THE IMPACT OF *VERITATIS SPLENDOR* ON CATHOLIC EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY AND SECONDARY LEVELS*

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INTRODUCTION

THE TOPIC which has been proposed to me, "The Impact of *Veritatis Splendor* on Catholic Education at the University and Secondary Levels," requires a note of clarification with regard to the word *impact*. When this Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II appeared, it was received with much comment, both positive and negative, on the part of the press and the other media. This is one aspect of the topic proposed: to trace in a synthetic way a picture of the reactions which the document stirred. Such would certainly be an interesting study, but I would perhaps be led to traverse much terrain before arriving at the nucleus of what I feel is my duty to say to you. I shall limit myself, therefore, to commenting on two positive reactions appearing in Italian newspapers immediately after the publication of the Encyclical.

The first was in the well-known Roman newspaper, *Il Tempo,* under the title, "An Act of Consistency in an Epoch of Doubt." It states: "If lighthouses had been moved every month, the sailors in the night would have seen the ships of history dashed against the rocks; and no voyager would have reached his homeland again if the North Star, within the Zodiac, had to obey vacillating positions of fashions and ideologies. . . . The papal document stirs discussions. . . . Nevertheless it is very much of current interest. While many ships finish on the rocks because they have

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sailed following fireflies instead of lighthouses and while the ruling classes have shipwrecked for having chosen compasses that lie, there is abroad a need to see the permanence of certain values recognized in the midst of all that changes, the necessity of an ethical nucleus linked to principles of the human person, honesty, freedom and responsibility."

This is a positive reaction, then, which welcomes the Encyclical as a text which says things that have to be said, giving basic directions for a journey, and stating the things no one dares to speak but of which everyone knows the necessity in daily living. This is also the substance of another comment on the Encyclical that I think it would be useful to cite. Carlo Bo, a university professor and a well-known figure in Italian intellectual life, writes: "Modern culture no longer has objective criteria for distinguishing good from evil," and he adds, "John Paul II has fought against Communism in defense of freedom; now he criticizes Western culture, which makes of freedom an absolute value. . . . The exaltation of freedom leads to ethical relativism, against which the Pope raises his voice." Agreement and basic approval are transparent in these lines, but the title under which they appear is "A Call to Order." Immediately the image is evoked—negative to the sensitivities of our times—of a commander intent on imposing order on his soldiers.

The heart of the problem perhaps, at least with regard to the teaching of moral theology in the Catholic context, is in the clear perception of the need for an unchanging point of reference, of a lighthouse for the voyage, and at the same time the fear of speaking of this need, of making it the subject of reflection, communication, and teaching. There is a kind of widespread fear which keeps us at a distance from the truth, from the permanent foundations of human acting, from the objective and the universal; a fear which is perhaps the principal cause on account of which so great a part of contemporary humanity risks dying of thirst while standing before a spring of cool water. In order not to appear authoritarian or negative, one keeps silent, does not speak, expresses oneself in a partial or even an erroneous way with regard to all that is most necessary for life. It would be difficult not to see in this a problem which is typically an educa-

tional one, upon which many questions converge. Can one speak of what is objective without diminishing the subject? Of law, without killing freedom? Of truth, without violating conscience? Of concrete actions, without fragmenting the unified impulse which must animate the human person? Of the intrinsic evil of an act, without taking into consideration the circumstances and motives for that act? On what basis can all this be done? When we speak of these things, do not our voices risk becoming that of a command, of an external order imposing itself without any opportunity for appeal?

And here we come to the second aspect of the word "impact" in the title of my presentation. With what tone of voice does John Paul II call attention to the unchangeable principles which are to direct our actions? What resonance or impact is his call meant to have within the context of our daily commitment to the formation of the future generations?

These are the questions to which I wish to respond, dividing my paper into three parts:

1) in the first, I should like to spend some time on a global presentation of the document, highlighting its context and its educational concern;
2) secondly, I shall seek to bring to light some central ideas of the Encyclical;
3) finally, I shall try to show some concrete consequences for teaching and, in particular, for the teaching of moral theology at the university and secondary levels of Catholic education.

I. A Document That Raises an Educational Question

We find a key passage for understanding the fundamental aim of *Veritatis Splendor* in n. 4 of the document. The Pope, after having pointed out the constant tradition of magisterial expressions concerning specific moral questions, underlines the originality of the intervention he is about to make: "Today it seems necessary to reflect on the whole of the Church's moral teaching, with the precise goal of recalling certain fundamental truths of Catholic doctrine which, in the present circumstances, risk being distorted or denied." In other words, the Magisterium cannot be concerned only with covering all the areas of human life, *in extenso*, so to speak. It must also assume responsibility for the

basic elements of the Christian ethical vision, without which the moral teaching of the Church in the individual sectors of life, no matter how well argued, cannot be assimilated, and thus will remain superficial and ineffective. Hence the effort at removing obstacles in an area of communication which today encounters particular difficulties: communication concerning moral choices.

An observation presents itself immediately: namely, one has the impression that the modern person finds it ever more difficult to perceive that his behavior, his decisions, can have need of instruction. At the pedagogical level there is, for example, a hesitation in the face of any kind of directivity or of setting forth proposals for what should be done or how it should be done. Frequently one is confronted with the idea that teaching should not carry with it a communication of contents, but should consist essentially in a "drawing out," an explication of what is already there. When one leaves the field of communicating technical skills and moves to the field of morality, this hesitation increases. Here the notion is widespread that one cannot or should not teach; that even less should there be the concern to make people aware of something objective, of what is received from outside oneself, what is independent of the will or understanding of the individual. But experience shows that, at every level, just as a true communication without the free involvement of two subjects cannot exist, so also human communication cannot exist unless it has a message, a content. Thus whoever holds that one must remain silent with regard to permanent foundations for giving direction for human choices leaves no room for the development of freedom and autonomy. Such a position instead lays the foundation for the development of a closed ideology, without any authentic opening, impenetrable to the reality of life. Against such a vision *Veritatis Splendor* raises its voice.

In the Pope's words, which take their point of departure from a look at the present situation of moral reflection in the ecclesial context, "[today] a new situation has come about within the Christian community itself, which has experienced the spread of numerous doubts and objections of a human and psychological, social and cultural, religious and even properly theological nature, with regard to the Church's moral teachings. It is no

longer a matter of limited and occasional dissent, but of an overall and systematic calling into question of traditional moral doctrine, on the basis of certain anthropological and ethical presuppositions. At the root of these presuppositions is the more or less obvious influence of currents of thought which end up by detaching human freedom from its essential and constitutive relationship to truth" (n. 4).

The concern evidently is for the teaching of morality in the ecclesial context. Such teaching risks being weakened in two ways. On one hand there is a decreased awareness in the field of moral theology of its being, no less so than dogmatic theology, at the service of the living Tradition of the Church. On the other, there is the danger of constructing a moral theology which has nothing to say to the contemporary world, a moral theology which dilutes the gospel or even alters it nature. Moreover, the tragedy which the Pope points to is that of moral thought which, for fear of appearing authoritarian and extrinsic to the subject, has in fact conferred an absolute character upon partial visions of the human reality. Ideas about man resulting from a study of limited aspects of human existence (psychological, intellectual, social, economic, etc.) have been transformed into ideologies claiming to account for the totality of man, if not ideologies which are in fact totalitarian. These, presenting themselves in the elegant and appealing vesture of scientific reality, have not always been recognized or uncovered by the moral theology of recent decades. It is in this way then that the necessity of discernment carried out and called for by the Encyclical is to be seen: it is not a "call to order," but penetrating look, an attention to the roots of the problems, an effort at clarity so as to prevent people from falling victim to their own illusions.

In this light one can see how the Encyclical has in view, without neat distinctions between them, two circles of an intended audience for its teaching, two circles which are destined to interset throughout the course of the document. In the first place, obviously, the ecclesial community, with its preaching, catechesis, its reflection and teaching in moral theology. But, inseparable from the Church, the Encyclical also has in view the whole of humanity in our troubled times, with its culture, its philo-

sophical thought, its political, economic, and social order. There can be no separation between these two realms. Certainly the Church is concerned about maintaining the purity of its message, but for no other reason than to be able to continue to proclaim it. Certainly, it thinks about the negative influences which some ideas can have on its thought, but while doing so it seeks to bring to the heart of these very ideas the liberating light of the gospel. The central question, indeed, is that of keeping alive today the dialogue, the "educational" communication between Jesus and the human person. This is what we read in n. 25 of *Veritatis Splendor*: "Jesus' conversation with the rich young man continues, in a sense, *in every period of history, including our own.* The question 'Teacher, what good must I do to have eternal life?' arises in the heart of every individual, and it is Christ alone who is capable of giving the full and definitive answer. . . . *Christ's relevance for people of all times is shown forth in his body, which is the Church.*" Seen within this perspective, it is difficult to place *Veritatis Splendor* within the military imagery mentioned earlier.

Let us see now whether this approach holds up to an examination of the central message of the Encyclical.

II. The Central Message

We have seen the profoundly dialogical, "educational" intention which animates the document. We must now try to show that this intention is concretized in the focal point to which the Pope calls attention: those "certain fundamental questions regarding the Church's moral teaching" spoken of in n. 5.

As you know, the Encyclical is composed of three chapters, each with a specific character: the first one is "Biblical," centered on the dialogue of Jesus with the "rich young man" (Mt 19:16); the second is "doctrinal," in which the problem of the discernment of some tendencies of contemporary moral theology is addressed in a language which at certain points is technical; the third is "pastoral," concerned with indicating the consequences of this reflection for the concrete life of the Church and the world.

Notwithstanding this apparent diversity in literary genre, the document in its entirety has a profound interior unity. A kind of unifying element pervades the whole document and assures its solidity. It is the fundamental question of the relationship between freedom and truth, or better, in Christ's own words: "You will come to know the truth and the truth will make you free" (Jn 8:32). So much so that the title of the Encyclical, instead of *Veritatis Splendor,* could be *Libertatis Splendor.*

Whence comes the necessity of insisting on this aspect? *Veritatis Splendor* does not hesitate to respond to the question, pointing out explicitly that there is a "crisis"—a crisis which has developed, as far as regards fundamental moral theology, around two aspects of the present culture:

a) the more philosophical aspect, leading to the claim of human autonomy in the area of morality, beginning with the discussion of freedom and truth;
b) the more theological aspect, that is, the loss of awareness of the authentic relationship between faith and moral conduct.

On one side, then, there is a sort of "fusion" which has progressively led philosophical reflection to identify truth and freedom, making of this latter the only absolute—truth "dissolved" in freedom. On the other, there is the risk—for moral theology which is faced with this philosophical vision—of dissociating in the life of the believer the area of faith from that of particular moral choices. In one case a kind of absolute affirmation of freedom, destined to lead to its own negation; in the other, a sort of "practical fideism" which robs faith of its influence and relevance for the effective determination of a way of acting.

This, we must acknowledge, is the decisive topic of our time, a topic which, with the fall of the communist dictatorships, has become yet more urgent: How to learn to live correctly in freedom? A freedom which is conceived of in a purely individualistic way, which approaches arbitrariness, can only be destructive; it would in the end place everyone against everyone else. The danger of again determining freedom from outside the human person and substituting for truth the result of the "collective will" is evident. Think, for example, of the analysis which John

Paul II made in his speech to the United Nations (5 October 1995): "Freedom is not simply the absence of tyranny or oppression. Nor is freedom a license to do whatever we like. Freedom has an inner 'logic' which distinguishes it and ennobles it: freedom is ordered to the truth, and is fulfilled in man's quest for truth and in man's living in the truth. Detached from the truth about the human person, freedom deteriorates into license in the lives of individuals, and, in political life, it becomes the caprice of the most powerful and the arrogance of power" (n. 12).

Within this broad horizon we can see the crisis which the Encyclical points out. Naturally, *Veritatis Splendor* is a response of the Magisterium. As such, it is important to emphasize, it is not a "theological" response in the technical sense of the term. That is, in the document there is not to be found—no matter how tempted one may be to think so—the canonization of a particular "theology," chosen from among those existing at the present time (cf. nn. 29 and 116). (Such theologies are recognized in their specific role of providing "a more appropriate way of communicating doctrine to the people of their time" [*Gaudium et spes* 62, cited in n. 29].) Even though the Encyclical treats, in great part, questions of the theoretical order concerning morality, the demands intrinsic to the Christian "way" (cf. Acts 22:4) remain its central point of reference. Therefore the source is Sacred Scripture, the living Tradition of the Church, and, in particular, the teaching of the Second Vatican Council (cf. nn. 5; 27; 29).

From the "magisterial" character of the Encyclical's response to this crisis flows the principal purpose which the document sets for itself. That purpose can be summed up in the world "discernment." In fact the title of the second chapter is: "The Church and the Discernment of Certain Tendencies in Present-Day Moral Theology." "Discernment," that is, "comparison" between some tendencies in moral theology and the *"sana doctrina,"* therefore, is certainly a "critical discernment," capable of acknowledging what is legitimate, useful and of value in them, while at the same time pointing out their ambiguities, dangers and errors" (n. 34)—a discernment, finally, that makes its own Saint Paul's warning not to conform oneself to this age but to be transformed by the renewal of one's mind (cf. Rm 12:2).

Now to the object of this act of the Magisterium. It is not easy to specify it in just a few words. The "discernment" of the Magisterium focuses on a convergence of debated questions more vast and more complex than ever before. The problematic can be set forth in terms of two sides of the question of the relationship between truth and freedom:

a) that of the law, that is, the Law of God, both in its universal formulation (nn. 35-53, in which is treated the relationship between divine law and human freedom), and in its application to the concrete personal situation, that is, conscience (nn. 54-64, in which is treated the relationship between conscience and truth);
b) that of the concrete putting of freedom into action, both in the free subject (that is, the person who acts freely, following a "fundamental option" expressed in "particular choices," nn. 65-70), and in its result (the moral act, nn. 71-83).

How can we come to grasp the deepest meaning of this intervention of the Magisterium on these two aspects of our topic? It is necessary, I think, in the case of both of the perspectives mentioned, to look at what would be the final negative outcome of the tendencies criticized by the Encyclical.

A) The perspective of the law

In this regard, the tendency to which Encyclical calls attention derives from a presumed conflict. The Law of God is understood as external to the human subject, constraining him, humiliating human freedom. A complete sovereignty on the part of human reason in determining the norms necessary for the ordering of life in this world is claimed as the fundamental premise for the autonomy of the human being.

It is not difficult to see how such a tendency leads inevitably to the canonization of man's solitude and, consequently, to the denial of the intimate structure of the person as open to dialogue and to communion. The presumed externality of God's law is eliminated by suppressing in man the capacity of listening. Thus the Word of God becomes "an exhortation, a generic paraenesis, which the autonomous reason alone would then have the task of completing with normative directives which are truly 'objective,' that is, adapted to the concrete historical situation" (n. 37).

It is a word then without "objective" content, without concrete incisiveness on the life of humanity, a word without "substance," deprived of that intrinsic gratuitous dynamism which leads it to become incarnate in history.

But the risk of canonizing man's solitude by means of a system of philosophy or moral theology has a still graver aspect. Not only must the Word of God conserve all of its power for an "objective" permanent and unchangeable proposition, but it must also be possible to grasp the interiority of the Word in all of its depth. The systems which are "ruinous" for freedom and which the Encyclical denounces are also the ones which deny that the freedom in man carries within itself its own regulation such as can be recognized as the order of his nature. What is this principle of regulation? The first and fundamental reply of the Pope is this: The principle of regulation is the truth, the truth which is found in our being human. Our "nature," which derives from the Creator, is the truth which guides and instructs us. The fact that we ourselves carry our truth within us, that our "nature" is our "truth," is also expressed with the term "natural law."

This idea, which goes back to pre-Christian philosophy, was developed further by the Fathers of the Church and by medieval philosophy and theology and had an entirely new relevance and urgency at the beginning of the modern era, in the face of the usurpations by the colonial lords. Those new peoples, even though not members of the Christian community, were not for that reason without rights, because man's "nature" confers rights on man as such. From this comes the principle that every man, insofar as he is man, by reason of his human nature, is the subject of fundamental rights that no one can take from him, because no human institution has conferred them on him.

Today the accusation is constantly heard that, with the concept of natural law, the Church makes man a slave of an outdated metaphysics or a backward biologism, attributing to biological processes the value of moral laws. The Encyclical rejects such an accusation, citing Saint Thomas: "The natural law is nothing other than the light of intelligence infused in us by God." The natural law is a "rational" law: it is the nature of man to be

endowed with reason. When it is said that our nature is the regulation of our freedom, not only is reason not excluded, but its place is fully acknowledged. In this way also we acknowledge fully the dialogical nature of human conscience, which is the seat of the relationship between man's freedom and God's law. "Moral conscience does not close man within an insurmountable and impenetrable solitude, but opens him to the call, to the voice of God. In this, and not in anything else, lies the entire mystery and the dignity of the moral conscience: in being the place, the sacred where God speaks to man" (n. 58).

B) The perspective of putting freedom into action

Following the same line of thought, that of the dignity of the human person as a being open, in his totality, to listening to the Word, and thus capable of recognizing in the Law of God the keystone of his freedom, we can easily approach the second perspective on the relationship freedom-truth of which the Encyclical treats.

In this case as well, we can begin from what would be the negative outcome of the dominant tendencies of contemporary thought. Here attention is drawn to the wholeness of the response which the human person is called upon to give to God by means of his moral life. The risk to freedom under this aspect is that of taking away the meaning and the seriousness of human action, seen either in its entirety or in the particularity of the individual act.

In accordance with his presumed incapacity to listen to a truth of which he himself is not the speaker, contemporary man tends to remove personal meaning from his concrete actions. In this conception of things, "particular acts . . . would constitute only partial and never definitive attempts to give . . . expression" to the so-called "fundamental option"; "they would only be its 'signs' or symptoms" (n. 65). But such a vision leads to a tearing which renders fragmentary and, in the end, meaningless man's historical action; he is thereby, deprived of his capacity to express his deep adherence to the divine call. "To separate the fundamental option from concrete kinds of behavior means to contradict the substantial integrity or personal unity of the moral

agent in his body and in his soul" (n. 67). *Veritatis Splendor*, therefore, affirms that the human person cannot be defrauded of the possibility conferred on him to enter, with all that is connected to his being historical, into the dialogue of love which God offers him. Individual human actions must in fact remain open to being the expression of the person's adoration and his adherence to God's call as well as of the tragedy of his refusal of it. Only in his way is there ultimately guaranteed the fullness of meaning which human freedom can assume.

In the same context of safeguarding the integral dignity of the human moral response should be placed the rejection of teleologism (proportionalism and consequentialism). If the moral act does not contain within itself the ultimate reason for its own goodness or evil, this implies that the human person does not bear in himself his own meaning, but receives it from an abstract superstructure made up of limited motivations and goals. The human person thus finds himself slave to a utilitarian vision of reality. For this reason, there must be "intrinsically evil" acts in order not to condemn man to the exclusive pursuit of relative goods, not to close him within the circle of his finitude, to save for him the possibility of opening himself up to the infinite by means of each one of his acts. To say that every human act has an object, the goodness of which does not derive from circumstances or consequences, means saying that human acts do not remain forcibly trapped in the net of limited temporal meanings but can in themselves "be ordered" to the ultimate end which is God (n. 79). This gives an infinite character to even the smallest action, guaranteeing the possibility of a greatness in man of which he on his own cannot conceive.

The central message of the Encyclical turns out then to be animated by a profound intention to keep open, in a theoretical reflection on morality, the full breadth of the vision of man of which the Church makes itself guarantor. Rather than closing the door to ethical reflection, *Veritatis Splendor* asks that this reflection not "dissolve" the Christian paradox with illusory solutions. "No absolution offered by beguiling doctrines, even in the areas of philosophy and theology, can make man truly happy:

only the Cross and the glory of the Risen Christ can grant peace to [man's] conscience and salvation to his life" (n. 120).

It is now time to see, in this light, what are the educational and formational consequences on the secondary and university levels.

III. The Consequences for Teaching

A) Consequences for education in general

In the first place, it seems important to note how the "educational" concern of the Encyclical is in itself a reminder for all who teach. I think we can speak of a call to safeguard a certain "difference" in education.

In order to have dialogue, and above all educational dialogue, it is necessary to maintain a "difference." No fusion favors the growth of freedom. But perhaps it is precisely that which is happening in our time and which the Encyclical criticizes. The conflictual situation in which humanity lives today pushes ever further toward finding individualistic solutions to various problems which present themselves. The confrontation with the "other"—whoever he is—is excluded *a priori* by a mentality which justifies the creation of values by the individual conscience. The teacher and the educator, in these circumstances, have a difficult task in reaching their students. From this there derives on every level a disorientation, which, far from aiding the exercise of autonomy and freedom, renders the maturation of the students difficult.

A first and essential impact of *Veritatis Splendor* on the task of the teacher is, therefore, at this basic level, that of maintaining the essential "difference" of the educational dialogue, thanks to the proclaiming of a truth and of a concrete truth. In this regard it should be noted that it would be a grave error to think that in *Veritatis Splendor* there are two parallel discourses: on the one hand about an abstract truth, attainable by the light of reason beginning from created reality; on the other hand, about a personal truth who is Jesus Christ, Son of God, made flesh for our salvation. In reality, in the light of Encyclical, Catholic teaching is called to an awareness that only one truth can be liberating for the human person and that it is a truth at one and the

same time universal and concrete. In the final analysis, the traditional expression "natural law" means nothing other than this. It says that truth is a concrete possibility for the heart of every human creature, not a particular concept or idea, but a living Light, accessible to all in every circumstance, the "image of God" in man, the light of the Word "who illuminates every man" (Jn 1:9) and which the faith of the Church sees resplendent in the face of Jesus of Nazareth.

As John Paul II has himself observed recently in his talk to the Bishops of Brazil during their *ad limina* visit (18 October 1995): "it will not be by weakening moral truth and neglecting true values that the Church will accomplish its mission on behalf of man. The Church, obedient to the Lord, who came not to judge but to save, must show mercy towards people without, however, giving up the principle of the truth and of a consistency according to which one cannot call good evil and evil good. It is an eminent form of charity towards souls not to reduce to nothing the redemptive doctrine of Christ" (n. 6).

B) Consequences for the teaching of moral theology

In this light too should be seen the consequences specifically concerned with moral theology indicated in nn. 109-113 of the document. Outside of the perception of a concrete Truth, unique and unchangeable, there remains only the banality of utilitarian thought, which makes the human being a slave of a finite purpose and finally of an abstract system, intolerant and tyrannical, which humiliates the person and does not recognize his vocation to the infinite and the eternal. This type of thought certainly cannot find a place in moral theology if this latter intends to take its part in the Church's mission of evangelization. *Veritatis Splendor* addresses this with the following points:

i. the ecclesial character of moral theology and the relationship with the Magisterium

The Encyclical's first point about the task or role of moral theology is its necessarily ecclesial character. Moral theology participates with full credentials in the description proper to all the-

ology, which "by its very nature and procedures . . . can flourish and develop only through a committed and responsible participation in and 'belonging' to the Church as a 'community of faith' " (n. 109).

But the ecclesial character proper to moral theology has its specificity in a peculiar relationship with the Magisteriun of the Church, which "in proclaiming the commandments of God and the charity of Christ . . . teaches the faithful specific particular precepts" and "carries out an important work of vigilance" (n. 110) in service to the faithful. In the face of this teaching of the Magisterium, the task of moral theology is, certainly, in the first place, that of having the faithful, especially future pastors, come to know the teaching of the Magisterium. Even more there is a necessity of deepening this knowledge. "Working together in cooperation with the hierarchical Magisterium, theologians will be deeply concerned to clarify ever more fully the biblical foundations, the ethical significance and the anthropological concerns which underlie the moral doctrine and the vision of man set forth by the Church" (n. 110).

Along these lines, it is necessary to develop a precise ecclesial consciousness, a consciousness which will welcome, not just in a negative way, the discernment which the Magisterium will effect with regard to individual problems. More than closing off certain areas of theological research, interventions of the Magisterium must be seen to be indicative of certain fixed points which are capable of marking the area of fruitful and productive theological reflection.

ii. service to the Church, society, and culture

In this way too one sees the contribution which moral theology offers not only to the growth of the Christian community, but also to society and culture. The scholarly reflection of moral theologians is essential for setting forth the dynamic and unifying aspect of Christian living. Because it cannot "be reduced to a body of knowledge worked out purely in the context of the so-called *behavioral sciences*," moral theology must always keep in mind the question which dwells in man" *"What is good or evil?*

What must be done to have eternal life?" (n. 111). These are the questions—already present in every human heart, even though often not explicitly and consciously—which make up the human person's concrete and operative point of reference for living.

iii. discernment

The third element which Veritatis Splendor calls to the attention of moral theologians is that of discernment with regard to modern culture. It is a question of a focusing better on the critical function to be exercised with respect to relativism, pragmatism, and positivism, to which so often the contemporary mentality is exposed. In the face of the tendency to obtain by empirical methods even moral principles for the ordering of human action, moral theology must strengthen its role as guarantor of "the *spiritual dimension of the human heart and its vocation to divine love*. . . . It is the gospel which reveals the full truth about man and his moral journey, and thus enlightens and admonishes sinners; it proclaims to them God's mercy, which is constantly at work to preserve them both from despair at their inability to know and keep God's law fully and from the presumption that they can be saved without merit" (n. 112).

iv. ecclesial responsibility

Finally, the invitation of *Veritatis Splendor* to moral theologians is synthesized in a call to assume responsibility. It is important that the person dedicated to teaching in Catholic institutions of learning grasp this aspect of the document well and not let himself be taken in by partial or reductive visions of his function within the Church and the world. The horizon indicated by the Encyclical is vast, I dare say, planetary. It is a question ultimately of the defense of man in his wholeness. For that reason, courage is needed to enter fully into this dynamic, avoiding secondary aspects of polemics or dissent. Moral reflection is not simply the fruit of the comparison of opinions and respect for the democratic procedures of discussion. If it were thus, instead of aiding, it would obstruct the bursting forth of that Word which from deep within every human being calls upon his conscience. The educational dialogue, the possibility of teaching and of help-

ing others to grow in freedom, would be cut at its roots. Within this framework should be placed the impact of *Veritatis Splendor* on Catholic teaching which we have been seeking to describe in these remarks.

