily with its pathological derivative meaning: "a false consciousness or a speculative assertion for which no empirical or historical basis can be provided and which therefore has a broken relationship with reality" (*Understanding of Faith*, p. 166, n. 90.) Because the relationship of the body of ideas with reality has been distorted in the interest of privileged groups, William Portier states that "to do ideology critique is to ask who benefits from the truth of a given body of ideas" ("Edward Schillebeeckx as Critical Theorist," *The Thomist* 48, p. 344).

[32] Schillebeeckx, *Christ: The Experience of Jesus as Lord*, trans. John Bowden (New York: Seabury, 1980), p. 78.

The paradox that revelation is totally free gift of the Wholly Other God which occurs nonetheless as a disclosure experience within the depths of human experience means that the authority of revelation will be manifest in a dialectical, not a direct, appeal to experience. Granting that there are some positive human experiences which 'break open' in their very fullness disclosing the divine depths at the heart of reality,[33] Schillebeeckx remarks that in the contemporary world with its extreme and global excess of human suffering the mystery of God is revealed far more often in a dialectical way through "contrast experiences." It is precisely in those experiences in which human beings have reached their limits, in experiences of failure and finitude and even oppression, that the Creator God is revealed "on the underside of the experience" as the source of human hope, protest, and resistance. In the contrast experiences of believers, God is manifest as the power grounding and sustaining humanity in the face of all that is inhuman. The correlation between revelation and human experience is indirect. It is precisely where reality offers resistance to human expectations and categories that "something more" can be disclosed. The collapse of former patterns allows a new horizon of meaning to emerge in the struggle with the "pain of contrast." [34]

The realization that revelation is experienced, interpreted,

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 34.

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 48. In the *Jesus* book the crucifixion of Jesus is presented as the ultimate and paradigmatic contrast experience. Precisely in the experience of abandonment and ultimate finitude, Jesus is able to "cling to God" in a radical hope which is vindicated in the resurrection. For Schillebeeckx's most extensive and clear discussion of experience and revelation and the privileged role of contrast experience see "Erfahrung und Glaube," *Christlicher Glaube in Moderner Gesellschaft*, Teilband 25, pp. 73-116. Freiburg: Herder, 1980. In *God is New Each Moment* Schillebeeckx is quoted as saying that "Those who suffer and are rejected are both the object of revelation and the subject of revelation . . . they are the only ones who can speak with authority about revelation." *God is New Each Moment*; Edward Schillebeeckx in Conversation with Huub Oosterhuis and Piet Hoogeven (New York: Seabury, 1983), p. 51.

and expressed by human beings in "utterly human history" led Schillebeeckx to explore further the critical dimension of the hermeneutics of a living tradition of faith. From his earliest writings he had maintained that no concept can fully describe the reality it intends. In his shift to history and hermeneutics, he emphasized that no historical or cultural actualization of faith can fully realize the eschatological promise of the God of the Future. The insights of critical theorists were to take him further: language and structures of the living tradition are not only inadequate; they may also be repressive distortions of the true mystery.

B. The Development of Tradition

In his earlier writings, Schillebeeckx preferred the term "development of tradition" to "development of dogma" since what was unfolding in history was the mystery of God's encounter with humanity, not merely the implications of conceptual formulations. The "deposit of faith" entrusted to the church and handed down from apostolic times is the entire "mystery of Jesus," not only formulations about, or teachings of, Jesus. Developing the core distinction between "tradition" and "traditions" which he had inherited from Yves Congar, Schillebeeckx further emphasized that tradition is constituted by a history of vital experience:

> What was experience for others yesterday is tradition for us today, and what is experience for us today will in turn be tradition for others tomorrow. However, what once was experience can only be handed down in renewed experiences, at least as living tradition . . . This means that Christianity is not a message which has to be believed, but an experience of faith which becomes a message, and as an explicit message seeks to offer a new possibility of life experiences to others who hear it from within their own experiences of life.[35]

This understanding of a living tradition is central to Schillebeeckx's contemporary theological project. Fundamentally the

[35] Schillebeeckx, *Interim Report on the Books "Jesus" and "Christ"*, trans. John Bowden (New York: Crossroad, 1981), p. 50.

living Christian tradition is constituted by the Holy Spirit (the "mystery in history") active in and through the Christian community (or as Schillebeeckx would emphasize now, Christian communities).[36] The expressions of the experience of Christian communities never fully name the deeper revelation-in-reality. While that insight is not new to Schillebeeckx, two further critical perspectives extend its implications: 1) the present moment in the tradition is a source of revelation and not only an occasion for the interpretation of the earlier tradition; 2) Distortion is possible—indeed inevitable—within a historical tradition both in its contemporary moment and in its earlier historical development.

1. *A New Moment in the Tradition*

The realization that past cultural forms of the tradition could not express adequately the living mystery of faith in new situations led Schillebeeckx, in his earlier hermeneutical writings, to seek new language to express the tradition in a new situation. In his more recent writings, however, Schillebeeckx has rejected this separation of tradition and situation as if the former were to be identified with revelation and the latter were "a mere field to be watered."[37] Taking seriously his claim that revelation occurs in human history, Schillebeeckx now views tradition (Jewish-Christian testimony to revelation and faith) and situation (the cultural, social and existential context of people to whom the gospel is announced here and now) as two poles of the one revelatory experience. In a more specific sense, Schillebeeckx uses the term situation to describe the present-day Christian situation as precisely a "new mo-

[36] Schillebeeckx now writes of church more in terms of local ecclesial (critical) communities which in dialogue with one another form the "great church" (*oikoumene*) as a unity-in-diversity. See *God is New Each Moment*, pp. 82-83 for Schillebeeckx's discussion of the shift in his ecclesiological perspective.

[37] Transcript of "The One Source of Theology." Lecture delivered at The American Academy of Religion, New York, 21 December, 1982. Cf. "*Theologisch Geloofsverstaan Anno* 1983."

ment" in the ongoing Christian tradition or movement. He states:

> In the concrete praxis of the faith of the believers, their identity with or deviation from the tradition of faith can be observed . . . The situation in this sense is itself already a piece of the Christian tradition in either an orthodox or a deviating sense.[38]

The dialectical interrelationship between present and past forms of living the gospel is really an encounter between different cultural forms of the one living gospel—the "permanent substance of faith." As both universal and historical, this "permanent substance" must be actualized and proclaimed in a unique way in every culture. No single framework of meaning can fully express the transformative and salvific power of the Christian Gospel which has its source in the unlimited critical and productive force of the Spirit of the Risen One. The conviction that that same Spirit is operative in Christian communities today undergirds Schillebeeck's claim that new experiences in the tradition carry a claim to authority since they emerge from contemporary communities' experience of what it means to follow Jesus today. Updating the Christian tradition involves more than repeating the kerygma or representing formulations of the Christian faith which were forged in different historical and cultural contexts. Rather, updating demands an interpretation which is faithful to contemporary new experiences (which may be completely foreign to the Bible) and which at the same time is faithful to the Christian tradition and in particular to "the phenomenon of Jesus."[39]

The new expressions of the tradition which emerge as con-

[38] *Ibid.*

[39] Schillebeeckx uses this expression in his *Jesus* book to refer to "Jesus" person, message, ministry, and death—a richly variegated extraordinary and distinctive life which taken as a whole can be interpreted historically in diverse ways." (Jesus, p. 51). Christian faith finds its source and norm in the *reality* of Jesus, not to be mistaken with "the historical Jesus," a historical reconstruction which though important, cannot adequately express the mystery of Jesus. (See *Jesus*, pp. 62-76).

temporary Christian communities " create a fifth gospel " with their lives which are either orthodox (though novel) or distorted interpretations of the tradition. It is the task of theological reflection, and ultimately of the pastoral leadership of the magisterium,[40] to distinguish between the two through a contemporary " discernment of the Spirit."

2. *Ideology and the Distortion of Tradition*

The correlation between the tradition and present experience needs to be a *mutually* critical correlation not only because the " new moment " may be a distortion of the tradition, but also because the process of the transmission of a *historical* tradition necessarily admits the possibility that earlier moments of distortion in the tradition will have been legitimated through some form of ideology, and handed on authoritatively as " the tradition." [41] Moving beyond Gadamer's " hermeneutics of good will " and incorporating aspects of Habermas's " hermeneutic of suspicion," Schillebeeckx has forged a hermeneutical method of doing theology as a " critical and creative retrieval of the tradition." A brief review of the classic debate between Gadamer and Habermas in terms of their understand-

[40] While emphasizing that the Word of God is entrusted to the entire church (cf. *Dei Verbum* # 10), Schillebeeckx continues to maintain that the official magisterium has " a distinct and irreplaceable function " in the Christian community. His recent writings, however, attend more critically to the concrete sociological process of the mediation of the Holy Spirit within the community. Hence he now emphasizes two critical dimensions: 1) the critical, prophetic role (as well as the tradition-preserving role) of the Holy Spirit, and 2) the possibility that the magisterium may operate in an ideological fashion, thus blocking the action of the Holy Spirit. See " The Magisterium and Ideology," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 19 (Spring 1982), pp. 5-17. Cf. Manuel Alcala, " Magisterium: An Interview with Edward Schillebeeckx," *America* 144 (March 28, 1981), pp. 254-58.

[41] In his commentary on *Dei Verbum*, chapter II, Joseph Ratzinger notes that the " necessity of the criticism of tradition within the Church " was not dealt with adequately at Vatican II. See " Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation," in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, Vol. III, ed. H. Vorgrimler (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969), pp. 184-190.

ing of tradition will contextualize Schillebeeckx's sublation of the two.[42]

Critiquing the Enlightenment's fundamental prejudice against tradition, Gadamer argued that individuals necessarily stand within a tradition prior to any attempts to interpret or critique that tradition. He pointed to the existence of " the classical " which has survived the test of time and has been handed down through a variety of historical and cultural periods, constantly setting before us something that is true. One's horizon is formed by the influence of classic forms of tradition which have shaped a particular culture. The evolution and transmission of a tradition through a process of the reactualization of classic meaning is an ongoing process in which truth gradually unfolds itself. Gadamer did not eliminate the possibility of error within this evolutionary process; yet he argued that in the continual search for the meaning of tradition, " fresh sources of error would be excluded and unsuspected elements of meaning would emerge." [43] His concern was not the interpreter's critique of the tradition, but the real possibility of the interpreter being " pulled up short " in hearing the " claim to truth " of the tradition.

Habermas challenged precisely this " false ontological self-understanding of hermeneutics ", insisting that what appears to be truth proving itself may instead be " systematically distorted communication " which has acquired a certain permanence through force. Granting that one does stand within a " supporting consensus " prior to understanding, Habermas noted that consensus has its origins in a process of human so-

[42] See Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, pp. 235-341; Jürgen Habermas, " A Review of Gadamer's *Truth and Method*, in *Understanding and Social Inquiry*, ed. Fred R. Dallmayr and Thomas A. McCarthy (Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press, 1970), pp. 335-363. For analysis of the debate, see Paul Ricoeur, " Hermeneutics and the Critique of Ideology," in *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, ed. John B. Thompson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 63-100; and Georges De Sscrijver, " Hermeneutics and Tradition," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 19 (Spring 1982), pp. 32-47.

[43] Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, pp. 265-66.

cialization. A critical look at the social process of transmission of meaning reveals that institutional structures and dominant power groups in a society, in order to protect their own interests, block the free dialogue which alone can lead to true consensus. Every consensus stands under the suspicion of being " pseudo-communicatively induced " and therefore a delusion. What Gadamer calls classic truth may well be oppressive ideology.

The hermeneutic presumption is that, while breakdowns in communication can and do occur when speaker and listener do not share a common pre-understanding or " world of discourse," those breakdowns can be overcome in a new actualizing interpretation of the tradition. Critical theory maintains that breakdowns in communication result from systematic distortions which cannot be repaired or transcended—resistance is the only appropriate response to the transmission of a repressive tradition or to the despotic exercise of authority.

3. *Schillebeeckx's Hermeneutics: Critical and Creative Retrieval of Tradition*

The insights of critical theorists enabled Schillebeeckx to grasp more concretely the problem of distortion within the transmission of the Christian tradition precisely as a historical tradition. Taking seriously the " flesh and blood affair " which constitutes human history involves the realization that history comprises a tradition of dis-grace and non-sense as well as a tradition of grace and meaning. Both his metaphysical and his hermeneutical perspectives explained concepts and concrete historical structures as necessary, but inadequate, expressions of the fullness of meaning (grace) which grounds history. Critical theory offered a further explanation of their inadequacy: repressive concepts and false structures emerge within the power struggle of human history. Un-truths or non-sense can be consciously or unconsciously legitimated by those in power in order to preserve their own interests.

While incorporating the critical thesis that the human mediation of the tradition of faith provides the possibility of distortion (including systematic and structural distortion), and thus that ideological elements in the tradition need to be identified as such, Schillebeeckx has remained convinced that the living tradition of faith will ultimately transcend every ideological formulation and will break through all repressive processes and structures. This claim is grounded in his conviction that what is handed on in the Christian tradition is revelation-in-reality, the mystery of God active in and through human history. Hence the Holy Spirit is the ultimate subject and guarantor of the process of tradition. The critical dimension in the process of tradition emerges ultimately from the liberating and critical character of the gospel itself.

The continuity in the tradition of faith is a continuity of experience, a continuity of faith-consciousness, a continuity of praxis, a continuity of discipleship. In every age and culture that experience of faith needs to be named differently (hence the need for a meaning-seeking hermeneutic); but in every age and culture that experience can also be distorted, blocked, or falsely identified (hence the need for ideology critique).

C. Theology: Faith-Praxis Seeking Historical Understanding

The theological task remains, for Schillebeeckx, "faith seeking understanding." Both "faith" and "understanding", however, need to be understood in terms of concrete human history. The faith which seeks understanding is the living faith of Christians and Christian communities as revealed in their praxis. Understanding (and judgment regarding the authenticity of this new moment in the tradition) are to be sought through a critical and creative retrieval of the history of "the great Christian tradition." The theologian attempts to locate the presence of the Holy Spirit living and active throughout the history of the tradition in spite of distortions and forgotten moments in its expression.

1. *The Starting Point: Tradition in its Contemporary Expression*

The starting point for Schillebeeckx's theology is no longer dogma, nor even human history or experience understood in some abstract sense. Rather, theological reflection begins with the tradition in its present moment as lived and expressed in concrete communities of faith. Particular attention is given to contrast experiences—new expressions of the tradition which conflict with earlier formulations of the faith while claiming to be faithful to the eschatological vision of the living Christian tradition in a new cultural moment. In a historical tradition oriented toward the future and grounded in the dynamism of the Holy Spirit, it is at least possible that new structures and expressions of faith are indeed creative actualizations of the tradition in a new time and culture.

It is important to note here that the experience which Schillebeeckx describes as a source of revelation is ecclesial, rather than individual, experience: "The practice of the community is the sphere in which theology is born."[44] Further, "contrast experiences" which are grounded in the underlying dynamism of the Spirit are productive not only of new praxis, but also of cognitive and critical reflection.

Because the ecclesial experience of critical communities is the sphere in which theology is born, the primary subject of theology is not the individual theologian, but the Christian community of faith. Schillebeeckx now identifies the "primary type of theology" as a non-academic or pastoral theology which emerges from the *consensus fidelium* as basic communities of believers name their experience of revelation in their concrete daily human lives. In this primary stage of theology, the role of the theologian is to help believers express their experience.

[44] Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*, trans. John Bowden (New York: Crossroad, 1985), p. 12.

On the other hand, Schillebeeckx does not dismiss the necessary reflexive, hermeneutic, and critical dimension of academic theology. Present actualizations of the tradition may or may not be orthodox retrievals of the "great Christian tradition." The role of the theologian is to search critically for the "logos" of Christian reason behind a practice. The concrete experiences of Christian communities constitute not the norm, but rather the agenda, for theological reflection. Now "contrasting" expressions of the tradition remain that which is to be justified—or criticized—on the basis of the larger history of the Christian tradition. The spontaneity of the *consensus fidelium* can unconsciously admit uncritical elements which distort the tradition. Intuitive certainty can be arbitrary. Hence the need for critical reflection and a disciplined theological hermeneutic.

In his recent writings on ministry, for example, Schillebeeckx begins with the already existing alternative practices of critical base communities. The theological question, he suggests, is whether these alternative practices are the fruits of the Spirit's productive and critical force in the face of ideological distortion of the church's ministerial structures or whether the alternative practices are themselves distortions of the Christian tradition.[45]

2. *Interpreting the History of the Tradition: Retelling the Story*

Schillebeeckx's understanding of the Christian tradition as the presence and power of the Holy Spirit active in and through the Christian community (or communities) is key to understanding his critical hermeneutical method. Because faith is mediated concretely in and through history, theology (faith seeking understanding) necessarily involves critical historical investigation. On the other hand, the history of the church

[45] *The Church with a Human Face,* p. 5: "Is this a successful, a less successful, or an improper response?"

as a "flesh and blood affair" is the history of a sinful church, a pilgrim people. The theologian's historical investigation seeks to identify what can never be separated from history, and yet transcends it: "manifestations of grace," the presence of the Holy Spirit active in and through the concrete history of the church.[46]

In addition to the faith perspective which he brings to his reading of history, Schillebeeckx consciously reads history from the perspective of the present and with a critical and emancipatory intent. While his work has been critiqued as biased for those very reasons, Schillebeeckx notes that historical consciousness precludes the possibility of a universal perspective. The hermeneutical structure of human consciousness is such that every interpreter, whether consciously or not, reads the past from the perspective of a contemporary pre-understanding. The more critical problem is whether one is aware of one's biases and whether one allows the text or tradition to challenge that pre-understanding; whether one not only interprets the tradition from the perspective of the present, but also allows oneself to be challenged by the tradition. A further theological reason for Schillebeeckx's interpretation of the past from the perspective of the present lies in his conviction that the Christian tradition is an eschatological tradition impelled by the power of the God of the future. Hence new moments in the tradition offer unique access to the Spirit's creative activity in history which is always new and surprising, yet remains unavailable in earlier readings of the tradition.

The critical "bias" which has been so disputed in his theology emerges, Schillebeeckx claims, from the liberating and critical character of the gospel itself. The pre-understanding necessary to understand the liberating gospel of Jesus Christ is

[46] Note Schillebeeckx's explanation of "theological exegesis" in *Jesus*, p. 39. Cf. the claim that "in and during historical investigation the theologian is 'doing theology'" (*The Church with a Human Face*, p. 6) See also Bernard McGinn's analysis of the role of history in Schillebeeckx's theological method is discussed in "Critical History and Contemporary Catholic Theology: Some Reflections," *Criterion* 20 (Winter 1981), pp. 18-25.

the practical-critical "bias" of orthopraxis, the lived experience of the gospel's call to discipleship. Christian communities and theologians must have concrete political commitments which are faithful to the gospel's liberating message if they are to understand that message. Orthopraxis forms the necessary pre-understanding of the historical, and more precisely the eschatological, "text" of the Christian tradition. Historical truth must be done—eschatological truth can be anticipated only in concrete human history.

In his theological investigation of the Christian tradition, Schillebeeckx is attempting to interpret not only a text or past history, but rather what Paul Ricoeur calls "the world of the text," or "the world in front of the text"—the gospel, the reign of God in human history (revelation-in-reality). From his earliest essays on hermeneutics Schillebeeckx has insisted that "interpretation goes beyond texts to the reality to which they bear witness."[47] Further, the basis for our contemporary appropriation of meaning from an earlier text or event is "the living relationship which we ourselves have with the same matter or reality that is discussed in the text."[48] The ultimate basis for reading the past tradition accurately is then the present experience of living in the same tradition of grace.

From the perspective of the present, with the emancipatory intention of the gospel, and with a specifically theological focus, the theologian rereads the history of the Christian tradition. Through a process of critical remembering and creative retrievals, he seeks to identify "manifestations of grace" in the history of the tradition, emphasizing forgotten or suppressed moments in that tradition and uncovering distortions which have come to be identified with the authentic tradition. A historical frame of reference allows one who stands in the same tradition to see the past from the fuller perspective of its "effective history," and to trace the "counter-thread" in the

[47] "Towards a Catholic Use of Hermeneutics," p. 33.

[48] Ibid.

fabric of that tradition.[49] But what critiques the present perspective of the contemporary theologian or theological community? How is the correlation of past tradition and present experience truly a *mutually critical* correlation?

3. *Mutually Critical Correlation of Two Poles of the Living Tradition*

In a historical tradition of faith, the fundamental hermeneutical problem is that there is no unenculturated form of the universal gospel by which to measure the fidelity of other moments in the tradition. Even the original apostolic experience, the *norma normans* of the tradition, is available only in the historically-culturally conditioned form of the Scriptures. The scriptures (revelation-in-word) are indeed an essential mediation of the originating moment of the Christian tradition (the experience of salvation in Jesus/revelation-in-reality), yet because all language is culturally conditioned, the scriptures at the same time constitute the first of many "local theologies."[50]

How then is one to distinguish authenticity from distortions in the plural historical mediations of faith—particularly in contemporary expressions of the tradition? Schillebeeckx admits the need for a "criteriology of orthodoxy" precisely so that in the process of enculturation "the identity of the liberating disclosure of meaning and truth of the Gospel does not come to any harm."[51] The most fundamental continuity of faith in a historical tradition oriented toward the future, he

[49] Hence the attempt to retrieve the synoptic "*memoria Jesu*" as "counter-threads" in the largely Johannine fabric of the development of the church's traditional christology (see *Jesus*, pp. 570-71). Note this method throughout Schillebeeckx's ministry writings. See also "The Right of Every Christian to Speak in the Light of Evangelical Experience 'In the Midst of Brothers and Sisters,'" in *Preaching and the Non-Ordained*, ed. Nadine Foley (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1983), pp. 11-39; and "Dominican Spirituality," in *God Among Us*, trans. John Bowden (New York: Crossroad, 1983), pp. 232-248.

[50] *God is New Each Moment*, p. 59.

[51] Transcript, "The One Source of Theology."

suggests, is to be found in a continuity of praxis—the life of discipleship. The Christian tradition of faith must prove to be true in history. But Christian discipleship demands forms of expression in a global and nuclear age quite different from the first century following of Jesus. The problem remains: how and by whom are new forms of orthopraxis to be identified as authentically Christian discipleship?

While not having worked out a detailed criteriology of orthodoxy, Schillebeeckx suggests that a contemporary "analogy of faith" or a "norm or proportionality"[52] needs to be used to demonstrate that a contemporary expression of faith is faithful to the living gospel in a new situation just as the medieval formulation of faith was faithful to the gospel in that time and the apostolic expressions of faith were faithful to the original experience of salvation in Jesus. Such a critical correlation of the fidelity of changing expressions of faith to the "substance of the Gospel" requires a critical perception of earlier expressions of faith in their original context, a critical perspective on contemporary culture,[53] and some common basis from which to identify "the substance of the gospel" in changing cultural forms. In his earlier writings Schillebeeckx located that common basis in "the objective perspective of faith"; in his contemporary writings he speaks of "the experience of grace." In either case, Schillebeeckx emphasizes that it is the Holy Spirit who initiates and sustains this "experience" of the "substance of the Gospel."

Ultimately, then, the hermeneutical task of theology in-

[52] For Schillebeeckx's use of "the analogy of faith" see "*Theologisch Geloofsverstaan Anno* 1983," pp. 14-15. For the "norm of proportionality," see *The Understanding of Faith*, pp. 58-63.

[53] The dialogue and mutual critique of local churches in different cultural contexts also plays a significant role here. "No single community can monopolize the Spirit of God; as a result, mutual criticism on the basis of the gospel is possible within the local communities. Christian solidarity with other communities is an essential part of even the smallest grass-roots church communities." (*Ministry: Leadership in the Community of Jesus Christ*, trans. John Bowden (New York, Crossroad, 1981) p. 73).

volves a process of "discernment of the Spirit" in which the church makes a critical judgment as to whether present experiences of faith are indeed possible faithful expressions of the "living mystery of Christ." As Schillebeeckx describes the theologian's role in the process,

> by discerning the spirits, the theologian attempts to discover whether new experiences are really the present echo of the inspiration and orientation which, in the context of the recollection of the biblical mystery of Christ, present their identity anew in these experiences or prove alien to them.[54]

Precisely because Christianity is a living tradition, the identity of faith is preserved by the Holy Spirit in new experiences and new expressions which are the present echo of the gospel—a living inspiration and orientation of grace.

4. *The Role of Dogma in Schillebeeckx's Theology*

What then is the role of dogma in Schillebeeckx's contemporary theological method? Fundamentally Schillebeeck's understanding of dogma has not changed from that of his earlier writings. "A dogma is the correct, though never exhaustive, hearing of a reality of revelation or of a word of revelation."[55] It is "a new formulation, relating to a particular situation, of the mystery of salvation experienced in the church—the experience of faith itself in a particular phase of ecclesiastical expression."[56] Schillebeeckx would not deny that dogmatic formulations of the church's faith are important, even essential, since the lived tradition of faith is necessarily mediated through history and thus through differing historical necessarily mediated through history and thus through differing historical expressions. The problem remains, however, that no conceptual formulation of the living experience of faith, regardless of its authority, importance, and value, can express fully

[54] *Christ*, p. 43. Cf. Erfahrung und Glaube, p. 90.

[55] "Exegesis, Dogmatics, and the Development of Dogma," pp. 124-25.

[56] "The Concept of Truth," p. 24.

the mystery to which it points. Dogmatic formulations, and even biblical formulations, are subject to the constraints and limitations of human language.

In his early writings Schillebeeckx emphasized that dogmas point to the mystery of revelation-in-reality. With the shift to history and to the biblical God of the future, he further specified dogma as pointing to the future: "It is a close-up of a movement which is continuing and in which it functions."[57] Here the relationship between orthodoxy and orthopraxis becomes clear: "One can only *do* the future. Thus reinterpretation is also dependent on the activity of the whole Christian life which sheds new light on the dogma and allows new aspects of it to come forth . . . it is in the doing of dogma that a dogma is once again reformulated."[58] From a critical perspective, Schillebeeckx adds the further caution that dogma, while pointing to and reexpressing the mystery of the gospel, is always developed in a specific historical context. Quoted out of the context of "the unity of its history" dogma can be used ideologically.[59]

In terms of the function of dogma in his contemporary theological method, Schillebeeckx's Jesus project is both illustrative and controversial. His contribution to christology is neither a hermeneutical retrieval of Nicea or Chalcedon nor a critical turn against the dogma of the church. Neither does Schillebeeckx claim to have developed a total christology. Rather the stated purpose of the Jesus book was to establish the historical foundations of the Christian tradition which only in its later development was expressed in dogmatic formulations. Schillebeeckx was seeking to identify and represent the

[57] *The Crucial Questions on Problems Facing the Church Today*, ed. Frank *Fehmers* (New York: Newman, 1969), p. 64.

[58] *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65. Cf. *Christ the Sacrament of Encounter with God*, trans. Paul Barrett, Mark Schoof, and Laurence Bright (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1963), p. 209: "Our life must itself be the incarnation of what we believe, for only when dogmas are lived do they have any attractive power."

[59] "The Magisterium and Ideology," pp. 14-15.

original inspiration and orientation of the Jesus movement—the Christian tradition in history. Rather than a hermeneutics of dogma, Schillebeeckx's book explored an earlier stage in the development of the history of the Christian tradition—the development of the kerygma to which later dogma points.

As a believing Christian theologian standing within the living tradition of the church, Schillebeeckx willingly affirms the classic statements of Nicea and Chalcedon:

> I have no trouble with any of this, seen from within a Greek intellectual outlook and the questions posed by it at that time; it is straight gospel.[60]

The Christological dogmas function as second-order affirmations preserving the accuracy and meaning embodied in the first-order confession of belief and prayer of the early Christian community which derived ultimately from their experience of Jesus as " the salvation of God."

The very dynamic which demanded the transportation of the biblical kerygma into dogmatic language precisely so that the universal gospel could be proclaimed and preserved in a Hellenistic culture, is the hermeneutical inspiration of Schillebeeckx's own search for a new christology which can speak to the later 20th century in a world of radical suffering.

On the one hand Schillebeeckx admits that dogmas and creeds are irreversible and necessary because they have safeguarded the mystery of Jesus Christ in a specific historical and cultural context. On the other hand, Schillebeeckx remarks that " the dogma itself compels me to find a paraphrase that will be intelligible to Christians without their having first to be converted (in order to become or remain believers) to a philosophy or set of meanings which are alien and unintelligible to them." [61] While Schillebeeckx makes some attempts to find that paraphrase in Part IV of the Jesus volume (discussing the two natures in terms of the " parable of God " and " the para-

[60] *Jesus*, p. 567.

[61] *The Schillebeeckx Case*, p. 51.

digm of humanity" and the unity in terms of a hypostatic identification inferred from Jesus's *Abba* experience), a theoretical reformulation of faith is not the focus of his writings. Rather, he proposes to move from theory to narrative and thus to shift to a language that can recapture the original experience of the Christian movement.

5. Narrative-Practical Theology

The shift from a theoretical reinterpretation of the truth of the gospel to a "doing of the truth" in history underlies Schillebeeckx's explanation of why his contemporary Christology constructed with a soteriological focus in the face of the global suffering of humanity has a narrative-practical, rather than a theoretical-dogmatic, intent. Christian faith is an experience which cannot be communicated through critical reason, argument, or theories. Theoretical discourse breaks down in the face of irrational suffering and remains unable to convey the "surplus of meaning" of an eschatological tradition which claims to speak of God as present in history. Rational thought can neither establish intelligible meaning in the non-sense of human history, nor express the "evocative surplus" of the dimension of grace in the fragmentary experiences of salvation in human history. Yet Christians claim that there is an ultimate meaning to human history to be found in the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus. That meaning is accessible, however, only in the following of Jesus in the concrete personal and social-political "imitation of Christ" and in the telling of the story which flows from that experience of discipleship.

In the life-story of Jesus, human suffering is not theoretically resolved, but practically resisted, and ultimately defeated by the power of God. The life-praxis of the followers of Jesus who stand in solidarity with the crucified of the contemporary world is an active remembrance and retelling of the story of Jesus. By retelling the story of the original experience of salvation in Jesus, Schillebeeckx hopes that the original inspira-

tion/orientation of the Christian movement will take root again so that contemporary believers will be drawn into active discipleship—they too will "go and do likewise." [62]

IV. *Conclusion*

A. Summary

Underlying the major shift in Schillebeeckx's theological method from a dogmatic to a hermeneutical-critical approach is a fundamental continuity rooted in his constant conviction that revelation occurs in history. Three significant threads of *continuity* can be identified in 1) Schillebeeckx's understanding of revelation, 2) the distinction between revelation-in-reality and revelation-in-word, and 3) his understanding of theology as "faith seeking understanding."

1. *Revelation*

Throughout Schillebeeckx's writings, revelation remains the salvific encounter between God and humanity offered to human beings in history, but significant shifts have occurred as Schillebeeckx has plumbed the implications of that claim in the reality of concrete human history. Recognizing that human history is constituted by human beings who experience reality within the framework of a living tradition, Schillebeeckx has incorporated faith's interpretative framework into the very definition of revelation. Exploring the social and political dimensions of the salvific encounter and attending to the negativity and suffering which constitute the experience of two-thirds of humanity, Schillebeeckx now describes the salvific encounter as "contrast experience" for most of the world today. Confronting the implications of human historicity and

[62] Although this is Schillebeeckx's intent, the critique of William Portier is to the point: "Particularly in the *Jesus* book, the text functions primarily as data and critical remembering as *narrative* is rarely achieved." (Portier, "Edward Schillebeeckx as Critical Theorist," p. 366.) See n. 4 for Metz's critique on this point.

historical consciousness, Schillebeeckx has grappled with the Christian claim that Jesus is universal Savior and has reinterpreted his original understanding of tradition as the process of the transmission of revelation in radically historical terms. If the promise of salvation is to be a universal offer in history, communities of believers must make the experience of salvation concretely available in the unique particularity of every time and culture. The claim remains constant: revelation occurs in human history; but its implications develop dramatically in the context of historical consciousness.

2. *The Distinction Between Revelation-In-Reality and Revelation-In-Word*

From his earliest writings Schillebeeckx has emphasized that the mystery of revelation requires a necessary mediation and interpretation, but that no conceptual expression of the mystery can ever exhaust or adequately name the salvific encounter. In his earliest writings Schillebeeckx grounded this claim in a metaphysical-epistemological explanation of the relationship between concept and the reality intended. Arguing that a non-conceptual but objective dynamism allows the human mind to transcend conceptual knowledge and approach reality, Schillebeeckx maintained that while the concept has a definite reference to reality, reality is never grasped or possessed by the concept.

Again, however, the claim that the offer of revelation occurs in concrete human history was to generate significant development in Schillebeeckx's understanding of the relationship between revelation-in-reality and revelation-in-word. An awareness of human historicity and a dawning historical consciousness deepened the twofold conviction that while the offer of salvation must be mediated in particular historical and cultural contexts if it is to be an offer for concrete human beings, still every expression of faith (whether in formulation or church structure) remains historically-culturally conditioned. There are no universal expressions of a faith that is mediated

in history. Every expression of faith, even the biblical expression, requires a hermeneutic which allows the universal meaning of the Gospel which is intended (the " world of the text ") to be reexpressed in a new and different historical and cultural context.

Further the reality intended by the Christian tradition is the reign of God. Historical mediation of that promise as " one dogma of salvation " requires a " hermeneutics of praxis " if the Christian claims that compassion is at the heart of the universe is to be proved true.

Further development of a critical perspective brought into focus a deeper problem. Language and structures which enculturate the living tradition of revelation are not only inadequate expressions of the mystery; they can function as coercive instruments of power *distorting* that very mystery. Hence conceptual formulations of revelation (including dogma) and institutionalized structures developed to protect and transmit revelation (including the magisterium and structures of ministry) are necessarily limited expressions of the mystery to which they point. Employed ideologically, those formulations and structures can distort that mystery.

3. *Theology as " Faith Seeking Understanding "*

The classical understanding of theology as " faith seeking understanding " characterizes Schillebeeckx's approach to theology throughout its various phases. Originally, however, the description took on a Thomistic cast. Faith, viewed as the restless assent of the mind to what was beyond its comprehension, led inevitably to theology—reflection upon and articulation of, the intelligibility of faith's belief. The shift from dogma to human experience as the starting point for Schillebeeckx's theology reflected a fuller understanding of theology as " faith seeking historical understanding." Now believers were to search their own concrete cultural and historical " signs of the times ", listening for " the echo of the gospel ". Further, Schillebeeckx emphasized that the living tradition of faith

oriented toward the future could be actualized only in and through concrete Christian praxis. Hence theology was to be understood as "faith-*praxis* seeking *historical* understanding."

Both the notion of critical reflection on faith praxis and the communal dimension of the theological enterprise have come to the fore in Schillebeeckx's recent writings. Schillebeeckx has emphasized that reflection on the contemporary praxis of the faith community is a necessary dimension of reflection on the Christian tradition because the contemporary situation functions as a "new moment" in the living tradition of Christianity.

Since both "new moments" and earlier enculturations of the tradition can be distortions of the authentic tradition, critical reflection is required. The task of Christian theology becomes then the mutually critical correlation of the Christian tradition (as expressed and lived throughout its history) and contemporary new enculturations of that tradition. Faith seeking understanding has become "faith-praxis seeking critical historical understanding."

B. Critical Questions

With the shift to a critical hermeneutics of "the great Christian tradition" Schillebeeckx has incorporated the conviction that grace is manifested in and through human history into his actual theological method. Still, the method as he has described and employed it to date, raises several important critical questions regarding language and the possibility of classic formulations in a historical tradition, the limits and identity of the Christian tradition, and the need for a process and criteria for orthodoxy.

1. *Functional Approach to Language and Classic Formulations of Faith*

Given Schillebeeckx's emphasis that revelation occurs in human history and more precisely in a living tradition of faith-interpreted experience, a question must be raised with regard to

the nature and function of language and text. Even Schillebeeck's preference for the historical-critical mode of biblical exegisis in his two Christology books reflects a functional approach to language and text which strives to get behind the text to the " earthly Jesus " or the experience of salvation in Jesus. The goal of his " theological exegesis " is to discern behind the text the original disclosure experience wherein revelation is located.

The scriptures remain normative for Schillebeeckx, but precisely because they provide " the most direct, uniquely practicable and historically most reliable access to the original event, the christian movement that took its impetus from Jesus of Nazareth." [63] At the same time he denies that the language of the Bible constitutes a privileged expression of that original experience [64] and has referred to the scriptures as " the first of many local theologies."

Here it would seem that Schillebeeckx needs to integrate further the implications of the shift in his theology of revelation. An unresolved tension remains in Schillebeeckx's attempt to preserve the distinction between revelation-in-reality and revelation-in-word while at the same time incorporating the interpretative element of faith into the very definition of revelation. If revelation is " an action of God as experienced by believers and interpreted in religious language and therefore expressed in human terms in the dimension of our utterly human history," then the fundamental critique of Yale philosophy professor Louis Dupré has as yet not been answered adequately by Schillebeeckx. As Dupré frames the question: " Must, at least to later generations, the original expression not remain as authoritative as the original experience? More precisely, can that experience itself ever be authoritative except through the expression? " [65]

[63] *Jesus*, pp. 58-59.

[64] Transcript, " The One Source of Theology."

[65] Louis Dupré, " Experience and Interpretation: A Philosophical Reflection on Schillebeeckx's *Jesus* and *Christ*," *Theological Studies* 43 (March 1982), p. 41.

A related area of investigation to which Schillebeeckx alludes, but which thus far has not been integrated into his system is that of levels of discourse/modes of language. Do not the scriptures (and liturgy, another important primary source of theology) as "first-order" symbolic modes of discourse which remain closer to the original experience function differently from later discursive "second-order" conceptual modes of expression? Schillebeeckx himself has written of the power of "symbolic evocation to transcend the impotence of conceptual articulation," and the ability of symbolic speech (in particular, narrative), to express the "surplus vested in reality."[66]

In a discussion of his *Jesus* book in 1982 Schillebeeckx stated explicitly that if he were to rewrite the text at that point he would have begun with narrative form/literary genre. Further he aligned the direction of his own contemporary hermeneutical thinking most closely with that of Paul Ricoeur. Ricoeur's distinction of the most orginary level of the discourse of faith from later levels of interpretation of the tradition, his discussion of the hermeneutics of poetic discourse, and his attention to biblical forms of discourse as theologically significant,[67] suggest new avenues for approaching the biblical text as far more than the first of many "local theologies"—as indeed a normative classic within the tradition of faith, which precisely as such, requires a critical hermeneutical retrieval in every later stage of the tradition.

The discussion of the possibility of classic formulations of faith arises in a somewhat different, but related, fashion with regard to the role of dogma in the living Christian tradition (and in Schillebeeckx's hermeneutical method). Granted the hermeneutical limitations of every expression of faith, the necessity of proving dogma true in concrete Christian praxis, and

[66] *Interim Report*, p. 142: cf. *God Among Us*, p. 161, and *Christ*, p. 733.

[67] See Paul Ricoeur, "Naming God," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 34 (Summer 1979), pp. 215-227; and "Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation," *Harvard Theological Review* 70 (Jan-Apr. 1977), pp. 1-37.

the possibility of dogma (as authoritative statement of the community's belief) being formulated or used ideologically, the question remains: Can the living community of faith make normative statements regarding the boundaries and understanding of the Christian tradition in the face of new challenges? Schillebeeckx clearly answers in the affirmative. The deeper problem rests with whether those formulations forged at a specific historical-cultural moment in the tradition can be considered normative expressions of the faith in a quite different context. Can dogmatic formulations be considered classics in the sense that they are "always retrievable, always in need of appreciative appropriation and critical evaluation, always disclosive and transformative with its truth of importance, always open to new application and thereby new interpretation?"[68]

In claiming that dogma needs reinterpretation precisely because it is true and, in arguing from practical-critical perspective that dogma needs to be "proved true" in every age, Schillebeeckx admits this classic significance of dogma (but not of dogmatic formulations). What he resists is the ideological claim of classic or normative significance without a corresponding awareness that classics demand both "appropriation and critical evaluation." While he clearly insists on the necessity of ideology critique in his recent writings, it is inaccurate to claim that his critical method is turned against the dogma of the church. On the contrary, his method explicitly identifies ideology critique with the critical perspective of faith and locates the critique within a more fundamental hermeneutical perspective of the creative retrieval of the living tradition. Here, however, two more fundamental questions emerge.