Conclusion

Now, as a concluding word, I should like to recall an image which could almost be emblematic of *Veritatis Splendor*, an image which John Paul II gave to the Church during the sixteenth year of his pontificate. It is the image of the Pope who, looking forward to the beginning of the Third Christian Millennium, speaks to five hundred thousand young people gathered in Cherry Creek State Park in Denver, the fourteenth and fifteenth of August 1993. In the words he spoke on that occasion we grasp in synthesis the Church's passion for education and the universal horizon within which it unfolds. The Holy Father said:

> On many questions, especially those of moral theology, the doctrine of the Church is today in a cultural and social situation which makes it at one and the same time more difficult to understand and more urgent and irreplaceable for promoting the true good of men and women. In a technological culture in which people are used to dominating matter, discovering its laws and mechanisms in order to transform it according to their wishes, the danger arises of also wanting to manipulate conscience and its demands. In a culture which holds that no universally valid truths are possible, nothing is absolute. Therefore, in the end—they say—objective goodness and evil no longer really matter. Good comes to mean what is pleasing or useful in a particular moment. Evil means what contradicts our subjective wishes. Each person can build a private system of values. . . . In the depths of his conscience man detects a law which he does not impose upon himself, but which holds him to obedience. That law is not an external human law, but the voice of God, calling us to free ourselves from the grip of evil desires and sin, and stimulating us to seek what is good and true.

It is truly to be hoped that this voice will be heard by each of us and that it will be able to inspire every Catholic teacher to do his share to make that voice audible in the hearts of all.

I end with a brief "story": a certain gentleman, at a very late hour of the night, is about to enter his house, but has lost the key

that opens the door. He bends down under a street light and begins to search for it breathlessly. At this moment a passer-by stops, wishing to help the man who lost his key. He too bends down and begins to search for the key.

They do not find it. After a while the passer-by turns to the man without his key and asks him: Are you sure you lost the key here? No, he replies, I lost it some distance from here, but where the key is, it is dark. I am looking for it here because I am underneath the light.

How many moral theologians bring people under an artificial light and ask them to find there the key to the truth, when instead it is to be found elsewhere, even if in a place where it is dark. Let us not be tricked by artificial lights; the Pope has indicated to us where we must search for the key to the truth, even where it is laborious to find it, because the search requires effort and sacrifice: under "the shadow of the cross."

MARITAIN AS AN INTERPRETER OF AQUINAS ON THE PROBLEM OF INDIVIDUATION

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I

THE MEDIEVAL problem of individuation is not the contemporary problem of "individuals" or "particulars" discussed by P. F. Strawson, J. W. Meiland, and others.[1] In a certain sense the problem of individuation originates with Parmenides, but it is Plato's philosophy of science that bequeaths the problem to Aristotle and to his medieval commentators. Its solution in Aquinas is not that of Aristotle, nor is it that of Scotus or Suarez. Aquinas will distinguish between the problem of individuation and what we may call the problem of "individuality" or the problem of "subsistence." The solution to both will draw upon many Aristotelian distinctions but will incorporate key elements of St. Thomas's own metaphysics, including the real distinction between essence and existence and his doctrine of participation.

It is Maritain's appropriation of St. Thomas's metaphysics that enables him to produce a realistic philosophy of science, one that he offers as compatible with contemporary scientific enquiry. It also enables him to develop a theory of person and personality. But the story begins with Plato.

Although Plato's theory of knowledge may appear fanciful to the modern reader, his analysis of scientific knowledge contains a basic set of observations whose truth remains uncontested even

[1] Cf. P.F. *Strawson, Individuals: An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics* (London: Methuen and Co., 1959); J.W. Meiland, *Talking About Particulars* (New York: Humanities Press, 1970); P. Butchvarov, *Resemblance and Identity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966).

though his explanation be faulty. Plato saw clearly that science is of the universal. Things may be particular, but when we consider them as objects of enquiry, the intellect focuses upon the form taken as an exemplar. In Plato's explanation things belong to their various kinds by participating in incorporeal, eternal, and unchangeable archetypes. From a realist's vantage point the problem may be stated simply: Since things are singular, how is it that we intellectually apprehend them as universal? Aristotle's solution is well known and it is one adopted and amplified by St. Thomas. Universals are abstracted from singular things.

No one would present Maritain as a medievalist, but, as an interpreter of Aquinas, he has wielded considerable influence in the United States and in Latin America. Many have come to St. Thomas under his tutelage. His knowledge of Aquinas is extensive and is drawn upon throughout his lifelong work, but perhaps nowhere more than in his philosophy of science and in his discussions of the person. The primary text for Thomas's doctrine of individuation is his commentary on Boethius's *De Trinitate*, where he discusses the division and methods of the sciences. Maritain's philosophy is indebted mainly to his reading of Thomistic texts, but he draws heavily, as well, on the works of his contemporaries, Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange and Louis Geiger, and on those of the classic commentators on Thomas, Cajetan, Sylvester of Ferrara, and John of St. Thomas.

Though employing St. Thomas, Maritain is always a man of the twentieth century. In books such as the *Degrees of Knowledge, Science and Wisdom, Existence and the Existent,* and *A Preface to Metaphysics*, his foe is always some contemporary exponent of a nominalist position.[2] "Nominalists," he will say, "have a taste for the real, but no sense of being."[3] Timeless

[2] *Degrees of Knowledge* [*Les Degrés du Savoir* (1932)], trans. G.B. Phelan, 4th ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959); *Science and Wisdom* [*Science et Sagesse* (1935)], trans. B. Wall (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940); *Existence and the Existent* [*Court Traité de L'Existence et de L'Existant* (1947)], trans. L. Galantière and G.B. Phelan (New York: Pantheon Books, 1948); *A Preface to Metaphysics* [*Sept Leçons sur L'Etre et les Premières Principes de la Raison Spéculative* (1934)], trans. B. Wall (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1939).

[3] *Degrees of Knowledge*, 3.

metaphysics, he will lament, no longer suits the modern intellect. "Three centuries of empirico-mathematics have so warped the intellect that it is no longer interested in anything but the invention of apparatus to capture phenomena."[4] An overstatement to be sure, but indicative of the thrust of Maritain's metaphysical project: to engender a respect for the stable, enduring, timeless aspects of things.

II

My aim in this paper is first to set forth the Thomistic doctrine and then to discuss Maritain's appropriation of it to show that Thomas is alive in the twentieth century. Within the philosophy of St. Thomas, it is first necessary to distinguish between the problem of "individuation" and the problem of "individuality," although Thomas himself does not use the latter term.[5] Both are aspects of what may be called "the problem of multiplicity and plurality." The distinction of one thing from another is the problem of "individuality" or "subsistence." Membership in the same class is the problem of "individuation." Metaphysical analysis forces us to recognize both. Whereas being is directly attained in a highly individualized manner through judgment, it is conceptualized in the widest of its universal aspects.

As agents reflecting on nature, we are confronted not only with a multitude of individual beings but with a multitude of beings within a class. Philosophically, how are we to explain numerical differentiation? How, on the other hand, are we to explain the existence of beings that share with each other a distinctive character? Or put another way: From a philosophical point of view, how is the evident individuality of a being main-

[4] Ibid.

[5] For a discussion of the diverse terminology employed in addressing the problem from the Middle Ages to the present, see Jorge J.E. Gracia, *Introduction to the Problem of Individuation in the Middle Ages* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1984). Other works of interest include: Gracia, *Individuality: An Essay on the Foundations of Metaphysics* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988); Gracia, ed., *Individuation and Identity in Early Modern Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994); and Gracia, ed., *Individuation in Scholasticism: The Later Middle Ages and the Counter-Reformation (1150-1650)* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).

tained at the same time that its sameness with others in a class is said to have a foundation in reality? It is axiomatic that where there is similarity we must look for difference, lest similarity becomes identity.

Indeed, Plato recognized the problem. To the question of how there can be many individuals in a class, each member sharing a limited perfection of the class, his doctrine of forms and his notion of participation supplied the answer. Aristotle's analysis of cognition, his doctrine of abstraction, and his distinction between potency and act provided him with materials for a different answer. For Aristotle, the groupings are not subjective but have a basis in reality. The intellect can consider all members of a class under a single concept because of the process of abstraction in which differences are left aside. Each member of a class has in common with other members of its class a nature, or essence, different from that had in common by the members of other classes. The groupings are not invented by the intellect but are discovered in antecedent reality. Given that analysis, how is sameness between beings that have their own unique reality to be explained?

For Thomas, the context is not simply the Aristotelian one, or even the one that he encounters in commenting on Boethius's *De Trinitate*. Thomas's full explanation will incorporate his doctrine of the real distinction between essence and existence and his notion of participation. When we consider the texts of Aquinas, the first aspect of the problem of the one and the many is the multiplication of beings: How can there be more than one being?[6] His distinction between essence and existence, between *what the thing is* and *the act whereby it is*, is crucial. There can be more than one being because the *act of to be* can be limited in a multiplicity of ways. In finite beings essence places a limitation on the act of *to be*. But individuality is a concept that pertains not only to material natures but to the divine and to angelic natures as well. It is existence that makes one thing distinct from another. "[T]wo features belong to the notion of an individual,

[6] *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 29, a. 4.

namely, that it is actually existent, either in itself or in something else; and that it be divided from other things that are or can be in the same species, existing undivided in itself.'"[7] Those two features, existence-as-a-unit and division-from-all-other-things, remain the basic features of Thomas's treatment of individuality. Everything has unity and individuation in accord with its having existence. "Each being," says St. Thomas, "possesses its act of existing and its individuation in accordance with the same factor."[8] But existence cannot give rise to diversity. Plurality requires the recognition of composition. Every being other than subsistent being is necessarily composite, involving its own limitation. Individuality is brought about by something that functions only in a potential not in an actual manner.

In purely spiritual, but nevertheless finite, creatures, form is the sole essential cause of the individuality of a substance. Each distinctive form, or essence, places a different limitation on its act of to be. Thus Thomas can say that each angel is a species unto itself. With material substances, however, we have individuals, each with its own act of to be, but having a sameness because its nature places on it a same limitation of the act of to be.

To the question, "How can there (in the case of material substances) be many similar individuals in a class, each member showing a limited perfection of the class?" Thomas answers that the difference must be caused by something distinctive of matter itself. If each individual is regarded as participating in the perfection possible to its class, the principle of limitation cannot be found in the form, or principle of actuality, that makes the composite thing to be what it is, but only in the potential essence or prime matter. Without such a limiting principle the essence could not be multiplied. Considered abstractly, there is nothing in the concept of "essence" as such that requires multiplication. Conceivably, as with angels, an essence could be a species unto itself. The principle of actuality in the essence, that which makes the thing to be what it is, is the form. For a form to be multiplied,

[7] IV *Sent.*, d. 12, q. 1, a. 1, ad 3.
[8] *Q. D. de Anima* , a. 1, ad 2.

it must be limited. In fact, there is no individual being of our experience that exhausts all the conceivable perfections of its class. Whatever is later to be said about the role of "signate matter," primary matter for Thomas is the first intrinsic potential principle of limitation in the essence of material things. It must be noted that Aristotle's hylomorphic doctrine becomes in the hands of Thomas a metaphysical doctrine and not merely one to explain change.

For Thomas, the problem of individuation is not simply one of how an individual is recognized, i.e., by shape, size, color, or activity. Beings, rather, are intrinsically different within their own class. Quantity, on this account, exercises an auxiliary role. On this interpretation, the principle of individuation by which each being is distinct from every other member of its class or species is a physical intrinsic constitutive principle in the individual essence. Whereas Aristotle identifies the individual essence with unchangeable form, Thomas places in material essences themselves an intrinsic principle of limitation, namely, primary matter.

The positions taken by Cajetan, Sylvester of Ferrara, and John of St. Thomas constitute alternative interpretations of Aquinas and are responsible for discussions that extend over centuries. Maritain, although indebted to Cajetan in many respects, is closer to Sylvester than to Cajetan in his understanding of the role of "signate matter." Quantity for Thomas is understood as a proper accident inhering in the material substance whereby the substance has parts outside of parts in space, that is, has extension. Matter under determinate dimensions, "signate matter," as a proper accident, flows from the essence necessarily. It may be called an "absolute" or necessary accident. Essentially divisible, quantity is the basis of numerical designation. It makes a material substance fully individuated in a class or species. Yet it should be remembered that, on Thomistic principles, what is primarily individuated is neither the matter nor the form but the received act of to be. Thomas's distinction between the principles of essence and existence, principles related to each other as potency is to act, is thus the foundation of his doctrine of individuation.

Thomas's theory of being is consistent with his theory of knowledge. Whereas Scotus will say, "That which is first known by the intellect is the individual being,"[9] Thomas insists that the intellect does not immediately and directly know the individual as individual but, rather, knows it indirectly and reflectively by a turning back to the image. The Thomistic universal is produced by abstraction, not as Scotus would have it by a process of precision or cutting off (*abscisus*) of differences. The Scotistic theory of individuation is consistent with Scotus's theory of knowledge, but that is another story.

III

Maritain incorporates these doctrines in a well developed theory of being and knowledge. They play a central role in his philosophy of science, which remains essentially that of St. Thomas but is updated to take account of modern achievements. He draws upon Thomas's theory of abstraction, his doctrine of causality, his theory of explanation, and, of course, his solution to the problem of individuation.

Maritain takes as his starting point the manner in which the object of natural science is attained. To use his own language, when the mind's eye falls upon the flux of the sensible, it must immediately turn from it to the intelligible, the immutable, which is able to be extracted by the mind from the things of sensory experience. It is only in the mind that the universal enjoys the positive unity proper to it.[10] Yet the intelligible object as resident in external things and in the senses is a concrete singular. The intelligible instead of being transcendent to things is there immanent in them. The object of science is not an *ens rationis* but the *natures* of material things. The senses reveal ontological diversity and report a multiplicity of happenings in a changing world. The intellect, discerning commonality, moves from an experience of the singular to affirmations about the class. It is those observations, formulated as patterns or laws of nature,

[9] *De Anima* IV, c. 3, n. 15.
[10] *Degrees of Knowledge*, 22ff.

that stand in need of explanation. The movement from particular to universal leaves difference behind. It is a characteristic of science in general, not simply modern mathematical science, to do away with individuation. There can be no *science* of the particular and yet the particular cannot be understood without the conceptual schema science brings to it.

"It is absolutely necessary to distinguish the *thing* with which science is concerned . . . and the perfectly precise object ('the formal object') upon which it lays hold and from which it derives its stability."[11] Anyone beginning in this manner will soon have to confront the problem of individuation. If one begins as a nominalist, one has an entirely different sort of problem, most likely, in contemporary parlance, "the reidentification of particulars." Maritain's starting point is obviously Plato's. "Science," he writes, "bears directly and of itself upon the abstract, on ideal constancies and super-momentary determinations—let us say, on the intelligible objects that the mind seeks out in the real and sets free from it. They are there, they exist there, but not at all in the conditions of abstraction and universality that they have in the mind."[12] Human nature is realized concretely in each of us, but only in the mind is it realized as a universal nature common to all men. The laws of nature described by the natural sciences are possible because they concern natures or essences. Take, for example, the law of expansion of solids by heat. The law means that a solid has within it the secrets of its nature, a certain structure that necessarily and unfailingly determines it to expand according to specific co-efficients under the action of heat.[13] Heat may be described as kinetic energy and further described in a statistical law governing molecular motion, but behind this statistical law there is a nature that is undergoing modification. Movement is of its very nature a physical and not a mathematical thing. Nominalism of necessity is limited to the sense report and leads to mechanism as a philosophy of science. "If the universal does not directly or indi-

[11] Ibid., 24.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid., 25-26.

rectly designate an essence, but only a collection of individual cases, it is not at all possible to understand how scientific law can be necessary and the succession of singular events contingent."[14] The mind can consider intelligible objects abstracted from, and purified of, matter but only to the extent that matter is the basis of diversity amongst individuals within a species, i.e., insofar as matter is a principle of individuation.[15]

Basic to Maritain's understanding of the problem of individuality is Thomas's distinction between essence and existence, between the whatness of the thing and the act of *to be* whereby it is. This is seen in Maritain's analysis of the so-called "existential judgment." In one simultaneous awakening of the intellect and the judgment the intellect affirms the existence of "something," i.e., "this thing exists."[16] "In forming this judgment the intellect, on the one hand, knows the subject as singular (indirectly and by reflection upon phantasms) and on the other hand, affirms that this singular subject exercises the act of existence."[17] It thus reaches the *actus essendi* (in judging)—as it reaches essence (in conceiving)—by meditation on sensorial perception.

With respect to self-knowledge the intellect only secondarily, by an explicit reflection upon its own act, becomes conscious of itself as thinking subject. The intellect is ordered primarily to being. From the very beginning, in the act of knowing it knows explicitly as extra-mental, the being and the existence of its object.[18]

IV

Maritain's discussion of person is found in a slim but important work, *The Person and the Common Good.* There he draws heavily on St. Thomas, making a distinction between "individuality" and the "person." Both concepts, "individuality" and "person," may be predicated of God, angels, and men. The divine

[14] Ibid., 28-29.
[15] Ibid., 35.
[16] *Existence and the Existent*, 27.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid., 28.

essence in its sovereign unity and simplicity is supremely individual. Angels are individuated essences. In the human composite, individuality flows from the material component. "Matter itself is a kind of non-being, a mere potency or ability to receive forms and undergo substantial mutations. . . . In every being made of matter, this pure potency bears the impress of a metaphysical energy—the 'form' or 'soul'—which constitutes with it a substantial unit and determines this unit to be that which it is."[19] Matter is characterized as an "avidity" for being; it derives all of its determination from form. "By the fact that it is ordained to inform matter, the form finds itself particularized in such and such a being which shares the same specific nature with other beings equally immersed in spatiality."[20] In order to exist, any being must be undivided and distinct from every other existent. In pure spirits individuality derives from the form constituting them as such and giving them their degree of intelligibility. Corporeal beings by contrast are individuated because of matter with its designated quantity. "Their specific form and their essence are not individuated by means of their own entity, but by reason of their transcendental relation to matter understood as implying position in space."[21] As a material entity, man has only a precarious unity, a unity easily shattered into a multiplicity, for in itself matter is inclined to disintegration.[22]

The doctrine of participation is invoked at the same time as the precariousness of human existence is stressed. "As an individual each of us is a fragment of a species, a part of a universe, a unique point in the web of cosmic, ethical, historical forces and influences—and bound by laws. Each of us is subject to the determinism of the physical world."[23] Nonetheless, each of us is a person. Personality signifies interiority, spirituality, and is traceable to the immaterial form. One and the same reality is in

[19] *Person and the Common Good* [*La Personne et le Bien Commun*], trans. J.J. Fitzgerald (London: G. Bles, 1948), 26.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid., 27.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

one sense an individual and in another sense a person.[24] Our whole being is individual by reason of that in us which derives from matter and is a person by reason of that which derives from spirit.

In another text, speaking of the composite, Maritain writes: "We cannot conceive the notion of body without the notion of organism, of *caro et ossa*, and we cannot conceive the notion of organism without the notion of qualitative heterogeneity; and we cannot conceive the notion of qualitative heterogeneity without that of the properties perceived by the senses." [25]

In this text Maritain is arguing that we must respect the sense report of material reality. Because the sensory properties flow from the essence of the material nature, the senses themselves disclose far more than they are formally able to appreciate. The form or principle of intelligibility is grasped intellectually in the sense report. Respect for simple sense awareness is suppressed in purely physico-mathematical reports dependent on instruments of observation and measurement that methodologically fail to attain the intelligible whole. The universe of abstract quantity, Maritain will say, filters out nature.[26]

Maritain earlier in his *Degrees of Knowledge* laid the groundwork for this analysis of the concept of "person." In that work he uses the word "subsistence" rather than "individuality" in making distinctions. "The first metaphysical root of personality is what is called subsistence. Subsistence presupposes a (substantial) nature that is individual or singular." [27] This nature (person) from the fact that it is endowed with subsistence cannot communicate with any other substantial nature in the very act of existence. It is, so to speak, absolutely enclosed with regard to existence.[28] "Subsistence is for the nature an ontological seal, as it were, of its unity. When this nature is complete (a separated soul is not a person) and above all when it is capable of possess-

[24] Ibid., 31.

[25] *Science and Wisdom* [*Science et sagesse*], trans. B. Wall (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1940), 57-58.

[26] Ibid., 58-59.

[27] *Degrees of Knowledge*, 231.

[28] Ibid.

ing itself, of taking itself in hand by the intellect and will, in short, when it belongs to the spiritual order, then the subsistence of such a nature is called personality."[29] Man must win his personality as he wins his liberty. A person develops personality within a community and runs the risk of contamination thereby. "For the same man who is a person . . . is also an individual in a species and dust before the wind."[30] Predicated of man, the word "personality" implies the laborious and the limited, the indigent and the complicated. Yet it designates man in the fullness of his human condition.

From considerations of human personality it is possible to free the notion "personality" from material limitation and to predicate it not only of man, but of angels and of God as well. Of angels, Maritain writes: "Think of what an angelic person must be. Such a one is still a created subject, but each exhausts by himself alone a whole specific essence. Finite in relation to God, he is infinite in relation to us. He subsists immutably above time, a mirror of God and of the universe."[31] And of God he writes: "In reality, as soon as one leaves images behind in order to think of Divine Transcendence, it is clear that it demands personality absolutely and necessarily. Personality is the seal of that transcendence."[32] In Pure Act there is absolute unity, absolute integrity of nature, absolute individuality. Thus, Maritain finds that the notion of "individuality" is one that is predicated analogously. One seeks in Maritain's work, *Philosophy of Nature*, an analogous predication of the concept "individuation," as it might be said of the organic and inorganic, but he does not broach the topic.[33]

V

Although Maritain never engages in what we today call "textual study," from beginning to end he is immersed through and

[29] Ibid., 232.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid., 233.
[32] Ibid., 234.
[33] *Philosophy of Nature* [*La Philosophie de la Nature*], trans, I. Byrne (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1951).

through in the thought of St. Thomas. He does not simply appropriate St. Thomas, he makes the Angelic Doctor's philosophy his own. It is a philosophy used to achieve wisdom within the context of the Faith, but used extensively in Maritain's never-ending war on what he takes to be erroneous views of nature and cognition, views that would deprive us of a metaphysics that opens one to the transcendent. From *Antimoderne* to *Le Paysan,* Maritain's philosophy is of a single piece. In the abstract his enemies are primarily nominalism, rationalism, positivism, mechanism, and mathematicism. He is to be found correcting Descartes, Kant, Eddington, Russell, Meyerson, Husserl, and scores of contemporaries. He not only draws heavily on the classic commentators of St. Thomas and authors previously mentioned, but he has read Bañez, Gredt, Hoenen, Chenu, Gardeil, Blondel, and Maréchal, among others, sometimes respectfully disagreeing with their interpretation of Aquinas. Gilson and Garrigou-LaGrange may be considered his foremost tutors.

Maritain's Thomism is never without textual foundation, but it is a Thomism that speaks with a twentieth-century accent. In drawing upon St. Thomas's doctrine of "subsistence" and "individuation" Maritain is faithful to the texts, but he employs those notions in a way that Thomas himself never envisaged. This is characteristic of the whole of Maritain's work. It does not advance textual study, but it does further the development of a Thomism relevant to the matters that we have been discussing. With respect to these key doctrines, it is obvious that one has to interpret St. Thomas in the context of his *Opera Omnia.* There are no essay length, let alone book length, studies to be found in Aquinas on the problem of individuation. Maritain's interpretation of St. Thomas is certainly a valid reading and supported in studies by Joseph Owens, Armand Maurer, and Charles A. Hart, to name but a few.[34]

[34] Cf. J. Owens, "*Thomas Aquinas,*" in *Individuation in Scholasticism,* 173; also "Judgment and Truth in Aquinas," *Medieval Studies* 32 (1970): 138-158; A. Maurer, Introduction to Thomas Aquinas, *The Division and Methods of the Sciences* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1963), ix-xl; C.A. Hart, *Thomistic Metaphysics* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1959).

We began with Plato and must end there. The problem of individuation in the sense in which we have been studying it does not arise in most contemporary philosophy. The problem occurs only when a philosopher maintains that there are individuals with natures or essences common to other members of the species. Individuality has to be explained in the presence of commonness.

My reading of contemporary philosophical literature, particularly that of the last decade, suggests that the philosophy of science has taken a realist turn. Various forms of empiricism have failed to account for the success of inference in modern physics and biochemistry, as that which in one generation was postulated as a plausible mechanism for observed phenomena has become directly or indirectly visible in another. Realistic interpretations of natural science confront the philosopher with the same problems that underlie Aristotle's analysis and Thomas's development thereof. Maritain in confronting the inadequacy of much twentieth-century empiricism was in many respect prescient; he has a much to teach *ad mentum divi Thomae*. Through him Aquinas becomes very much a contemporary philosopher.