2. *The Limits and Identity of the Christian Tradition*

Once one admits that ideology is possible, if not inevitable, in the development of a concrete historical tradition, how and

[68] Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, p. 115.

by whom is the authentic tradition determined? And if tradition is ultimately a tradition of lived experience, whose experience counts?

Schillebeeckx includes, for example, the writings of Tertullian in his pre-Montanist period as part of his historical development of the church's living tradition of ministry. Why not the Montanist period? Who is to say that the naming of Montanism as heretical is not the result of ideological distortion of the tradition? What are Schillebeeckx's criteria for judging what constitutes "the great Christian tradition?" The issue is critical today for all theological methods which claim to correlate contemporary experience with "tradition" or to re-read tradition from the perspective of contemporary experience. The question is not only whose experience counts *now*, but also whose experience constituted the tradition. *What* tradition is being retrieved? "Usable tradition" for the feminist theology of Rosemary Ruether, for example, comprises the Hebrew and Christian scriptures; marginalized or "heretical" Christian traditions (gnosticism, Montanism, Quakerism, Shakerism); primary theological themes of the dominant stream of classical theology; non-Christian, Near-Eastern, and Graeco-Roman religion and philosophy; and critical, post-Christian world views such as liberalism, romanticism, and Marxism—all of which are subjected to a feminist critique and brought together in a new relationship.[69]

Schillebeeckx would not broaden his notion of "the great Christian tradition" to include that breadth of sources for theology, but he does admit that history has been told from the side of "the victors" and he consciously employs a historical method which searches for lost moments in the tradition (those ruled out in the traditioning process of the past and those invisible in the structures and process in the present). The question of the breadth of the tradition emerges in terms of both past and present experience.

[69] Rosemary Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk* (Boston: Beacon, 1983), pp. 20-45.

3. *Process and Criteria for Orthodoxy*

Further, Schillebeeckx admits the need for scholarly critique of his reading of the tradition on the basis of alternative historical evidence. Given two possible interpretations of the history of the tradition, however, how is a judgment reached (and by whom) regarding the more authentic interpretation of the tradition? While Schillebeeckx explicitly states his confidence that the Holy Spirit will preserve the identity of the living Christian tradition, the question of the mediation of the Spirit's presence in the community is at issue here. While not denying the unique pastoral ministry of the magisterium, Schillebeeckx incorporates the *sensus fidelium* into the process of preserving and interpreting the living tradition of faith. In the process of " discerning the spirits " Schillebeeckx clearly sees an important role for the practical, prudential judgments of communities of faith living in the power of the Spirit. Lonergan's claim that objectivity is reached through authentic subjectivity in the self-correcting process of conversion could be useful here if it were transposed into communal terms, and if the notion of mutually critical correlation were developed. Coming from a Dominican spirituality which emphasizes the operation of the Spirit in the community and in democratic process, Schillebeeckx may have a valuable future contribution to offer the church in terms of alternative ways of viewing the discernment of the Spirit in the community. Concrete ecclesial structures of communication and dialogue need to be developed, however, for the theological process to function as a mutually critical correlation of " the great Christian tradition " and contemporary new moments in that tradition.

The ecclesial magisterium would maintain a " distinct and irreplaceable function " in this understanding of the theological process, but a magisterium that would be constituted and function non-ideologically. As leaders of the community of faith entrusted with the gospel, the role of the magisterium as envisioned here would be to listen openly to the entire com-

munity of faith, to encourage scholarship and the freedom of theologians to explore the truth of the Christian tradition, as well as, when necessary, to exercise a corrective in the name of the gospel.

C. Implications for " doing theology "

The search for an adequate method of " doing theology " in an age of historical consciousness is a task which confronts all contemporary theologians, but which has unique implications for those who emphasize history as the locus of revelation. Whether Schillebeeckx grants dogma, and even more fundamentally, Scripture, adequate " classic " significance in his contemporary theological methodology is open to debate, but the basic insight that human historicity demands a hermeneutical approach to every human expression can scarcely be disputed. Even the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith which expressed reservations about Schillebeeckx's hermeneutical method granted that [he is] " certainly correct in thinking that no doctrinal formula or set of formulas can express the mystery in its totality, with all its virtualities and all its concrete aspects, present and future." [70]

The foundational conviction that revelation is located in concrete human history challenges long-accepted academic dichotomies as well. The boundary between historical and systematic theology becomes problematic once theology is viewed as a process of seeking " manifestations of grace in history " or the quest for " what is going forward in a living tradition of faith." If revelation occurs in the experience of the community of believers, the disjunction of pastoral from systematic theology is equally problematic. Reflection on the experience of concrete communities of faith becomes the necessary starting point for systematic investigation of the mystery of God in history, not only a " second-level " form of practical or pastoral theology. If revelation occurs in human history and human

[70] *The Schillebeeckx Case*, p. 119.

experience then all theology becomes in some sense, pastoral theology. Further the critical questions of "who does theology" and "in what context" are raised with a new urgency.

Similarly, a profound awareness of human historicity confirms the growing cry of all critical approaches on theology: There is no universal, objective theology as compared with other local, particular theologies (e.g. feminist, black, hispanic, Asian, etc.). All theology is done from the perspective of a limited historical and cultural pre-understanding. All perspectives remain incomplete; hence plural perspectives become a value, not a limitation, in seeking the mystery of God in history. Likewise some form of ideology critique becomes a necessity in a community which admits to being a pilgrim people and a sinful church.

Finally, if theology emerges from a faith community's search for historical understanding in service of deeper Christian discipleship, the connections between spirituality and theological reflection need to be explored more deeply. Grounding Schillebeeckx's theological method and project is the conviction that the Holy Spirit is the source of the tradition and the ultimate guarantor of its fidelity in changing historical expressions. The Word of God has been entrusted to the church; hence, the theological process necessarily involves the process of discernment of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the experiences of the community.

Schillebeeckx's theological project continues to develop. His recent writings do not claim to develop either a complete christology or a full theology of ministry and the important volume dealing with ecclesiology/pneumatology remains a promise. In the development of his theological method, however, one can see some of the most basic questions facing all contemporary theologians if theology is to take seriously the Christian conviction that grace is active in and through concrete human history.

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TOWARD A RELIGIOUS ETHICS OF TECHNOLOGY: A REVIEW DISCUSSION

[I]t seems to me that Schema 13 [preparatory draft for the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*] needs to rest on a deeper realization of the urgent problems posed by technology. . . . (The Constitution on Mass Media seems to have been totally innocent of any such awareness.) For one thing, the whole massive complex of technology, which reaches into every aspect of social life today, implies a huge organization of which no one is really in control, and which dictates its own solutions irrespective of human needs or even reason. . . . I am not of course saying that technology is "bad," and that progress is something to be feared. But I am saying that behind the cloak of specious myths about technology and progress, there seems to be at work a vast uncontrolled power which is leading man where he does not want to go . . . and in which the Church . . . ought to be somewhat more aware of the intervention of the "principalities and powers" of which St. Paul speaks.

—Thomas Merton, Letter to Bernard Häring (December 26, 1964)[1]

WHEN A DRAFT of the United States Roman Catholic bishops' proposed pastoral letter on human values was circulated to philosophy teachers at Catholic colleges in 1975, one respondent took the occasion to suggest that what was needed was not another general restatement of "human values" or a piecemeal analysis of specific issues (unemployment, artificial contraception, abortion, nuclear weapons, etc.) but something intermediate—work toward the development of an ethics of technology.[2] Unbeknown

[1] *The Hidden Ground of Love: The Letters of Thomas Merton on Religious Experience and Social Concerns*, selected and edited by William H. Shannon (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1985), pp. 383-384.

[2] The pastoral subsequently appeared as *To Live in Christ Jesus: A Pastoral Reflection on the Moral Life* (Washington, DC: U.S. Catholic Conference, November 1976).

to himself, he had voiced a concern similar to that expressed by Thomas Merton a decade earlier. With the publication another decade later of *Technological Powers and the Person: Nuclear Energy and Reproductive Technology*,[3] the proceedings of a workshop for Catholic bishops by the Pope John XXIII Medical-Moral Research and Education Center (then in St. Louis, now in Boston) there is evidence that this need is being increasingly recognized.

Working from cross-disciplinary analyses of two commonly un-associated issues—nuclear energy and reproductive technologies (i.e., the ostensibly positive correlates of nuclear weapons and artificial contraception)—*Technological Powers and the Person* seeks to formulate general guidelines for the engagement with modern technology. Two specific technologies are rightly seen as related aspects of a global phenomenon, and philosophical anthropology is properly proposed as the foundation for ethical principles. Although aspects of this assessment may well be criticized, the general approach—as well as this particular workshop and the form of its final proceedings—deserve commendation. What follows, then, are some comments on format and substantive content aimed at furthering such a project.

1.

The workshop itself (which was held in Dallas, Texas) was opened on the evening of January 31, 1983, with a keynote address by Christopher Derrick, a Catholic layman from England who has written on moral and religious issues of culture

[3] Albert S. Moraczewski, O.P., Donald G. McCarthy, Edward J. Bayer, S.T.D., Michael P. McDonough, S.T.D., and Larry D. Lossing, eds., *Technological Powers and the Person: Nuclear Energy and Reproductive Technologies* (St. Louis, MO: Pope John Center, 1983). Pp. xiii, 500. This is the third in a series. Previous proceedings are *New Technologies of Birth and Death* (196 pages, from a 1980 workshop) and *Human Sexuality and Personhood* (254 pages, from a 1981 workshop), both published by the Pope John Center; as the titles and pages alone indicate, neither has the scope of the present volume.

and ecology.[4] Together with a general overview of the workshop by the senior editor, Derrick's address constitutes part one of the proceedings. His fundamental question concerns whether there might not be an "inordinate attachment to temporal good" (p. 13) operative at the core of the desires both to generate electricity by nuclear power and to provide technological solution for the problems of infertility. In Derrick's own blunt words:

> [I]f we are to be Christians instead of materialists, how passionately should we set our hearts upon temporal good of any sort? How important should we consider it for ourselves and others to have all things exactly as preferred? . . . The Corporal Works of Mercy are of course obligatory. . . . But even so, our badge is the Cross, not the supermarket or the credit-card (p. 13).

This opening challenge was followed by three days of presentations and discussion—one each on nuclear energy, the human person, and reproductive technologies. Each included the delivery of papers by five informed speakers representing a wide range of professional perspectives—Catholic and Protestant members of the communities of science, engineering, medicine, business, law, politics, theology, philosophy, history, and psychology—supplemented by discussion. The salutary picture that emerges from the transcript of exchanges following the printed versions of each set of papers is one of bishops engaged in asking straightforward questions while admitting some confusions and uncertainties. The absence of references to Teilhard de Chardin and ideologies of "building the earth" or co-creation theology (except for one minor lapse) is equally refreshing.

In printed form the workshop proceedings have benefited from a number of helpful editorial additions. Each section, as well as each paper, is preceded by a summary, and an index has

[4] See, e.g., Christopher Derrick, *The Delicate Creation: Towards a Theology of the Environment* (Old Greenwich, Conn: Devin-Adair, 1972); and *Sex and Sacredness: A Catholic Homage to Venus* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1982).

been provided for the whole work. Both contribute to making this a more usable and informative volume. Two minor weaknesses are that the discussion transcripts lack a consistent format, and that there are a few glaring typographical errors. E.g., p. 170: "Such high technologies are readily transferable to the underdeveloped areas." Obviously, from the context, there needs to be a "not" inserted after "are." On p. 315 as well, the last complete sentence seems to be missing some important qualifier. A bit more by way of editorial description of the structure of the workshop would have been helpful as well; it is not clear, for instance, whether the papers were actually read or just distributed in advance. Two improvements in layout would have been the inclusion of running heads for each page (the absence of which makes it difficult for a reference user to locate quickly a particular paper) and wider margins for note making.

2.

Turning to the core sections of the book and the substance of the workshop, we note that part two of the proceedings contains materials from the first full day (February 1)—papers and discussions on the topic of nuclear energy. John Deutch, Dean of Science at MIT, begins by laying out the pros and cons of coal versus nuclear electric power generation, and concludes with a mild personal judgment in favor of nuclear over coal on environmental grounds. Edwin Zebroskie, Vice President of the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations, follows with a strong pro-nuclear position—maintaining its economic benefits and criticizing "excessive protectionist activities" as causing more harm than good. Zebroskie's paper is (at 57 pages) by far the longest contribution to the whole book (average presentation length = 23 pages). Zebroskie is also the most vocal individual in the discussion transcripts.

Interestingly enough, John Ahearne, a member of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, provides some counter balance with a discussion of the disadvantages of nuclear energy.

Gordon Hurlburt, President of Westinghouse Power Systems, the largest U.S. manufacturer of nuclear power plants, then surveys the domestic decline against a background of rising international demand in the nuclear power market—noting how this places the U.S. at a competitive disadvantage. And, finally, Frederick Carney, an ethicist from the Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University, undertakes an explicitly moral analysis. His argument, appealing to the value of freedom, the duty of beneficence, and the virtue of integrity, presents "qualified support for nuclear energy" (p. 155).

As is evident, the papers are largely pro-nuclear. Fortunately, the bishops also evidence considerable skepticism, and indicate dissatisfaction that no one representing the Union of Concerned Scientists or soft energy path advocates was invited to present a case. At one point a bishop also questions the parochial nature of the analysis. Deutch's lecture on "World Nuclear Energy Assessment," he points out, actually deals with only the industralized world, and categorically rejects biomass power generation as economically unfeasible.

> But in fact [says the bishop] there are other countries in the world presently using biomass very adequately to provide for the needs of millions of people, and China is only one illustration. . . . This causes me to raise a serious question as to whether these decisions, the so-called *economic* decisions, are not really *political* decisions (p. 172, his emphasis).

At another point Zebroskie, in response to Derrick's keynote challenge that "nuclear energy is about being rich" (p. 15), states that "no responsible planner sees the hedonistic pursuit as either desirable or likely or even possible" (p. 177). Yet barely five pages later Commissioner Ahearne admits that Third World countries want nuclear power precisely because they "have the same desire that we have for an abundance of goods" (p. 182). Fr. Benedict Ashley, a theological advisor (who later contributes a paper), affirms that "some things are intrinsically wrong" (p. 174), and on this basis questions whether uncontrollability might make certain aspects of nuclear energy morally unacceptable under any conditions.

The most crucial issue raised by this initial set of papers and discussion, however, concerns the proper process for ethical decision making. Carney, for instance, argues for a strong fact-value distinction.

> One of the curious things that has developed in energy debates in the last ten years in North America and Western Europe is what I call value-determined facts, that is, the determination of the facts of the matter under discussion by one's prior commitment to values. Now this is a very different situation from the intellectual milieu in which I was raised, for there and then one believed that facts could be commonly agreed upon independently of a person's values, and were epistemologically "hard." On the other hand, values were understood to vary somewhat from person to person, and were considered to be epistemologically "soft" . . . (pp. 161-162).

Later, in discussion, Ashley argues that the "non-technical segment of society" should rely for "*technical truth*" (p. 176. his emphasis) on the consensus of such institutions as the National Academy of Science and the National Academy of Engineering. Both Carney and Ashley—not to mention other contributors—fail to acknowledge studies in the sociology and philosophy of science and technology which disclose how the vested interests of technical organizations have historically made it difficult for them to recognize certain unsavory facts, and how many "facts" reflect values.

3.

Part three of the proceedings is devoted explicitly to the idea of the human person and is clearly the most philosophical. As such, the five papers in this section deserve somewhat more substantial review.

Paul Vitz, a psychologist from New York University, first outlines the main tenets and theoretical underpinnings of that individualistic psychotherapy oriented toward autonomy and self-actualization (see the writings of Carl Rogers, Erich Fromm, Abraham Maslow, Rollo May, Fritz Perls, et al) which

predominated in North America at least from 1950 to 1970. He then examines the biological, socio-economic, ideological, and moral-religious critiques of this psychotherapy which began to emerge around 1975, and chronicles the tentative rise of a "Christian psychology" centered on a deeper, even theological conception of the person.

The key point of this four-fold critique is recognition of the built-in but unacknowledged presuppositions of individualistic psychotherapy. According to Vitz's account of the socio-economic version of this critique,

> As we look back on the prosperity of the affluent society in the period 1945-1975, the connection of the . . . proposed ideal of self-growth looks more and more like an expression of a Chamber of Commerce psychology . . . (p. 202).

Or, as he writes later, referring to the moral version of the same argument:

> The basic point is that there are no facts without values. . . . Even to attend to a particular fact is already to give it a value with respect to those facts ignored (pp. 205-206).

The upshot is that "any interpretation of an ideal individual, any proposal for what people should become, is rooted in philosophy, social ideology, and often religion" (p. 208). Theology can therefore make legitimate claim to play a role in the formulating of psychotherapeutic theory.

Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, of the World Institute for Advanced Phenomenological Research and Learning, follows with a lengthy (44-page) philosophical analysis of the person. Tymieniecka, who collaborated in making Karol Wojtyla's *The Acting Person* available in English,[5] begins by noting the persistent appeal to the idea of the person in both popular and philosophical circles. At the same time, somewhat paradoxically, this appeal takes place in a society subject to strong deper-

[5] Karol Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, in collaboration with Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, trans. Andrzej Ptooki, *Analecta Husserliana*, vol. 10 (Boston: D. Reidel, 1979).

sonalizing forces. The problem, she maintains, is caused by too individualistic and rationalistic a conception of the person, to counter which she outlines a three-dimensioned functional theory of the person as an organizer of the life-world, an integrator of human faculties, and an agent of conscious action within the social realm. In this third capacity the person manifests a "moral sense" of responsibility toward the world.

Tymieniecka's paper is weakened by over-reliance on the in-group terminology of phenomenology.[6] She is also excessively schematic and unnecessarily critical of any substantive (as opposed to functional) view of human nature—a critique which carries over into her stress on the act (or function) of valuing over the objectivity of any values. The idea of human value (instead of the good) certainly deserves criticism, but not on this basis. Nevertheless, her open utilization of the notions of soul and spirit in arguing for the ability of humanity to rise above and even turn against "natural life-values" or "the business of life" (p. 235); her recognition of the reality of good and evil; and her final articulation of humanity as "the custodian of the existential balance of everything-there-is-alive" (p. 254)—all these provide thoughtful insight into the issues at hand.