AQUINAS ON REINCARNATION

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I. INTRODUCTION

AQUINAS EXPLICITLY addresses the question of whether reincarnation is possible on numerous occasions.[1] Not surprisingly, his most extensive and subtle treatment of the subject is found in a work addressed to non-Christians, the *Summa Contra Gentiles*.

Aquinas took it to be his duty as Christian philosopher to address errors which were apt to have a detrimental effect on the faith of Christian believers.[2] In this spirit I have undertaken the task of presenting Aquinas's philosophical arguments against reincarnation. For nowadays belief in reincarnation is becoming increasingly widespread, even among Christians, in spite of the fact that it is incompatible with belief in the resurrection of the body. My treatment of the matter will necessarily be summary, both because of the large number of arguments which Aquinas proffers, and because a full understanding of Aquinas's arguments presupposes an understanding of his teachings on natural philosophy, and especially on the soul.

[1] A partial listing of the works in which Aquinas discusses reincarnation is as follows: In *Super Evangelium S. Matthaei*, ed. P. Raphaelis Cai, O.P. (Turin: Marietti, 1951), n. 925, Aquinas refers to *transmigrationem animae*. Reference is made to the Pythagorean fables on the subject in *In Aristotelis Librum De Anima Commentarium* (Turin: Marietti, 1959), n. 131 (hereafter cited as *De Anima*). Extended discussions of reincarnation are found in *Summa Contra Gentiles* (hereafter cited as *ScG*), II, c. 83, ed. C. Pera, O.P., et al. (Turin: Marietti, 1961), and in *Scriptum super Sententiis* (hereafter cited as *Sent.*), IV, d. 44, q. 1, a. 1 (Paris: Lethielleux, 1956). The *Index Thomisticus* indicates that the word *"metempsychoseos"* is used twice in the *Catena Aurea* (Matt.), but does not appear in any of Aquinas's own writings.

[2] Cf. *De Unitate Intellectus Contra Averroistas*.

What is reincarnation? The problem in attempting to understand and to form a proper judgment about the idea of reincarnation stems from the fact that this word designates a cluster of disparate beliefs and doctrines, some popular, some philosophical, others religious. If reincarnation has always figured prominently in the religious and cultural fabric of Eastern thought, it has been less present in the West. In spite of some precedents in the past, it is only really quite recently that this idea has been gaining ground here, although in forms quite different from those of the East. The question, then, is a vast one. For this reason, among others, we intend to limit our consideration to those versions for which Western philosophers have offered a defense. Their claim is that upon death the spirits of at least certain people enter into other human bodies (generally those of newly conceived infants), or even into the bodies of lower life forms. Moreover, it is usually maintained that the kind of being one's spirit will enter after death depends upon how one has lived one's previous life. One might thus return as a queen, or as a poor and miserable person, or even as a slug, in correspondence to the goodness or evilness of one's former life.

Aquinas's arguments against reincarnation are of two sorts. Sometimes he argues against what he calls the roots of a given version of the theory.[3] What he means by roots are positions the acceptance of which render reincarnation necessary or plausible. In showing that the roots are unsound, Aquinas refutes a given account of reincarnation, but does not refute the basic doctrine as such, for there may be some other account that would justify the belief. The other sort of argument which Aquinas gives positively establishes that reincarnation is impossible. We intend to consider here both sorts of argument.[4]

[3] Cf. IV *Sent.*, d. 44, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 1.

[4] Note that Aquinas does not address the religious versions of the theory with the exception of Plato's theory which can be considered religious to the extent that it is derived from the Pythagorean mysteries. Aquinas interests himself in those theories known to him that both offer a rational account and have some plausibility.

II. Arguments Drawn from Natural Philosophy vs. the Theory of Reincarnation

A. Plato's Theory of Reincarnation[5]

We shall begin by examining Plato's theory of reincarnation, because it is, of the two philosophical theories that have some degree of verisimilitude, the less subtle and at the same time the more widely held. Plato's theory is founded upon his position on the relation of the soul to the body. As Aquinas recounts:

> Plato held that the human soul not only existed of itself, but also that it had in itself the complete nature of the species. He maintained that the whole nature of the species is in the soul, saying that man is not something which is composed from soul and body but the relation of soul to body was like that of a sailor to a ship or one clothed to one's clothes.[6]

The soul's being reincarnated then would pose no more difficulty than changing clothes does to a person. Aquinas goes on to argue that it is false to say the soul relates to the body as sailor to ship, and in doing so attacks the root of Plato's belief in reincarnation:

> However, this position is untenable. For it is manifest that the soul is that by which the body lives, for to live is the being of the living thing: the soul therefore is that by which the human body has actual existence. It belongs to a form to give actual existence. Therefore the soul is the form of the body. So if the soul were in the body as a sailor in a ship, it would not make the body the kind of thing it is, nor the body's parts the kind of thing they are. The contrary, however, is obvious from the fact that once the soul leaves the body, the particular parts do not

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[5] Plato's teachings on reincarnation are found in the *Republic, Philebus, Laws, Meno, Timaeus, Phaedo,* and *Phaedrus*. In both the *Phaedrus* (495ff.) and the *Phaedo* (81a) the account is basically the same, namely, that after death the philosopher's soul spends the rest of its time with God (*Phaedrus* 249a), whereas the souls of those who live unrighteously "are compelled to wander about graveyards as a punishment, wandering until at last through craving for the corporeal which unceasingly pursues them, they are imprisoned once more in a body. And as you might expect, they are attached to the same sort of character or nature which they have developed during life. . . . [T]hose who have cultivated gluttony or selfishness or drunkenness . . . are likely to assume the form of donkeys and other perverse animals" (*Phaedo* 81d, 81e, in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, eds. Hamilton and Cairns [New York: Pantheon Books, 1961]).

[6] Cf. *Quaestio Disputata de Anima* (hereafter cited as *QD de Anima*), a. 1, in *Quaestiones Disputatae,* vol. II, ed. P. Bazzi et al. (Turin: Marietti, 1965).

retain their original name except by equivocation. For the dead eye is called an eye by equivocation, as are stone eyes and eyes in pictures; and same with the rest of the parts. And furthermore, if the soul were in the body as a sailor in a ship, it would follow that the union of body and soul was accidental. Death, therefore, which brings about the separation of body and soul, would not be the corruption of any substance—but this is obviously false.[7]

Plato's theory of how body and soul are related offers no explanation for why the body corrupts once the soul departs. And it makes the human body to be a puppet or a costume, but not something that is itself living.[8]

Aquinas brings out yet another absurd consequence of Plato's theory:

> Moreover, every mover moving itself exists in such a manner that it has itself [the power] to move or not to move. But the soul, according to the opinion of Plato, moves the body as moving itself. Therefore it is in the power of the soul to move or to not move the body. If therefore it is not united to the body except as motor to mobile, it will be in the power of the soul to separate itself from the body when it wills, and to unite to it once again when it wills; which is manifestly false.[9]

Some people claim that the soul does leave the body, namely, when a person dreams. However, one cannot dream at will. Yet if the soul were united to body only as its mover, it would be able to leave and come back to the body at will.

Another way of attacking Plato's theory of reincarnation is by showing that the conception of the relation of body and soul upon which it is based is flawed not only in its claim that the soul is related to the body only as its mover, but also in its claim that human nature is to be found wholly and exclusively in the soul.

[7] Ibid.

[8] *ScG* II, c. 57: "the mobile does not have being through its mover, but only motion. If therefore the soul were united to the body only as mover, the body would certainly be moved by the soul, but it would not have being through it. To live, however, is a certain being of the one living. The body therefore would not live through the soul."

[9] *ScG* II, c. 57.

Aquinas's line of argument is as follows.[10] An essential property of a human being is the ability to think. Now, experience shows that we cannot think without imagining. For we notice that when we are trying to learn something we form for ourselves images to serve as examples, so that we may see in them what we want to understand.[11] When we are unable to form suitable images because of fatigue, illness, or lack of experience, we find ourselves unable to learn. Moreover, not only are images necessary for learning, but they are necessary if we are to be able to think about what we already know. For everything we know is known in reference to sensible things, and these cannot be correctly understood except as existing in individuals, for that is the sort of thing they are. Thus without reference to an individual represented in imagination, we could not truly understand the nature of a material thing[12] and consequently neither could we understand any other kind of thing.[13] Now, since imagining is a process carried on by the brain, one cannot think unless one has the said bodily part. Without a body, then, a complete human person cannot exist. In sum:

We are able to know the mode of being of the human soul from the operation [activity] of the human soul. Insofar as it has an operation which transcends what is material, its being goes beyond the body and does not depend on the body. Insofar as its nature is such that it acquires immaterial knowledge from material things, it is plain that the

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[10] Another argument Aquinas gives against the position that the soul is the whole human being is as follows: "For animal and man are certain sensible and natural things. This would not be, if the body and its parts were not of the essence of man and animal, but if the soul were the whole essence of both" (*ScG* II, c. 57). Cf. also *Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia* (hereafter cited as *De Pot.*), a. 10, in *Quaestiones Disputatae,* vol. II, ed. P. Bazzi et al. (Turin: Marietti, 1965): "This cannot be the case, because, man being thus [*sic*] would not be a *per se* being, but a *per accidens* being; nor would man be in the genus of substance, but in the genus of accident, as this thing which I call clothed, and shod."

[11] Cf. *ST* I, q. 84, a. 7c.

[12] Cf. ibid.

[13] Cf. *ST* I, q. 84, a. 7c: "All the things which we understand in our present state, are known by us by comparison with sensible natural things." Cf. also *De Veritate,* q. 12, a. 3, ad 2: "because the principle of our knowledge is sense, in a certain manner it is necessary to resolve everything which we judge in sense [experience]."

completion of its nature cannot be without union with the body. For something is not complete in nature, unless it has those things which are required for the proper operation belonging to that nature.[14]

A rational soul without a body cannot exercise its rationality, for the intellect cannot think unless the imagination provides it with objects to think about.[15] Souls without bodies are thus incomplete persons.

Aquinas thus demolishes Plato's case for reincarnation by his several arguments which show that the conception of the human person upon which Plato bases his account is false.[16]

B. An Alternative to the Platonic Theory of Reincarnation

One might object, though, that the very reasons Aquinas gives to destroy the roots of Plato's version of reincarnation, namely, those that show that a human being is not an accidental unity of body and soul, require one to postulate a return of the soul to a body after death:

> . . . because if the resurrection of the body is denied, it is not easy, indeed it is rather difficult to maintain the immortality of the soul. For it is the case that the soul is naturally united to the body, [to be] separated from it, however, [is] contrary to its nature and *per accidens*. Whence the soul divested of the body so long as it is without the body is imperfect. However, it is impossible that that which is natural and *per se*, be finite and as nothing; and that which is contrary to nature and *per accidens*, be infinite, [which would be the case] if the soul would last forever without the body. And therefore the Platonists positing the immortality [of the soul], posited reincarnation [*reincorporatio*] . . . .[17]

Crucial to this argument are the notions that body and soul form a naturally complete whole, and that imperfect states are never permanent in nature. The imperfect exists for the sake of the per-

[14] *QD de Anima*, a. 1.

[15] Cf. *In Librum Boethii de Trinitate*, ed. Decker (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1959), q. 6, a. 2, ad 5.

[16] At the other extreme from those who deny that their bodies are part of themselves are those who claim to be only their bodies, claiming their intellect to be a bodily part, the brain.

[17] *Super Epistolas S. Pauli*, ed. P. Raphaelis Cai, O.P., vol. 1 (Turin: Marietti, 1953), I Cor., n. 924.

fect, not for its own sake, and nature does nothing that is purposeless. Aquinas offers two counter-arguments to this argument for "cosmic recycling" of souls. One of them shows that this version of reincarnation entails an absurdity similar to that which it was meant to avoid: namely, that natural causes would have as *per se* end the bringing about of an imperfect state.

Consider first the form of reincarnation that claims that a human being not only can be reincarnated as another human being, but also as a plant or animal. What we observe about natural processes is that they result in organisms having the right tools for the activities they have to perform: the beaver has the teeth it needs in order to cut down trees for dams; the Sphex wasp has the stinger, the poison, and the instinctive knowledge needed to paralyze successfully the grasshopper which serves as food for its young. Only in rare cases, such as the appendix, do natural processes result in something useless, and such cases are limited to parts of minor importance. Major flaws are eventually bred out of a population because the individuals carrying the genes for the flaws die before they can reproduce. The minor flaws that are found in a few defective individuals do not disprove that nature *in general* does nothing in vain. Minor flaws that are widespread among the individuals of a species are sometimes due to evolutionary ancestry, i.e., in the species' predecessor these parts were previously useful. Moreover, such parts tend to be bred out over time (e.g., the fin size of the whales has diminished over time, which is understandable since whales do not need such large ones, and it is a waste of energy to produce them). Those cases where they are not bred out can often be explained by the fact that they are genetically linked to some trait which is beneficial.[18] Genetically linked flaws are not without utility as they may prove beneficial when environmental

[18] Although Aquinas was unaware of many of the specific utilities of traits of organisms discovered by modern science, he nonetheless acknowledged them in principle. He further recognized in general that the presence of certain defects in natural things was due to material necessity. A knife will rust if it is iron, but will not cut if it is made of plastic (in spite of what the airlines pretend). There is always a trade-off; cf. *Quaestiones Disputatae de Malo*, q. 5, a. 5, in *Quaestiones Disputatae*, vol. II, ed. P. Bazzi et al. (Turin: Marietti, 1965) and *QD de Anima*, a. 8.

conditions change, and thus allow for the development of a new species. Thus though minor flaws of this sort do not contribute to the good of the particular individuals bearing them, they do contribute to the good of the origin of new species. Therefore, it is rightly thought that as a general rule nature does nothing in vain, that is, nothing of major significance on a permanent basis.

Now according to the reincarnation theory, humans reincarnated as plants or animals would have the ability to think and to invent new technology, but could make no use of these abilities. This is especially obvious in the case where human beings would be reincarnated as plants,[19] but it is also true where they would be reincarnated as higher animals such as a monkeys, for monkeys lack a brain sufficiently developed for the imagination and memory needed in order to provide the mind with an adequate object of thought. Even if one conceded that the monkey did have an adequate imagination and memory[20] the fact would still remain that there would be no necessary correspondence between the ideas of any given human soul and the memories of any given monkey. Without such correspondence, the human soul would have many ideas about which it could not think. Natural processes would continually and perpetually result in the reduction of some human beings to this frustrated state. Thus, the cosmic recycling theory results in the same absurdity it aimed at avoiding, namely that of holding that nature acts in vain.

The same consequence follows even on the hypothesis that the adult soul, rather than entering into the body of a lower organism, enters into that of a human infant. For although an adult soul does not differ from an infant soul in kind, it does differ from it inasmuch as the adult soul has acquired the perfections

[19] Note also that not only would nature be acting in vain by frustrating the human soul, it would moreover be acting in vain by giving the plant a soul having more actuality than was needed for the plant to function as a plant.

[20] This cannot be the case. For if the monkey's body were so disposed that it had the bodily instruments that are required for human thought, it could only be because it was informed with a soul giving such an aptitude—which is to say that it would have a human soul; cf. *QD de Anima,* a. 8 and a. 9.

of a certain number of ideas. If the intellect of the child is as a blank slate, that of the adult is as a slate that has something written on it. To put an adult soul in an infant body would result in the same consequence as putting it in the body of a monkey. For the adult soul would possess certain ideas about which it would be incapable of thinking, inasmuch as it lacked the corresponding experiences and images which are required as an object of thought. If nature does not do things which are pointless, it could not be the natural state of things that adult human souls be reincarnated in bodies that would not allow them actually to think about ideas they had acquired.

The above argument is a variation of the following argument which Aquinas gives in regard to the question of whether the soul could pre-exist the body. The argument is based upon the fact that the soul and its operation is the final cause of the body:

> If therefore [Aquinas argues the truth of the antecedent earlier in the article] the human soul needs the senses in order to understand [nature, however, never fails in what is necessary in order to execute proper operations, as in the case of animals having a sensitive and motive soul, it gives them suitable organs of sense and motion], therefore the human soul would not have been instituted without the necessary aids of the senses. The senses, however, do not operate without corporeal organs. . . . Therefore the soul was not instituted without corporeal organs.[21]

[21] *ScG* II, c. 83. Cf. *De Anima,* n. 811 where a similar argument is made in response to those who might think that immobile animals have the capacity to move, but not the instruments: "And because someone might believe that they [immobile animals] do not lack a motive principle, but that they lack suitable instruments for motion; in order to remove doubt about this, he [Aristotle] adds that nature does nothing in vain [*frustra*], nor does it fail as to things that are necessary, except in mutilated and imperfect animals, as are monstrous animals: which monsters certainly occur outside the intention of nature, from the corruption of some principle in the seed. But immobile animals are perfect in their species, and are not mutilated as monsters are: A sign of which is that they generate individuals like to themselves, and they have due growth and decrease, which is not the case of mutilated animals; therefore in such animals nature does nothing in vain, nor does it fail as to things that are necessary. Whence it follows that if they had a principle of motion, they would have the organic parts disposed to progressive motion. Otherwise the motive principle in them would be superfluous, and the things necessary for the execution of the motive potency would be wanting. And this, however, we are able to accept: That to each thing in which a principle of life is present, organs suited for that principle are present; and that the parts of the body are for the sake of the parts of the soul."

Aquinas gives basically the same argument, based on the notion of soul as final cause of the body, in the *Compendium Theologiae*:

> Since, however, the soul is united to the body as form, [and] to each and every form, however, a proper matter corresponds, it is necessary that the body to which the soul for a second time is united be the same in definition and species with the body which it deposed through death. For the soul in the resurrection does not resume a heavenly body or an airy body, or the body of some other animal. . . .
>
> Further. As to the same form according to species is due [*debetur*] the same matter according to species; so to the same form according to number is due the same matter according to number: for as the soul of a cow cannot be the soul of the body of a horse, so the soul of this [one cow] cannot be the soul of another cow. It is necessary, therefore, since the rational soul remains numerically the same, that in the resurrection it be united again to the numerically same body.[22]

Just as cow souls in general require a suitable matter, i.e., certainly bodily parts through which the powers of the cow soul can be effective, so too each individual cow ought to have the particular bodily parts suited to the particular powers of its soul. Loss of these parts may come about due to injury, disease, or old age, but the addition of a whole and different body to a given soul would be in vain because the two would not be fitted to each other, and the body would thus hinder the soul.

A second argument that Aquinas gives is taken from the nature of the soul as form. The cosmic recycling theory again maintains that one cannot be a complete person without a body, but claims that any body will do. In other words, one needs a body to function as a person, but one does not need a particular body in order to be oneself. Aquinas argues that you could not be you without the particular body that you have. Nor could your soul be your soul if it were united to any other body than your

[22] *Compendium Theologiae*, c. 153. Cf. *ScG* II, c. 83: "[I]t was shown above that the soul is united to the body as its form. It is necessary that forms be proportioned to their proper matters, since they relate to each other as potency and act; a proper act, however, corresponds to a proper potency. Therefore one soul is not united to many bodies."

own. It is impossible that one and the same soul be united to diverse bodies:

> For human souls do not differ from one another in species, but only in number; otherwise humans would also differ in species. Differences according to number, however, are present according to material principles. It is necessary, therefore, that the diversity of human souls be drawn according to something material; not, however, such that matter be a part of the soul itself; for it was shown above that it [the human soul] is an intellectual substance, and that no such substance has matter. It remains, therefore, that according to the order to the diverse matters to which the souls are united, the diversity and plurality of souls is taken in the mode spoken of above. If therefore there are diverse bodies it is necessary that they have diverse souls united to them; therefore one soul cannot be united to many.[23]

If humans differed from one another by their soul or form alone, they would differ from one another in species as square does from triangle, and four from five. However, we plainly do not differ from one another in species. We have actual existence due to our souls, which are of the same species, but which differ from one another according to the diverse matter to which each soul is united and to which each corresponds even when the body ceases to be. Each of our souls is individualized by its union with a proper matter, and cannot be individualized again, and thus is incapable of being united to any other matter.[24]

We should note, however, that the above argument brings with it many familiar problems, since it is based upon the difficult-to-grasp notion of matter as principle of individuation. Perhaps the most acute problem in understanding individuation as it relates to the question of reincarnation regards the way in which the soul retains a relationship to a specific body. In a number of places Aquinas says that in order for the same person to come to life again, the same soul must be reunited to the same body.[25] What, however, makes a body the same body? In some

[23] *ScG* II, c. 83.

[24] Aquinas attributes this argument to Avicenna (*De Pot.*, q. 3, a. 10).

[25] Cf. *ScG* IV, c. 84: "[I]n order that a man rise again numerically the same, it is necessary that his essential parts be numerically the same. If, therefore, the body of the man rising again is not [composed] of this flesh and these bones from which he is now composed, the man will not be raised again numerically the same."

places, Aquinas seems to indicate that the same prime matter is needed in order to have the same body: "In the resurrection, however, both the numerically same soul will come back again, since it is incorruptible, and this numerically same body restored by divine power from the same dust into which it had disintegrated; and thus will the numerically same man rise again."[26] In other places, however, he seems to say that any suitable matter to which the soul could be united would constitute the same body. He acknowledges that the matter constituting the body changes during one's lifetime, and this without prejudice to one's individuality. Thus it is puzzling that he would hold that one would need (some of) the matter that had actually constituted one's body in order to have the same body, when new matter, so long as it is of the appropriate sort, would seem to do just as well.[27]

This problem notwithstanding, Aquinas insists that it is impossible for the human soul to be recycled in another body:

Further, in those things which are generated and corrupted, it is impossible that they come back again through generation the same in number; for since generation and corruption is a motion to substance in those things which are generated and corrupted, the same substance does not remain, as it remains in those things which move according to local motion. But if one soul were successively united to diverse bodies which were generated, man would return the same in number through generation; which according to Plato follows of necessity, who said that man is a soul clothed with a body. It even follows on any other position;

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[26] *Super Epistolas S. Pauli,* I Cor., n. 1015.

[27] Cf. *ScG* IV, c. 81: "In the body of man, while it lives, there are not always the same parts according to the matter, but only according to the form; according to the matter the parts in fact flow out and flow in. Nor does this prevent a man from being one in number from the beginning of his life even until the end. . . . [F]or the form and species of the individual parts of [the body] remain continuously through its whole life, but the matter of the parts is dissolved through the action of natural heat and is once again generated through food. There is not a numerically other man according to diverse parts and states of life, although not everything which is materially in man according to one state is in him according to another. Thus, therefore, it is not requisite, to this that a man rise again numerically the same, that everything which was materially in him according to his entire lifetime be taken up again, but only so much as suffices for completing an appropriate quantity, and it seems that what was more perfectly existing under the form and species of humanity is chiefly what is to be taken up again."

because, since the unity of a thing follows upon form as even does its being, it is necessary that those things be the same in number of which the form is one in number. Therefore it is not possible that one soul be united to diverse bodies.[28]

The body and the soul make up the same substance, the former being the potency and the latter the actualization,[29] so when the soul is united with some suitable matter it is going to give that matter the same being it gave to the matter it actualized before the person died.

[T]he form of other generable and corruptible things is not *per se* subsisting, such that they have the power to remain after the corruption of the composite, as is the case of the rational soul, which retains the being which it acquires in the body even after the body [corrupts], and in the participation of which being the body is drawn back [to life] through the resurrection, since the being of the body is not other than the being of the soul in the body; otherwise the conjunction of soul and body would be accidental; and thus no interruption has taken place in the substantial being of man such that it would not be possible for the numerically same individual to return due to an interruption in being, as happens even in other corrupted bodies, of which the being is completely interrupted, the form not remaining, the matter remaining, however, under another being.[30]

The two arguments just given do not simply show that it would be unfitting, and thus unnatural for the soul to be united

[28] *ScG* II, c. 83.

[29] Aquinas defines the soul as "the act of a natural body having life in potency" in *De Anima*, n. 230 (n. 229 specifies that it is the "first act"). From this definition he solves a certain doubt about the manner in which the soul and body make up one thing (n. 234): "And certain were positing some medium by which the soul was united to the body, and in some manner attached. But there is no room now for this doubt since it has been shown that the soul is the form of the body. . . . [I]t is shown in the eighth book of the *Metaphysics* that form is united to matter through itself [*per se*], as the act of it; and it is the same that matter be united to form as that matter exist in act. And this is even what he says here: that since one and being are said in many senses, namely, being in potency and being in act, that which is properly being and one is act. For as being in potency is not being simply, but relatively speaking [*secundum quid*], so too is it not one simply, but *secundum quid*: for in this manner something is said to be one even as it is said to be being. And therefore as the body has being through the soul as through form, so even is it united to the soul immediately, insofar as the soul is the form of the body."

[30] IV *Sent.*, d. 44, q. 1, a. 1. Cf. *ST* I-II, q. 4, a. 5, ad 2. Cf. *QD de Anima*, a. 19, ad 5: "'sense' is said in two senses. In one way in regard to the sensitive soul itself, which is the principle of potencies of this sort; and thus through sense an animal is an animal as

to any body other than its own, but that such a union is in fact impossible (on account of the nature of the human soul as self-subsistent form of the body).