Fr. Donald Senior, professor of Sacred Scripture at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, begins (like Tymieniecka) by rejecting the idea of any "clearcut blueprint for the human person that can be determined with rational precision" (p. 261). This is followed by a further rejection of any literalistic interpretation of Scripture. Senior goes on, however, to identify six anthropological constants found in the Bible—that human beings are rooted in God, are corporal, are historical, are social, are responsible, and are limited by sin and death. In considering the implications of this biblical anthro-

[6] Of the 31 footnotes, two-thirds refer to her own works, and all but two of the remainder to other phenomenological authors such as Edmund Husserl, Ludwig Binswanger, et al. The two exceptions identify 18th century precursors of her theory of the moral sense.

pology, he repeatedly appeals to the need to incorporate "theological conviction" and "vision" (p. 285) or what is "for us" the authority of Scripture (p. 287)—thus implicitly subjectivizing and relativizing the biblical influence. Senior also suggests—following some recent (uncited) historical studies[7]—that the biblical understanding of the human is "not incompatible with the very technology that seems to create our problems" (p. 285), although he also grants that "the Bible warns against allowing technology and progress to become idols" (p. 286).[8]

Fr. Michael J. Himes, professor of historical theology at the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception Huntington, New York, considers what contemporary theologians—primarily Langdon Gilkey, Bernard Lonergan, and Karl Rahner—have to say about the person. Like Senior, Himes—in the course of emphasizing the "historical consciousness" that is "the hallmark of modernity" (p. 290)—indulges in the obligatory bashing of any appeal to a substantive theory of human nature. He argues, instead, for a "transcendental reflection" on the conditions for human creative participation in the world, and adopts Lonergan's well-known transcendental precepts: Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible, Evaluate, and (when necessary) Change. Moral decision making, Himes maintains, is properly understood "not as the application of timeless principles derived from a natural law based on a static concept of human nature . . . but rather as an exercise of concrete historical subjectivity" (p. 310). At the same time, Himes tellingly asks what Christianity has to contribute

[7] See, e.g., Lynn White Jr., *Medieval Religion and Technology: Collected Essays* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

[8] This tension has been studied at some depth in a number of works by Jacques Ellul, a Protestant lay theologian who is mentioned once (on p. 21) by Derrick. For one recent summary statement, see Jacques Ellul, "La Résponsabilité du christianisme dans la nature et la liberté," *Combat Nature*, whole no. 54 (Jan.-Feb. 1983), pp. 16-17—translated by Katharine Temple and Carl Mitcham as "Christian Responsibility for Nature and Freedom," *Cross Currents* 35, no. 1 (Spring 1985), pp. 49-53.

to such a decision-making process. Quoting Rahner, he clearly affirms this to be the recognition that the human being is one "who loses himself in God" (p. 309); it nevertheless remains unclear what implications he draws from such an affirmation.

Fr. Benedict Ashley, professor of moral theology at St. Louis University and senior fellow of the Pope John Center, concludes with "An Integrated View of the Christian Person" that seeks to build on "the reflections on human personhood which have been presented . . . by a biblical theologian, a systematic theologian, a philosopher, and a psychologist" (p. 314). Following paragraph summaries of each of these four presentations, and further references to Wojtyla's philosophical anthropology, Ashley presents "a Thomistic, but not Transcendental, account of the human person"—on the principle that it "deserves a hearing" and may meet "the requirements of modernity as well as or better than other approaches" (p. 317).

This presentation begins by distinguishing four senses of the word "person." "Person" can mean (1) an autonomously existing being or substance which has a claim to saying "I." In this sense "person" is that which answers the question "Who are you?" The term "person" can also refer to the description or nature which is properly given in response to the question "What are you?" either (2) as individual or (3) as a member of a species. Finally, (4) "person" can refer to any combination of the above. Ashley points out that "the stress on historicity, subjectivity, and freedom as aspects [of the human] tends to ignore or neglect sense 3, namely, what all human beings have in common, in order to emphasize what is individual and unique" (p. 319). Historicity, subjectivity, and freedom undermine community. He further shows that "it is a caricature to describe [the] traditional view [of human nature] as 'static' and 'abstract'" (p. 323) by moving from an analysis of God as a dynamic trinity of persons —since God is the prime analogate for personhood—through

angels to human beings. Moreover, because of the Fall the true nature of humanity is revealed not by the human or social sciences, but only in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

Two historical notes readily buttress Ashley's brief for a substantive theory of human nature. One is that "nature," according to Aristotle, is defined as a "principle of motion and change."[9] It is difficult to see how scholars as knowledgeable as Tymieniecka and Himes could ignore such a classic conception, of which Ashley himself makes implicit use at the end of his paper and again in the discussion when he refers to how "the unborn child from the moment of conception *develops itself* . . . by its own intrinsic powers" (p. 332). The potentiality of the fetus to be human is not at all like the potentiality of a block of marble which can be carved by Michelangelo into a statue (see p. 347).

The other note is that St. Thomas Aquinas explicitly allows for change in natural law, distinguishing between what we might call top-down and bottom-up decision making.[10] Top-down decision making corresponds to the application of "timeless principles derived from a natural law" to particular (ahistorical) cases. But such an approach "will be found to fail the more we descend toward particulars."[11] Thus the need for bottom-up decision making, which entails what Himes calls the exercise of "concrete historical subjectivity" trying to bring itself into harmony with or to participate in general principles. But, contrary to Himes, there has to be a top (timeless principles) and a bottom (historically unique conditions) in either case. It is difficult to see what historical subjectivity could act for, what it would be trying to do, if it did not recognize some general principles—although clearly its relation to them through bottom-up acts of prudence will be very dif-

[9] Aristotle, *Physics* III, 1 (200b 11). See also *Physics*, II, 1 (192b 23); *On the Heavens* III, 2 (301b 18); and *Rhetoric* I, 10 (1369a 6).

[10] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* I-II, question 94, especially articles 4 and 5.

[11] *Summa theologiae*, q. 94, a. 4, Respondeo.

ferent in character than the top-down deductions of the practical syllogism.

Finally, on the basis of his notion of the human person as a subsistent being with an individuated nature which is nevertheless common to all members of the human family (to adapt Boethius), Ashley sketches a Thomist taking-into-account of historicity, subjectivity, and freedom. History forces us to recognize that "mere conservatism" will not conserve "the perennial truth" (p. 324). We must learn to address persons in their historical context. (It is in just this context that Ashley alludes to co-creation theology—in an attempt to "see the hand of God at Work . . . in the advances of science, technology, and the arts" [p. 325].) Subjectivity forces us to recognize that rationality is not all there is to human nature, that human nature also involves growth and development through feeling and imagination. And freedom, as the most profound possibility of human action, calls forth both respect for individual conscience and pursuit of a pedagogy which can assist persons to know the good and do it in the face of manifest pressures to substitute illusion for knowledge and social acceptance for authenticity.

It is revealing that in discussion the bishops are most drawn to Vitz's paper, probably because of its concrete character. Despite considerable criticism of theories of human nature as lacking in the requisite concreteness—especially by Tymieniecka and Himes—the philosopher and theologians tend to talk in pretty abstract categories. Perhaps they do "protest too much." Indeed, when Tymieniecka is asked in the lead-off question to apply her theory and spell out "some standards" for guiding nuclear and reproductive technologies, she admits as much:

> Yours is a very complex question. It is perhaps difficult to see the notion of the "person" in direct, immediate relation to concrete practical problems of nuclear energy, society, biology, etc. In fact, it seems virtually impossible (p. 335).

She does go on, however, to summarize her position as calling for an inversion of orientation in the human self-understanding from one of domination to "custodianship."

It is also worth noting that the bishops indicate some healthy skepticism in regard to the apotheosis of historical consciousness. One bishop, for instance, commenting on Himes characterization of modernity as defined by "historical consciousness," points out that other observers have described "our time as a period when the study of history is at a very low ebb, and [argued] that we are very uninformed historically" (p. 348). No mention is made, however, of a possible correlation: historical consciousness in Himes's sense easily implies historicism, or the belief that history by itself determines truth, so that not only is there no need to try to understand the past (all truth is given by the present), but it is impossible (our consciousness is locked into the present). Historical consciousness in the modern sense undermines history.

One theme that runs through all five papers is a criticism of individualism. Senior puts the issue in a provocative form by responding to one bishop's comment with an account of a talk by a Jewish scholar:

> He acknowledged that the traditions of the New Testament, Jesus's own ministry, seem to have brought a corrective to a rather rigid structure of society. But that was only possible . . . because Jesus could presume a very strong *communal base.* The scholar raised a very interesting point: If Jesus had undertaken His ministry in a society in which there was a great emphasis on the *autonomy of* the individual, perhaps His prophetic call would have been directed at forming a core, a center, of communality, instead of appealing so much, as He did, to the outcasts (p. 340).

There is little discussion, however, of the dimensions of this individualism—its roots, its implications, and how it might most prudently be corrected.

4.

Part four, on reproductive technologies, opens with a paper by Terence Brinkman, lecturer in moral theology at the Uni-

versity of St. Thomas in Houston, Texas—a paper equally as philosophical as any in part three. Its intention is to lay out Pope John Paul II's concept of the human person in relation to "technologized parenting." Unfortunately, the paper is turgid in the extreme. Much worse even than Tymieniecka—with whom he agrees about the essential human act being the moral act—Brinkman conflates phenomenological and scholastic terminology. He struggles to present a view of the moral act as involving a self-image which the person attempts to realize precisely in his action, and then to apply this to the problem of sexual relations. Yet even he recognizes that "it is quite unlikely the argumentation above [Why not just say "my argument"?] will appeal to most ethicists in the field of medical ethics today [Why not just "contemporary bioethicists"?]" (p. 379). He might appropriately have accepted some responsibility for this, given his own edematous exposition.

The other four papers are more factual and technical in orientation. Two doctors—Thomas Nabors, clinical professor of obstetrics-gynecology from the University of Texas at Dallas; and George Tagatz, chief of the reproduction endocrinology and infertility clinic at the University of Minnesota—spell out in two different papers some of the medical techniques for treating infertility. Neither exhibits any serious reservations about the use of a wide variety of reproductive technologies. Tagatz, in fact, argues strongly for artificial insemination with donor.

Finally, Judge Carol Los Mansmann, U.S. District Court of Pittsburgh, examines the secular legal aspects of surrogate parenting. And Francis Morrisey, Dean of the Faculty of Canon Law at St. Paul University in Ottawa, Canada, spells out what Church law has to say with regard to these new technologies—although he admits that "the new Church law cannot address itself directly to medical and moral problems" (p. 439). Both—Mansmann indirectly, Morrisey directly—point up how the technological conquest of infertility grows out of a

self-oriented desire to satisfy individual needs rather than a concern for the good of another, the child.[12]

In discussion the bishops seem a bit overwhelmed both by Brinkman's ponderous prolixity and the doctors' technical amoralism. More dialogue takes place with the judge and canon lawyer—a dialogue in which Ashley once again takes an active part. In one key exchange, a bishop comments that

> We have given a lot of attention to war and peace. . . . [But] it seems that the issues . . . at this Workshop are . . . more personal, more a matter of concern to the people who are committed to our care (p. 455).

Ashley demurs, on the grounds that reproductive problems actually affect a relatively small minority, and that advances may even eliminate questionable medical procedures (when blocked fallopian tubes can be surgically repaired, much *in vitro* fertilization will be rendered unnecessary). "The general issue 'where is technology going,'" he nevertheless concedes, "is very, very important" (p. 456). Mansmann responds that one should not judge the importance of reproductive technology on numbers alone, because otherwise there might not be the commitment to realize the medical-technological fix to which Ashley alludes. No comment is made on the truth that a large percentage of fallopian tube blockages are caused by sexual promiscuity and venereal disease, so that a moral fix is possible as well.

In light of all the difficulties in technological decision making, both Ashley and the bishops conclude for a "sane conservatism" (p. 452) or "tentative conservatism" (p. 456). That such a conservatism may be virtually powerless against "a certain built-in momentum" of technology is, however, scarcely acknowledged.

[12] Leon Kass, *Toward a More Natural Science: Biology and Human Affairs* (New York: Free Press, 1985), should be consulted for further insight into the moral-religious dimensions of the relation between human nature and medical technologies.

5.

The final fifth part of the proceedings contains a "Reprise and Coda" by Sr. Margaret John Kelly, of the Catholic Health Association. An aside about the need to include aesthetics in any comprehensive axiological analysis of technology is well taken, but as a whole the paper is too effusive in its references to literature and the arts. Primarily it tries to affirm the relevance of traditional wisdom to present technology by identifying three recurrent questions: Can the person (re part three) be adequately defined? Is technological change so rapid (re part four) as to undermine moral judgment? How should technological risk (re part two) properly be assessed? But proposed responses are disappointingly thin. Christians, Kelly says, should become futurists, develop intellectual leadership, and promote prudential judgment—which is like telling people they should become saints, without providing any practical guidelines for how to go about it.

By way of supplement, then, at least three (very unequal) substantive comments are in order—all bearing on how to relate human nature and the ethics of technology, which is the central theme of this book. One deals with risk assessment, a second with the nature of human nature, and a third with how to slow down and resist undesirable technological change.

The proper evaluation of risk and its incorporation into ethical decision making is—as Carney, Ashley, Kelly, and others rightly contend—critical to the practice of an ethics of technological research, innovation, and utilization. This is likewise an issue highlighted in recent concerns about nuclear power development. Attempts to come to terms with the general problem have, however, been part of the emerging public policy debates about technology at least since the 1960s—debates which took on explicit institutionalized form with the establishment in 1972 of the Office of Technology Assessment. Crudely oversimplifying, one can identify two approaches to technology assessment: one (a) would distinguish facts from values; the other (b) would deny the fact-value distinction.

One of the most vocal proponents of option (a) has been Arthur Kantrowitz, who in 1967 testimony before a Senate subcommittee first proposed the idea of what has since come to be called a "science court."[13] Later elaborated in an influential 1975 article,[14] Kantrowitz's proposal was adopted by a Presidential Advisory Committee, and efforts have actually been made to put it into practice on a trial basis.[15]

Kantrowitz's original idea was that on any given technology-related controversy—such as those associated with nuclear power, ozone depletion, food additives, etc.—experts would be selected to argue each side of the issue. An initial effort would be made to agree on statements of scientific fact. Where such agreement was not possible, advocates would argue their cases before scientist-judges and, just as in legal proceedings, be subject to vigorous cross-examination. Proceedings would conclude with the judges rendering a finding of scientific fact,

[13] Senate Subcommittee on Governmental Research of the Committee on Governmental Operations, U.S. 90th Congress, 1st session (March 16, 1967), *Congressional Record* (June 8, 1967), p. 15256. For review of the discussion generated by this proposal up through the 1970s, see Robert S. Banks, "The Science Court Proposal in Retrospect: A Literature Review and Case Study," *Critical Reviews in Environmental Control* 10, no. 2 (Aug. 1980), pp. 95-131.

[14] Arthur Kantrowitz, "Controlling Technology Democratically," *American Scientist* 63, no. 5 (Sept.-Oct. 1975), pp. 505-509. See also Kantrowitz, "The Science Court Experiment: Criticisms and Responses," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist* 133, no. 4 (April 1977), pp. 44-50.

[15] Task Force of the Presidential Advisory Group on Anticipated Advances in Science and Technology, "The Science Court Experiment: An Interim Report," *Science* 193, whole no. 4254 (Aug. 20, 1976), pp. 653-656. See also the news item by Philip M. Boffy, "Experiment Planned to Test Feasibility of a 'Science Court'," *Science*, 193, whole no. 4248 (July 9, 1976), p. 129. This specific proposal for a trial science court was never carried though because President Jimmy Carter dissolved the Task Force when he took office in Jan. 1977. However, in Feb. 1977 Minnesota Governor Rudy Perpich picked up on the proposal as a means to deal with a local dispute about electric power-line construction. For an account of this experiment, see Barry M. Casper and Paul David Wellstone, "The Science Court on Trial in Minnesota," *Hastings Center Report* 8, no. 4 (Aug. 1978), pp. 5-7; and R. Banks, *op. cit.*, note 12, pp. 120-130. Casper and Wellstone (both of Carlton College) and Banks (University of Minnesota) were involved with the Minnesota experiment.

after which the issue could be returned to public policy debate on a more intelligent basis. This corresponds closely to Ashley's idea that society should rely for "technical truth" on determinations by the technical community. It might also be termed "half-hog" technocracy—as opposed to "whole-hog" technocracy, which would turn the determination of both truth and value over to technical elites.

In 1980 Alex Michalos undertook "A Reconsideration of the Idea of a Science Court" which specifically attacked the fact-value distinction.[16] In his reformulation, the science court idea becomes representative of option (b). But while denying the fact-value distinction, Michalos does not explicitly draw any institutional implications or otherwise alter the idea of the science court.

> The distinction between facts and values is not essential to the main purposes of the Court. . . . The main purpose of the Court . . . is to arrive at a *timely and authoritative agreement* about issues broadly classifiable as [part of the] scientific [fact-value framework]. The idea is to design a procedure that will give elected representatives access to the most reliable and valid information relevant to such issues as soon as possible. Although it has been called a court, it is plainly in the family of special task forces, commissions and boards of inquiry.[17]

In reality, however, rejection of the fact-value distinction carries important implications for the structure of a science court in a democratic society, a point developed by Kristin Shrader-Frechette, one of the most philosophically astute analysts of risk-cost-benefit-decision-making. In a recent book she has argued that

> if it is reasonable for the court to address the political and evaluative aspects of controversies, rather than merely the technical ones, then it likewise seems reasonable for intelligent citizens and not

[16] Alex Michalos, "A Reconsideration of the Idea of a Science Court," *Research in Philosophy and Technology*, vol. 3 (1980), pp. 10-28. This issue had been raised consistently by previous critics. See R. Banks, *op. cit.*, note 12, pp. 115-117.

[17] Michalos, p. 14; his italics, my interpolations.

just scientists to act as juries after the adversary presentations and cross examinations. In other words, if it is epistemologically impossible for the court to avoid value issues, then it is not clear that only scientists should adjudicate the controversies in question.[18]

Altered in these two ways—extended to deal with public policy questions, broadened to include citizen participation [19]—Shrader-Frechette suggests re-naming this institution a "technology tribunal." Half-hog technocracy is transformed into whole-hog democracy.

This designation would correctly locate the issues to be dealt with as technological, rather than purely scientific, and it would avoid the authoritarian and antidemocratic connotations of the term 'court.' Instead the label, 'tribunal,' would serve to describe adversary proceedings in which scientists and other experts took part, but it would leave the final policy recommendations to some democratic procedure rather than solely to expert determination.[20]

On the one hand, Shrader-Frechette's proposal, because of its very breadth, faces problems of institutionalization much larger than Kantrowitz's; on the other, it is not exactly clear how such a technology tribunal would actually differ from what already happens, under ideal circumstances, in our society.[21] Nevertheless, her approach could profitably be taken a step further. In light of the central role played by different theories

[18] K. S. Shrader-Frechette, *Science Policy, Ethics, and Economic Methodology* (Boston: D. Reidel, 1984), p. 294. An earlier version of the quoted chapter was first published as "Technology Assessment, Expert Disagreement, and Democratic Procedures," *Research in Philosophy and Technology* vol. 8 (1985), pp. 103-129.

[19] Note, with reference to this second point, the shift in terms from "judges" to "juries." Actually, in a little noticed (neither Banks, Michalos, nor Shrader-Frechette cite it, although Kantrowitz does) editorial, "What's To Be Done About Externalities?" *ChemTech* 1, no. 9 (Sept. 1971), p. 513, editor B. J. Luberoff proposed technology assessment by "Technological Juries" which would include citizen participation.

[20] Shrader-Frechette, p. 294.

[21] The rise of "private courts" (see Martin Tolchin, "Private Courts with Binding Rules Draw Interest and Some Challenges," *New York Times* [Sunday, May 12, 1985], p. 38) opens an interesting avenue for utilization.

of human nature in the interpretation of reality, it could reasonably be argued that any technology tribunal in our pluralistic society should explicitly include representatives of various views about the nature and purposes of human life. Christians especially should insist that their view of human nature as grounded in a transcendent reality be represented, because such a view readily leads to non-utilitarian perspectives on various aspects of technology.[22]

Furthermore, it can be argued that different restricted communities within the pluralistic society— that is, communities based on some consensus regarding the nature and purpose of human life—should constitute their own technology tribunals to help articulate their distinctive ways of life in an advanced industrial context. Indeed, Catholic commissions which have dealt with artificial contraception and nuclear weapons can legitimately be interpreted as in-group technology tribunals.

In technology tribunals or any other forum for the discussion of technology, arguably the most common ethical-political judgment is phrased in terms of humanization. In what ways, and to what extent, does technology—in general (if this is a legitimate concept) or (if not) in particular—bring about humanization or dehumanization? When directed toward the individual, this question is primarily an ethical one. When focused on the technology-society relation, it becomes political in character. In either case, any argument about the human meaning of technology ultimately rests on ideas about both the nature of being human and the nature of technology.[23]

[22] For one textbook comparison which points in this direction see Leslie Stevenson, *Seven Theories of Human Nature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974). Stevenson's seven theories—those of Plato, Christianity, Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, Jean-Paul Sartre, B. F. Skinner, and Konrad Lorenz—are each analyzed as exemplifying different patterns of theory, diagnosis, and prescription. They take as fundamental different human problems and offer guidance for how to solve them. As such they will naturally tend to render different judgments on technological risks and other aspects of technology.

[23] For a brief elaboration of this point in another context, see Carl Mitcham, "Philosophy of Technology," section C, "Toward a Synthesis: The Question

To focus on the person as the key to humanity—i.e., to replace the humanization/dehumanization polarity with one of personalization/depersonalization—inevitably builds in a certain bias toward individualism. As used to be pointed out in pre-Vatican II textbooks of philosophical psychology,[24] human beings exhibit a paradoxical constitution. Insofar as a human being has a nature, he is a member of the species, sharing a form with other humans, part of a whole. But insofar as he is a person he is formally individuated, unique, a whole in himself, with an inner life all his own. Indeed, what Tymieniecka says about the paradox of personalism can be read as a result of the modern attempt to secularize or materialize this spiritual aspect of humanity. And it may well be that modern technology is itself intimately associated with just such an attempt.

Along this same line, much of what Tymieniecka and Brinkman say about moral sense and the realization of a self-image in moral action is said much better in literature of the Catholic spiritual tradition. Tymieniecka herself alludes once to St. Teresa of Avila in this respect, but Brinkman never mentions it at all. Christians, especially Christian philosophers, could profit by making more open use of this tradition. As Thomas Merton, a contemporary representative, points out, the spiritual life begins with the recognition that I have two selves: true self and false self. Until the dialectic between these two selves becomes integral to the moral engagement with modern technology, that technology will continue to be experienced as dehumanizing—or perhaps more properly "de-divinizing"—in relation to the spiritual life.

This dialectic, it may also be suggested, is essentially in-

of Humanization," in Paul T. Durbin, ed., *A Guide to the Culture of Science, Technology, and Medicine* (New York: Free Press, 1980; paperback reprint, 1984), pp. 337-344.

[24] See, e.g., J. F. Donceel, *Philosophical Psychology* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1955), especially pp. 343-349. (The second edition of this text [1961] is enlarged by over 100 pages with extensive adaptations from phenomenology; the third edition [1967, post-Vatican II] is retitled *Philosophical Anthropology.*)

volved with another between action and contemplation. The point has been sketched at a recent American Catholic Philosophical Association meeting in a paper by Fr. Robert Roth.[25] Drawing particularly on the thought of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, Roth maintains that contemplative "contact with nature [is] essential for the growth of the person as a moral being."[26] Through this one can acquire a sense of perspective and a natural awareness of God. Such contact is, however, progressively threatened by modern technology.[27]

The ability to resist this threat is not readily subject to individual initiative; it depends on community action. The idea of an individual or personal technology tribunal is virtually a contradiction in terms. This is why someone such as Jacques Ellul has tried to promote the development of Christian professional associations for critical reflection on the moral aspects of technical occupations.[28]

But even more is this kind of banding together needed among families. For instance, when a husband and wife decide, after careful consideration, to remove television from their home, it is inevitably treated by their children as a regrettable eccentricity. In order for such resistance to make sense or to be effective, there must be some group solidarity. Amish and Mennonite communities have been more effective in exercising control over the technological forms of their lives precisely be-

[25] Robert J. Roth, "Moral Attitudes in a Technological Age," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, vol. 57 (1983), pp. 98-104.

[26] Roth, p. 101.

[27] For a related argument from the perspective of monastic tradition, see P. Hans Sun, "Notes on How to Begin to Think About Technology in a Theological Way" in Carl Mitcham and Jim Grote, eds., *Theology and Technology* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1984), pp. 171-192.

[28] See, e.g., the comments in Jacques Ellul, *In Season, Out of Season* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1982), pp. 63-66. David Gill, Dean of the New College, Berkeley, "a graduate school of Christian studies for the laity," argues this same need.

cause of their united effort.[29] The failure of Catholics to practice their beliefs in areas such as artificial contraception and abortion can be directly attributed to their adoption of the ideology of pluralism, even imitating in their own communities what should instead be taken as an opportunity to create separate, distinctive ways of life. Recognition by the Catholic charismatic movement and other groups of the need to form community is thus a positive sign—although to date these communities have not addressed the problem of technology *per se* in depth. For bishops who are serious about dealing with the moral issues inherent in nuclear power and reproductive technologies, one can only suggest encouraging these groups to deal with such issues. The consequence would, one suspects, be adoption of something like the basic communities strategy from Latin America for an alternative technologies program.

Technology in the abstract may well, like culture in the abstract, be "neutral." But concrete cultures, and those parts of cultures called technologies, inevitably embody with more or less strength distinctive visions of the good and specific way of life. Just as Christianity has learned to take a critical attitude toward cultures, even those in which it itself has undergone historical development, so it must now exercise its judgment on a technology which it may have even helped to create.

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[29] For one outsider's reflection on this witness, see George De Vries Jr., "Lessons from an Alternative Culture: The Old Order Amish," *Christian Scholar's Review* 10, no. 3 (1981), pp. 218-228.

BOOK REVIEWS

Revelation and Theology: The Gospel as Narrated Promise. By RONALD F. THIEMANN. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame, 1985. Pp. x + 272. $23.95.

The author, recently named dean of Harvard Divinity School, wrote this book as chairman of the Religion Department at Haverford College. A Lutheran, he pays tribute to Hans Frei of Yale University as his principal mentor. Influenced by Frei's narrative theology, he argues for a doctrine of revelation understood as God's narrated promise. Narration, Thiemann contends, is essential for revelation, which is the doctrine of God's identifiability. We identify persons by ascribing character traits to them on the basis of their patterns of behavior. God's patterns of behavior are made known through the biblical narrative.

Promise, for Thiemann, is an essential category because it is the mode by which the biblical text encounters its readers, inviting them to put their trust in the God who was the principal agent of the history of Israel and of Jesus Christ. Faith, discerning God's identity as the subject of the biblical text, goes out to him as a living reality.

Thiemann's thesis of course implies that Christian revelation is given in the Bible, that the Bible is predominantly narrative, and that the main theme of the biblical narrative is the prevenient God who enacts his intentions and addresses the reader through the text. Faithful discipleship is the appropriate response to God's self-giving love as disclosed in Jesus Christ. Thiemann illustrates these principles concretely by a chapter-length analysis of the Gospel of Matthew.

Thiemann defends his theological options on the ground that the alternatives do not sufficiently protect the divine prevenience. This doctrine, he holds, must be safeguarded not only because it was formally taught by the Council of Orange but also—and, one would gather, more fundamentally—because it is implied "by a cluster of Christian convictions concerning God's promises, identity, and reality" (80-81). According to Thiemann it is a "common conviction shared by all those who confess the name of Christ . . . that all human life, including our theological thinking, is ultimately dependent on the creating, sustaining, and redeeming grace of God" (70). Apart from the rather broad use of the term "grace" this statement would be acceptable to very many Christians, including myself.

In the course of establishing his own position Thiemann develops an

incisive critique of a number of rival approaches. He rejects the "foundationalism" of classical apologetics which, as he understands it, would seek to justify Christian faith by reference to some kind of self-evident, noninferential experience from which it could be deduced. On the basis of a critical analysis of Thomas Torrance and several earlier theologians, he concludes that no such unassailable starting point exists. Thiemann also rejects the transcendental turn to the subject, which he ascribes to David Tracy and David Burrell, on the ground that this reduces biblical revelation to a generic human experience and ends by undermining the truth-status of all particular religious claims (187). Finally, Thiemann maintains that new theologies which dispense with the category of revelation (Gerald Downing, Gordon Kaufman) or give it no necessary function (David Kelsey) surrender the Christian conviction of God's prevenience and make faith dependent on purely human initiative.

A nonfoundational defense of God's prevenience, according to Thiemann, has three distinct emphases. First, its justification of Christianity is conducted from within a conceptual framework supported by Christian faith, community, and tradition. Second, such a reflection evaluates and criticizes Christian doctrine and practice according to criteria internal to Christian faith. Third, this reflection seeks to justify its tenets holistically, by reference to the structures imbedded in the entire system of Christian beliefs and practices. Thiemann considers it proper to justify individual beliefs retrospectively by showing their importance for defining Christian identity. Thus he tries to show that a rejection of God's prevenience as a "background belief" would require "a radical and unwelcome revision in our understanding of Christian identity" (78). He makes use of "reflective equilibrium" and retrospective justification in ways strongly reminiscent of Francis Schüssler Fiorenza's *Foundational Theology* (1984)—a book possibly published too late for Thiemann to refer to. Both he and Fiorenza, however, rely on authors such as John Rawls.

In opposition to the foundationalists Thiemann, wisely in my opinion, eschews any sharp dichotomy between the "first-order" language of faith and the "second-order" language of theology. Christian theology, he maintains, must be carried on within Christian faith and must adopt patterns of speech that are consonant with Christian sources and premises. Theology, he asserts, "has no rationale independent of the first-order language of faith" (75). In particular, he denies that any successful account of Christian belief can be furnished by pointing to the religious experience supposedly available to all human beings.

I find myself in agreement with practically all Thiemann's major positions. I applaud his skillful defense of revelation theology without recourse to rationalistic foundationalism or subjectivistic transcendentalism.

In my own *Models of Revelation* I made little explicit use of the categories of narrative and promise, but they are harmonious with my general approach. I rely more on the category of symbolic or sacramental communication. Thiemann might agree that Israel and Jesus Christ, as God's agents in human history, are in fact "real symbols" of the divine. By their very being they make present the hidden reality of the God who calls created persons through them into union with himself. They are thus pledges and anticipations of the age to come. The category of promise, when applied to such historical figures, could seem to tie revelation too narrowly to certain verbal expressions in the Bible, but Thiemann, while attending primarily to the linguistic component, seems open to the idea of promise "enacted" in the persons and events of the biblical narrative. In this wider understanding promise may be classified as "sacramental."

A few shortcomings of the book, or personal difficulties of the present reviewer, should probably be detailed. In writings influenced by Hans Frei, including Thieman's, the biblical narratives seem to be exempted from historical criticism. Thiemann himself discusses them as pure narrative without raising the question of their objective validity. He seems to assume that these stories give true accounts of the way things are, for if they were products of fantasy or illusion they could scarcely bear the theological weight that Thiemann places on them. Granted that "Scripture depicts a God who continually keeps his promises" (154), the reflective inquirer would be justified in asking for some grounds for holding that this depiction is veridical and is not simply wishful thinking. If Thiemann had given more attention to this problem, his book might better succeed in providing, as it claims to do, "a reasoned theological account of Christian faith and hope"(7). Without such assurances the decision of faith could appear arbitrary and irresponsible.

I fully agree with Thiemann's insistence on the divine prevenience, but I find some obscurity in his treatment of the connection between God's prevenience and any human response. Does God effectively influence the decision of faith? At one point Thiemann asserts that God is "the creator of the universe, the redeemer of a sinful humanity, and the reconciler of a broken world" (108). These terms seem to me to imply causality. Yet Thiemann repeatedly rails against understanding God's prevenience in causal terms (98, 109, *et passim*). Possibly Thiemann is assuming that causality must necessarily be deterministic, but in many philosophical traditions causality is not so narrowly understood. God's prevenience would be more intelligible if it were presented in causal, though not deterministic, terms.

I was not surprised to find in this book certain characteristically Lutheran motifs such as the "unconditionality" of justification and its antecedence to all human merits. Properly understood, this is not simply

good Lutheranism but is basic Christian doctrine as understood by Catholics also. Thiemann, however, goes further. At one point, relying on Robert Jenson, he asserts that, on peril of works-righteousness, justification or salvation must not be conceived as any kind of causal process involving interaction between the divine and human agencies. While asserting this, he also denies that human beings are purely passive in their own justification (96-97). The idea that sanctification is a process involving the activity of both God and creatures is well rooted in the Lutheran as well as the Catholic tradition. Perhaps because he treats the whole question so briefly, Thiemann does not seem to me to provide an intelligible alternative.

As should be obvious by this point, Thiemann's book deals with a multitude of crucially important questions. It enters into the very heart of the contemporary debate about revelation and theological methodology, and makes many insightful contributions. For the most part, I am enthusiastic about his approach, which seems to offer a highly promising alternative to the theological options he rejects. What I regard as shortcomings in this book are partly due to its relative brevity, granted the vast range of topics on which it touches. But the very breadth of the horizons makes this book especially stimulating and arouses the reader's eagerness to hear more from its talented author.

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The Triune God: Persons, Process, and Community. By JOSEPH A. BRACKEN, S.J. College Theology Society: Studies in Religion, 1. Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1985. Pp. viii + 208, incl. Glossary, Bibliography and Index. $22.50 (cloth), $11.75 (pb.).

Among the questions that urge themselves upon contemporary practitioners of theology few are more masic than that of the reconstruction of theology itself. How radical a reconstruction (and thus a corresponding deconstruction) is called for? This volume represents Joseph Bracken's option on the issue. He is willing to wager all on an integral attempt to begin everything anew with the resources for a systematic theology provided by the thought of Alfred North Whitehead. This includes drawing upon other authors who have expanded upon, and in some ways altered, the seminal thought of Whitehead. Earlier attempts at something like this that come readily to mind are: Daniel Day Wil-

liams's *The Spirit and Forms of Love* (1968), Norman Pittenger's *Process Thought and Christian Faith* (1968), Paul Sponheim's *Faith and Process* (1979), Marjorie Suchocki's *God-Christ-Church* (1982), and the several books of John Cobb, notably perhaps *A Christian Natural Theology* (1965), and in a qualified sense Schubert Ogden's *The Reality of God* (1963), and Langdon Gilkey's *Reaping the Whirlwind* (1976). In addition to these are several collections of essays, e.g. *Process Theology,* edited by Ewart Cousins (1971), and *Process Philosophy and Christian Thought,* edited by Delwin Brown, Ralph E. James, and Gene Reeves (1971). Bracken's book, however, is seemingly the first attempt by a Catholic theologian at a full-scale process systematics—though some articles on particular doctrinal areas, those of Bernard Lee on the sacraments for example, are available.

A considerable price has to be paid for such an endeavor in terms of a deconstruction of what has gone on in theology before—too high a price in the estimation of many. To take just a random sampling from Bracken's treatment of the Trinity alone, many will be given pause by statements such as the following: "the three divine persons are constantly growing in knowledge and love of one another" (p. 7); ". . . the human community is part of the communitarian life of God [so that] creation is part of the total reality of the Son . . . who is part of creation" (p. 7); "In a very real sense, the Son is incarnate in us as he was in Jesus, but not to the same degree" (p. 53); "Accordingly, while as distinct persons they possess separate consciousnesses, nevertheless they together form a single *shared* consciousness" (p. 25); ". . . creation as a whole but above all the human community, men and women interacting with one another throughout space and time, can add something to the total reality of the Son in his interaction with the Father and the Spirit from all eternity" (p. 47).

The integralness of Bracken's undertaking is impressive, moving in a logical sequence of chapters through seven traditional themes. 1) First is a doctrine of God as an interpersonal process that is simultaneously a doctrine of man as in God's image. This makes it clear at the very beginning that the trinitarian symbol will dominate all subsequent explorations. 2) Next is creation and Incarnation, presented with strong panentheistic undertones, in which the world is posited as part of the communitarian life of God, and Incarnation is viewed as, if not exactly necessary, at least as inevitable. 3) Next is a theology of sin as a rejection of the initial aims supplied by God. 4) Following this is a consideration of redemption focusing on personal conversion to Jesus which brings about a state of intersubjectivity between God and man. 5) This opens the way to sacraments as ritual celebrations of the paschal mystery, in which there comes to the force a strong Catholic sense of sacramentality. 6)

There follows a doctrine of church pivoting on the questionable understanding that "truth . . . is achieved . . . whenever two or more members of a given community agree as to the meaning, the proper 'interpretation' of a common object of inquiry" (p. 9). 7) Lastly there are reflections on eschatology in which salvation ultimately hinges on, not a life of virtue or a lack thereof, but on "the peaceful acceptance of one's past life at the moment of death and the willingness to accept a radically new form of existence as a gift from a loving God" (p. 10)—a position which precludes and suggestion of moralism or of "works righteousness".

The basic hypothesis in all this, of course, is a conception of reality as intrinsically processive and social. The importation of this into theology, however, is such that it occupies there the role of a borrowed and merely functional metaphysics. This reintroduces the problem as to whether or not God's disclosure of himself in revelation is not again being trimmed to the carrying power of an a priori philosophical system. The philosophy in question is one whose focus on the objective cosmos enables it to play the role traditionally given to natural theology. Bracken eschews at the outset anything like Bernard Lonergan's "invariant structure of consciousness", or David Tracy's adaptation of that, in their attempt to establish a grounding for authentic subjectivity. This processive concept of being stems from Whitehead's vision of the universe in which polar tensions are a universal factor, explaining the irreducible dynamism of the real. Ultimately this comes down to positing a physical and a mental pole at the heart of every actual entity—the former prehending data from the past, the latter projecting new values attainable in the immediate future, in the act of concrescence which is the self-creation of each actual occasion. But it can be asked if this polarity is anything more than an extrapolation from what occurs in the instance of human consciousness. It is not clear that it represents an indigenous structure of all reality. Philosophers, at any rate, have been less than enthusiastic in accepting Whitehead's dismissal of substance as the basic category of the real. Introducing such tension into deity, in the form of a dipolarity on the part of the divine nature, distinguishing thereby the Primordial Nature and the Consequent Nature, is a clear option for Panentheism wherein God is not God without the world whereby he actualizes himself in his consequent nature.

This appears to place the deity at some remove from Yahweh God of the Jewish scriptures, and from the one Jesus reveals as his heavenly Father; it is far from the *Ipsum Esse Subsistens* of Aquinas, from the "Totally Other" of Karl Barth, the "Holy Mystery" of Karl Rahner, or the *Macht über alles* of Wolfhart Pannenberg. What is slighted here, in short, is what Kierkegaard refers to as "the infinite qualitative difference". In its place we have something closer to a cosmic deity, suggesting not

only a continuity of humanity with God but also of God with humanity. God and creature share "the same basic structure" (p. 85), and divine and human consciousnesses are understood as interpenetrating (p. 189).

Bracken's project, in effect, stands or falls on the viability of its philosophical substructure—before which the believer can legitimately feel some hesitancy. Does this not give Creativity, which has no actuality apart from its instantiation in actual occasions, ontological priority over God? It is difficult to read anything else out of Bracken's observation that Whitehead in *Process and Reality* "understands creativity to be the ontological principle linking God and the world of finite entities in a single ongoing process" (p. 59, n.24). Does not God himself, in this schema, function more as an abstract explanatory principle than as a transcendent person whom mankind is able to encounter in intersubjectivity (under God's initiatives in grace). Some commentators on Whitehead, notably Langdon Gilkey in *Reaping the Whirlwind,* and Lewis S. Ford in "The Non-Temporality of Whitehead's God" have attempted to overcome this impasse by reconstructing Whitehead's thought in such wise as to reposit Creativity in God rather than locate it as something impersonal that enjoys ontological priority over God. How successful that attempt has been is still a question.

Another hesitancy concerns whether or not the central truths of Christianity can be satisfactorily illumined by analogies drawn from natural processes of the spatio-temporal universe in preference to analogies with personal agents. One of the continuing reservations on process thought is that centering on a deficient concept of "person" and so a perduring sense of self-identity. This at least calls into question any possibility of personal immortality—though Bracken believes that such a possibility can be affirmed. A quite different question concerns the legitimacy of conceiving God as suffering in union with humankind, not solely in and by way of the humanity assumed in Jesus of Nazareth, but in his very divinity (cf. pp. 83 and 103). Is not this to deprive God of his very divinity, making him to be one more actual entity of the world even if a privileged one?