The cosmic recycling theory, initially attractive because it recognizes both finality in nature and the natural character of the union of body and soul, ends up being a position little different from that which says that soul stands to body only as mover and not as form. For as Aquinas shows, the soul can be the form or act of only one body, and each soul and body are uniquely fitted to one another. If one imagines a given soul in another body, one in effect is denying that it is the particular form that it is because of its relation to the particular body of which it is the form. Thus in effect one is envisaging a particular soul as indifferent to any particular human body, rather than as something dependent upon one particular body for its proper completion.[31] Although a correct understanding of the nature of the soul as form of the body sufficiently shows the absolute impossibility that the soul give existence to a body other than its own, a second sort of argument against reincarnation can be used against a person who mistakenly thinks that the soul could actualize a second body. This is the argument based on the order of final causality, specifically the order of the body to the soul which is further ordered to the life activities of the organism. The argument proceeds by showing that souls when reincarnated would be in a bodies lack-

through its proper form. In this mode sensible is taken from sense, according as it is the difference constitutive of animal. In another way, sense is said in regard to the sensitive potency itself, which, since it is a natural property, as was said, is not constitutive of the species, but only follows upon the species. In this sense, therefore, sense does not remain in the separated soul, but only in the first sense does it remain. For in man the essence of the sensible and rational soul is the same. Whence nothing prohibits a man who rises again from being the same numerical animal. For in order that something be numerically the same, it suffices that the essential principles be numerically the same; it is not required that the properties and the accidents be numerically the same."

[31] While "the human soul differs from other [material] forms, because its being does not depend on the body, nor does its being individuated depend on the body; for anything, insofar as it is one, is of itself undivided, and distinct from others" (*QD de Anima,* a. 3), nonetheless since the soul has the nature of a part, it does not attain its proper perfection apart from the whole of which it is a part, and the identity of this whole depends on the presence of the same matter, i.e., the same body, as well as the same form. These considerations ground one of Aquinas's arguments for the necessity of the resurrection of the body (cf. *ScG* IV, c. 79).

ing the tools suited to them; yet it is not possible that natural processes result in things being regularly reduced to frustrated states.

C. Another Problem with the Theories of Reincarnation

Another problem with most theories of reincarnation is that they provide no explanation for why most of us forget our previous life or lives. One notable exception is Plato's theory which accounts for the soul's forgetting in terms of the soul's being aggravated by the body which it enters. In the *Meno*, Plato offers as support for this view evidence which appears to show that people do not learn, but rather recollect things known to them from a previous life. Aquinas gives numerous arguments against the notion that learning is remembering, one of which is that if this were so, a person who was blind in his present life would be able to have scientific knowledge about color since he had sense knowledge of it in a prior life where he was not blind—which of course is not the case.[32]

III. Arguments Against Reincarnation Based upon a Dialectical Examination of the Possibility of Supernatural Causality

Reincarnation could not be a natural phenomenon, for the reasons we have just seen. Another way of trying to defend reincarnation is by attributing it to supernatural causes. One alternative would be to say that it is due to "cosmic necessity."[33] This account is hardly satisfactory, however, since it leaves unexplained from whence the necessity, and moreover, why in this instance this necessity runs counter to the finality observed in nature when it does not do so as a general rule. Another more likely alternative is to ascribe it to the willful intervention of supernatural powers. To examine this position fully would be an

[32] *ScG* II, c. 83; in the same place he gives three other arguments vs. this position, including an interesting analysis of the *Meno* (cf. *Meno* 81a, 81b). Note that in *ScG* II, c. 83 Aquinas destroys another root of reincarnation that we have not mentioned, namely, the eternity of the world or at least the unendingness of the future generation of humans.

[33] Cf. *ScG* II, c. 89 for a discussion of a particular "cosmic necessity" theory.

extremely difficult task inasmuch as it would involve examining the existence and nature of supernatural powers. Thus the arguments offered in this section will be dialectical.

Two possible motives are generally offered for why supernatural powers would reincarnate human beings, namely: 1) in order to reward or punish them; 2) as a way of showing mercy to them.

Let us consider the first possibility: It is evident that it is pointless to punish someone, if they are unaware that they have done anything wrong, and could not possibly be aware. Most of us are unaware of having had a previous life. Therefore to punish us for what we did in a previous life must be due either to stupidity or to cruelty. Certainly, stupidity and maliciousness are not characteristics that most people attribute to supernatural beings. Those, then, who hold that these consequences of the reincarnation-as-punishment-or-reward theory are untenable[34] must reject the theory itself if they are to be logically consistent.

Another motivation sometimes offered for why a supernatural power (or powers) would cause us to be reincarnated is that this is due to mercy, for successive reincarnations give us extra chances to live wholesome lives. The supernatural being in its mercy does not want to condemn us definitively for the wrongdoings of our first life.

This explanation suffers from a number of defects: First, if most of us do not remember our previous life, we cannot appreciate our present life as a merciful second chance. Second, if the supernatural being in its mercy does not want to condemn us for the wrongdoings of our first life, why would it condemn us for them in later lives? And what if the cycle of reincarnation stops when certain individuals who had lived good earlier lives, have gone downhill in their most recent life? Where is the mercy in

[34] Indeed, Aquinas shows that these things cannot be true of God; cf. *ST* I, q. 6 and q. 14. According to Aline Lizotte, Hinduism envisages God in quite another manner: God creates the world "on the basis of an élan vital born by libido. Creation is then a cosmic error, an act of self-negation on the part of the creator, the entry in the world of multiplicity which is the destroyer of the One" ("La Réincarnation est-elle compatible avec la foi?" *Famille Chrétienne* 767 [Sept. 24, 1992]: 50).

that? One could of course ask a similar question on the supposition that a person has only one life. Multiplying lives, however, increases the amount of time one has, but it does not increase the likelihood that one meet one's final destiny in a good rather than a bad moral state. Moreover, a second chance is reasonably given in two situations: The first is when the original test was poorly designed. But most will not countenance that the cosmic tester be lacking in intelligence. A second ground for retesting is found when some factor outside the control of the individual being tested hampers his or her performance (e.g., sickness or inexperience). Yet, while Aquinas grants that bad upbringing and lack of intelligence have a detrimental impact on one's moral development, he also maintains that all human beings in virtue of their intellect and free will are able to overcome these handicaps and live morally acceptable, albeit morally diminished lives (as happens in the case of those who suffer from invincible ignorance and those who never arrive at virtue, but only at continence).[35]

Aquinas would plainly reject the version of reincarnation that assumes that the cycle will not stop until all become good. (Some stones take longer to be smoothed by the waves than others, but given enough time they eventually get there.) There are many obvious problems with this theory, the most blatant of which is that it in effect denies free will, since we all become good whether we want to be or not (or, alternatively, we all eventually have to want to be truly good).

Aquinas does not give the arguments presented in this section. He probably saw little need for them given that his argument based on the nature of the soul as formal cause of the body shows that it is impossible even for God to reincarnate a human soul. The closest Aquinas comes to addressing the possibility that reincarnation is explicable by supernatural causes is when he discusses whether those who hold that the soul pre-exists the body can offer any explanation for why the soul becomes united with the body.[36] The dialectical arguments we have offered here,

[35] Cf. *In Decem Libros Ethicorum Aristotelis ad Nicomachum Expositio,* ed. Raymundi M. Spiazzi, O.P. (Turin: Marietti, 1964), Bk. III, lec. 1 and 2.

[36] Cf. *ScG* II, c. 83 and *ST* I, q. 118, a. 3.

however, are based on what Aquinas holds regarding the nature of God, punishment/reward, voluntary action, and free will.

IV. Conclusion

All theories of reincarnation in some way affirm that soul and body are two independent entities. Crucial to Aquinas's refutation of reincarnation as a possible natural phenomenon is an exposition of the correct understanding of the relation between the individual person's soul and body. To recapitulate: Aquinas offers two related arguments, one from the nature of soul as form, and another from the nature of the activities of the soul as final cause. Aquinas shows that the soul can be the form or act of only one body because the soul is the individual soul that it is because of the particular body to which it is related, and because the soul, being a subsisting form, gives the same being to the body to which it is united after death as to the one with which it first acquired its being. Each soul and body are thus uniquely fitted to one another. A further consequence of this relation is that any body will *not* do when it comes to the exercise of the powers of the soul, neither those that require a bodily organ nor those that depend on activities that involve a bodily organ (as the exercise of the intellect depends upon imagining). As for theories that invoke supernatural causes, they are to be rejected because they entail the absurd consequences that the supernatural being would have to be stupid or malicious. Moreover, even if there were some reasonable motive for the supernatural power to reincarnate humans, it could not do so. It is no more possible to unite the soul of a deceased individual with a different body than it is to unite this very shape or accidental form of one material object to another material object.[37]

[37] God, however, could join the human soul to an alien matter, but in this case it would not be the actualization of that matter; rather, it would be the prisoner of an otherwise actualized matter. Such a union would not be by nature, but only by force. It would thus be painful to the soul, much as Plato thought of the soul's union to its own body. Cf. *QD de Anima*, a. 21: "Utrum anima separata possit pati poenam ab igne corporeo."

V. EPILOGUE

One is correct in noting that the above arguments are not likely to convince most of the people who subscribe to reincarnation. This is partly due to the fact that some of the arguments are difficult, presupposing knowledge about the human soul: its immortality, its relation to the body.[38] And it is partly due to the fact that a certain number believe because they want to believe it—after all most popular versions of reincarnation seem to absolve one from responsibility by leaving it vague about when, if ever, beyond the present life one will be rewarded or punished for one's actions, some versions even going even so far as to claim that one will eventually arrive at a perfected state in spite of oneself. Why, then, make the difficult choices one would have to make if one only lived once and one wanted to be good?

There is a third reason, as well, why some believe in reincarnation, namely, because they think that there exist genuine cases of people who are reincarnated. These people are of course reasoning correctly when faced with an argument that supposedly proves that a universal negative statement is true and with one genuine contradictory instance they reject the supposed proof (or at least reject its universal scope, since some arguments do show something to be true for the most part). What people commonly overlook, however, is that unless they themselves have observed an instance of something, they do not know it to be a fact. Rather they are either simply believing that the case is genuine on the word of the person claiming it or they are *inferring* that the case is genuine from signs (some of which signs may only be known by taking the word of a person who claims to be reincarnated). The case is not a direct object of their observation. When one relies on the words of another, there is plainly the possibility that that other intentionally or unintentionally deceive one. Thus, people are mistaken about thinking that cases known at second hand settle the question of reincarnation. They fail to realize that

[38] Cf. *ScG* II, c. 68 where Aquinas gives an impressive list of the authors who misunderstood the relation of body to soul, each in a somewhat different way.

claims could be accepted as only probable at best, and that only after being documented.[39]

In addition to confusing knowing with believing or opining, people are often ignorant of the sort of criteria to apply in order to determine whether there is any plausibility to the supposedly reincarnated person's claim. What are the signs by which one judges the authenticity of such a claim? Knowledge of these criteria pertains more directly to science than to philosophy, so it would be out of place to go into them here. We must also point out, however, that some of the supposed evidence for reincarnation cannot be easily dismissed, either on scientific grounds or on philosophical grounds, and may be attributable to the actions of supernatural beings, namely, demons.[40] But an examination of this too falls outside philosophy's scope.

[39] The other thing about cases is that even when one oneself has experience of paranormal phenomena, *one must be careful to distinguish the experience from the opinion one readily forms to explain the experience.* For example, a person dreams that the next party would be a flop, and it in fact turns out to be a flop. Did that person foresee the future? Or did he or she simply project conscious or unconscious misgivings about the party's success in his or her dream, and this dream just happened actually to correspond with reality? Or was the person perhaps influenced by the dream to do things which brought the event about (self-fulfilling prophecy)?

[40] Aquinas speaks in many places about demons revealing hidden things to humans in order to lead them away from God (cf. *De Pot.*, q. 6, a. 10; *ScG* III, c. 154). Most often he speaks of demons providing people with information about the future. It is not hard, however, to see how demons could inform people of things that happened before those persons' births in order that these people might be convinced that they were reincarnated (and/or convince others that this is the case), thus destroying their belief in individual judgment, the last judgment, and the resurrection of the body.

NATURAL LAW, IMPARTIALISM, AND OTHERS' GOOD*

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The title of a recent article by Henry Veatch and Joseph Rautenberg asks "Does the Grisez-Finnis-Boyle Moral Philosophy Rest on a Mistake?"[1]; the answer that the text of that article produces is, unsurprisingly, "Yes." Veatch and Rautenberg argue that despite superficial similarities between the moral theory defended by Germain Grisez, John Finnis, and Joseph Boyle and the eudaimonist moral theories defended by Aristotle and Aquinas, the Grisez-Finnis-Boyle (hereafter "GFB") view is more akin to utilitarian impartialism than to Aristotelian or Thomistic eudaimonism. I shall argue that although Veatch and Rautenberg are correct to label the GFB view a type of impartialism, they misunderstand both the character of its impartialism and the mistake on which it rests. A clearer understanding of what is at issue between impartialist and eudaimonist natural law theories will bring into focus the severity of the problem faced in trying to decide between these accounts.

I

Call the thesis that all correct practical reasoning proceeds from one's own good as a principle "eudaimonism"; call the thesis that all correct practical reasoning proceeds from the good

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[1] Henry Veatch and Joseph Rautenberg, "Does the Grisez-Finnis-Boyle Moral Philosophy Rest on a Mistake?" *Review of Metaphysics* 44 (1991): 807-830.

impartially considered "impartialism." As Veatch and Rautenberg point out, the GFB view endorses impartialism: from the point of view of practical reason, whether a good is instantiated in you or in me makes no difference.[2] This impartialism places the GFB view on the side of the utilitarians against the eudaimonism of Aristotle and Aquinas. That Grisez, Finnis, and Boyle part ways with Aristotle and Aquinas on this issue is, of course, no argument against the GFB view. Veatch and Rautenberg attempt to call the GFB impartialism into question, though, by arguing both that the GFB impartialism has absurd consequences and that the argument by which Grisez, Finnis, and Boyle reach the impartialist thesis contains plain errors.

Veatch and Rautenberg hold that the impartialism advocated by the GFB view is a result of modern moral philosophy's disconnecting the concept of a good from that of human needs, desires, and interests:

> The notion of 'good' [on the 'modern' view] needs to be denatured and completely dissociated from all reference to our liking, desiring, or finding pleasing those things which we take to be good. Instead, all 'goods' are to be converted into so many 'oughts', and as 'oughts' they are to be furthered and pursued.[3]

On the modern view, to assert that pleasure is a good is to assert only that pleasure ought to be promoted; to say that knowledge is a good is to say only that knowledge ought to be pursued. From this sundering of the relationship between the idea of a good and that of human needs and interests it is a small step

[2] Although both utilitarianism and the GFB view endorse impartialism, they differ importantly in that utilitarianism is consequentialist whereas the GFB view is not. To move from the impartialist thesis that the good impartially considered is the starting point for practical reason to the utilitarian thesis that one ought to act so as to maximize overall goodness requires, among other presuppositions, the assumption that another's good and my own are commensurable. This premise the GFB view denies; no two instantiations of basic values between which choice is possible are commensurable. See Germain Grisez, Joseph Boyle, and John Finnis, "Practical Principles, Moral Truth, and Ultimate Ends," *American Journal of Jurisprudence* 32 (1987): 99-151, esp. 110.

[3] Veatch and Rautenberg, "Grisez-Finnis-Boyle Moral Philosophy," 816.

indeed to impartialism: once goods are no longer such in virtue of anyone's needing or desiring them, there is no reason to promote one's own good over that of anyone else: "Instead, all goods having now been converted into so many 'oughts', it would seem to follow that this cannot but impose on the moral agent a strict obligation to further and promote every and all goods equally and impartially."[4]

Veatch and Rautenberg argue that this impartialism has absurd implications. First, it makes the connection between our reasons for reckoning something good and our reasons for furthering or promoting it completely unintelligible. For on this view, what is good is simply what one ought to further and promote, and one's reasons for furthering and promoting it derive from this moral "ought." We reckon something good, however, because it fulfills a need or interest or desire. Now, to be sure, there is no inconsistency here. What there is, though, is a relationship between desire for something and a moral requirement to promote or pursue it that is totally surd.

Secondly, Veatch and Rautenberg claim that impartialism would lead to an immobility of practical reason. If "a moral agent may not show the slightest preference or partiality for one good over against another," then he or she "is under a strict obligation to work for and to promote all goods equally and impartially."[5] Veatch and Rautenberg wonder whether rational action would be possible on such a view, given the vast array of goods to be promoted or pursued:

> How can any one moral agent work to further all goods and all values, not only his own, but those of all others as well, and do so all at once without showing the slightest partiality for any one good that might prompt him to choose that one as over against another?[6]

The sincere impartialist would, on Veatch and Rautenberg's view, become the practical equivalent of Buridan's ass, unable to fix upon a subset of goods to pursue, and hence would be unable to pursue any.

[4] Ibid., 815.
[5] Ibid., 817.
[6] Ibid.

Granting for a moment that these absurd consequences follow from impartialism, it might be wondered why the GFB view endorses it. Veatch and Rautenberg hold that the GFB impartialism is the result of a mistake concerning what the principle of universalizability requires of moral judgments. It is often taken to be an essential feature of moral judgments that they be universalizable, that is, that they be applicable to all persons, and that they be formulable without use of proper names, using only predicates and logical operators.[7] A difficulty seems to result, though, if one attempts to universalize judgments concerning what is good. For what is good is typically indexed to someone's needs or interests; but "the fact that I hold a thing to be good, or to be of value to me, certainly does not imply that anyone or everyone else must therefore hold it to be good or of value for him as well."[8] Given that what is good is initially picked out by reference to human needs and interests, we may decide either that judgments about what is good are never moral judgments (because they are not universalizable) or that at least some uses of "good" are disconnected from human needs and interests. "Modern ethics," on Veatch and Rautenberg's view, opts for the latter. Thus, "good" is stripped of its connection to human needs and interests, and becomes "so many 'oughts'."[9]

As Veatch and Rautenberg point out, however, this line of reasoning is specious. The principle of universalizability does not enjoin us to disconnect the notion of "good" from all human needs and interests; it enjoins us only to disconnect the notion of "good" from any particular set of human needs and interests. In order to universalize the judgment that knowledge is good, for example, we need not disconnect knowledge from its character

[7] Rawls divides the principle of universalizability as I have formulated it here into two requirements: that of universality, according to which moral principles "must hold for everyone in virtue of their being moral persons," and that of generality, according to which moral principles must employ only those predicates that "express general properties and relations." See John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), 131-132. Rawls recognizes that universality and generality do not entail impartialism; see 136.

[8] Veatch and Rautenberg, "Grisez-Finnis-Boyle Moral Philosophy," 812.

[9] Ibid., 816.

as fulfilling for humans; we need only note that for each human, it is the case that knowledge is fulfilling for that human. Goods may be indexed to human interests without being indexed to any particular human's interests. The judgment that G is good is therefore perfectly universalizable: it means that for anyone in a particular set of circumstances, G would fulfill some interest any person in those circumstances would have.[10]

If Veatch and Rautenberg were correct in their characterization of the impartialism of the GFB view, as well as in their accounts both of how Grisez, Finnis, and Boyle arrive at that impartialism and of what implications follow from it, then the GFB view would be hopeless. I shall argue, though, that Veatch and Rautenberg go astray from the start in their characterization of the GFB impartialism: the GFB view does not advocate any disconnection between the concept of a good and that of human interests. Grisez, Finnis, and Boyle arrive at their impartialism not by way of any concerns about moral language, but by way of a certain account of what is self-evidently grasped as good by practical reason. And further, given the proper characterization of the GFB impartialism, the absurd consequences that Veatch and Rautenberg impute to it do not follow.

Veatch and Rautenberg hold that the impartialism that is characteristic of modern ethics generally, and of the GFB and utilitarian views in particular, is the result of the disconnection of the notion of goodness from that of human interests. Significantly, the only author that Veatch and Rautenberg cite on behalf of this view is G.E. Moore, who undoubtedly held it: according to Moore, one can determine whether a state of affairs is intrinsically good by isolating in imagination that state of affairs; if one judges that it would be good for such a state of affairs to exist, that state of affairs is intrinsically good. On Moore's view, the strict application of this test results in the detaching of the notion of "good" from any relationship to human interests.[11] But Moore is, I think, the exception rather

[10] Ibid., 829-830.

[11] See G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica* (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1988), esp. §50 where he attacks Sidgwick for holding that the good is necessarily connected to human interests.

than the rule in modern ethics. To attempt to prove this point here, though, would take us off the track; our concern is whether Grisez, Finnis, and Boyle disconnect the concept of a good from that of human needs, interests, and desires. It is clear, however, that Grisez, Finnis, and Boyle do not make this move. For the central concept of their moral theory is that of a basic good or basic value, that is, a good sought for its own sake. But on the GFB view, the goodness of any basic value is constituted by its contributing to human fulfillment, and the reason to promote the basic values is their contribution to human fulfillment. To judge that something is a basic good is to judge that it is "a general form of human well-being" and a "fulfillment of a human potentiality."[12] The fundamental concern of ethics, then, is the fulfillment of persons,[13] and the "basic goods are basic reasons for acting because they are aspects of the fulfillment of persons."[14] This is *not* a moral view that reduces goods to "so many 'oughts.'"

The GFB view does not, therefore, transform claims of the form "G is a good" to claims of the form "agents are morally required to pursue or promote G."[15] How, then, does it embrace impartialism? It embraces impartialism by holding that while the character of something as a good does depend on its being fulfilling of human interests, its character as a good does not depend on the *identity* of the person whose interests that good fulfills: "As intelligible, the basic goods have no proper names attached to them. So that they can be understood as goods and provide reasons for acting whether, in a particular case, the agent or another may benefit."[16] The "as intelligible" in this statement contrasts with "as sensible": for considered not in their

[12] John Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), 72.

[13] Germain Grisez, *The Way of the Lord Jesus, Volume I: Christian Moral Principles* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983), 115.

[14] Grisez, Boyle, Finnis, "Practical Principles," 114.

[15] Indeed, given Finnis's emphatic assertion that the judgments that the basic values are goods are not moral judgments, but rather "the evaluative substratum of all moral judgments" (*Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 59), it is hard to see why Veatch and Rautenberg would think that the Grisez-Finnis-Boyle view turns goods into so many "oughts."

[16] Grisez, Boyle, Finnis, "Practical Principles," 114.

intelligible aspect (that is, as exerting a pull on one's intelligence) but only in their sensible aspect (that is, as exerting a pull on one's feelings), the basic goods are agent-centered, for our feelings are swayed more by the prospect of the participation in basic values either by ourselves or by those close to us than by the prospect of such participation by those in no special relationship to us. Considered in their intelligible aspect, though, my good and the good of any other person are indistinguishable.

Why is it, though, that these goods are indistinguishable by practical reason? This impartialism is not the result of an application of the principle of universalizability; as Veatch and Rautenberg make clear, such an application would be a misapplication. Rather, the GFB impartialism springs from their view that what is grasped by practical reason as good is simply participation in the basic values, not participation in the basic values by a certain person or persons. Consider basic value V. It is the view of Grisez, Finnis, and Boyle that what your practical reason grasps self-evidently as good is simply participation-in-V, not participation-in-V-by-you. And if participation-in-V is what is grasped as good by practical reason, then one is required in reason to be impartial between one's own participation in V and another's participation in V, for both are equally participations in V.

From his earliest writings on natural law to his most recent discussions, Finnis has defended this account of why reason requires impartiality among all those who can partake of the basic goods:

> [O]ne is confronted not only with the pull of one's experienced desire for self-preservation [for example], but also with the concept that human life [for example] is a value to be realized and respected, and an awareness that the value is realized as much in your life as mine. Intelligence thus faces the problem, which realization of the value to pursue, and cannot solve the problem by declaring that my life is more valuable, as such, than yours.[17]

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[17] John Finnis, "Natural Law and Unnatural Acts," *Heythrop Journal* 11 (1970): 368.

> [T]he basic goods are human goods, and can in principle be pursued, realized, and participated in by any human being. Another person's survival, his coming to know, his creativity, his all-round flourishing, may not interest me, may not concern me, may in any event be beyond my power to affect. But have I any reason to deny that they are really good, or that they are fit matters of interest, concern, and favour by that man and *by all those who have to do with him*?. . . we can add, to the second requirement of fundamental impartiality of recognition of each of the basic forms of good, a third requirement: of fundamental impartiality among the human subjects who are or may be partakers of those goods.[18]

> One can consider as desirable the participation of other people in goods of the same sort, i.e. one can think it good that other people, even people who do not engage one's affections at all, should be able to act (or to share in the results of action) under the same description: what at the level of mere feeling is radically different (his securing a good and my securing a good) becomes, at the level of understanding, significantly 'the same'.[19]

> At the level of understanding your good and my good are indistinguishable in value. I may be moved to promote my own good over yours, but my pursuit of my good in preference to yours is the result of emotion, not of the recognition of intelligible reasons for action.[20]

If Veatch and Rautenberg have mischaracterized the impartialism of the GFB view, however, they have also mischaracterized the impartialism of at least the most historically prominent versions of utilitarianism. It is instructive to note the similarity between Finnis's argument for impartialism and Sidgwick's argument in *The Methods of Ethics* that philosophical intuitionism leads to the principle of utility. Sidgwick argues that the self-evidence of a principle forbidding arbitrariness provides the basis for a dialectical argument against the egoist: so long as the egoist holds that desirable consciousness is good, he or she is committed to the claim that desirable consciousness is just as good when instantiated in another as it is when instantiated in

[18] Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 106-107 (emphasis added).

[19] John Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 46.