If human historicity is to be taken seriously, a religious tradition can be handed on only within a process of reinterpretation. This involves the risk of ideological distortion—thus the legitimacy of a hermeneutics of suspicion, in this case regarding what Christianity has appropriated from Hellenic rational thought. Bracken has undertaken such a reinterpretative task in a very radical way, and with courage and imagination. But representing the truth achieved in earlier cultures has to be a critical venture. And part of that critical act has to be correlating newer categories of thought with those that have survived in authentic tradition—especially those that go back to the original experiences whence Chris-

tianity came into being. To take one example: God's involvement with and reaction to genuine novelties introduced into the world as a result of the initiatives of human freedom, rightly renders suspect the conception of God as immutable. But what immutability really claimed was not anything like inertia or unconcern, but only that God was not mutable in any of the ways characteristic of finite realities striving to transcend their limitations. Immutability was predicated as a property of deity whose essence was Pure Actuality—the consummation of all mutation. What this meant to preclude from God was only change that amounted to some sort of further perfecting of his intrinsic being—leaving the way clear for the possibility at least of relational change vis-à-vis a world of creatures. There is no reason why contemporary experiences of God's saving activity in Christ must be articulated only in the conceptual and linguistic categories of the past. But seemingly there ought to be some means of showing that such newer articulations do not repudiate truths achieved in the past and handed on in authentic living tradition.

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The Church: Communion, Sacrament, Communication. By ROBERT KRESS. New York: Paulist Press, 1985. Pp. iv + 217. $9.95.

One of the results of the recent synod is certain to be more attention to deepening our understanding of the church as communion. Robert Kress's fine volume cannot help but be a useful contribution to that discussion. As he succinctly states, "the Church is the communion of believers who exist as the sacrament of Christ, who is the sacrament of God, who is the communion of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" (p. 59). For Kress any ecclesiology that does not root the church in the triune, perichoretic (a favored word) life of God is a radically truncated one. As a theandric (another favored word) reality, the Church must mirror its ground or source. If that ground is a dynamic, joyous unity-in-diversity, this should be reflected in the life and structures of the ecclesial community. Such is the context in which the author reflects on a variety of themes that are reflective of the post-Vatican II agenda: the relationship among local, regional, and universal churches; the understanding of the church as sacrament; the tension between holiness and office; the meaning of leadership in a community best understood as a perichoretic communion of gifted members. To each of these topics Kress brings a grasp of the

tradition, a wide acquaintance with the relevant theological literature, and a willingness to make provocative judgments ("yes" to the ordination of women; "no" to the new egalitarianism—a church conceived without administrative, pastoral authority.) Kress particularly cherishes the church as "the memory and tradition of Christ." His commitment to this tradition has both rooted him and freed him. He draws knowledgeably on Aquinas and Augustine, Rahner and Heidegger, von Balthasar and the Shepherd of Hermas. Lawrence Cunningham is correct: this book is radically conservative.

There is one area where I felt that there was a certain lack. Kress's treatment of the church as sacrament and of the seven sacraments contained much that was valuable: his stress on the sacramentality of ecclesial life as such, his historical analysis of "sacrament", his phenomenology of the nature of Christian worship. Yet all of this seemed strangely abstracted from the liturgical praxis of the Christian community. This lack is especially visible in his admittedly tentative salvation-historical correlation of the sacraments with our sharing in the religious experience of Jesus (pp. 147-148). To make that correlation, especially in the case of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist, without an explicit reference to the initiatory, communal dimension of these sacraments is certainly problematic.

I would like to make a final comment, not on the substance of the book, but on its editing and proofing. There are a number of errors, the most obvious of which is the elimination of the umlaut from Heribert Mühlen's name. (There is a curious inconsistency, too, in the use of the umlaut. It is used in "Küng" but replaced by an "e" in "antiroemische.") There is also the intrusion into the body of text of bibliographical discussions (pp. 12, 75) which are better placed in the endnotes. None of this, however, derogates from a book which I judge to be a stimulating and useful contribution to the current discussion on the nature and structures of the church.

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The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics, II: Studies in Theological Style: Clerical Styles. By HANS URS VON BALTHASAR. Translated by Andrew Louth, Francis McDonagh, and Brian McNeil, C.R.V. Edited by John Riches. San Francisco: Ignatius Press; New York: Crossroad, 1984. Pp. 362.

This is the second volume of the translation of Hans Urs von Balthasar's *Herrlichkeit* edited by Joseph Fessio and John Riches, corresponding to the first part of the second volume of the original. The translation has been a joint project, and, if as a result it is more uneven than that of the first volume, with rare exceptions it is an accurate rendition into good English of the author's difficult German. The problems which the book presents to the reviewer do not stem from the translation, but from the subtlety of the theological viewpoint of the author himself—a viewpoint here manifest, if not *in actu secundo,* then *in actu primo proximo,* for this volume is given over to an examination of the thought of five "clerical" or "official" theologians (Irenaeus, Pseudo-Dionysius, Augustine, Anselm, and Bonaventure) whom von Balthasar has chosen because they exemplify that aesthetic integration of theological insight which the author considers to offer the sole means of avoiding the dead ends of systematization, these being those logical culs-de-sac into which the clerical theologians of the medieval schools, with the exception of a few such as Bonaventure, were carried by their mistaken devotion to a new project, typified by Thomism and dominant by the end of the thirteenth century, of enclosing the free unity and rational integrity of the truth revealed in Christ within the transcendentally necessary structures of the sterile immanentist rationalism which von Balthasar considers to be constitutive of all systematic thought.

It would doubtless be possible to read this second volume with some profit, apart from any acquaintance with the first, but it would be to miss the context in which the theologies chosen for examination become luminous. In any event, this volume, like the first, is not to be read at a sitting, or merely once: the product of a lifetime's study, *The Glory of the Lord* must itself be studied, and the study should follow the sequence of the work itself.

Von Balthasar's literary style is highly allusive, while his thought is at once subtle and dense; the combination imposes upon the reviewer a task of interpretation which can be undertaken only with some diffidence, yet the importance of providing some sort of prolegomenon to the easily bewildering richness of this masterwork in order that it be made more ac-

cessible to the readership for whom its author and editors intend it must warrant the risk indissociable from such interpretation.

At first hand, much of the reviewer's work is already done by the author in an introductory section, which in turn states the goal of the entire enterprise, that of providing concrete historical ("dramatic") realizations of the "form" of Christ, "the glory of the Lord," which the first volume set forth as the norm of all valid theology. The theologies which do this are "beautiful," and by being so have a factual impact upon the history and culture of the faith. Von Balthasar then explains what is meant by theological "style:" the freedom of the theologian manifesting itself in giving a particular free but obedient form to the content of the revelation, whose Form is the glory of God. The author then recites the decline of "official" or "clerical" style of theology from the end of the thirteenth century, and points to the emergence of a new "lay" style in the later medieval period, a style which was to become normative in consequence of the effective abdication by the official scholastic theology from the properly theological task of seeking to understand ever more profoundly the ecclesial tradition of the revelation in Christ, in favor of the sterile academic commentary upon St. Thomas wherein scholasticism languished until the Enlightenment, and then from the neoThomist revival in the late nineteenth century until its final defeat by biblical scholarship in the recent past. Von Balthasar insists upon the discontinuity, even within the "clerical style," of the aesthetic syntheses he presents for examination: they may share family resemblances, such as a background of Platonism, but the integral completeness of each theological vision bars, in his view, any development from one to any other. In this insistence, von Balthasar echoes that punctillist or individualist emphasis common to Platonist and to Augustinian phenomenology, which encounters not continuity but multiplicity. It is not immediately evident that a Thomist transcendental analysis would agree, but von Balthasar has no interest in such an analysis, which by reason of its interest in the intrinsically *necessary* conditions of intelligibility would be systematic in the derogatory sense which he ascribes to that term. The reader should keep in mind that von Balthasar thinks Thomas to be finally a transitional thinker whose project of systematization failed and could not but fail insofar as it was rigorously pursued. Much is of course left unstated in the introduction, but one may infer that von Balthasar finds manifest in the history of medieval theology from Abelard to Biel a self-destructive suppression by theological "system" of the freedom of the revelation, a Pyrrhic victory which logically concluded to the anti-intellectualism of the Lutheran Reform, for that line of systematic theologians (whose "dialectics" had already triumphed over the hermeneutical aesthetics of the Latin patristic exegesis represented by "theologians" such as Bernard)

had adopted an Aristotelian notion of rationality which was inherently incapable of accommodating the particularity and the historical freedom of the truth revealed in Christ, and consequently was unable to comport with a Christian wisdom. It is then patent that the systematic theologians who from the eleventh century onward were persuaded by this new Aristotelian rationality—and for von Balthasar they include practically all the great names of the high middle ages apart from Bonaventure—are not of great interest to theology as von Balthasar understands it, viz., as an aesthetics.

One may object that the "necessary reasons" sought by Anselm and after him by the Victorines smack more than somewhat of the same necessitarian rationality which von Bathalsar properly condemns; it is here that a strategic distinction must be made. The identification of necessity and freedom was no novelty to the Greek philosophical tradition, and especially to Neoplatonism; if this tradition is fatally infected with a pagan monism, this does not derogate from the concrete truth of the insight which finds coherence and intelligibility rather than mere randomness in freedom. It is then not impossible that Anselm and those who follow him in seeking the unity or integrity or "necessity" inherent in the truth of the revelation do so without any implicit denial of its freedom. However, if Anselm is thus acquitted, why not equally an Abelard or a Thomas?

The answer appears to lie in the kind of openness to the Triune God of the Christian revelation which the aesthetic theologians attribute to the human mind. For them, this openness is upon Christ as beauty, the Glory of God incarnate, and the mind which understands this divine self-manifestation cannot be submitted to an autonomous logical a priori without immediately losing its openness, which is to lose its own being, its own *intelligere*. It is *logical* necessity that imports immanence, the unfreedom of that which is locked within a timeless structure; the *aesthetic* necessity which Anselm had in view is the *free* integrity of a concrete historical particular reality which is beautiful because it possesses an inner rectitude of the sort to which one pays tribute in recognizing that to alter a single note in a Bach fugue or a line in a Byzantine ikon would be to defeat the harmony by which both are what they are, beautiful. The five theologians here under discussion agree in accepting a doctrine of gratuitous divine illumination; they concur in supposing the mind to be constituted as mind by that gift, to be created by it in the freedom that is its understanding. It is the presumption of divine illumination that unites these theologians in a notion of the free rationality and free intrinsic intelligibility of the order of creation far other than that of the Aristotelian rationalism in that it rests, a priori, upon a concrete intuition of God which cannot be commanded; neither can it be

communicated by any congeries of ideas or concepts. It is a pure gift of God in his self-manifestation, and a gift which from Irenaeus to Bonaventure, albeit with varying clarity, was seen to be at once Trinitarian, Christocentric, and inherent in the creation of the human intelligence as such. No question of the capacities of an autonomous reason can arise within this radically theological epistemology; the knowledge of the truth is free, it is gift, and it is not divided as between that which is at the disposal of a putatively self-sufficient nature and that which is bestowed by grace, for there is, from within this matter-of-fact theological stance, no self-sufficiency in the created order, and this as a matter of definition.

If this inference be accepted, there remains to be explained the link which so binds theology to aesthetics as to bar the legitimacy of any other avenue to theological insight: in response, one might cite von Balthasar's summary statement, the aphoristic title of his summary book, *Die Wahrheit ist symphonisch*; by this axiom he would indicate that the integrity, the intelligible unity of the true, has only that necessity which is proper to the beautiful, and which cannot be reduced to logical consequence or comprehended within a closed identity-system, as elsewhere he has accused the systematic theological constructs of Karl Rahner and Teilhard de Chardin of attempting to do. He finds this aesthetic approach to theology already effective in the theologians he has selected: with a remarkable unanimity, they speak not so much of a discursive understanding or comprehending of the revelation, as of the vision and taste of the mystery; here one may be reminded of Augustine's famous line, "In thy light we see light," but von Balthasar is not speaking merely as an Augustinian; he identifies with the entire theological aesthetic tradition as one who finds in the gift of wisdom a *sapida scientia* (*sapientia*) or sensible knowledge of God, a knowledge transcending all that can be mediated by concepts or ideas and which therefore is achieved only in the immediacy of an aesthetic experience—of the kind one would now term existential—of the Glory of the Triune God manifest in Christ. Of this *sapientia* Bonaventure's theology of the spiritual senses offers the most complete account, but it is fundamental in Catholic theology from its inception with Irenaeus in his recognition of the theologically indispensable free illumination of the mind by God, with its implication that *intelligere* is *videre* and that the *videre* is directed outward toward a light and a vision not its own, received as gift, even as the gift at once of free truth and of freedom, and so of the mind's very being: *esse est intelligere*.

It is fundamental to this gift, which is the supremely free self-manifestation of God, the gift which invites and flowers in the free return gift of the recipient's own created self to God, that the Giver be Triune: the

power to beget the Son is the same as the power to create, in the sense that the Trinity is the radical condition of possibility of the free self-manifestation of God which is our creation in his image: if God were Monad, all differentiation or multiplicity whatever could not image but rather would be utterly alien and antagonistic to that Unity, with some variant of pantheism providing the only possible resolution of the consequent dualistic cosmological impasse.

It is then apparent that von Balthasar's theological aesthetic is tied very closely to the doctrinal insistence upon the gift of illumination as the very condition, the free a priori, of free knowledge: the denial of all human self-sufficiency, a denial inherent in the notion of creation itself, has particular reference to the human mind; as mind it is radically dependent upon and open to God, and from its initial examination by Irenaeus this openness has been expressly recognized to be Christocentric. If the further implications of this Christocentrism are not yet apparent to an Anselm or a Bonaventure, their Christocentrism is nonetheless explicit: as Bonaventure has it, *Christologus verus metaphysicus.*

It is difficult for this reviewer to avoid the impression that the theological aesthetics already in place with Irenaeus is nearly mature, and that after him the meditation upon it became uniformly troubled by a dualism which, while it had little or no impact upon Irenaeus's own Christocentric synthesis, distracted theologians after him from a full appreciation of the historicity of the revelation of the divine glory in Christ. Von Balthasar notes that Irenaeus does not Platonize, and we do not find in von Balthasar's description of the theology of Irenaeus, as we do in his accounts of the thought of Pseudo-Dionysius, Augustine, Anselm, and Bonaventure, those antihistorical cosmological emphases, drawn from Neoplatonism, which have in their aftermath borne so heavily upon the free historicity of the Christ and the Church, tending toward a reduction of the Logos to a nonhistorical and mythic cosmic preincarnate status, and to a reduction of the Church's sacramental worship to a static contemplation of that non-human Logos. The recovery of Irenaeus's thoroughgoing Christocentrism, with all it implies for the historicity of the created human understanding of created reality, is of the first importance for contemporary theology. The vital Christocentricity of the thought of Pseudo-Dionysius, of Augustine, of Anselm, and of Bonaventure is weakened sometimes to the vanishing point by the dehistoricizing thrust of this Neoplatonic heritage.

The illumination doctrine was of course part and parcel of the Augustinian hylomorphic tradition until shortly before the close of the thirteenth century; only with Duns Scotus is it officially renounced by the Franciscan custodians of that tradition in favor of the Aristotelian rationalism whose supreme confidence in autonomous intelligence was

soon undercut by a dawning recognition that reason thus enclosed upon its own intrinsic logic could know precisely nothing of God: with this denial, the Ockhamist view of God as near-demonic *potentia absoluta* became inevitable, and confessional theology relying henceforth upon a doctrinal authoritarianism became a servile obedience, forcing upon what was still called philosophy the dilemma latent in a phenomenologically grounded hylomorphism whose elements-in-tension are nevertheless later assumed to be logically associated, i.e., in terms of act and potency. This dilemma was resolved historically by the Cartesian rediscovery of the pagan dualism with its irrational schism between matter and mind: after Descartes, philosophy as empiricism continued to attend the phenomenological multiplicity of concrete experience and embarked upon the course leading to modern physical science, while as idealism the unfettered freedom of pure speculative inquiry entered, after the victory of Enlightenment rationalism over the juridicalized Catholic theism of Suarez and Descartes and over the rationalist deism of Spinoza and Leibniz, upon the utopian quest for an immanently necessary, ideal, transempirical and autonomous human unity, and began the elaboration of those systematic "philosophical" constructs of man without God whose inexorable immanentizing of false eschatons has proven so irresistible to the contemporary liberationist heirs of transcendental Thomism.

It is one of the ironies of history that, simultaneous with the recognition by the Franciscan Augustinians, under the impulse of Aristotelian logic, of the non-necessity and hence the superfluity of illumination to pure rationality, St. Thomas was discovering the indispensability to Catholic doctrine of the equivalent of illumination; in *S.T.* IIaIIae, Qq. 2 & 10, in *Quodl.* 2 and in *Comm. in Joann.* v. vi, & xv, he saw that the mind as informed a priori and universally by an awareness of God, an awareness to which he gave the labels *trahi a Deo* and *instinctus fidei,* was the indispensable condition of the actuality of the truth of the utterly fundamental Catholic doctrine which finds in infidelity a sin. This discovery came late in the life of Thomas, and never entered into the body of official Thomist theology or the metaphysics upon which the later commentators were so meticulously intent; this is the more understandable in that St. Thomas himself had never gone on to provide a place for it in his metaphysics, epistemology, or psychology, thus raising a question still unresolved by later students of Thomism over its relation to the order of grace. The manual theology, if it mentions the *trahi a Deo* or the *instinctus fidei* at all, subsumes their referent to the *lumen fidei* or one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit: viz. wisdom, although Thomas had said clearly that it was the temporal as well as the metaphysical prius of the grace of faith.

The result has been to leave the discussion of illumination in the pos-

session of those Augustinian scholars old-fashioned enough to resist the allure of Scotist and nominalist rationalisms; illumination remains for such theologians a subject of learned debate, but has never entered formally into the theology of grace, as a perusal of the pertinent articles collected fifty years ago in the volumes of the *Augustinus Magister* will show. The academic discussion of illumination has mainly concerned whether illumination can be identified with the Thomist agent intellect whose ontological status whether as nature or as grace is itself open to further question.

The discussions with Thomists wedded to a faculty psychology (with which the Augustinian phenomenology of consciousness cannot be at peace) has led to the unwarrantable notion that the Augustinian emphasis upon the free illumination of the mind is finally voluntarist and that the Thomist epistemology is correspondingly intellectualist; the basis for this error is a common nominalist tendency to suppose that theologians of these disparate schools are talking about the same thing when they speak of *intellectus*; this in turn breeds a common acceptance of the vague notion that what is not the discursive thought proper to the Thomist faculty of intellect is properly relegated to the irrational, hence to the will or *voluntas*. Thus, because illumination is for Augustinian theology the a priori of realist discursive thought and hence cannot be itself discursive, it tends to be relegated by this nominalism to the level of the non-intellectual, i.e., to the non-rational instead of the pre-rational. It is then thought of as a blind charism, an enthusiasm, an emotion, a dynamism toward the good, not as such concerned with the truth; the good which it seeks is evidently one already immanent to the self, since the self, the thinking human being, has no "windows" upon any transcendent reality, once the a priori gift of free intellectual intuition of the free self-manifestation of God is lost: the constitutive free a priori of the theological aesthetics of the faith as developed from Irenaeus onward is now transformed into an immanent ideal whose intrinsic necessity is now held to be discoverable by a quasi-Thomist transcendental analysis, whereby it is deduced to be a necessary structure intrinsic to the mind, whether as pure or as practical reason. From this mistake to the Kierkegaardian notion that faith is a blind "leap in the dark" is not much of a step, nor is the inverse idea now very startling, that religious truth is measured by its contribution to the individual's proper self-fulfillment; these twin analyses of the faith were neatly joined in Bultmann's existentialist theology after the first world war and continue so to be in Catholic variants of that romantic refusal of the free, historical concreteness of the revelation.

Von Balthasar's insistence upon a return to the fullness of the Catholic illumination doctrine, a doctrine which he has shown to be older and more basic to theology than Augustine's use of it, is therefore an insistence

upon that which has been and remains truly indispensable to Catholic theology, for it constitutes the single guarantee at once of the freedom, the transcendence, the realism, and the historicity of our understanding; upon this gift of light depends not only theology, but realist knowledge across the board: the autonomous mind cannot remain so, and yet learn, for learning bespeaks the new, that which transcends the immanence of the mind.