[20] John Finnis, "Natural Law and Legal Reasoning," in *Natural Law Theory: Contemporary Essays*, ed. Robert George (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 149.

him- or herself. The egoist would therefore be acting contrary to reason if he or she were to promote his or her lesser good at the expense of the greater good of others.[21] Both Finnis and Sidgwick rely on the following claim: if something is unqualifiedly good, then it must be just as good when instantiated in person A as it would be when instantiated in person B. Both Finnis and Sidgwick hold that participation in certain values is unqualifiedly good: for Finnis, the basic values of life, play, knowledge, religion, etc.[22]; for Sidgwick, desirable consciousness.[23] Both suggest that what results from the injunction against partiality is a requirement to see the world from a God's-eye point of view: Finnis likens one who fulfills this requirement to an "ideal observer,"[24] whereas Sidgwick likens this impartial person to one who takes "the point of view . . . of the Universe" in his or her moral judgment.[25] For both Sidgwick and Finnis, the good is essentially related to its desirability for human persons, but the identity of the person in whom the good is instantiated is irrelevant from the point of view of practical reason.[26]

For the moment we may bracket the issue of whether the form of argument endorsed by Finnis and Sidgwick is persuasive in order to focus on the issue of whether the absurd consequences that Veatch and Rautenberg assert to follow from impartialism do in fact follow from it. The first of the two absurd implications is that if impartialism is true, then one's reason for holding something to be good and one's reason to promote the good are not

[21] Henry Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics,* 7th edition (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1981), 382.

[22] Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 81-90.

[23] Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics,* 395-407.

[24] Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 108.

[25] Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics*, 382.

[26] Sidgwick is not the only utilitarian writer attracted to this strategy. When questioned in correspondence about the dubious proof of the greatest happiness principle presented in the fourth chapter of *Utilitarianism,* John Stuart Mill's reply seems to be that his argument was intended to show that if one takes his or her own happiness as a good, he or she must admit that others' happiness is a good as well, and that the sum of all of these goods is itself a good. See the *Later Letters of John Stuart Mill*, vol. 16 of *Collected Works* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 1414. For this reference I am indebted to Alan Ryan's "Introduction" to John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, *Utilitarianism and Other Essays* (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), 50.

intelligibly connected. For we *characterize* something as good because of its capacity to meet a human interest; but on Veatch and Rautenberg's formulation of impartialism, the *reason* to promote the good is simply that we are morally bound to do so. But given the proper formulation of the GFB impartialism, the relationship between how something is recognized as a good and the reasons for promoting or pursuing it is not surd; that relationship is perfectly intelligible. One's reason for recognizing something as a good is that it conduces to human fulfillment (not necessarily one's own); one's reason for pursuing or promoting something that is good is that it conduces to human fulfillment (once more, not necessarily one's own). Hence the unintelligibility that results from the Veatch-Rautenberg characterization of impartialism is absent on a proper understanding of the GFB view.

Neither does impartialism turn a sincere impartialist into a Buridan's ass for fear of showing partiality. Veatch and Rautenberg seem to think that the requirement of impartiality is a requirement not to show preference for any good over another. But this is not right; the requirement of impartiality is a requirement not to devalue any instantiation of a good in one's deliberation because of the location of its instantiation. Hence, if one were a utilitarian impartialist, one could act to realize certain goods in oneself and not in others if realization of the former would produce greater good than the realization of the latter. In so doing, one need not violate the requirement of impartiality by devaluing the good that could be produced in others; one need only recognize that the good to be produced in oneself is the greater good. No arbitrary partiality is displayed in such a case. Of course, the GFB view rejects the commensurability of instantiations of basic values, but this rejection of commensurability conjoined with the requirement of impartiality does not lead to paralysis either. For each of us is in a better position to promote certain instantiations of basic goods—e.g., those instantiated in oneself and in those close to one—rather than others. And, further, it must be remembered that action is not without desire: one's sensible desires toward some instantiations of basic values rather than others may determine which goods one acts to pro-

mote, and this can be done without acting contrary to reason, provided that one does not do so on the belief that instantiations of basic values in some persons are intrinsically more valuable than instantiations of basic values in others.

The GFB impartialism neither proceeds from the shoddy reasoning that Veatch and Rautenberg place at its source nor implies the absurd consequences that Veatch and Rautenberg impute to it. If advocates of the eudaimonist thesis are to challenge impartialism, then they must produce alternative arguments showing that the GFB impartialism generates unpalatable consequences or that the GFB impartialism rests on a different kind of mistake. I shall take the latter option: I shall argue that Grisez, Finnis, and Boyle inadequately support the claim that what is grasped as good by practical reason is participation in basic values as such and not participation in basic values by oneself.

Consider once again the comparison between Finnis's and Sidgwick's arguments for impartialism. Both assert that if one takes the instantiation of a certain value to be good, then one must in reason admit that an instantiation of that value is just as good in one person as in another. Yet in spite of the close similarity between these arguments, Finnis and Sidgwick do not reach a conclusion of the same form. Finnis concludes that partiality is as such unreasonable. Sidgwick concludes that there are competing principles of practical reason, one of which declares partiality unreasonable, the other of which declares partiality eminently reasonable.[27] Whence the difference?

The argument which leads from philosophical intuitionism to the principle of utility only functions, on Sidgwick's view, against the egoist who accepts that desirable consciousness is good as such, and not merely that his or her desirable consciousness is good for him or her.

> If the Egoist strictly confines himself to stating his conviction that he ought to take his own happiness or pleasure as his ultimate end, there seems to be no opening for any line of reasoning to lead him to

[27] Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics*, 498.

> Universal Hedonism as a first principle; it cannot be proved that the difference between his own happiness and another's happiness is not *for him* all-important. . . When, however, the Egoist puts forward, implicitly or explicitly, the proposition that his happiness or pleasure is Good, not only *for him* but from the point of view of the Universe, . . . then it becomes relevant to point out to him that his happiness cannot be a more important part of Good, taken universally, than the equal happiness of any other person.[28]

One who denies that desirable consciousness as such is good need not recognize that another's desirable consciousness is as good as one's own is, or even that it is good at all. Now, Sidgwick's response on behalf of the egoist is applicable to Finnis's argument against partiality in pursuit of the basic values. Finnis's argument for impartialism depends on the truth of the claim that what practical reason grasps is that participation-in-V is good, and not simply that participation-in-V-by-me is good. Yet, if I understand Veatch and Rautenberg correctly, their position is that all that is grasped by practical reason is that one's own participation in basic values is good for him or her; we may also recognize that another's participation in basic values is good *for that person*, but (unless that other is in a special relationship to us) that recognition is of no practical import. Does the GFB view have the resources to show that the Veatch-Rautenberg view is mistaken on this point?

As we have seen, Finnis insists that at the level of understanding one's own participation in basic values and others' participation in basic values is indistinguishable *qua* good. Consider the following analogy. Suppose that you were given the task of collecting red objects, and that is the only aim you are pursuing. You collect fire engines, and cherries, and stop signs. If one day you were to refuse to allow Macintosh apples into your collection, though, merely because they are apples, we would find your behavior to be irrationally arbitrary. To refuse to allow red apples into your collection of red objects merely because they are apples is to refuse to allow red apples into your collection for no reason at all; even though it is an apple, it is just

[28] Ibid., 420-421.

as red as a cherry, or a fire engine, or a stop sign, and therefore should be included in your collection of red objects.

We might think that this imagined case of the arbitrary collector is strictly analogous to the condition of the eudaimonist of the Veatch-Rautenberg variety. To treat others' participation in basic values not as a good is to dismiss it arbitrarily, without any reason at all; even though your participation in V is not my participation in V, it is just as good as mine is.[29] The cases are not analogous, however. One who holds only that his or her participation in V is (self-evidently) good is not claiming that another's participation in V is any less a participation in V than his or her own participation in V is. Rather, one who holds such a view is claiming only that the other's participation in V is not (self-evidently) good. It is arbitrary to include a cherry in a collection of red objects yet not to include an apple; and it would be arbitrary to count one's own knowledge as participation-in-knowledge yet not to count another's knowledge as participation-in-knowledge; but it is not *prima facie* arbitrary to count one's own knowledge as a good yet not to count another's knowledge as a good. On the eudaimonist view, one need merely hold that the goodness of an act of participation in a basic value is constituted jointly by the fact of participation and the fact that it is oneself that is doing the participating. Of course, one who holds this view can affirm that knowledge is a human good, a good for all humans. What he or she means is that my knowing is good for me, your knowing is good for you, and due to the capacities and potentialities that humans have by nature, for each human his or her knowing is good for him or her. This is what it means, such a person would say, for knowledge to be a human good. But it does not commit one to the view that one ought to be impartial between his or her own and another's participation in any basic value.

[29] I am not assuming that for the eudaimonist his or her good is never constituted at least in part by others' good, such as in the case of friendship. When I refer to "others" I mean it strictly to mean those with whom one is in no special relationship; they are *completely* other.

The impartialist might concede that there is *prima facie* no arbitrariness, but might claim that upon closer inspection the arbitrariness becomes apparent. Derek Parfit describes a hedonist who cares a tremendous amount about his future experiences, with the following exception: he does not concern himself with pains or pleasures that will beset him on any future Tuesday. This person has "Future-Tuesday-Indifference."[30] This is not to say that on Tuesdays this hedonist does not care about his present pleasures and pains; it is merely to say that when considering future pleasures and pains he treats all of those pleasures and pains that will occur on future Tuesdays with total indifference. Thus, if this person has a choice between undergoing a severe pain on a future Tuesday and a mild pain on a future Wednesday, the hedonist will choose the severe pain on Tuesday. Parfit writes that "This man's pattern of concern is irrational. Why does he prefer agony on Tuesday to mild pain on any other day? Simply because the agony will be on a Tuesday. *This is no reason.*"[31]

We might think that one who treats one's own participation in values as good and others' participation not as good is evidently as irrationally arbitrary as one who has Future-Tuesday-Indifference. As we might point out that the pain experienced on a future Tuesday will be just as painful as the pain experienced on a future Wednesday, we might point out that another's participation in basic values is just as much participation in basic values as one's own is. But we are back to where we started. The eudaimonist should grant that another's participation in basic values is just as much participation in basic values as his or her own is. But the difference resides in whether one should recognize that the other's participation is good.

At this point, the impartialist might ask for an explanation of why the fact that participation in a value is one's own is sufficient to transform it into an intelligible good. The eudaimonist

[30] Derek Parfit, *Reasons and Persons* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 124.
[31] Ibid.

should reply, though, that the relevance of the fact that participation in a value is one's own is deep, too deep to be explained by any other considerations. As Sidgwick writes,

> It would be contrary to Common Sense to deny that the distinction between any one individual and any other is real and fundamental, and that consequently "I" am concerned with the quality of my existence as an individual in a sense, fundamentally important, in which I am not concerned with the quality of the existence of other individuals.[32]

The eudaimonist might ask the impartialist: "Don't you think that your own good is of special concern to you, and not just because you are in a better position to promote it? Don't you think that it has a 'first claim', so to speak, on your efforts?" The eudaimonist might try to bring the point home by drawing the following picture. "There is someone on the other side of the earth with whom you have no contact, with whom you have no special relationship. There is no doubt that participation-in-knowledge is good for this person. But do you think that this person's participation-in-knowledge is a good in the same way and with the same practical relevance that your participation-in-knowledge is a good?"

These considerations do not, of course, show that impartialism is false. They do show, however, that we cannot at this point be confident that practical reason self-evidently grasps that participation in basic values is good as such. It may appear that we are at an impasse. For the conflict here—whether what my practical reason grasps as good is participation-in-V, or participation-in-V-by-me—is a conflict concerning the self-evident first principles of practical reason. How can this conflict be resolved?

[32] Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics*, 498. The reason why Sidgwick encloses the "I" in quotation marks seems to be that Sidgwick questioned whether there is any such subsisting individual: "Grant that the Ego is merely a system of coherent phenomena, that the permanent identical 'I' is not a fact but a fiction, as Hume and his followers maintain; why, then, should one part of the series of feelings into which the Ego is resolved be concerned with another part of the same series, any more than with any other series? However, I will not press this question now; since I admit that Common Sense does not think it worthwhile to supply the individual with reasons for seeking his own interest" (*The Methods of Ethics*, 419). Parfit carries out the project of deducing the ethical consequences of a Humean account of personal identity in *Reasons and Persons*, 199-347.

II

Decisions regarding what propositions are adopted as the first principles of a science are not made by simply gathering up the propositions pertaining to that subject matter that are obviously true. No substantive science could be produced by starting with such frail material.[33] How, then, can decisions about first principles be made? Such decisions are made by examining the sorts of deductive schemes that different candidate sets of principles are capable of generating; only by examining these schemes are we able to assess the relative merits of different candidate sets of principles. To assign the status of "first principles" to a candidate set of propositions is to say, then, that of all the competing theories, there is one that has shown itself to be superior to its rivals, and this set of propositions is the set of first principles in that theory.

I take it that it has been shown in the first part of this paper that the first principles of the impartialist GFB view and the first principles of the eudaimonist Veatch-Rautenberg position are, so far, dialectically undefeated; in order to assess the merits of their rival claims to be first principles of the most defensible natural law theory, we shall have to examine the theoretical power that each account possesses. To bring them into contention in this wholesale manner would be, of course, a massive undertaking. I propose to spend the rest of this paper considering just one kind of problem to which both theories would have to provide a solution: that of how one ought to respond to others' good.

Impartialist theories have an easy time explaining why and to what extent persons are required by reason to respect, foster, and promote others' good. On this view, self-preference is as such irrational; to promote one's own good over that of another simply because it is one's own is to act arbitrarily. It does not follow, though, that self-preference can never be justified. For each of us is in a better position to promote his or her own participation in basic values than anyone else's. Part of the explanation

[33] See Alasdair MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 173.

for this is the simple truth that we are better able to foster participation in basic goods by those who are close to us, and no one is closer to us than ourselves. But there is a deeper reason that justifies some self-preference. Participation in some basic values is in whole or in part constituted by free choices and voluntary actions.[34] We might be able to foster a set of conditions in which others may make these free choices and perform these voluntary actions, but we could not produce them in others. Self-preference is further justified because in these cases it is necessarily up to each person to perform those acts whereby each participates in basic values.[35] As Finnis notes, though, these allowances for justified self-preference leave the requirement of impartiality very much in force:

> when all allowance is made for [justified self-preference], this [requirement of impartiality] remains a pungent critique of selfishness, special pleading, double standards, hypocrisy, indifference to the good of others whom one could easily help ('passing by on the other side'), and all the other manifold forms of egoistic and group bias.[36]

A natural law theory that embraces impartialism, then, seems capable of providing a reasonable arena for self-preference while placing strict requirements on the respect that must be shown with regard to others' good.

Veatch and Rautenberg seem to think that a eudaimonist natural law theory would also have little difficulty accounting for the requirements that we are under with regard to others' good.

> [I]f one should try to make a rejoinder [to eudaimonism] . . . by asking whether in an Aristotelian or Thomistic [i.e., a eudaimonist] context there can be no such thing as a love of neighbor, or no sacrificing of oneself for the good and well-being of others, the reply is that not only

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[34] Grisez, Finnis, and Boyle call all those goods constituted (at least in part) by choice "reflexive": "The instantiations of these goods include the choices by which one acts for them" ("Practical Principles," 107). These reflexive goods are the goods of practical reasonableness, friendship, and religion (ibid., 108).

[35] Finnis, "Natural Law and Unnatural Acts," 368-369; *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 107-108.

[36] Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 107.

is provision made for such a thing as an individual's love of his friends, but also and more generally a love of neighbor is actually something morally requisite for each and every human being. Yet this certainly does not mean that such a love of neighbor for Aquinas is ever to be construed as an exercise in utilitarian impartiality . . . No, for Aquinas, as for Aristotle, a love of neighbor is to be construed as a love for one's friend in which one's friend's good is identified with one's own good, and where to pursue the good of one's friend is to show even a definite partiality for one's own happiness and well-being, of which the good of one's friend becomes an integral part. To put it in a nutshell: one's obligation is to love one's neighbor as oneself![37]

We might read Veatch and Rautenberg's treatment of the problem of others' good as an effort to turn the tables on Grisez, Finnis, and Boyle, since it is part of the GFB view both that friendship is one of the basic goods and that it is constitutive of friendship that the good of one's friend becomes an aspect of one's own good. In participating in friendship, one necessarily finds oneself in a situation in which his or her good is bound up with the good of others: as Finnis writes, "self-love (the desire to participate fully, oneself, in the basic aspects of human flourishing [including friendship]) requires that one go beyond self-love (self-interest, self-preference, the imperfect rationality of egoism)."[38]

The Veatch-Rautenberg position may be fairly summarized as this: the way to handle the problem of others' good is, on a eudaimonist account, to make the others somehow *less other*— that is, to emphasize the existence of special relationships such as those of friendship (either directly, or perhaps mediated by God in *caritas*) or community.[39] Now, there is no doubt that on both impar-

[37] Veatch and Rautenberg, "Grisez-Finnis-Boyle Moral Philosophy," 820-821.

[38] Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 143.

[39] Scott MacDonald also seems to employ this strategy in his "Egoistic Rationalism: Aquinas's Basis for Christian Morality," in Michael D. Beaty, ed., *Christian Theism and the Problems of Philosophy* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), 327-354. While affirming that on Aquinas's view the rational agent seeks his or her own good, MacDonald points out that each person's interests are "not narrowly individualistic. One might hold that by virtue of their possessing intellect human beings have an interest in a good that includes, perhaps even predominantly, the good of others. Hence, when human beings seek the good of the family or the city they seek it as part of their own good" (339). MacDonald holds that altruistic concerns can be explained in these terms (340).

tialist and eudaimonist natural law theories the requirements of reason arising from these special relationships have an important place. But to rely wholly upon them as a way of handling the problems surrounding others' good is ill-advised, for two related reasons. First, to rely wholly on contingent unifying relationships to explain one's obligations to respect others' good is to allow that in the limiting case of the person who does not participate in the good of friendship, for whatever reason (commitment to other basic goods, emotional distaste for friendships, serious chemical imbalance in the brain), such a person is under absolutely no requirements with regard to others' good. Secondly, even for those who participate to a great extent in the goods of friendship, there are still many who remain completely other—perhaps the stranger on the roadside who has been set upon by thieves, or perhaps the stranger on the other side of the earth whose environment we might contaminate for our own convenience. With regard to such people, we are under no requirements, if all requirements to respect others' good derive from special relationships in which another's good becomes assimilated to one's own.

The Veatch-Rautenberg response to the problem of others' good is inadequate, and it might seem that the GFB impartialist formulation of the first principles of practical reason is preferable on this score. How could one who accepts the eudaimonist formulation, which takes as its starting point one's own good, defend a strong requirement to respect others' good?

Consider the following story. Suppose that Joan has a certain set of dispositions and capabilities that suit her for the game of chess. She is introduced to the game, she enjoys playing it, she diverts much of her leisure time to chess-playing. Eventually she judges that her playing chess, or, as we might say, participation-in-chess-by-her, is a good. Since Joan recognizes that the status of her participation in chess as a good for her is due at least in part to her being suited to play chess, and her being suited to play chess is due to her capabilities and dispositions, she recognizes that others of similar disposition and capability who have not yet been introduced to the game could come to judge that their playing chess is good for them. This judgment is inert from

the point of view of practical reason, though; Joan does not yet believe herself to have any reason to respect or to foster their chess playing.

In participating in the practice of chess, though, Joan comes to reflect on her relationship to that game. She comes to judge that the game of chess is a source of value for her, a source of value toward which she ought to display respect. One way of expressing her respect for the game of chess is to exhibit certain behavior toward others who are capable of or are participating in the practice of chess. To those who are capable of playing and enjoying the game, yet have not been introduced to it, she may give her used chess-board, or teach the rules, or give pointers about strategy. To those who play the game, she may encourage their progress, or congratulate on successes and console on losses. There will be a set of actions that she will take to be signs of disrespect, and thus that she has reasons to refrain from: belittling the game by her words, for example, or interrupting others' games. Joan comes to believe that in exhibiting this kind of behavior to those who play the game she would somehow be disrespecting the game of chess, a practice that she ought to respect given its status as a source of value for her.

Did Joan come to hold false beliefs in this story? Would she be in any way required to express respect for the game of chess in such circumstances? I shall argue that in this story certain sorts of action come to be required of her due to expressive reasons resulting from her relationship to the practice of chess. I take the notion of an expressive reason from the work of Joseph Raz, who considers friendship to be a paradigm for the sort of relationship that can generate reasons for action of this kind. Consider first two ways that friendship can be cited as a reason for action. First, one has some amount of goodwill for his or her friend, and this goodwill may be cited as a reason for acting to benefit the friend.[40] Secondly, friendships generate expectations such that it would be wrong to disappoint them, and these expectations are reasons for acting as well.[41] However, Raz wants to

[40] Joseph Raz, *The Authority of Law: Essays on Law and Morality* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 254.

[41] Ibid.

say that there is another kind of reason that friends have for acting, which he calls "expressive reasons."[42] One has reason to promote the interests of one's friend, but the reasons for doing so are not exhausted by the goodwill that one has toward him or her. One has reason to perform other actions which do not benefit the friend at all; the reason to perform such actions is that they are symbolic of the relationship that exists between them. These reasons are expressive reasons, so labelled because "the actions they require express the relationship or attitude involved."[43] To employ Raz's example, even if one's friend will not be harmed by confirming innuendoes that are made about him or her, one's confirming them would be inappropriate given the relationship that exists between friends.[44]

How might Raz's discussion of expressive reasons support the rationality of the imagined chess-player? What I suggest is that in the case of the chess-player, what occurs is that through participating in the practice of chess and becoming committed to it as a good to be sought one stands in a relationship to that practice which generates expressive reasons for action. The relevant relationship that generates the expressive reasons is that of being a source of value for another: the reasons that Joan has to behave in certain ways toward prospective and actual chess-players derives from her relationship to a game, a source of value for her. Even if others' good *qua* chess-players does not constitute her good, she has reasons to forbear from hindering their progress, and perhaps even reasons to foster their participation. The reasons that she has to respect others' participation in the practice of chess are therefore not welfare reasons, but symbolic reasons. It might seem that they are welfare reasons, given that by fostering others' participation in chess Joan would be helping them to secure a good. This appearance is misleading, though. An expressive reason that is a welfare reason is a reason to act, arising from a special relationship, that requires one to benefit the party with whom one has a special relationship; a symbolic rea-

[42] Ibid., 255.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.

son is a reason to act, arising from a special relationship, that requires an action which does not aim at benefiting the party with whom one is in a special relationship. But the expressive reason to respect others' participation in the practice of chess does not arise from the relationship to other chess-players, but from the relationship to the practice of chess itself; Joan has reason to foster others' participation in chess not primarily under the description "helping them secure (or not hindering) their good *qua* chess-players," but primarily under the description "expressing respect for the practice of chess" and only derivatively under the description "helping them secure (or not hindering) their good *qua* chess-players." Joan's reason to foster their participation in the practice of chess is that the action of fostering their participation in that good is expressive of respect for that practice.

I am going to suggest that a eudaimonist natural law theory should hold that our reasons for respecting others' participation in basic values are expressive reasons: as the imagined chess-player has expressive reasons for action due to the relationship in which she stands to the game of chess, each of us has expressive reasons to respect others' participation in basic values due to the relationship in which each of us stands to the basic values. But this claim faces immediate objections. First, as Raz notes, the actions that we have expressive reasons to engage in due to friendship are culturally determined and culturally variant. Presumably, though, a natural law account of the requirements that we have with regard to others' good should not depend wholly on variant cultural factors. Unless it is possible that there be expressive reasons that are not wholly culturally determined, expressive reasons cannot serve as part of a natural law theory of practical reasoning. Secondly, in the case of the practice of chess, the expressive reasons that were generated were due to a relationship with chess which Joan voluntarily entered and which, if she desired, could be terminated.[45] But presumably a

[45] This is not to say that the relationship could be terminated at will, that is, by the very choice to terminate the relationship. But one could begin a course of action whose predictable outcome is the severing of one's relationship with the practice of chess.

natural law account should not be such that the requirements we have with regard to others' good can be so easily taken up or put away; indeed, they should not be able to be taken up or put away at all.

With regard to the first objection, we may grant that Raz is right to say that many of the actions that one has expressive reasons to perform due to a friendship relationship are culturally determined. But it is far from clear that all such actions are culturally determined. There may be actions that are naturally expressive of certain relationships. It is even more plausible, in fact undeniable, that there are some actions—murder, assault, rape, torture—that are naturally expressive of a lack of respect for certain relationships. One who has a friend has an expressive reason not to murder one's friend, not to assault, rape, or torture him or her. This is culturally invariant. It might be tempting to say that one's reason not to harm friends in these ways derives from the fact that one's friends also happen to be human beings, all of whom we are required to respect. But this is quite implausible upon a moment's reflection. We realize that there is additional reason not to rape, murder, or torture friends, reasons that we are most aware of when we confront the particularly horrible cases in which one friend harms another in these ways. So the actions that we have expressive reasons to perform are not confined to those that are determined by particular and varying cultural patterns. It is possible, then, for a natural law account of respect for others' good to employ expressive reasons for action that are culturally invariant.

Secondly, it is true that the expressive reasons that are generated by the relationship of friendship are the result of voluntary acts, even if these voluntary acts are not performed with the intention of generating such reasons. One who does not enter into such a relationship does not have the relevant expressive reasons for action. In the case of the basic values in which one can participate, though, the relationship is not the result of voluntary acts at all. The relationship is a given, if, as I have assumed, natural law theory is correct to say that all humans are capable of grasping a variety of basic values as good. Since the expressive reasons for action result from certain relationships,

and for all persons the relationship to the basic values is a given, it is possible that all persons necessarily have expressive reasons for action resulting from their relationship to the basic values.

Although there is nothing essential to expressive reasons for action that precludes the existence of such reasons that are natural and culturally invariant, we have not yet considered any positive argument for the existence of expressive reasons that would require us to respect others' good. Without such an argument, the attempt to provide a defensible eudaimonist account of how we ought to respond to others' good would have an *ad hoc* air about it: it would look like a eudaimonist natural law theory with the assertion "we ought to express respect for others' good" tacked onto it. If the requirement to express respect for others' good is not to be *ad hoc*, we shall have to connect it to one of the two foundational features of natural law theory: that there are certain natural goods and that there are self-evident principles of practical reasonableness that specify how it is reasonable to respond to these goods. If we are to provide a well-grounded account of the expressive reasons to respect others' participation in basic values, we shall have to root the reason to express respect for others' good either in one of the basic values or in some self-evident principle of practical reasonableness.

Let us consider first the possibility that the reason to respect others' participation in the basic values is rooted in a self-evident principle of practical reasonableness. Consider the following distinction: a source of value V is *derivative* if it is a source of value in virtue of its being the means by which one may participate in another source of value W; a source of value is *fundamental* if it is not derivative. If natural law theory is correct, then the basic values are fundamental sources of value, and the only fundamental sources of value. Suppose that it is a principle of practical reasonableness that fundamental sources of value are to be shown respect. If so, we could argue as follows to the conclusion that we ought to respect others' good. The basic values are to be shown respect, since the basic values are fundamental sources of value, and fundamental sources of value are to be shown respect. Not to respect others' participation in the basic values, though, would be to express disrespect for the basic

values. Hence, one ought to respect others' participation in the basic values. The important question, then, is this: is it a principle of practical reasonableness that fundamental sources of value are to be shown respect?

As we have already noted, the question of the status of a proposition as a principle is only settled by an examination of the deductive scheme in which that principle has a place; we can, though, raise considerations that at least make plausible this proposition as a principle of reasonable action. For what could be more worthy of respect than a fundamental source of value? All things that are worthy of respect are such in virtue of their being good in some way; given that everything good in the world is good ultimately in virtue of a fundamental source of value, does it not seem that fundamental sources of value would themselves be eminently worthy of respect? If it is admitted that such sources of value must be eminently worthy of respect, does it seem plausible that there would be a deductive argument connecting the concept "worthy of respect" with the concept "fundamental source of value"? If there is no such argument, yet it is granted that fundamental sources of value are worthy of respect, we must hold that the principle in question is a basic principle of practical reasonableness.

If there were not a reason to express respect for a fundamental source of value, then it would seem that the only explanation for this state of affairs could be that the source of value is also a source of disvalue, i.e., the instantiation of that value is intrinsically opposed to another value. But none of the basic values is intrinsically opposed to another. Sometimes we can participate in a basic value only at the expense of not participating in others; our time and opportunities in this world are limited. It is true that we can bring about participation in a basic value sometimes by attacking another: we can attempt to deceive ourselves, for example, in order to bring about inner peace. But these are *per accidens* oppositions between basic values; no participation in a basic value is *in itself* an attack on another. Hence we cannot say that the explanation for our not having a reason to express respect for a fundamental source of value is that it is also a source of disvalue.

Perhaps, then, we should posit as a principle of practical reasonableness that fundamental sources of value are to be shown respect in one's actions. Including such a principle within the framework of a eudaimonist natural law theory would provide for a fuller account of how we ought to respond to others' good. If, however, this line of reasoning were rejected—the inclusion of the principle regarding respect for fundamental sources of value may still appear *ad hoc*—then we would be forced to turn to the basic values to see whether any of them provides a way to ground the requirement to respect others' good. As we saw earlier, this is the strategy employed by Veatch and Rautenberg: they attempt to ground respect for others' good in the basic value of friendship. Unfortunately, their theory would provide a far too voluntaristic account of what is owed to others. Is there another basic value that could serve as the basis for a requirement to respect others' good?

Consider the list of basic goods[46]: life, knowledge, play, aesthetic experience, practical reasonableness, friendship, and religion. The first four of these goods could not conceivably serve: on a eudaimonist natural law theory, these goods are irretrievably self-centered. One's concern for one's own life, or knowledge, or play, or aesthetic experience, could not reach outward to embrace others' good, except perhaps instrumentally. Friendship has been ruled out due to the contingency of friendship and the limited scope of concern that accompanies it. As the good of practical reasonableness is participated in by adhering to self-evident practical principles, reliance on that value would send us back to the task of formulating a self-evident principle regarding respect for fundamental sources of value. There remains, then, only one basic good to consider: that of religion. How could the good of religion, conceived eudaimonistically, serve as a basis for respecting others' good?

The good of religion is the good concerned with "the estab-

[46] I use Finnis's list of basic goods as given in *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 86-90. I take this list to be substantially correct.

lishment and maintenance of proper relationships between oneself and the divine."[47] For, as Grisez, Finnis, and Boyle write,

> most people experience tension with the wider reaches of reality. Attempts to gain or improve harmony with some more-than-human source of meaning and value take many forms, depending on people's world views. Thus, another category of . . . good is peace with God, or the gods, or some nontheistic but more-than-human source of meaning and value.[48]

There is a tradition of natural law thought, though, according to which the variety of goods in which humans can participate are but so many ways of assimilating oneself to God by becoming likenesses thereof: as Aquinas writes, all creatures "acquire their last end insofar as they share in the divine likeness, inasmuch as they are, or live, or even know."[49] Grisez, Finnis, and Boyle do not disagree with Aquinas on this point: "every human fulfillment is a participation in the divine goodness."[50] This identification of participation in the basic values with participation in the divine goodness would, however, make possible an account of respect for others' good grounded in the good of religion eudaimonistically conceived. On a eudaimonist natural law view, one aspect of one's good is participation in the basic value of religion; if one is to achieve one's good, one must be related in a proper way to the divine. But surely it must be the case that expression of respect (or at least an absence of expression of disrespect) for the divine is necessary for maintaining a proper relationship to it. It would be an expression of disrespect for the divine, though, not to respect others' participation in basic values, since participation in the basic values is participation in the divine goodness. Hence, the actions that one must perform in order to participate in the basic value of religion would include actions respecting others' participation in all of the basic val-

[47] Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 89.
[48] Grisez, Boyle, Finnis, "Practical Principles," 108.
[49] *Summa Theologiae* I-II, q. 1, a. 8.
[50] Grisez, Boyle, Finnis, "Practical Principles," 135

ues.[51] A concern for one's own good would require a respect for the overall well-being of others.

In the first part of this paper I argued that impartialist and eudaimonist readings of the self-evident principles of practical reason are incompatible yet dialectically undefeated; the second part of this paper was devoted to examining the responses that impartialist and eudaimonist natural law theories are capable of providing to the problem of others' good. Although the impartialist natural law theory defended by Grisez, Finnis, and Boyle seems to have an easy time dealing with the problem of others' good, I have argued that there are excellent prospects for a successful eudaimonist solution to this problem. The success of eudaimonism in this regard should be both welcome and regrettable to defenders of eudaimonist natural law theories. It should be welcome to them insofar as they are *eudaimonists*: for eudaimonism presents powerful evidence for its viability by its capacity to handle a problem that would initially appear to be insoluble in its terms. Insofar as the eudaimonist natural law theorist is a *natural law theorist,* though, the success of eudaimonism may be cause for regret. For the ability of eudaimonism to handle the problem of others' good nourishes the spectre that haunted Sidgwick: the possibility that there are two rival sets of first principles of practical reason, one eudaimonist, one impartialist, neither of which can be shown superior to the other; this condition Sidgwick rightly took to be "Chaos."[52] If one is committed to natural law theory, one ought to hope that reasons are forthcoming to prefer one account of the first principles of the natural law to the other, whether the victor be impartialism or eudaimonism.

[51] Of course, if this path to a requirement to respect others' good is to be navigable, we must be capable of possessing sufficient knowledge of God's existence, attributes, and activity to hold that participations in the basic values are but so many ways of becoming like God. Either we must be capable of such knowledge naturally, or else this sort of eudaimonistic account of others' good will fail to operate until the necessary data are supplied by revelation.

[52] Henry Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics,* 1st edition (Macmillan, 1874), 473.

LAW AND THOMISTIC EXEMPLARISM

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CIVIL LAW differs from empirical law in that the former *pre*scribes regularities in human action while the latter *de*scribes and predicts regularities in the world apart from human action. By an empirical or descriptive law scientists mean a law that is knowable on the basis of observed regularities. An example is Boyle's law. That at a constant temperature the volumes occupied by a constant mass of gas are in inverse ratio to the pressures they support is an observed regularity. This law also describes and predicts a regular occurrence in the world apart from human action. The same is true of Galileo's law that the acceleration of free fall on Earth is thirty-two feet per second per second. But the law that citizens ought to pay taxes in proportion to their incomes prescribes a type of action human beings are obliged to take at regular intervals. A notable difference is that predictability is much lower in the case of civil law than it is in the case of empirical law. You can infallibly predict that the inverse ratio of volumes to pressures in a gas will hold in the next case or that the next free fall will accelerate at thirty-two feet per second per second. But that your neighbors will pay their fair share of taxes next year is a risky guess. This is part of what it means to say that empirical natural laws are in the world in a way that the laws of society and the state are not. Events, activities, or relationships in the world do not fail to conform to laws whereas actions of citizens often fail to conform to the laws of the state.

From empirical laws scientists distinguish theoretical laws. These more general laws are usually called theories or hypotheses. Unlike empirical laws, theories are never generalizations drawn from observations of phenomena. Moreover, theories are often the explanation of empirical laws. So the latter both enter

into the explanation of a phenomenon and are for their own part explained by theories. Empirical laws are thus both *explanans* and *explanandum* as regards phenomena and theories respectively. Thus, Galileo's law of acceleration both enters into the explanation of the particular event of the free fall of this stone at thirty-two feet per second per second and is itself partly explained by Newton's laws of motion and his law of gravity.[1] But whether or not causal-deductive explanation includes empirical laws that are themselves explained by theoretical laws, all such explanation includes both *explanandum* and *explanans*. The former is always some empirical phenomenon. And the latter, as Carl Hempel and Paul Oppenheim point out, is generally made up of two parts, a law or laws and statements of fact or antecedent conditions.[2] In the following schema the first two lines comprise the *explanans* and the last line the *explanandum.* Thus:

$C_1, C_2, \ldots, C_n$ (statements of conditions)
$L_1, L_2, \ldots L_n$ (laws)
E (description of phenomenon to be explained)[3]

While much causal-deductive explanation in science follows this pattern, not all of it does. For while the *explanans* must include a law, it need not include a statement that is not a law. For example, Hempel and Oppenheim cite the case in which the regularities that govern the motion of the double stars are explained solely in terms of the laws of celestial mechanics.[4] In any case, whether it is the *explanandum* of a theory or the *explanans* of a particular observed phenomenon, an empirical law has these three characteristics: first, it is originally based on observations; second, no term in the statement of it fails to occur in the observation statements from which (in the order of knowl-

[1] Carl G. Hempel and Paul Oppenheim, "Studies in the Logic of Explanation," in Janet A. Kourany, ed., *Scientific Knowledge: Basic Issues in the Philosophy of Science* (Belmont, Cal.: Wadsworth, 1987), 31.

[2] Ibid., 31.

[3] Ibid., 32.

[4] Ibid., 31.

edge) it is based; and third, no values of its variable terms are determined in relation to each other or to the law.[5] Thus, Boyle's law, Hooke's law, and Snell's law are empirical laws since they satisfy all three criteria while Newton's second law is not since it fails to satisfy the third criterion. Force and mass are not independent of each other in the sense specified.[6]

But behind the criteria of empirical law and the dual role empirical law can play in causal-deductive explanation (i.e., as *explanans* and *explanandum*) lies the deeper question: What is the ontological status of law? On this question turns the philosophical issue of realism vs. anti-realism as regards law. Since laws are universal in form,[7] answers to the question echo the classical division on universals. There are the nominalist, the conceptualist, and the realist accounts of the status of empirical law. More difference than is commonly thought divides the first two. Much more separates the first two from the last. In what follows, I distinguish the three views and argue in favor of the realist view. Then I show that the realist view in turn takes three forms, i.e., Platonic, Aristotelian, and Thomistic realism. Finally, I defend the Thomistic analysis. If the defense succeeds, then empirical law, no less than what in Thomistic ethics is called natural law, is part of the divine eternal law.

I

Given our datum that empirical law is part of the world in a way that civil law is not, how can nominalist scientists retain the datum? If laws are both universal and part of the world and if nominalists deny universals altogether, then nominalist scientists deny that empirical laws are in the world. But if they are not in the world at all, empirical laws are not in the world in the way that civil law is not. And then no account of the datum in question is given.

[5] C. F. Presley, "Laws and Theories in the Physical Sciences," in Arthur C. Danto and Sidney Morgenbesser, eds., *Philosophy of Science* (New York: Meridian, 1960), 208.

[6] Presley, 208.

[7] The form of a statistical law, of course, is not universal but particular. But just for that reason statistical laws are laws in a derived sense of "law."

Nominalist scientists respond by denying that empirical laws are real universals. Logical empiricists make up the most celebrated members of this group. They include Carnap, Hempel, and Reichenbach. For them, an empirical law is not a universal thing but a true universal *statement* that is used to explain and predict things.[8] Recall that in the foregoing schema of Hempel and Oppenheim's an empirical law L is one of the statements in the *explanans* that is used to explain the empirical phenomenon described by E, the *explanandum*. Under this view, a law is no occult universal entity that lurks behind and explains a regularity or string of similar occurrences. Thus, to say that the rate of acceleration of a particular falling apple is an instance of the general law of acceleration is *not* to say that the falling apple, something ordinary, exemplifies a transcendent universal, something extra-ordinary. It is rather to say that the falling apple behaves like every other observed case of a falling body. And since this regularity is predictable in a future case in a way that taxpayers' conformity to tax laws is not, the datum in question is retained without counting laws as real universals.

Conceptualist scientists are different. They classify the laws of science not as true universal statements but as true universal judgments. Here, "judgment" refers to a mental entity and not, like "statement," to a linguistic entity. Recall that conceptualists of all stripes hold that universals exist only in minds. That is what separates them from nominalists, for whom universals lack even mental existence. Recall too that all conceptualists deny that there is anything common in real things as the basis for the universality of concepts. That is what separates them from realists.

Thus defined, conceptualists break up into two kinds, empirical and a priori. The difference between them mirrors the difference between Locke and Kant on universals. According to empirical conceptualists, all universals, including empirical laws, are derived *from* sense data. But in the view of a priori con-

[8] Hempel and Oppenheim, "Studies in the Logic of Explanation," 38-39. See also Rudolf Carnap, "The Confirmation of Laws and Theories," in *Scientific Knowledge*, 122.

ceptualists, at least some universals, empirical laws included, are imposed by science *on* sense data. The latter view originated with Kant. For Kant, the only reason Galileo's law of free fall acceleration is called "empirical" is that it applies *to* sense data. It is not called "empirical" because it is derived *from* sense data. Thus, while for empirical conceptualists like Locke all universals are a posteriori, for constructionist (a priori) conceptualists like Kant some universals, empirical laws included, are a priori. Like nominalists, both kinds of conceptualists deny that universals are real entities. But, unlike nominalists, both types of conceptualists affirm that universals exist *in mente*.

Empirical conceptualists, just like nominalists, provide an explanation for the datum that empirical laws are in the world in a way that civil law is not. The difference is that for them empirical laws are universal judgments rather than universal statements. Ernst Mach, for example, claims to be in close agreement with Karl Pearson in holding that laws of nature are "mental formulas."[9] They are "the consequence of our psychological need to find our way in nature" and "nothing but subjective rules for the guidance of an observer's expectations."[10] These mental formulas or judgments do not here refer to acts of judging (otherwise, these conceptualists would succumb to psychologism). But neither do they refer to the object judged, where by "object" is meant some mind-independent entity (otherwise, since for conceptualists laws are *universal* judgments, laws would be real universals; and then on the matter of the status of law conceptualists would be realists and not conceptualists). Rather, mental formulae or judgments here refer to objects judged, where "objects" refers to mind-made universals.

By contrast, a priori conceptualists satisfy the datum in question very differently. Though they agree that empirical laws are universal judgments, in the sense of "judgment" just specified, they deny that these laws are based on observed regularities. It

[9] Ernst Mach, "The Significance and Purpose of Natural Laws," in *Philosophy of Science*, 267.

[10] Mach, 270, 273.

is just the other way around. The regularities are determined by the laws. For the regularities in nature *themselves* require explanation and the explanation is in terms of a priori laws. The regularities are thus not ultimate and irreducible but require a universal behind them. It is due to universal laws that there are regularities among particular events in nature; it is not due to regularities among particular events in nature that there are universal laws. Karl Popper, for instance, says that instead of sitting back passively and waiting for repetitions to impress regularities on them, scientists actively impose regularities on the world. "We try to discover similarities in it, and to interpret it in terms of laws *invented by us*."[11] And speaking more of scientific paradigms than of the laws of nature that enter into them, Thomas Kuhn remarks that, with the exception of anomalies, all phenomena have a "theory-determined place" in any paradigm.[12] This means that it is theory that determines phenomena in any given theory (paradigm) and not the other way around. That is part of what he means by "the priority of paradigms." According to Kuhn, this priority of paradigms to phenomena is indicated by the circularity in which each side of a paradigm debate is implicated. When in the history of science a debate over paradigms breaks out, each side must appeal to its paradigm in arguing in behalf of its paradigm.[13] This is because any phenomena to which a paradigm-defender may appeal as proof are already determined by the paradigm.

Under constructionism, therefore, science finds regularities in nature because it is science that puts them there. This it does by imposing on sense data structures or laws to which those data must conform if phenomena are to be made intelligible. Empirical laws are just the way scientists make sense of the world. They are part of the world in a way that civil law is not because science *makes* them part of the world in order to explain the world. And by "world" here, of course, is meant not world as

[11] Karl Popper, "Science: Conjectures and Refutations," in *Scientific Knowledge*, 148.

[12] Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1970), 97.

[13] Kuhn, 94-95.

it is in itself but world as explained by science. And so we find Karl Popper applauding the Kantian characterization of science as an inquiry that proceeds from theory to observation instead of from observation to theory. The understanding does not derive its laws from nature but imposes its own laws on nature.[14] The only difference is that for Popper these laws are pragmatic and relative whereas in Kant they are fixed and absolute. As anomalies crop up that under existing laws and the paradigm of which they are a part are either awkwardly or inadequately explained, a paradigm change takes place and different laws are conceived that prove to be more serviceable. This is the transcendental turn, with a pragmatic slant, as applied to science.

As against these anti-realist assays of empirical laws, realist analyses hold that such laws are real universals. Under this view, either the general law of acceleration, say, is found exemplified in each and every instance of a falling body or else it subsists independently and timelessly, separated from the individual falling bodies that mirror it. The former is moderate realism and the latter is extreme or Platonic realism. Moderate realism, in turn, may take two forms. First, universal empirical laws like the law of acceleration are found *both* temporally in individual falling bodies as well as in our minds *and* eternally in the mind of the Creator. This is scholastic realism.[15] Second, such laws are found in individual falling bodies only. And this is Aristotelian realism. What is common to all three realisms is the belief that empirical laws are both universal and independent of human beings. In this realists are separated from all anti-realists be they nominalists or either empirical or a priori conceptualists.

II

It turns out, however, that five of the foregoing six analyses of empirical law are wrong. Four of them fail to meet the conditions

[14] Popper, "Science: Conjectures and Refutations," 150.

[15] Scholastic realism, of course, predates the concept of empirical law in science. But had they known about such laws of nature, scholastic realists would have construed them in this way.

necessary for saying that any instance of an empirical law *conforms* to that law. And the fifth fails for other reasons.

To see this, it must be pointed out at the start that any law must be such that it is capable of being conformed to. Otherwise it is not a law. This is true of empirical laws, theoretical laws, mathematical laws, socio-economic laws, international laws, or laws of the city, state, or community. Suppose a person R recognizes that the following is a law: At constant temperatures the volumes occupied by a constant mass of gas are in inverse ratio to the pressures they support. But suppose that at the same time R denies that the law in question (Boyle's law) is ever capable of being conformed to. We should say in that case that R simply misunderstands what is meant by "law." For whatever else it is, a law is something that can be conformed to. The case is no different with civil law. Suppose Congress passes a law directing each American to send sixteen ounces of gold every Tuesday to Fort Knox. Such a "law" even falls short of being an unjust law since it is no law at all. And it is no law at all because it cannot possibly be conformed to.

Supposing, then, that any and every law can be conformed to, what are the conditions of that conformability and how do four of the six possibilities just reviewed fail to meet those conditions?

To answer, if one thing conforms to another the second is always the standard or measure of the first. We say that A's polite actions conform to the rules of etiquette, that B's dress conforms to the current style, that C's actions on a soccer field conform to the rules of soccer, that D's acts conform to the moral law, that a nation's naval actions conform to international law, that certain events conform to Boyle's law, and so on. In these as in all other cases of conformity what is conformed to is the standard or measure of what conforms to it. But, quite generally, if one thing is the standard or measure of another, then the former is both logically prior to and explains the latter. In the foregoing examples, a code of etiquette is logically prior to and explains a person's polite actions, a certain dress code is logically prior to and explains the mode of a person's dress, a set of game rules is logically prior to and explains the actions of a soccer player on the field, and so on. Since, therefore, law is that to which other

things conform, law is always logically prior to and hence explains that of which it is the law.

Further, to say that one thing conforms to another is to say that the two terms in this relation, the standard conformed to and that which conforms to it, have something in common. Conformity, in other words, is an identity-in-difference. To recur again to our examples, it is the very same rule of etiquette and not just something like it that exists particularly in A's act and universally in the minds of all or most members of the society to which A belongs. Otherwise, act and rule would not jibe and it would be falsely said that A's act *conforms* to the rule. And it is one and the same dress style and not merely a similar one that is found both particularly in B's actual dress and universally in the mind of the designer who creates the style. Otherwise, it would be false that B's dress conforms to the current style. Clothing that resembles but does not exemplify the going style is shunned by modish teen-agers. They see that, appearances aside, it does not really conform to the prevailing style.

Taken together with the logical priority of law to that of which it is the law, this identity-in-difference of the law-relation implies further that law is both transcendent and immanent. It both stands above its instances and is present in them. To see this, note first that the law-relation is a two-term asymmetrical relation. Since things conform to law and not the other way around, law is logically prior to the things that conform to it. Second, since things *conform* to and do not just resemble law, an identity holds between the two terms. Since the terms are two and not one, it is a formal and not a numerical identity. For it is one and the same law that exists both universally as measure and particularly in that which is measured. In a state such as our own, for example, a law of Congress transcends the citizens whose actions follow that law. Yet, to the extent that citizens follow the law, it is the law itself, and not just something similar to it, that is present in their lawful actions. The same is true of the laws or rules of etiquette in a society. American etiquette exists in the minds of Americans. As such it transcends and guides our actions. But it is the very same etiquette, and not just one that resembles it, that is present in our everyday polite actions. And

in matters of dress, the latest dress style in the minds of Paris designers transcends the individual dress of the style-conscious majority. But it is the very same pattern, and not some close facsimile, that is exemplified in the way fashionable persons are actually dressed.

Nor is there any contradiction in saying that law is for the reasons just given both transcendent and immanent. Being transcendent and being immanent do not here refer to opposed characters of the same thing. They refer to two opposed ways in which a character exists. They are thus adverbial and not adjectival. Saying that law is both transcendent and immanent is like saying that whiteness is both in minds and in reality. As being in mind and being in reality are two ways in which whiteness exists, so, too, being transcendent and being immanent are two ways in which law exists.

III

If law is both universal and the measure of conformity, it follows that both nominalist and empirical conceptualist assays of empirical law go astray. For under these views, no empirical law ever logically precedes any one of its instances. Recall that for nominalists laws are true statements in universal form. But while true universal statements serve as premises for concluding statements in arguments, no true statement ever logically precedes a fact. It is just the other way around. Facts are logically prior to the truth of statements. It is because grass *is* green that the statement "Grass is green" is true and not vice versa. But while statements of instances of laws are surely made, and, if Hempel and Oppenheim are right, serve as *explananda* in causal-deductive explanation, the instances *themselves* are not statements but facts. And, as Hempel and Oppenheim themselves recognize, it is these instances, of course, that are explained by laws.[16] Either, therefore, laws are not true universal statements or else no law logically precedes its instances. But if

[16] Hempel and Oppenheim, "Studies in the Logic of Explanation," 31.

no law is logically prior to its instances then no law explains its instances. For a cause is logically prior to its effect. It follows that to the extent that they identify laws with true universal statements, nominalists prevent laws from explaining their instances. But, then, since a law's explaining its instances is a condition of saying that the latter conform to the law, no nominalist covers the conformity-relation in which law consists.