It has been the misfortune of this doctrine that it has for the most part entered theology together with middle Platonism and Neoplatonism, and that this pre-Christian overburden has never fully been cast off. The mistakes attendant upon this imposition of a nonChristian cosmology upon the entire theological problematic echo across the centuries from the time of Philo to our own; Irenaeus excepted, each of the authors von Balthasar examines in this volume is inhibited by that dualist Greek wisdom from a attaining a fully historical theological understanding of the scriptural and doctrinal tradition, some more explicitly than others. We do not have here to do with that Hellenization of doctrine of which Harnack and more recently Dewart have spoken, but with the failure of the theologians under discussion fully to convert the cosmological imagination of the Platonic worldview to the Catholic faith in the Lord of history. Over and again, we find the Philonic interpretation of Genesis 2, which understands the *hieros gamos* of the first Adam and the first Eve as an allegory of the timeless relation between the eternal Logos and the soul, obscuring the theological and therefore historical understanding of the *Logos sarx egeneto* of Jn 1:14 as a free, historical, and human event rather than merely as a structure of relation between God and man. This regression to Platonic dualism is evidenced in a feminizing of the good creation in favor of the overwhelming masculinity of the cosmic Creator (still a common error, and one whose implications are entirely incompatible with the sacramental praxis—e.g., marriage—of the Church), and in a neglect of the Church's determinedly historical-sacramental life and worship in favor of a timeless contemplation of the Logos, whose Incarnation then becomes only nominally important. Such mistakes were of course inevitable; they merely evince the obvious fact that the history of the Catholic Church is the history of a progressive intellectual conversion from the cosmic nonhistorical consciousness to the historical consciousness which is the Christian faith, a conversion that is always incomplete. The cosmological nonhistorical worldview which is the perennial alternative to the historical faith of the Church, a worldview whose phenomenological dimension was profoundly explored by the Platonic tradition, furnished and formed the imagination of the intellectuals who included most of the early theologians after Irenaeus; it is hardly astonishing that it is possible to see in their work, from the vantage

afforded by the passage of seven to fifteen centuries, where more remains to be done. However, their unfortunate cosmologizing of the revelation is not of interest merely to antiquarians, for it also pervades contemporary theology: the cosmological mentality flourishes yet, among liberals as among traditionalists, and is easily detectible in their common refusal of sacramental realism on grounds which finally repeat a Platonic dualism. This recurrent failure of the Catholic nerve, this loss of Catholic historical consciousness, is manifest in the rejection, commonplace again today, of the sacramental and eschatological significance of our sexual differentiation. One can understand this as a relic of Platonic pessimism in a Pseudo-Dionysius or a Gregory of Nyssa; it is a little harder to condone in those who would now propose it as a basis for the revision of the sacrament of orders.

This second volume of *The Glory of The Lord* is a worthy sequel to the first; it continues the reader's engagement at once with a theological project of the highest importance and with a theological culture simply unavailable in English apart from this translation of the masterwork of a very great scholar, one who has been accurately described as the most cultured theologian now living. To share at whatever level the fruits of his profound meditation upon the Catholic tradition is to enter more deeply into the history of the faith; this passage, as Cardinal Newman assures us, is into the faith itself. No better guide than *The Glory of the Lord* exists.

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The Bible in the Medieval World: Essays in Memory of Beryl Smalley. Edited by KATHERINE WALSH and DIANA WOOD. Studies in Church History, Subsidia 4. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985. Pp. 338. $45.00.

When Beryl Smalley, as quite a young scholar, decided to launch an investigation into the vast tradition of medieval commentary on the Bible, all of her tutors and colleagues advised against it. Medieval exegesis seemed unsophisticated, even "wrong" from the point of view of biblical scholarship, and historically insignificant with regard to the "real" contributions of medieval learning in fields such as philosophy and law. Yet Smalley held to the position that any genre of writing produced in such profusion could not possibly be wrong or insignificant; rather, the problem lay in the inability of modern scholars creatively to reimagine what role the commentaries, homilies, catenae, and scholia so beloved of medi-

eval authors actually played in their intellectual lives. The best-known result of this stubborn curiosity is her magnum opus, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages,* first published in 1941, with second and third editions appearing in 1952 and 1983. This book changed forever the boundaries of medieval intellectual history, and, as this memorial volume of essays amply demonstrates, made Beryl Smalley the intellectual mentor of two generations of scholars.

R. W. Southern's introductory essay points out that Smalley's work has had a greater impact on some areas of medieval studies than on others. So, for example, the biblical imagery surrounding the reign of Charles the Bald is well-recognized, while many problems associated with the exegesis of the high medieval schools remain pretty much as Smalley left them. It is striking that, although the essays cover topics in medieval exegesis from Bede to Wycliffe, not one addresses the issue of the *Glossa ordinaria.* Smalley's first ground-breaking articles showed the *Glossa* to be a product of the twelfth-century school of Laon, not, as previously assumed, of the Carolingian author Walafrid Strabo. Nearly half a century later, there is still no critical edition of even one version of one part of the *Glossa ordinaria.* Perhaps this indicates that few scholars, now as then, are willing to undertake painfully detailed manuscript work.

The Bible in the Medieval World thus does not fully represent Smalley's work, although it does contain articles on some of her favorite figures and movements: Peter Comester, Peter the Chanter, the Franciscans, Jewish/Christian intellectual contacts, the Wycliffites. Besides the *Glossa,* however, the volume also is notably lacking in any consideration of the School of Saint Victor. And, as a set of essays on medieval exegesis in general, it suffers from an almost total silence about the monastic commentary tradition of the ninth to the twelfth centuries.

It is easy to understand why the selection of topics seems so scattered and unsatisfying. This *festschrift,* like so many, has given the contributors an opportunity to write about their favorite topics without attempting any coherent plan. Beryl Smalley may have inspired all of these essays, but it is doubtful that she would have found them all inspiring. Nevertheless, a few of these chapters are truly excellent. Robert Lerner's analysis of the "committee" authorship of two Revelations postills attributed to Hugh of St. Cher is a *tour-de-force* of scholarly imagination, painstakingly documented. Gilbert Dahan's inquiry into the Hebrew sources of Peter the Chanter is a model of clarity on a very confusing subject. And Katherine Walsh's study of the preaching of Richard FitzRalph underlines the fallacy of overdrawn distinctions between medieval "school" and "cloister." This was one of Smalley's major insights in the last decade of her life, a perspective from which she criticized her own earlier

work. Certainly, there is much in this book to honor the memory and continue the scholarly tradition of Beryl Smalley.

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Logic: An Aristotelian Approach. By MARY MICHAEL SPANGLER, O.P. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1986. Pp. 270. $16.75 (paper).

Certain fields of knowledge periodically require updated textbooks since new material is added and new issues arise. One thinks of liturgical textbooks or those in moral theology. Why would we need a new text in Aristotelian logic? We still have the classic breakthrough text of the late John Oesterle, *Logic: The Art of Defining and Reasoning.* Five years later in 1957 appeared the brilliant volume of the late Vincent Edward Smith, *The Elements of Logic.* Still available is Dennis Kane's *Logic: The Art of Predication and Inference.* In one way or other all three present splendidly the basics of Aristotelian logic and Kane's book has a section on symbolic logic.

However, another factor for publishing a new text even in a stable field of knowledge is the change in the student population. Oesterle's text is almost cryptic by comparison with the Spangler volume. Many, perhaps most, of today's students would find the clear, clipped style of Oesterle too bare for them. Smith's erudite case problems probably would intimidate many in our present logic classes.

Spangler knows today's students. She has written a text that is developed in the same outline as the texts cited but in a language and style suited to our present student population. Indeed, Spangler, from her years of college teaching, is aware that many an otherwise competent student still lacks skills in reading and writing. Consequently this text, though primarily setting forth the principles of Aristotelian logic, at the same time provides optional exercises which relate logic to comprehension skills of reading. The result is an admirable textbook which brings together something of the Middle Ages' famous trivium of logic, grammar, and rhetoric.

Repetition is the mother of learning but if done poorly repetition can be a total bore. Spangler has the gift for repeating the doctrine on each point of logic over and over but in such a pleasant and even entertaining way that the student is not bored but delighted at the almost effortless

progress achieved in each chapter. Further, the text includes study questions at the end of each chapter that make for a challenging review plus exercises at the back of the book which test the student's skills.

The teacher will find this text a most useful tool of instruction. One can lecture on the material in one's own words. The student can read the text. Then teacher and student can discuss the material as well as have interesting sessions based on the various exercises provided. For those with the time, the reading exercises offer another rich area for intellectual growth.

This text is suited for superior high school seniors, college students, and excellent as a review course at the seminary level. The latter is important. Many Catholic seminaries are providing a year or at most two years of philosophy. Some subjects are given less time than needed and logic often is ignored or has a small share in the curriculum schedule. The Spangler text is ideal for such situations. Her explanations of each point in logic are crystal clear, her illustrations abundant, and her skillful use of charts to give a comprehensive picture of the whole and parts of logic is outstanding. As one who has used the text for three years in its manuscript form, the verdict is: Try it. For students interested in a further development of logic a series of appendices is provided, including a fine one on symbolic logic.

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The View from Nowhere. By THOMAS NAGEL. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986. Pp. 244. $19.95.

With the opening words of his Introduction, Thomas Nagel, Professor of Philosophy at New York University, makes clear the problem that his book will treat:

> This book is about a single problem: how to combine the perspective of a particular person inside the world with an objective view of that same world, the person and his viewpoint included. It is a problem that faces every creature with an impulse and the capacity to transcend its particular point of view and to conceive of the world as a whole (p. 3).

Steeped in linguistic philosophy and in contemporary analysis Prof. Nagel is far from the caricature of the linguistic analyst who fiddles with word games while philosophy as metaphysics is reduced to ashes. Rather, with an evident commitment and zeal Nagel argues that the single prob-

lem he explores is central to both life and thought. Not only does he view it as the most fundamental issue about knowledge, freedom, morality, and the self, but he also believes that our reaction to the problem will greatly color both our view of our lives and our interpersonal relationships. This teacher of philosophy is no disinterested observer. Not excessively academic in either his interests or his mode of expressing those interests, Nagel is concerned with many of the questions that have preoccupied the great thinkers.

In his eleven chapters Nagel, using as a fulcrum what he refers to as the internal-external tension, examines the metaphysics of mind, theories of knowledge, value, ethics, and death, and never seems to settle for the too-easy answer. According to Nagel a view or form of thought is more objective the less it relies on the position of the individual in the world or on the particular type of personality that he has. The wider the spectrum of subjective types to which a view is accessible the more objective the view is. So, while a perspective might be more objective in relation to a personal view of an individual, that same perspective could be viewed as less objective when compared to a more theoretical view. Nagel suggests that we view reality as a series of concentric spheres and that we progressively reach those spheres as we detach ourselves from the contingencies of our particular subjective perspectives. Nagel's option for objectivity is clear early on:

> I shall offer a defense and also a critique of objectivity. Both are necessary in the present intellectual climate, for objectivity is both underrated and overrated, sometimes by the same persons. It is underrated by those who don't regard it as a method of understanding the world as it is in itself. It is overrated by those who believe it can provide a complete view of the world on its own, replacing the subjective views from which it has developed. These errors are connected: they both stem from an insufficiently robust sense of reality and of its independence of any particular form of human understanding (p. 5).

The author's balance and honesty add to the persuasiveness of his arguments. I never had the impression that Nagel was giving short shrift to positions with which he disagreed. Though he argues against skepticism, idealism, and reductionism, including scientism, he does not hesitate to acknowledge the insight gone askew that is at the root of these positions. Throughout his book Nagel is trying to walk a tightrope between the narrowly subjective and the excessively objective. The almost ascetic distancing and detachment that ought to characterize a "view from nowhere" is retained by Nagel throughout his reflections and he does this without ever diminishing his interest in the truth. When he states his positions—he comes out in favor of realism in epistemology and ethics—he does so clearly. While embracing and defending an objective view in epistemology

and ethics, he also insists on the importance of subjectivity, giving it a *sine qua non* presence in explaining the important issues. Throughout Nagel does his rope-dancing with apparent ease and confidence.

As he argues for the advantages of objectivity, Nagel in his writing style conveys his own surety but also his openness and readiness for dialogue. His clear writing style like his reasoning suggests an at-homeness with difficult philosophical ideas and an eagerness to reflect on them and communicate them to others. Never obtuse, his writing style has a freshness and almost conversational tone. Any difficulties that a reading of *The View from Nowhere* presents are due more to the density of the ideas than to any awkwardness of style. Though Nagel deals with problems old enough to have plagued Plato, his approach exudes a kind of freshness. Not only is there nothing of the tired or the musty or the stale in Nagel's writing but rather a vibrancy and enthusiasm are conveyed. The professor even manages a joke in the middle of his defense of the objective standpoint. Pointing out that some idiosyncratic values will prove inaccessible to the objective standpoint, Nagel uses as an example people who want to run twenty-six miles without stopping. Stating that they may not be exactly irrational but that their reasons are only understandable from the perspective of a value system that to others seems foreign to the point of unintelligibility, Nagel comments in a footnote "Though one never knows where it will strike next: it's like *Invasion of the Body-Snatchers*" (p. 155).

Even more interesting and perhaps more important than particular positions that Nagel takes concerning mind or freedom or ethics are his statements about philosophy. He has the enviable skill of articulating both the richness and the poverty of philosophy, both its wealth and its need.

> It is necessary to combine the recognition of our contingency, our finitude, and our containment in the world with an ambition of transcendence, however limited may be our success in achieving it. The right attitude in philosophy is to accept aims that we can achieve only fractionally and imperfectly, and cannot be sure of achieving even to that extent. It means in particular not abandoning the pursuit of truth, even though if you want the truth rather than merely something to say, you will have a good deal less to say. Pursuit of truth requires more than imagination: it requires the generation and decisive elimination of alternative possibilities until, ideally, only one remains, and it requires a habitual readiness to attack one's own convictions. That is the only way real belief can be arrived at (p. 9).

Something of Nagel's wisdom as well as his grasp of the history of philosophy is evident in his discussion of the temptation that philosophers have of transcending their predecessors by opting for something that is really less than philosophy. Mentioning the too-facile solutions of posi-

tivism and scientism, Nagel notes with understanding the frustrations that philosophers experience when reality does not yield its answers easily or clearly. The impatience that leads to the rejection of philosophy or to an embrace of what is unworthy of support Nagel compares to the impatience that many experience with their childhood. It is vain to try to grow up too early. Nagel claims that philosophy is the childhood of the intellect and a culture that tries to bypass that childhood will never really grow up.

I found most interesting and most poignant Nagel's last chapter "Birth, Death and the Meaning of Life." Focussing on the meaning of our existence reveals to Nagel the tension and incompleteness of combining the internal and the external outlook. At best the marriage between the subjective and the objective is uneasy when we reflect on our own existence.

> From far enough outside my birth seems accidental, my life pointless, and my death insignificant, but from inside my never having been born seems nearly unimaginable, my life monstrously important, and my death catastrophic (p. 209).

Looking at ourselves with objective detachment, we cannot view ourselves as central in the universe. Pointing out that a religious faith can convince us of our importance because of our belief that we are important to a supreme being, Nagel suggests that if we do not accept a religious answer we may be struck with an antihumanism because we cannot create a cosmic meaning from our own perspective. As far as I can tell, Nagel has not accepted a religious answer and has chosen to do the best he can in integrating the internal and the external perspectives. Confessing that he does not believe in an afterlife, he identifies death as a curse having nothing favorable to be said for it. With courage Nagel pursues all the evidence that suggests human life's pointlessness and even absurdity and flinches from none of it. From his relatively secular viewpoint Nagel musters enough subjective or internal evidence to continue to live somewhat meaningfully. Accepting that there is no way to achieve a fully integrated attitude toward human death and human life's meaning or lack of meaning, Nagel believes that this acceptance moves us as close as possible to living in the light of truth.

Though some of the chapters of *The View from Nowhere* were published previously, I never had the feeling that the book was patched together from disparate pieces. Rather the unity and tightness of Nagel's reasoning conveys the compelling appearance of a text logically and stringently constructed. Even when I found Nagel's reflections wanting, as I did his reflections on death, I felt I was encountering an impoverishment that is to some extent indigenous to philosophy. Prof.

Nagel emerges from the pages of his book as a philosopher whom, even when we disagree with him, we can still admire.

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Religious Experience. By WAYNE PROUDFOOT. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985. Pp. xix + 263.

For the last two centuries, religious experience has been a central concern of those who have thought about religion. When evidence about primitive religious beliefs and practices became widely available in the nineteenth century, it tended to be understood not so much as bearing on cosmology or history as expressing particular kinds of religious experience. This was seen as an advance on the Enlightenment, which used to treat pagan religions as mere complexes of erroneous belief and immoral conduct. It is notable, however, that, while religious experience itself appeared to be more or less universal, the *idea* of it was novel. However impressive Isaiah's or Paul's religious experience may have been, they themselves would not have said that they underwent religious experience, or that they expressed it in their speech or writings.

Ever since Schleiermacher, whose influence above all gained currency for the notion, its apologetical uses have been noted. Religion need no longer be justified, apparently, by metaphysical arguments, or by alleging its importance for the moral life; religion is autonomous, and all basic conflict with morality or science is conveniently excluded.

The present book is a sustained critique of this whole approach to religion. The author argues that there are no simple inner states directly available to introspection, as Schleiermacher and others seem to suppose; the inner states associated with religion depend ineluctably on concepts, beliefs, and practices. Many recent authors would agree with this stricture as far as it goes, but still argue for the autonomy of religious language and doctrine, and renounce reductionism in the manner of Schleiermacher. But the author urges that, ingenious as is the resulting protective strategy, it is based upon a confusion. It is one thing to insist on neutrality in the *description* of religious phenomena—here the religious subject's viewpoint is all-important; but it is another to be neutral in *explanation* of them—here one has to transcend, and may well have to contradict, that viewpoint.

As well as Schleiermacher's *Speeches* and *Christian Faith,* William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience* is subjected by the author to

detailed discussion. Successive chapters examine Schleiermacher's theory of religious experience, two conceptions of interpretation, the ascription of emotion to oneself and others, mysticism, religious experience as such, and different kinds of explanation of religious experience and the issue of reductionism. The book as a whole seems to me rather an impressive treatment of a very important subject.

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Intimations of Reality: Critical Realism in Science and Religion. By ARTHUR PEACOCKE. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984. Pp. 94. $10.95(cl.), $4.95(pa.).

In the first of the two lectures printed in this small volume, Peacocke argues for a "critical realist" interpretation of both scientific theories and religious doctrines. Both aim (fallibly but genuinely) to speak of reality, and their methods and tools are similar enough so that if the claims of one deserve to be taken seriously, so do those of the other. Addressing one reality as they do, science and theology cannot proceed in isolation, but must be regarded as "interacting and mutually illuminating" (51).

In the second lecture Peacocke offers suggestions as to how theologians should construe the relation between God and the created world, in view of what scientists are now telling us about the latter.

Many of the ideas presented here are familiar from Peacocke's earlier *Creation and the World of Science* and from writings of Ian Barbour and others. The main novelty lies in his buttressing the case for (and refining the interpretation of) critical realism with arguments drawn from recent work in the philosophy of science. I will start with his discussion of critical realism with respect to science, and then consider his claims for theology, his argument for the mutual relevance of the two, and (briefly) his theological suggestions.

As Peacocke sees the history of the subject, an earlier-prevalent "naive realism" about scientific theories and the entities mentioned in them has been undermined chiefly by the work of T. S. Kuhn et al., especially as extended and radicalized by sociologists of science—most pointedly by those pursuing the "strong programme" of explaining scientific theories past and present as social products, without regard to any assessment of their truth value and thus without invoking conformity to reality in explaining a theory's acceptance or success. The recent revival

of realism among philosophers of science he views largely in the aspect of a rebuttal of the sociologists' anti-realist claims. He notes, but sets aside as ancillary to his project, the question what we might learn from the strong-programmers even if we deny their more radical claims. Fair enough. What is more regrettable is that the unwary reader could easily come away with the impression that contemporary philosophers of science are to be found in just two camps on these matters: realists and sociologically-minded anti-realists. In fact, there have been and are quite a few—e.g. Bas van Fraasen and Larry Laudan—who argue against realism on grounds quite independent of sociology: Duhemian grounds, for instance, and considerations drawn from quantum theory. (See van Frassen's *The Scientific Image,* Laudan's *Science and Values,* and their respective essays in *Scientific Realism,* edited by Jarrett Leplin.) So, while there is a revival of realism in philosophy of science, there is hardly a consensus, though it is no doubt also true that most working scientists, unaffected by the philosophers' debate, would adopt some form of critical realism.