The same criticism works against the empirical conceptualist's view of law. Under that analysis, empirical laws are true universal judgments rather than true universal statements. But true judgments no more logically precede facts than do true statements. Once again, it is the other way around. It is because grass *is* green that the judgment "Grass is green" is true and not vice versa. But laws are logically prior to their instances and the latter are facts and not judgments. So it follows once more that either laws are not true universal judgments or else laws do not logically precede their instances. But without being logically prior to its instances no law explains its instances. Just so far as they count laws as being true universal judgments, therefore, empirical conceptualists follow nominalists in preventing laws from explaining their instances. But, then, since explaining its instances is a necessary condition of saying that a law is conformed to by its instances, empirical conceptualists join nominalists in failing to explain the conformity-relation in which law consists.

But nominalists and empirical conceptualists may answer that the objection rests on a simple misstatement of their view. It is not law *statements* or law *judgments* in the *explanans* that explain the instances or facts described by the *explananda.* It is rather the laws that are expressed by those statements or judgments. And those laws are identified by nominalists and empirical conceptualists alike with observed regularities in nature. Thus, Galileo's law of acceleration is identified with the aggregate of those events in which the free fall of a body has been observed to accelerate at thirty-two feet per second per second.

This clarification of the nominalist and empirical conceptualist account of law evidently escapes the objection in question. True statements or judgments are not under that assay made log-

ically prior to facts since to begin with no nominalist or empirical conceptualist ever does identify laws with either statements or judgments. And then an obstacle is cleared to construing laws as explaining their instances. For causes are logically prior to their effects. Thus, a given instance of Galileo's law, a fact, is explained not by a statement or judgment but by *other* facts, namely, the collection of past cases of free falling bodies that have been observed to accelerate at thirty-two feet per second per second. And it is this latter regularity that is identified with an empirical law.

But identifying laws with observed regularities instead of with the statements or judgments that express those regularities blocks explanation on another front. For causal explanation not only forbids that law be logically posterior to instance but also that law be particular. For law by definition is universal. But according to nominalists and empirical conceptualists, all that is real—observed regularities included—is purely particular. Therefore, substituting observed regularities in the world for universal statements or judgments reaps nominalists and empirical conceptualists no advantage in answering the objection that the identification of laws with the latter fails to cover the explanation of facts by law. The fact of the matter is that nominalists and conceptual empiricists succumb to a perfect dilemma. According to them, laws are either true universal statements or judgments or the regularities in the world that are recorded by those statements or judgments. If the former, the universality of law is satisfied at the cost of surrendering the logical priority of law to instance. For true statements and judgments are conditioned by and not the conditions of facts, as was said. But if the latter, the logical priority of law is uncontradicted at the cost of spiking the universality of law. In either case causal explanation is ruined. For causal explanation consists in the instance-law relation and the latter is *both* a relation of conditioned to condition, of the logically posterior to the logically prior, *and* a relation of particular to universal.

To resolve the dilemma, it might be answered that law, or that which explains some present or future instance, is not necessarily universal. For we say that knowledge of a past regularity

explains why we believe that a similar present or future instance conforms or will conform to that regularity. And yet the regularity is not a universal but an aggregate of particular similar events. If a present event *e* is similar in some respects to a large number of past events, then I expect *e* to be similar to those events in another respect. I expect the ball I hold to fall when I release it because so many other balls have done so in the past.

Here the evident counter-reply is that this is not explanation but justification. Causes are not reasons and explanation is always a matter of citing causes for facts. It is not a matter of giving reasons for believing propositions. If with regard to my believing that the ball I release will fall one is concerned with not the mere psychological fact of the belief but my grounds for holding it, then citing a past regularity between released balls and falling balls is relevant. For here it is not asked what the cause or explanation of the belief is but what the reasons are for holding it. But if with regard to that same belief it is just the psychological fact of the belief with which one is concerned and not my reasons for believing what the belief states, then citing the same past regularity is not relevant. For here it is not asked what the reasons are for holding the belief but what is the cause or explanation is of the *fact* of the belief. And the answer is had only by recourse to what is universal.

Moreover, in the example cited each member of the past observed regularity must *itself* have been explained by the same law by which the present falling ball is explained. But if laws are past observed regularities, then the law governing *those* members must be identified with a prior regularity. Furthermore, since the members of that regularity are also instances of falling balls, then they too must have themselves been explained by the same law by which both the more immediate past falling balls and the present falling ball are explained. But, once again, if laws are past observed regularities, then the law governing the members of this more distant past observed regularity must be identified with a still further observed regularity in the more distant past, and so on, *ad infinitum.*

Now the trouble with this identification of laws with past observed regularities is not just that it implies this infinite

regress of laws. It is also that it fails to cover the fact that a present, a past, and a more remotely past instance of a law are explained by the *same* law. Since, in the example, it is a different aggregate of past observed regularities each time that is the law of a present, a past, and a more remotely past instance of a falling ball, it is, if laws are identified with these regularities, a *different* law each time that explains these instances. And this is counterintuitive.

Finally, identifying laws with past regularities prevents laws from being logically prior to or the conditions of their instances. An aggregate of past observed cases of bodies accelerating at thirty-two feet per second per second is nothing but the sum of its members, all of which are individual instances of bodies that have accelerated at that rate. But since in each case *their* free fall must have been explained, *their* free fall is hardly the explanation of the free fall of a present instance. If a law L is identified with a given series of past events similar to a present event *e*, then L is not logically but only temporally prior to *e*. But since any law is logically prior to that of which it is the law, then L is not the law of *e*. Not only that, but if L is comprised of past events which, of course, no longer are, then L no longer is. But if L is not, how is it sensibly said that *e*, a present event, is an instance of L, something non-existent? It seems, therefore, that when law is not universal but a series of past observed regularities, explanation of events by law is no explanation at all.

And so it can be said that the foregoing dilemma holds after all. In their assay of law nominalists and empirical conceptualists are caught between relinquishing the logical priority of law to instance and denying the universality of law. But, in either case, the fact and possibility of explaining facts in the world in terms of empirical laws are lost. And then, as accounts of law, it follows that both nominalism and empirical conceptualism are defeated.

IV

The conformity-relation that is entailed by one thing's being the law of another also defeats both Platonic and Aristotelian realism as regards empirical law. Here, however, the argument

turns not on the logical priority of what is conformed to to what conforms to it but on the formal identity of the two, on the fact that the two have something in common. When a given instance of a law L conforms to L, it is the very same law that exists universally in L as measure and individually in the instance as measured, as was stated. Otherwise, it is falsely said that the latter conforms to the former. For, to repeat, all conformity is an identity-in-difference. But it was just shown that this identity-in-difference in turn implies that in the law-relation law is transcendent on one side of the relation and immanent on the other. The trouble is that Platonic realism provides for the transcendence of law at the cost of denying the immanence of law, while Aristotelian realism provides for the immanence of law at the cost of surrendering the transcendence of law.

To explain, take again Galileo's law of free fall. There is no problem as to how such a law is transcendent under a Platonist view of universals. For, according to Platonists, laws like this subsist in a timeless heaven separately from their exemplifications. But there *is* a problem about how such a law can ever be immanent. For, under Platonism, not universals themselves but only copies or reflections of universals are found in nature. If, therefore, immanence as well as transcendence characterize any law and a Platonist assay of empirical law covers the latter at the expense of the former, then such an assay of empirical law comes up short. As for an Aristotelian realist account of empirical law, this suffers from the very opposite deficiency. Empirical laws like Galileo's law of acceleration are immanent in individual accelerating bodies but are in no sense transcendent according to that analysis. They neither exist separately in Plato's heaven nor do they exist eternally as divine exemplars in the mind of a creator-God who makes the world after them. True, Galileo's law under this type of moderate realism exists universally in *our* minds as abstracted from its instances in nature. To that extent, it, as well as all known empirical laws, can be said to "transcend" their particular instances in nature. But this is a different sense of "transcend" from that which is meant when it is said that law transcends its instances. For the latter sense of "transcend" entails that what law transcends conforms to law and hence both

logically follows and is explained by law. But it is just the other way around with empirical laws when they exist universally in our minds as abstracted from their particular instances. In such a state, these laws conform to and hence both logically follow and are explained by the particular lawful events from which they are abstracted. So in the relevant sense of "transcendent," no empirical law under this Aristotelian account ever is transcendent. But, if not, Aristotelian realism as regards empirical law fails for the reason opposite to that for which a Platonist assay of empirical law fails. As the latter fails to provide for the immanence of law, the former fails to provide for the transcendence of law. But providing for both dimensions of law is necessary to any adequate view of empirical law, since, as was said, both transcendence *and* immanence are entailed by the relation of conformity in which law consists.

V

That leaves just two possibilities, namely, a priori conceptualism and Thomistic realism. These hold an advantage over the foregoing four accounts in that they cover the conformity between law and its instances and all that is implied by that conformity. Under a priori conceptualism, empirical laws are interpretations scientists give to the world. They are not abstracted *from* the world but are imposed by scientists *on* the world. They are thus a priori and not a posteriori. But such laws are evidently not a priori in the sense of being "innate" forms of human understanding like the categories of Kant. Otherwise, human beings would always and necessarily interpret the world in terms of, say, Galileo's laws. But this was evidently not true before Galileo. Instead, Galileo's as well as all other empirical laws are, in the age in which they occur, the unique creation of a few outstanding scientists of that age. Nor are they written in stone. Since they are nothing but convenient ways of explaining and predicting phenomena, these same empirical laws are pragmatic and relative. They may be modified at any time or even outright abandoned in favor of other, more serviceable laws. They thus

follow the more relative a priori of philosophers like C. I. Lewis and Karl Popper rather than the absolute a priori of Kant.

This pragmatic constructionism implies that empirical law is much closer to civil law than is first thought. For like civil law, empirical law is on this analysis made and not discovered by reason. The product of creative imagination, it depends on mind to exist. And just like civil law, it is, to repeat, imposed on and not abstracted from phenomena. The only differences are: (1) while civil law governs the voluntary behavior of humans, empirical law governs non-voluntary activities and events, human or otherwise; and (2) while a future event in the case of a empirical law is predictable, no one reliably predicts that a civil law will be obeyed in the next instance.

The strength of this pragmatic a priori approach to empirical law is that it *does* provide an explanation for the conformity-relation in which law consists. That is the advantage this anti-realism has over the two realisms that were just reviewed. Under this a priori conceptualism, empirical law is logically prior to its instances, is the measure or standard of its instances, and shares something with its instances. Thus it explains all three features of the law-relation that we saw are implied by the conformity-relation. Here, law is logically prior to its instances because the latter are explained by the former and not the other way around. As in Kant, object conforms to concept and not concept to object. And this is because object or phenomenon is interpreted and organized in terms of a creative, a priori pattern or law in the mind of the gifted scientist. Thus the law in question is, as it by definition must be, the standard or measure of the phenomena it explains. Here, too, law as stated or thought (i.e., law as transcendent) and what conforms to law (i.e., law as immanent) have a common pattern. And this is something that, as was previously shown, is also implied by the conformity-relation. Under this same constructionist view, what conform to law are not activities or events as they are in themselves apart from being construed by the minds of physicists. Rather, they are occurrences that, just because they *do* conform to preconceived laws, necessarily bear the stamp of that law. And so the construction-

ist view of law covers the identity-in-difference that characterizes the law-relation.

To this transcendental view of empirical law it may at first be objected that it implies skepticism. Since empirical laws apply to things as structured by science, empirical laws are never known to be true. For it is never known that such laws apply to things in themselves. Behind this objection, though, is an assumption that every constructionist denies. And so no constructionist takes the objection seriously. That assumption is that truth is the conformity of statement to reality. But if instead truth is defined as the conformity of statement to appearance (i.e., reality *as structured by science*), the objection of skepticism fails. Since according to constructionists appearance is known and since a stated empirical law is true just when it conforms to appearance, it cannot be alleged that under constructionism statements of empirical laws are not known to be true.

One might counter, however, by arguing that, though this redefinition of truth escapes skepticism as regards empirical laws, it implies skepticism as regards reality. In the view of constructionists, since the laws conformed to by phenomena are the products of human minds, it is human beings who make the world. It is the creative scientists or philosophers in any given time, i.e., the Galileos, the Newtons, the Einsteins, who for that time make the world what it is both for themselves and for others. But the trouble with this is that it resurrects the unknowable thing-in-itself. If empirical laws are imposed a priori on the given, then what is delivered up by this imposition is, to repeat, reality-as-structured-by-science and not reality as it is in itself. The ability of physics to disclose reality as it is in itself—or at least the possibility of our ever knowing or saying that physics discloses the nature of reality as it is in itself—is excluded. Since interpretation is necessarily interpretation *of* something, it cannot be said that all there is is interpretation. Behind interpretation is something that is *being* interpreted and about the nature of that hidden something or *Ding an sich* nothing at all is known.

But, with Kant, many find this principal skepticism about ultimate reality innocuous. So long as phenomena are conveniently organized, managed, and predicted by law, why lose any

sleep over noumena? Besides, to insist that ultimate reality is known for what it is in itself is to hark back to a pre-Kantian, dogmatic metaphysics and this has long since been repudiated. Still, for anyone who takes the transcendental turn in philosophy or science, the unknown thing-in-itself sticks out. For one need only recall Fichte's point that to acknowledge that there is an unknown thing-in-itself is to claim knowledge about it, namely, that it is unknown. And then a contradiction lies coiled in the heart of the constructionist's program of distinguishing mind-structured phenomena from ultimate noumena.

This is not the only trouble, however. Because under constructionism laws are not abstracted from objects but are rather imposed by mind on objects, what is meant by calling a stated empirical law "true" is not that it corresponds to reality. Rather, such a law statement is called "true" because it conforms to appearance. This appearance is determined by the reigning paradigm. That means that, if there is a paradigm change in the near future, the same law statement may then turn out to be false. This is Kant's "Copernican revolution" with a pragmatic twist. Thus, while true statements still consist in correspondence, the measure of the correspondence is no longer mind-independent reality but man-made appearance. Truth thus varies with and is relative to the prevailing paradigm and that is all there is to truth.

Now the peculiarity of this pragmatic a priorism is that it installs a dogmatism in science that rivals religious dogmatisms of old. Persons cannot conduct independent research to see if the laws are true. Or at least any such research is ruled out of order from the start. For since these same laws are *already* true in the only sense "true" has under this view, namely, "corresponds to the received paradigm," the research is illicit. Not only that, but it is the received paradigm that determines in the first place the nature, scope, and limits of all research. But from this it follows that any such thing as independent research—research that seeks out the raw facts of nature uninterpreted by any preconceived model or paradigm—is meaningless. All research is necessarily "in-house" research and hence all research confirms the paradigm that directs it.

Nor does this self-serving dogmatism of scientific constructionism go unnoticed. For example, though he concedes that the preconception and resistance to innovation that comprise this dogmatism "could very easily choke off scientific progress," Thomas Kuhn nonetheless defends the dogmatism. It is, he says in effect, the price one pays for the vitality of research.[17] How research *gains* genuine vitality when it can choke off scientific progress is neither made clear nor is it easy to see.

Second, a closely related objection to pragmatic constructionism is that it countenances the possibility that two opposed physics are simultaneously true. Suppose two rival physics, each with its own laws and each espoused by a different community of researchers, emerge. Then, since both physics conform to reality as structured by a community of scientists, *both* physics are true at the very same time.

To this objection, however, constructionists have an easy answer. For they would insist that only the physics that wins out is true. This is another way of saying that truth is defined not as the conformity of a stated law to how *a* community of scientists construes reality but rather to how *the* community of scientists construes reality. Thus, as long as the rivalry continues, so far from it being the case that *both* physics are true, *neither* one is true. But this evades the contradiction at the cost of denying that, in any contest of opinion, those on the winning side ever justifiably prefer their view to that of the losing side because it is true. This is because, in any such conflict, the view that wins out does not win out because it is true but is rather true because it wins out. And equally disconcerting, this same escape implies that what all or a majority of researchers believe cannot possibly be false; that a consensus of opinion in science is *ipso facto* the true opinion in science. As Kuhn freely admits, the matter of paradigm choice in science is the same as it is in political revolutions. In either case, "there is no standard higher than the assent of the relevant community."[18]

[17] Thomas S. Kuhn, "The Function of Dogma in Scientific Research," in *Scientific Knowledge*, 254.

[18] Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 94.

This is not only startling in itself but it implies a stinging irony. If in natural science truth is wholly relative to received opinion, then, to escape arbitrariness, constructionists must say that truth in any discipline whatever is relative to what happens to be believed in that discipline. And this is a philosophical and not a scientific belief. It is the philosophical tenet that consensus is always and everywhere the measure of truth. But the fact of the matter is that this same wider or philosophical conventionalism is *not* believed by a majority of philosophers. But, then, by the constructionist's own criterion of truth, it follows that this same philosophical conventionalism—which is required by the constructionist to save his own scientific conventionalism from arbitrariness—is false. Therefore, the constructionist assay of empirical law is either arbitrary or self-defeating.

VI

Nevertheless, constructionism holds a clear advantage over the four other possibilities that have so far been reviewed. For it provides an explanation, as they do not, for the conformity-relation in which law consists. And this is another way of saying that it accounts for, as they do not, both the transcendence and the immanence of law. And so the question is, without sacrificing that advantage, is it possible to identify a *sixth* account of empirical law that escapes the three pitfalls of constructionism? This would be a view that not only sidesteps the dilemma of being either arbitrary or self-defeating but that also avoids both the dogmatism and the *Ding an sich* of paradigms.

The answer to this question is that there is at least one such possibility and that is the account of empirical law that would have been given by scholastic realists of the Middle Ages. It combines the best of both realism and anti-realism in law, while leaving behind the deficiencies of each.

Consider, for example, how the account of law given by a scholastic realist like St. Thomas Aquinas achieves this synthesis. All law, says Aquinas, is in its primary sense located in mind

as a rule or measure of activity.[19] That means that law is something that can be conformed to *by* activity, human or otherwise. And right here one finds in Aquinas the fundamental identification of the law-relation with a conformity-relation. True, the activity Aquinas here refers to is activity that directs a thing to its end. But bracketing the question of teleology, one can still say that, for Aquinas, to the extent that things, persons, or events follow laws, they conform to those laws. Nor is Aquinas unaware of the fact that this conformity implies the immanence as well as the transcendence of law. Activities that conform to a law are not just copies or images of the law as the reflection of a tree in a pond is the copy or image of the tree. Rather, the law is really present in the conforming activities. Otherwise, they would not be really lawful activities any more than the image of the tree in the pond is really a tree. And then they would falsely be said to conform to law just as dress that simulates, but falls short of exemplifying, the current style is falsely said to conform to that style. And so we find Aquinas insisting that, though law is properly and primarily found in the mind of a lawgiver, it is also properly, if secondarily, found in its concrete instances in the world.[20] Law is thus both transcendent and immanent. And both features of law are entailed by law being at once a rule of reason with respect to something else and a relation of conformity. As regards the latter, if any law L is a rule of reason with respect to some event *e* that conforms to L, then L is on a higher level than *e,* or in other words, L transcends *e*. For being a rule or measure of reason with respect to *e*, L is both logically prior to *e* and at the same time external to *e*, just as any one term in a dyadic relation is external to the other. Thus, since L is at once logically prior to and external to *e*, it can be said that L transcends *e*.

So far, there is nothing to choose between this Thomistic assay of law, and hence of empirical law, and the pragmatic a priori account of law that was just reviewed. Both analyses cover the fact that the law-relation is an identity-in-difference, that, as a

[19] *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 91, a. 2; I, q. 90, a. 1, ad 1.

[20] *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 90, a. 1, ad 1.

relation of conformity, law entails both transcendence and immanence. And we have said that this is the distinct advantage that these two views hold over the remaining four accounts of law.

Here the similarity ends, however. For all the scholastics, Aquinas included, join Fichte and the post-Kantian idealists (and for that matter the later Wittgenstein, too) in eschewing any such thing as a hidden, unknowable *Ding an sich*. It is a curious thing how opposites sometimes come together. As over against pragmatic constructionists who more or less follow Kant, Thomistic realists and the German objective idealists all insist that reality *is* knowable. And one reason for their optimism on this score is the apparent inconsistency of saying the opposite.

But Thomistic realism in law not only covers the conformity-relation in which law consists without the hidden thing-in-itself. It does this without either dogmatism or conventionalism. And, as was shown, the two go hand in hand. As for the first, we saw that under pragmatic constructionism, anyone who questions the truth of a received physical law is automatically branded as being out of order and politically incorrect. For such a received law is *already* true by the fact alone that it *is* received. It is a law that is part of an overall physics. And, since that overall physics has prevailed over its rivals, it is just on that account the true physics. And as for the second, we saw that, aside from implying this dogmatism, the trouble with pragmatic constructionism is that the scientific conventionalism it entails escapes being arbitrary by adopting a wider, philosophical conventionalism. And the irony in this is that, by its own criterion of truth, this universalized conventionalism turns out to be false.

For its part, however, Thomistic realism escapes both dogmatism and conventionalism by denying in the first instance their common source, namely, constructionism. As the name states, Thomistic realism is realism and not a priori conceptualism. Under it, empirical laws are not a priori imposed *on* events by gifted scientists but are rather abstracted by them *from* events. To that extent, it is an empiricist and not a rationalist realism. This abstraction of laws from lawful events presupposes that the laws must, to begin with, be present in those events. But this

immanence of law in lawful events is so much grist for the Thomistic mill. For, as was said, the conformity-relation in which all law consists implies the immanence of law in that of which it is the law and, since they define law as the rule or measure of activities, Thomists construe law as a relation of conformity. With realism replacing constructionism as regards the status of law, however, both dogmatism and conventionalism fall by the wayside. For under this realism truth is not the conformity of statements to appearance or reality-as-structured-by-science but rather the conformity of statements to reality itself. Accordingly, statements that conform to reality-as-structured-by-science or to the received scientific paradigm may turn out to be false statements. And so, saying that a law is believed by all or a majority of physicists at any given time is quite compatible with saying it is false. Not only that but, since truth does not here consist in a consensus of belief, those who question that consensus are not automatically ruled out of court as being politically incorrect. So the advantage of this Thomistic view of law is that it bypasses all three pitfalls of pragmatic constructionism, i.e., the hidden thing-in-itself, dogmatism, and conventionalism, while all along accounting for the immanence of law.

But in abandoning constructionism, Thomistic realism is not deprived of explaining what constructionism explains, but what nominalism, empirical conceptualism, and even Aristotelian realism all fail to explain, namely, the transcendence of law. As was stated, constructionists account for the transcendence required by the conformity-relation by tracing the source of empirical law to human minds. And this a priori status of law is equivalent to the transcendence of law. But to abandon constructionism is not necessarily to surrender the a priori or transcendent status of law. One can keep the latter and also avoid the three pitfalls of constructionism that were just reviewed by making God and not humans the author of empirical law. God subjects events and activities in the real world, the world as it is in itself, to certain laws that exist as eternal exemplars in His own mind. It is, for example, formally if not numerically one and the same law of acceleration that exists transcendently as divine exemplar and immanently in the falling stone. In the former con-

dition the law is *ante rem*. It is a priori and cause only and not effect. But in the latter condition the same law is *in re*. Here, it is both effect (of the Exemplar) and cause (of our idea of it). Finally, it is one and the same law of acceleration that exists in both these ways and that also exists *post rem* or a posteriori in the mind of Galileo. And here it is effect only and not cause. This is constructionism inverted. For, on the side of knowledge, Galileo does not a priori impose the law of acceleration *on* the world but rather discovers it a posteriori *in* the world. And, just because of that, his statement of that law is true because it conforms to reality itself and not true because it conforms to reality as interpreted by him. But on the side of being, like every other instance of the law of acceleration, the falling stone conforms or measures up to that law. And this implies, as was said, that the law of acceleration is both logically prior to and separate from that instance.

That it is logically prior to this or to any other instance of it is evident. It is law that explains what conforms to law; it is not what conforms to law that explains law. But, if you once overstress the dependence of our *knowledge* of general laws on perceived instances of laws, you run the risk of missing this truth. For you are then psychologically set up to draw the unconscious inference that, because *knowledge* of law depends on instances of law, *law* depends on instances of law. This mistake of confusing what is logically prior with what is prior in knowledge or belief is the mistake that nominalists and empirical conceptualists make about law. And like most important mistakes, it comes from the exaggeration of a truth. It is the truth, missed by constructionists, that knowing is not making but discovering, that all our knowledge of the world is, as the gentle Locke insisted, derived from sense experience of the world.

So far as the separateness of universal law from its instances is concerned, this is less evident. It is not evident to Aristotelian realists. But it becomes evident as soon as attention is paid to the logic of the relation of conformity. For there to be a relation of conformity there must be two things, the thing that conforms and the thing it conforms to, the measured and the measure. In this, conformity is no different from the relation of being to the

left of, being taller than, or any other asymmetric, dyadic relation. Law, then, is one thing and any instance of law is quite another thing. But, further, the thing conformed to is on a higher level than what conforms to it since the former explains the latter. Law, therefore, is transcendent.

Like nominalism and empirical conceptualism, Aristotelian realism also springs from the exaggeration of a truth. It is the truth on which Aristotle insists as against Plato, namely, that universals are instantiated in particulars. Humanity is really in Socrates and justice is really found in individual just acts. If, therefore, there are universal empirical laws, these laws are also immanent in the events of which they are the law; so at least an Aristotelian realist holds. And in the heat of this eagerness to correct a one-sidedly transcendent view of Forms and laws, it is easy to run to the opposite extreme of excluding transcendence altogether. But for all of this correct insistence on the part of Aristotelian realists on the immanence of Forms or laws, it does not follow from their immanence that laws are not also transcendent. And transcendent it has been shown they must be if law is a relation of conformity.