But how, specifically, does critical realism differ from the naive kind? The difficulty of answering this question is compounded by the great variety of theses held by various authors to be central claims of realism (or anti-realism) *simpliciter.* This variety is well illustrated in Leplin's collection, and anatomized in his introduction to it.

One of the authors on whom Peacocke draws, Ian Hacking, distinguishes, in his contribution to the Leplin volume and at greater length in his *Representing and Intervening,* between realism about entities (theoretical terms, or many of them, do refer; there are such things as electrons) and realism about theories (scientific theories, even large-scale ones like the fundamental theories of physics, aim to tell the truth about what underlying realities are like and how they behave, and often come reasonably close to succeeding). Hacking argues for the former kind of realism, and has grave doubts, to say the least, about the latter. He thinks we can be confident that electrons are being manipulated to produce particular effects in particular experimental set-ups, and thus that they exist; but grand theories are quite another matter.

Peacocke's version of critical realism follows Hacking in insisting on the reality of the entities referred to in experimentally-well-supported theories, while stressing (as against naive realism) the fallibility and revisability of statements made about them. It is not entirely clear just how far his skepticism about theoretical statements extends—probably not as far as Hacking's, or as that of Nancy Cartwright (*How the Laws of Physics Lie*) who argues on different grounds for conclusions broadly similar to Hacking's.

Peacocke's other main philosophical source is Ernan McMullin. In " A

Case for Scientific Realism" (yet another essay in Leplin's useful collection) McMullin says that "the basic claim made by scientific realism . . . is that the long-term success of a scientific theory gives reason to believe that something like the entities and structure postulated by the theory actually exists" (26; quoted at Peacocke, 24). Here again we have a stress on realism about entities, though it seems to be at once a shade more cautious about them and—in view of the reference to "structure"—somewhat more sanguine about theories than the Cartwright-Hacking version. I cannot here summarize, only recommend, McMullin's careful and subtle discussion. But two points should be noted. One is that he considers the fundamental explanatory theories of mechanics to be a very special case, which one should view with more reserve (though not to a Cartwrightian extent) than theories in such areas as cell biology and plate tectonics. The other point is that, because of the inescapably metaphorical element in explanatory theories, terms like "fertile" and "insight-producing" are more appropriate in characterizing them than "true."

Peacocke also stresses the role of models and metaphors in science, and finds therein a crucial similarity to the language and methods of religion and theology, one which greatly strengthens the case for critical realism with respect to theology. It also provides a way of explicating the relation between positive and negative theology. I feel a certain malaise here, a suspicion that the radicalness of the *via negativa* is being understated. Granted, if one takes the metaphorical character of scientific theories and explanations as seriously as Peacocke does, one will insist that the inadequacy of our theories is more than just a contingent and conceivably temporary matter: if science involves a process of continuous metaphorical extension, then in principle no terminus, where we had basically said it all, could ever be reached. Nonetheless, it would seem that in many religious traditions, at least, the *via negativa* is held to have the last word in a stronger sense than that. Indeed, Peacocke himself suggests such a view in his concluding paragraphs. "The rest is silence" is his last sentence (81). Thus it jars when Peacocke suggests (50) that "the Christian mystic is your true critical realist"—at least if "critical realism" is supposed to mean the same thing in relation to theology as to science.

The reference to the *Christian* mystic is symptomatic of a questionable move in Peacocke's program. He starts out defining the "theological enterprise" as "the reflective and intellectual analysis of the religious experience of mankind" and then does the usual quick slide to "in particular, of the Christian experience" (37). This restriction requires justification, which I think unlikely to be obtainable within the framework of an approach that stresses parallelism between science and theology as

interpretations of general aspects of human experience. Thus when Peacocke says "the ways of science and of Christian faith must always, in my view, be ultimately converging" (51) one must ask: Would he say the same of Muslim faith, or Theravada faith? If not, why not? If so, would it follow that in converging with science they would also converge with one another?

With or without Peacocke's restriction, the claim that "the scientific and theological enterprises" should be seen as "interacting and mutually illuminating approaches to reality" (51) requires our attention. It does not follow from anything that has been said so far. Even if we suppose both to provide intimations of reality, the relation between science and theology might still be like that between entomology and quantum electrodynamics. To show why it isn't, Peacocke appeals to the familiar picture of a hierarchy of levels of complexity and organization in nature, with different sciences at different levels and theology at the top. The science appropriate to any given level will be autonomous in the sense of having its own concepts and principles, not definable in terms of or derivable from (respectively) the concepts and principles at the level below, but still constrained in some ways by the need to fit together with them. (It is well to remember, of course, that constraints can be heuristically fruitful by imposing conditions on possible solutions to problems.) Thus theology at the apex is autonomous, but still should take due account of the results of the sciences below. (Peacocke's argument requires that the sciences at all levels below a given one in the hierarchy be relevant to it, not just the one(s) at the next lower level. This is a pedantic point, perhaps, but it is related to a not-so-pedantic point, to be made later.)

If we accept this hierarchical picture, an interesting question arises, which Peacocke does not address. Is a science constrained in any way by those *above* it in the hierarchy? It would seem that the answer will have to be "yes," if his argument is to support the conclusion that there should be *inter*action between science and theology. In fact he confines himself almost exclusively to the question how theology might fruitfully take account of scientific results; the only admonition he addresses to scientists is that they

> will have to be more willing than in the past to see their models of reality as partial and applicable at restricted levels only in the multiform intricacies of the real and always to be related to the wider intimations of reality that are vouchsafed to mankind (51).

Note that for the first part of this advice, that scientists should be modest and conscious of their limits, one doesn't need theology: the ideas of *critical* realism and a hierarchy of qualifiedly-autonomous levels would suffice. Whether and how scientists are obliged to attend to theology in

relating their models to the widest of the "wider intimations" we are not told. In particular, it would be interesting to know whether the wider implications are to be reckoned with only when technological applications of theory are in question, or in the formulation of the theories themselves as well.

In his second lecture Peacocke first sketches the world-picture presented in current natural science, then suggests how theologians might respond. Very briefly: in place of a basically simple, strictly deterministic cosmos the scientists now give us a picture of a complexly hierarchic world with constantly emerging novelties, the outcome of an interplay of chance and law. Accordingly, we should think of creation not as something essentially accomplished already, but as a continuing process *within* the reality of the Creator, who should be thought of as experimenting and improvising on basic themes, and as subject to something like suffering in that the course of creating cannot be strictly foreseen and controlled. It is noteworthy that the combination of panentheism and continuing creation allows Peacocke to develop a model within which we can speak of a feminine aspect of Deity. One wonders whether the scientific world-picture is the main source of this thought. Presumably he would not claim that it is; rather he would see here a happy convergence in our time of the scientific world picture with a result of primary theological reflection on human life.

Mindful of limitations of space (among others) I will resist the temptation to play theologian by attempting to assess the substantive merits of Peacocke's theological suggestions. Instead, I will close with two general observations.

First, given Peacocke's hierarchy in which the sciences of humanity stand closer to the apex than do physics and biology, it is at least a little anomalous that he considers only the latter sciences in his second lecture. One cannot fault an author for sticking with his areas of competence, and further the concentration on the natural sciences might be considered an appropriate corrective to an undue stress on anthropology in much of twentieth-century theology. Still, if we reject a dualism between man and nature and regard the social sciences as dealing with some of the more complex levels of the natural order, it would seem that a full development of the idea of creation in the light of science would have to take account of whatever intimations of reality the social scientists might have come upon.

Second, and more troublesome: the aspect of contemporary science to which Peacocke seeks to relate theological affirmations is a broad "scientific world picture." Now from one point of view this seems eminently natural and reasonable, even obvious. But there is a problem. Consider his argument:

> Because we are *critical* realists, we must take this perspective on the world afforded by physics and cosmology seriously but not too literally. This means that in thinking how it might influence our models of God's relation to and actions in the world, it is only the broadest, general features, and these the most soundly established, that we must reckon with (60).

The trouble is, of course, that in the version of critical realism developed in the first lecture, more confident of the reality of theoretical entities than of the truth of statements about them, it is just the most general theoretical features that we are *least* entitled to regard as "soundly established." Perhaps I have misunderstood Peacocke's version of critical realism; but, if so, it gets much less support from philosophers like Hacking and McMullin than he supposes. That the big picture is (probably close to) right, though the details might be wrong, is *not* what the realists among contemporary philosophers of science typically contend—more nearly the opposite.

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The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman, Vol. VI. Edited by GERARD TRACEY. New York: The Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press, 1984. Pp. 417. $49. 95. *A Packet of Letters: A Selection from the Correspondence of John Henry Newman.* Edited by JOYCE SUGG. New York: The Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press, 1983. Pp. 230. $19.95.

Volume Six of Newman's letters and diaries documents the years 1837 and 1838 which, though far from the most eventful years of Newman's life, saw the culmination of a remarkable development of his influence, an influence which at the same time was warmly welcomed by some and stridently criticized by others. A visitor to Oxford in November of 1837 gave the following picture of Newman's position:

> It was allowed that the Doctor [Pusey] and Newman *governed the University,* and that nothing could withstand the influence of themselves and their friends. Every man of talent who during the last six years has come to Oxford has joined Newman, and when he preaches at St. Mary's (on every Sunday afternoon) all the men of talent in the University come to hear him, although at the loss of their dinner. His triumph over the *mental* empire of Oxford was said to be complete! (164)

Newman no doubt would have explained that "triumph" in the same way he described a putative disciple of Pusey's—"he is Pusey's, only so far as Pusey is Truth's . . ." (175). But though he was an unwilling leader, he was a leader nevertheless. His influence, however, brought as much criticism as accolade; even Pusey felt sorry for the responsibility attributed to Newman, writing to Keble that "it is not fair to let Newman bear the whole brunt alone, as if his Theology were something peculiar, or as they call it, the Newmania" (51, note 2). Pusey's sympathy was expressed in March of 1837; in November of 1838 we see Newman's own assessment—as if too exhausted to hide his exasperation any longer, he wrote to Keble:

> I wish parties would seriously ask themselves *what* they desire of me. . . . People really should put themselves into my place, and consider how the appearance of suspicion, jealousy, and discontent is likely to affect one, who is most conscious that every thing he does is imperfect, and therefore soon begins so to suspect every thing that he does as to have no heart and little power remaining to do any thing at all. (347)

He suffered under the general criticism that he was "betraying a cause and unsettling people" (307), and, even when he could recognize good as coming from his work, the benefit was an inferred, not a felt, one—he likened himself to "the pane of glass . . . which transmits heat yet is cold" (57).

These letters show us a man who never found writing easy (192-3), yet wrote prolifically nonetheless; the year 1837 in particular was filled with such commitments. The *Lectures on the Prophetical Office of the Church, viewed relatively to Romanism and Popular Protestantism* (his attempt at a *Via Media*) was completed in January, and he lost no time in getting deeply into various projects, concluding in September that "I never have had so much important business on my hands at a time as now. The Library of the Fathers, my book on Justification, some Tracts, and Froude's papers" (121). The letters also reveal a man who saw his task, given the nature of his general audience, as one calculated to bring criticism down on him: "The age is so very sluggish that it will not hear unless you bawl—you must first tread on its toes, and then apologize" (74). But he was optimistic as well: "The only safety many people find against Catholic truth is *not inquiring,* but that cannot last in the 19th century" (198).

Newman was anxious about his proposal for a "Middle Way" in *The Prophetical Office* ("I speak seriously when I say I think I shall be considered an infidel" [8]), but that anxiety was allayed when he discovered it was "selling very well" and that critics were "agreeably surprised" to learn he was no Papist (61). Nevertheless, the "absurd panic

[which had] risen in London about the Popery of Oxford" (71) continued to manifest itself in annoying ways throughout the rest of the year. He was fearful again in June about the delicate issues concerning Romanism and a *Via Media*—this time with respect to publishing Richard Hurrell Froude's papers (77). By December he was "very anxious now about Froude's remains," for, though they will

> bring forward very many, I doubt not, but they will much scandalize and I fear throw back some persons by their uncompromising Anti-protestantism—and they do tend to make people disloyal towards the Establishment—I *hope* not, to make them Romanists (177).

The letters for the remainder of 1837 and 1838 trace Newman's response to the reception of Froude's *Remains,* as well as to the Bishop of Oxford's public comment concerning the *Tracts for the Times.* The latter was a particularly troubling experience for Newman in many ways, in spite of efforts made by the Bishop to reassure him as to its lack of censure and to dissuade him from the consequent total repression of the *Tracts.* Priesthood and hierarchical authority were fundamental—"I know what I am, I am a clergyman under the Bishop of Oxford and any thing more is accidental" (307-8). The letters beginning in August 1838 thus provide a valuable complement to his published views on authority.

But in addition to being a priest Newman was clearly also a pastor, and the letters and diary entries show how seriously he took those obligations and how they contoured his plans (e.g. 135). In addition to the numerous letters which document his views on doctrinal issues (Atonement, Sacrifice, faith/works, etc.) and liturgical issues (embedded in political ones), we find letters offering advice concerning devotional piety ("The Psalms should be the basis of all devotion"—47), and methods of prayer (66-67). Moreover, this volume, more than most of the others, has (in addition to a variety of his letters to women) references which indicate his attitudes toward women. He thought, for instance, that "it would be a great thing if we had lives of saintly women, there being little biography of the sort" (20), and he had a "considerable intention of bringing out a Quarterly Miscellany, if I can get Ladies to write for it, to be called The Daughters of the Church . . ." (66). Though his experience convinced him that "there is no trusting women" (30), he nevertheless praised their intelligence (254).

In these letters Newman periodically works through material concerning the character and role of doctrine, providing hints of what would come to fruition in his work on the development of doctrine. Though there is little of explicitly philosophical interest, we do find expressions of principles which have a bearing on both his philosophical and theological positions. For instance, his emphasis on context-dependence is clear early on, in terms of "the *particular* case" vs. the "general rule" (149,

48, 27). Moreover, the theme of the legitimacy of a middle ground appears in various places. He distinguished between being himself "disposed" to do something, and "recommending" another to do it (155, 231); in that same vein he characterized as false the "dilemma [that] you must either repeal your statutes or keep them" (that is, he said, a "shrewd argument for a lawyer or politician, not for divine" [90]).

In sum, we can be grateful that Newman's recognition that "words are not a suitable index of intention" (56) did not prevent him from leaving behind the wealth of letters of which this volume represents a small part, for these letters not only reveal the personality of an important figure in nineteenth-century British thought, they also provide fascinating commentary on the political and ecclesiastical happenings of the day. And we can applaud Gerard Tracey for continuing the tradition of excellent editing which has characterized the more-than-twenty volumes already published; his conscientious thoroughness and judicious choice of letters and documents to supplement and illuminate Newman's own make this volume a most valuable addition to the set.

The strengths of such a volume lie in its inclusiveness and its minutely detailed picture of a brief period, and these are invaluable to the scholar, but for others *A Packet of Letters* may be more manageable. Joyce Sugg has done a favor to those who want to taste a broader range of Newman's wit, grace, intelligence, and elegant turn of phrase. She has chosen to give examples of the various kinds of letters Newman wrote, with two criteria: (1) that the letters are meaningful without further commentary, and (2) that the presentation be chronological, given the decisiveness of his conversion. This kind of collection obviously cannot do what a volume of the full edition does so well—for example, present the drawn-out agonizing over particular decisions, or suggest the depth of a painful loss, or illuminate a particular response by reference to the various formulations to different correspondents—but it has a compensating advantage in that it gives us (within obvious and unavoidable constraints) an overview of the whole of his life, and to see the progression of his thought within a single view is an exciting experience.

One example of such progression is found in the development of his attitudes toward Roman Catholicism. In 1833 he writes that "There is [in Roman Catholics] so much amiableness and gentleness, so much Oxonianism (so to say); such an amusing and interesting demureness, and such simplicitly of look and speech, that I feel for those indeed who are bound with an iron chain, which cripples their energies, and (one would think) makes their devotion languid" (25); in 1834, "The more I examine into the R. C. system, the less sound it appears to me to be" (33). In 1840, he begins "to have serious apprehensions lest any religious body is strong enough to withstand the league of evil, but the Roman Church"

(45); this is qualified in 1842: "I wish to see, and trust to see, the ruling power of the Roman Church taking a truer, more manly, more sensible, more Christian line, removing scandals, and unlearning bigotry, and ceasing their vile connexion with liberals and democrats. Meanwhile, I can only say that it is lucky for us they are in the deplorably low ethical state, to which I have been alluding, for they would be most formidable opponents, if they were not" (56). In June of 1844, he writes: "I have had a strong feeling . . . very active now for two years and a half, and growing more urgent and imperative continually, that the Roman Communion is the only true Church—and this conviction came upon me while I was reading the Fathers . . ." (64). The culmination is in July of 1845: "it is morally certain I shall join the R. C. Church" (70).

It is interesting also, in light of the observation in Volume Six of Newman's "triumph," especially at St. Mary's, to note his feelings about St. Mary's three years later in 1840. He writes:

> Everything is so cold at St. Mary's—I have felt it for years. I know no one. I have no sympathy. I have many critics and carpers—If it were not for those poor undergraduates, who are after all *not* my charge, and the Sunday Communions, I should be sorely tempted to pitch my tent here [at Littlemore] (47-8).

Though the letters thus deal with issues of great seriousness, the overall impression is that one is almost always smiling at the kind of thing that Newman says or the particular way in which he says it. Though it is undoubtedly true that Newman mellowed in his later years, these letters make clear that even early on he was a man who could laugh at himself, and who liked entertaining others—as we see in his early descriptions of life on board a steamer, of lodgings in Rome, or of the Italian postal system. This continued throughout his life, with holidays providing much of the material: he writes of a restaurant meal which "simply destroys the working power of the stomach," of the "suspicion with which you begin to eat and the impossibility of your getting your will to cooperate with your jaws, which is a great secret of food digesting well"—of a meal, that is, which "not only does not answer the purpose of food, but murders sleep, when night comes" (161). On top of this, "the mattresses are new, filled with hair—there is no fault to be found with them, except that I cannot sleep on them." At other times his annoyance was less lightheartedly entertaining. For example, his anger at Pugin's intolerant identification of a particular architectural style with orthodoxy, expressed calmly but decisively in one letter (85-87), later finds expression in a biting sarcasm which cannot be kept in check: "Wonderful wicket doors to Pugin's Church—about as high as the entrance to a kennel—simply wonderful—say three feet six high" (133).

Interspersed among bits of wise personal advice to friends, and poli-

tical and ecclesiastical comment, are glimpses of his self-image: he is "destined to be a 'man of strife,'" a "controversialist, not a theologian," often in trouble because "the Bishops see only one side of things." The "chain" on his arm is constructed by the "theological philosophers" of the time, who like old nurses "wrap the unhappy infant in swaddling bands on boards—put a lot of blankets over him—and shut the windows that not a breath of fresh air may come to his skin. . . . They move in a groove, and will not tolerate any one who does not move in the same" (178). There are also other personal revelations, as when he writes that "I may have a high view of many things, but it is the consequence of education and of a peculiar cast of intellect—but this is a very different thing from *being* what I admire. I have no tendency to be a saint. . . ." (84), or when, speaking of feelings, he admits that he is "obliged to lock up in my heart what, if put to view, might come to harm" (122).

The volume is, quite frankly, a delight to read, reminding me somewhat of the little blue school notebook in which Newman periodically jotted down a sentence or two, marking within the compass of a few pages the passage of the years from school-boy to very old churchman. I recommend the collection highly, not only as an introduction to Newman, but also as a lovely example of a genre too little engaged in these days.

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