VII

To sum up, from the fact alone that law as such is a relation of conformity it follows that the analyses of empirical law proffered by nominalists, empirical conceptualists, and both Platonic and Aristotelian realists all miss the mark. For the conformity-relation in which any law consists entails (A) that law is on a higher level than and separate from that of which it is the law and (B) that law is at the same time a universal pattern that is present in lawful events or activities. This is what is meant by saying that law is both transcendent and immanent. But none of the assays of law just mentioned account for both (A) and (B). That is why they destroy the identity-in-difference of the law-relation.

(A), (B), and the identity-in-difference they entail are accounted for only by the a priori conceptualist and the Thomistic realist conception of law and hence of empirical law. Yet, as between

these two views of empirical law, it cannot fairly be said that there is nothing to choose. For despite the fact that many scientists prefer pragmatic conceptualism to Thomistic realism, it is questionable whether this preference is either consistent or correct. That it is a preference that revives the thing-in-itself is troublesome enough. Echoing Kant, such scientists tell us that what is known is reality-as-structured-by-science and not reality as it is in itself. And in this they seem to overlook Fichte's warning that you cannot consistently say that only reality as structured by science is known. Further, it is a preference that says that any song different from that sung by the reigning paradigm is a priori out of tune. Science, of all things, then ends up defending dogmatism and the status quo. And worst of all, it is a preference that is caught between being arbitrary and being self-defeating. To guard their own scientific conventionalism from the charge of arbitrariness, constructionists require a wider, philosophical conventionalism as regards truth. But the irony is that by their own criterion of truth the latter is false.

But Thomistic realism satisfies both (A) and (B) above without any of these difficulties. Under it, there is a relation of formal identity between God and lawful events and activities in the world. In other words, each term in the relation incorporates the self-same law. Otherwise, it would be falsely said that the events and activities *conform* to that law. It is just that in God the law is transcendent while in events and activities in the world it is immanent. To use the language of the tradition, it is one and the same law or essence that has two different ways of existing.

Here, law is a dimension of what Aquinas and scholastic philosophers generally call ontological truth. This is the truth of things rather than the truth of propositions. According to a more familiar dimension of this truth, things like trees and toads are called true because they measure up to the Idea of treeness and toadness respectively in God's mind. This is the divine Idea as exemplar. But Aquinas, for one, insisted on another dimension of ontological truth. This holds not between things and their transcendent exemplars but between events or activities and their

transcendent laws. This, he says, is the divine Idea as law.[21] But whether it is divine Idea as exemplar or divine Idea as law, truth in this relation is found primordially in God and not either in natural things on the one hand or in natural events on the other. For it is these things and events that conform to exemplars and laws respectively and not the other way around. And much to the disappointment of constructionists and humanists of all stripes, in that same hierarchy of truth the human intellect ranks last. Says Aquinas:

> Thus, the divine intellect measures but is not measured; natural things measure and are measured; but our intellect is measured, and it does not measure.[22]

[21] *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 93, a. 1.
[22] *De Veritate*, q. 1, a. 2.

EMOTION AND GOD: A REPLY TO MARCEL SAROT*

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MARCEL SAROT has helpfully drawn attention to the question of St. Thomas's treatment of divine emotion; and in my view he rightly protests against the widely fashionable approach of rejecting the classical doctrine of impassibility in favor of a suffering and passible God. Nevertheless, I disagree sharply with his contentions (1) that emotion is restricted to corporeal creatures,[1] and therefore (2) that emotion cannot be ascribed to God.

What kind of moral agent would God be without emotion? Sarot is not helpful here, and in this respect the critics of impassibility have a legitimate point; for, if we eliminate emotion from God, then we have to treat the Scriptures as "embodying primitive anthropomorphic conceptions of God," so that God's love, wrath, mercy, justice, and even his "serious concern for the welfare of His people are meaningless."[2]

To dismiss the biblical picture of God as anthropomorphic, maintaining not only that "anger" and "joy" are symbolic, but that even the notions of care and concern are not applicable to the divine being, seems unfaithful to revelation. It also calls into question the nature of God's personality and agency.[3]

* See Marcel Sarot, "God, Emotion, and Corporeality," *The Thomist* 58 (1994): 61-92. Much of this paper was prepared for a theological discussion group at the University of Virginia, before the appearance of Sarot's article. I am grateful for the points raised by Robert Wilken, Jamie Ferreira, Eugene Rogers, David Hart, and others in the discussion, and for the helpful comments of Jeff Greenman on this version.

[1] Sarot, 82: "without corporeality, no emotion."

[2] T. E. Pollard, "The Impassibility of God," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 8 (1955): 360.

[3] R. E. Creel thinks that emotional impassibility is compatible with caring about and acting for the welfare of another person, but that such a being could not be "rejoiced by the good fortunes of its beloved and distressed by its misfortunes" (*Divine Impassibility: An Essay in Philosophical Theology* [Cambridge: Cambridge, University Press, 1986], 117). I do not think this is close enough to the biblical presentation.

The burden of my response, and what I explain below, is this: Being a rational agent implies emotion of a kind. If we can speak of God having intellect and will, which St. Thomas does (*STh* I, qq. 14 & 19), so that God is an intelligent being with powers to act, then we should be able to speak (with similar qualifications) about emotion in God. In other words, agency by intellect and will implies emotion, which means that emotion should be ascribed to God, as the Bible does, but in a way that does not attribute passibility.

The two basic mistakes I see in Sarot's account are these: (1) to rely on physicalist definitions of the nature of emotion; (2) to assume that the Latin *passio* is the same as the contemporary English term "emotion." Thus I agree that Aquinas understood the relevant meaning of *passio* to refer to a person undergoing some bodily change (a *transmutatio corporalis*), but deny that this extended in Aquinas's account over the entire range of even human emotion.

Much of the recent work in the field of emotion, amongst both philosophers and psychologists, suggests that bodily sensation is only sometimes an aspect of emotion, and not essential in its definition. I shall attempt to show the parallels between the distinctions made by Aquinas and the framework of some of this contemporary research.

I. Emotion and Moral Agency

The essence of emotion has to do with being a moral agent, not with bodily existence. Any moral being (including angels and other spirits, God and human beings) has emotion. This is the implication of any moral psychology (especially, though not necessarily, Aristotelian) that analyzes moral action as a result of choice combining reason and desire in reference to an end to be obtained. Beings that have intellect and will (or rational appetite) have emotion; that is, they are capable of being "moved" towards (or away from) an object by appetite.

For human beings, the paradigm experience of emotion is the feeling of arousal (such as anger or fear) by which one is suddenly ready for response. The quickened heartbeat, the rush of adrenaline, the experience of these bodily responses is the sign of

the experience of emotion. To ascribe these feelings to God, with terms such as the Hebrew *'af* (which conveys an image of God with inflamed nostrils), is to indulge in anthropomorphism or anthropathism, ascribing the human experience or feeling to God.

That part of the emotional description that denotes the attitude of the agent, however, is not metaphoric. The love of God (or the joy or the anger) is a real quality, and stands in the same relation to its symbolic representations (such as an embrace for love, or inflamed countenance for anger) as the power of God does to the expression of God's "scepter" or "right hand." The emotions ascribed to God refer to the attitudes of a moral agent, not only those with bodies. In other words, the emotional descriptions refer primarily to an attitude and action arising from it, rather than to accompanying feelings. Anger is hostility, not rising blood pressure; love is faithful concern, not a feeling or other sentiment.[4]

In understanding this point, consider the question of emotion in angels, creatures that are neither corporeal nor divine. There is no question of their having the same attributes as God, but still they are moral agents without bodies. According to the categories of St. Thomas, angels have a rational appetite (will), but no sense appetite, and therefore no "irascible" and "concupiscible" passions (*STh* I, q. 59, a. 4). However, there is a sense in which one can speak about fear, or courage, or temperance in angels in terms of the will.[5] Angels are not simply intelligences; they have *amor* and *dilectio naturalis* (*STh* I, q. 60, a. 1). In an intellectual nature there is found a natural inclination governed by the will; in natures with sensation, this is a sensitive inclination.[6]

[4] This approach is the direct opposite of the view of William James, which shaped psychological views in the earlier part of this century (and seems to underlie Sarot's view; see below), that the feeling (awareness of physiological arousal) is the emotion. A person experiences the symptoms of fear—heartbeat, trembling—then interprets this in the light of the circumstances. In cognitive theories of emotion, it is the interpretation of the situation that produces the emotional reaction.

[5] *STh* I, q. 60, a. 1, ad 3.

[6] *STh* I, q. 60, a. 1: Unde in natura intellectuali invenitur inclinatio naturalis secundum voluntatem; in natura autem sensitiva, secundum appetitum sensitivum.

Without a body there can be no question of experiencing an emotion in a way that depends on sensation. But there is a connection between emotion and being a moral agent: to have goals and to want them achieved, to be disappointed when they fail and delighted when they are fulfilled. "There is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10) cannot be a mere metaphor for sexless and bodiless beings who obediently make another entry in the Book of Life; it refers to spiritual beings, with intellect and will, who see something take place that they had been hoping for and are pleased by it. They have a stake in what happens, and that is what is implied in being a moral agent.

II. *Passio* and Emotion

Let us begin with the passage where Aquinas seems to present a categorical denial of emotion in the nature of God. In *Summa Theologiae* I-II, q. 22, a. 3, St. Thomas presents as an *objectio* what many would regard as an excellent argument for considering emotion in God: "Joy and love [*amor*] are emotions. Now it must be possible for them to occur in the intellectual orexis as well as in the sensory, since the Scriptures attribute them to God and the angels."[7]

In his reply, Thomas quotes St. Augustine with this explanation:

> When love, joy and the like, are attributed to God or the angels or to man's intellectual orexis, they refer simply to acts of will which produce indeed the same sort of result as does action prompted by emotion, but are not in fact accompanied by emotion [*absque passione*].[8]

The word *passio* should not be taken as equivalent to the English "emotion" (even though Eric D'Arcy's translation in the

[7] *STh* I-II, q. 22, a. 3: Praeterea, gaudium et amor passiones quaedam esse dicuntur. Sed haec inveniuntur in appetitu intellectivo, et non solum in sensitivo; alioquin non attribuentur in Scripturis Deo, et angelis.

[8] Dicendum quod amor et gaudium et alia huiusmodi, cum attribuuntur Deo vel angelis, aut hominibus secundum appetitum intellectivum, significant simplicem actum voluntatis cum similitudine effectus absque passione (*STh* I-II, q. 22, a. 3, ad 3). The English translation given here is by Eric D'Arcy in the Blackfriars edition of the *Summa theologiae* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964-81), 19:13-15.

Blackfriars edition does so, along with a few contemporary philosophers[9]). *Passio* for Aquinas implied change, which implied potentiality and imperfection; thus *passio* would be problematic in connection with the being of God. But passion in the stricter sense that Thomas develops as part of the treatment of moral psychology in *STh* I-II, qq. 22-48 cannot be attributed to God because it implies bodily change. To suffer (*pati*) in the strict sense (and Thomas also describes two more general senses in *STh* I-II, q. 22, a. 1) applies to bodies: "*passio* properly speaking is found where there is a corporeal change."[10]

There is, however, another category of feeling or emotion not covered by this term. For Thomas *passio* meant strictly emotion accompanied by physiological change; non-bodily emotion was something he recognized, described, and associated with the dynamic quality of the will; he distinguished it from *passio*, but did not mean to deny it as an aspect of emotion. Below we shall discuss some of the passages where he uses the term *affectus* to describe the movement of the will without *passio*.

By following Thomas closely we realize that when he denies passion in God, he is not denying emotion (in the wider sense) but passion in the more technical sense of bodily change. It is not so much that we cannot ascribe emotion directly to God as that we cannot ascribe bodily emotions to the divine nature, which follows from not having material existence. I believe it can be demonstrated that St. Thomas accepted the ascription of emotion to God in another sense, that of the will. Recognizing this means that efforts either to attribute emotional qualities to God by dismantling the traditional divine attributes by arguing for suffering and change or to defend an impassible deity as non-emotional are not necessary.

For those who do not immanentize the divine nature, the point should be taken that it is possible to reject *passio* in the

[9] E.g., Robert C. Solomon, *The Passions: The Myth and Nature of Human Emotion* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976).

[10] Passio autem cum abiectione non est nisi secundum transmutationem corporalem, unde passio proprie dicta non potest competere animae nisi per accidens (*STh* I-II, q. 22, a. 1).

technical sense without rejecting emotion in the general sense. It is possible to have emotion in the sense of personality or moral agency without experiencing the feelings associated with embodied human agents.

It is possible to have great joy without the feeling of "walking on air," sorrow without the possibility of sobbing or tears, disappointment without "a sinking feeling," or anger without rising blood pressure. If emotion is defined in terms of these physical symptoms, then not only are God and angels emotionless, but a person who reacts vindictively with steely calm is not angry.

Much of the problem seems to be one of doubt that an agent really has an emotion unless the feeling is experienced with physiological arousal. This aspect of the problem seems to rest on a fallacy that needs exposing. Human emotion is the way in which human beings react and operate as moral agents, but it is not a requirement for personal agents in general.

If one is in a car, rounding a bend, and an oncoming truck is in one's lane, only a few yards away, a response of fear at imminent disaster will trigger adrenaline. The "fight" or "flight" reaction is still a basic pattern of human reaction, and enables humans and other animals to take necessary action with maximum readiness. An angel or demon would have no rush of adrenaline; but could still envision the possibility of a dreaded outcome, just as humans talk about their "fears" of a rising unemployment rate. The demons who recognize one God (cf. James 2:19) experience genuine fear but no real trembling.

But this covers only some situations, and cannot be generalized to provide a biological basis for all instances of fear. In other situations, without any perceptible change in bodily sensation, we can appraise a situation, see what is at stake in reference to our goals or values. We may, for example, refrain from saying something potentially hurtful, or phone the stock broker to sell some shares, and afterwards describe these actions as: "I hated to offend my host"; or "I was afraid the stock market would fall further." The use of emotional terms cannot be dismissed as merely fictional: the agent's affection for her friend produces a real aversion to causing her harm; the investment at stake represents the resources for retirement that she could ill afford to lose. Yet the

hate or fear is not detectable by facial expression or heart beat, that is, by awareness of change in physical state.

Let us push further the assumption that only a person with a body really has emotions by an analogy with listening to music. My enjoyment of a symphony by Mozart needs to involve a recording or a live performance. I read music, but not well enough to follow a complicated score and "realize" it without also hearing it performed. But there are professional musicians who can "hear" a work in their minds and master a score without actually hearing any sounds.

Now, if we may imagine God's "enjoyment" of the symphony, this would have the additional advantage of immediate totality. God would know beginning and end together, understand its structure and meaning instantaneously. This may seem too remote from the ordinary experience of music; but it seems to be the same sort of mistake to insist that a piece of music must be heard sequentially, and with actual sound waves produced, if it is to be a genuine experience of music, as to say that physiological changes are essential to emotion.

III. Current Theories of Emotion

A major limitation of Sarot's account is his assumption that the James-Lange and Schachter-Singer theories still hold the field.[11] These older accounts support his interpretation of Aquinas because they incorporate physiological arousal in the definition of emotion.

Basically, the James-Lange theory postulates that an external event produces bodily responses in an individual, particularly approach or avoidance reactions, and it is the person's perception of these events that constitutes the emotion; the experiments of Schachter allowed room for cognition by positing first a general visceral response, particularized by the individual's evaluations of her external and internal world.[12]

[11] Sarot's estimate, "the two theories of emotion that have been most influential during the present century" (Sarot, 86), is perhaps accurate through the 1960s but does not recognize the massive recent shift to cognitive theories.

[12] See the summary account in G. Mandler, "Emotion," *Oxford Companion to the Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

In the last fifteen years there has been a remarkable production of books and articles devoted to theories stressing a cognitive view of emotion.[13] What is common to these views is the point that the experience of emotion (to whatever extent physiology is involved) is *preceded* by a cognitive appraisal of a situation from the individual's point of view. Fear, for example, is generated not by a biological response system but by the rational assessment of some threat. This means that there are few philosophers or psychologists, contrary to Sarot's assertion, who would hold to the older physiological view of emotion without serious criticism or major modification.[14]

There is a double irony in Sarot's unawareness of the shift to cognitive views, and his continued association of Aquinas with the James and Schachter legacy. First, the recent cognitive theories are much more in line with Aristotelian-Thomist psychological principles; and second, one of the psychologists most influential in the 1960s for the shift away from the James-Lange paradigm actually based her work on Thomistic theory.[15]

Many modern theorists, both philosophers and psychologists, have pointed to the need to develop a description of emotion in a broader sense—that emotion is a product of cognition and perception, that it reflects attitudes or beliefs of the agent, that it is

[13] Major studies include: N. Frijda, *The Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Ronald de Sousa, *The Rationality of Emotion* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1987); and A. Ortony, G. L. Clore, and A. Collins, *The Cognitive Structure of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

[14] For examples of those ranging from the more sympathetic to the radically opposed: William Lyons, *Emotion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), supports a physiological definition, but note that Lyons's version is much more subtle than the James-Lange theory that he criticizes for its excessive Cartesianism (see 12-16); De Sousa, *Rationality of Emotion,* does not eliminate the James-Lange tradition but changes it by stressing the cognitive aspect of emotion; R. M. Gordon, *The Structure of Emotions: Investigations in Cognitive Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), devotes a chapter to demonstrating that the James and Schachter theories trivialized emotions by getting the relationship between sensation and emotion completely backwards.

[15] Magda Arnold, *Emotion and Personality,* 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960); and Magda Arnold, ed., *The Nature of Emotion: Selected Readings* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968).

an important part of subsequent action, and that it is sometimes felt.

In other words, contrary to popular impression and to many prior theories, the connections between cognition and emotion and between emotion and action are essential ones; but whether they are "felt" or not is less central. In the study of Johnson-Laird and Oately, for example, the associated physiological aspects are separable from the emotion itself: "one can experience the bodily sensations without the emotion; one can experience the emotion without the bodily sensations."[16]

Physiological arousal is treated almost as a side aspect of emotion by Ortony, Clore, and Collins, who define emotions as "valenced reactions to events, agents, or objects, with their particular nature being determined by the way in which the eliciting situation is construed."[17] Emotions are not simply apprehension and appraisal, but involve what they term "affect," which is central to the concept of emotion. Arousal is incidental to emotion; it reflects the intensity and type of reaction of the agent, but it is far from essential to emotion itself.[18]

IV. St. Thomas on *Affectus* and Divine Emotion

When Aquinas denied passion to God (*STh* I-II, q. 22, a. 3), we have seen that he did so not on the grounds of God's perfection or impassivity, but because there is no sensation and sense

[16] P. N. Johnson-Laird and K. Oately, "The Language of Emotions," *Cognition and Emotion* 3 (1989): 86.

[17] Ortony, Clore, and Collins, *The Cognitive Structure of Emotions*, 191.

[18] The distinction between emotion in a general sense and emotion or feeling associated with bodily change is in accordance with lines emerging in contemporary philosophy and psychology. In addition to the work of Ortony et al., there are others who are working on cognitive theories of emotion compatible with the Thomistic view. Nico Frijda, in *The Emotions,* one of the most comprehensive recent treatments of the subject, defines emotion as "action readiness change" (71), expressing a viewpoint fundamentally similar to the Augustinian and Thomistic tradition in associating emotion primarily with agency. In Frijda's terms, emotion proper is "relational action tendency" and the change in "relational action tendency (activation)."

It is the narrower sense of emotion for Frijda, which is the paradigm case of "felt" emotions, that seems to correspond exactly with the definition of *passio* by Thomas as response involving sense appetite and bodily change; and the wider sense of emotion as action tendency seems to overlap with the Thomistic view of the will.

appetite in God. For this reason God and angels do not experience passion. But this should not be read as the exclusion of emotion.

When qualities such as love and joy are attributed to God (or to human beings with respect to their rational appetite), they signify "a simple act of the will, with similarity of effect, but without passion."[19] This is not a denial of emotion in God but of arousal; a denial of passion in the sense of arousal or excitement in spiritual beings, but still an affirmation of emotion in the broad sense of "valenced reaction to events, agents or objects."

Aquinas used the term *affectus* to describe emotion in God and other spiritual beings. In the section on the human will (*STh* I, q. 82) Thomas applies the term *affectus* to the kind of emotion found in moral agents without corporeal being (angels, demons, and God). He says (q. 82, a. 5, ad 1) that love and other passions can be taken in two ways. As passions, they refer to an excitement of the soul, and this is the usual notion, which applies only to beings with a sense appetite. But in another way they signify a basic *affectus* without passion or excitement of the soul, and they are acts of the will. And in this fashion they are attributed to angels and to God.[20]

I believe that the framework of Aquinas's theory of moral agency included emotion in connection with the intellect and will of spiritual beings; the fact that he used the term "affect" indicates that he was affirming more than a fictional usage of emotional terms for God. The topic of emotion in God is not developed by Aquinas, however, apart from the treatment of love in general (and in special relation to the Holy Spirit).

Let us consider the one passage where Thomas treated directly the question of divine emotion: *STh* I, q. 20, a. 1, "Whether there is love [*amor*] in God." The affirmation of the presence of love in God in the main response is along the lines presented

[19] *STh* I-II, q. 22, a. 3, ad 3: amor et gaudium et alia huiusmodi, cum attribuuntur Deo vel angelis, aut hominibus secundum appetitum intellectivum, significant simplicem actum voluntatis cum similitudine effectus absque passione.

[20] *STh* I, q. 82, a. 5, ad 1: Alio modo significant simplicem affectum absque passione vel animi concitatione. Et sic sunt actus voluntatis. Et hoc etiammodo attribuuntur angelis et Deo.

above; although the term "affect" is not used, Thomas teaches that the dynamic quality of appetite in general towards different objects is the basic meaning of the term love, and this applies to God who has will, or intellectual appetite.

In the first article Aquinas briefly lists the arguments that might be brought to bear against the notion of love in God: love is a passion, and there is no passion in God; sadness and anger are attributed to God only metaphorically.

Aquinas affirms the necessity of ascribing love to God and shows its broader application not just to sensation but to the will. The action of the will, and of any appetitive power, is to tend towards good and away from evil as objects of action. Since reference to evil is secondary to what is good (in that it is seen in opposition to good), the positive motions in reference to *bonum* are primary, while motions in reference to *malum* are secondary. This means that *amor* and *gaudium* are primary in comparison to sadness and hate.

Thomas summarizes his own argument here for considering the existence of emotion in God. All appetitive movements, i.e., of appetite in general, including the will, presuppose love as a kind of first root. No one desires something unless it is a loved good; neither does one enjoy anything but a loved good. Hate also occurs only for something that is contrary to something loved; and, similarly, for sadness and other emotions of this kind, it is clear that they are to be referred to love as first principle. Thus wherever there is will or appetite, there is love; where the first principle is removed, then the others are removed. Since God has will, we must say he has love.[21]

This part of Thomas's teaching, which forms the main part of the response, is that to which I want to draw attention, as it supports the point that emotion is to be taken in a general way and

[21] *STh* I, q. 20, a. 1 c: Et propter hoc omnes alii motus appetitivi praesupponunt amorem quasi primam radicem. Nullus enim desiderat aliquid nisi bonum amatum; neque aliquis gaudet nisi de bono amato. Odium etiam non est nisi de eo quod contrariatur rei amatae. Et similiter tristitiam, et cetera huiusmodi, manifestum est in amorem referri sicut in primum principium. Unde in quocumque est voluntas vel appetitus, oportet esse amorem; remoto enim primo, removentur alia. Ostensum est autem in Deo esse voluntatem. Unde necesse est in eo ponere amorem.

is characteristic of the will and therefore of any moral agent. This must be kept in mind when Thomas appears to deny emotion in God.

In the replies to the arguments (q. 20, a. 1, ad 1 & 2) Aquinas makes it clear that the element of emotion that he does not ascribe to God is bodily change (*transmutatio corporalis*). It is the accompanying physiological change that defines a *passio*. A passion then has a technical meaning: activations of the sense appetite, insofar as they have a bodily change connected with them, are called passions, and not acts of the will.[22]

Therefore love (*amor*), joy, and delight, when they signify acts of the sense appetite are passions, but not as they signify actions of the intellectual appetite; and this is how they are ascribed to God. God loves without passion (*sine passione amat*).

In reference to God at the beginning of the *Summa* Aquinas uses the term *affectibus mentis,* affects of the mind (*STh* I, q. 3, a. 1, ad 5). In treating of the relations within the Trinity and the procession of the Holy Spirit as the love of God, Aquinas speaks of the impression of love as an affection.

The use of the term "affection" to signify non-corporeal emotion is applied to human action in a number of places in *Summa theologiae* I-II that treat the psychology of human action. Thomas distinguishes there between emotion that is associated with the will, as motivation for action, and passion in the narrower sense which we would call (bodily) feeling. There is an important passage in *STh* I, q. 64, a. 3, for example, where Thomas says that sadness and joy, etc., cannot apply to demons, because passions require a sense appetite with a bodily organ . But in the sense that these emotional terms refer to "basic activations of the will" (*simplices actus voluntatis*) they do apply.

V. Conclusion

There is a clear distinction made by Thomas that needs to be recognized: There is a kind of affective reaction not dependent on the sense appetite or bodily change, included in the English

[22] *STh* I, q. 20, a. 1, ad 1: Sic igitur actus appetitus sensitivi, inquantum habent transmutationem corporalem annexam, passiones dicuntur, non autem actus voluntatis.

term "emotion," that is characteristic of all moral agents with will, including God. Thomas described this negatively (*sine passione*) but he also used the positive term *affectus*. The English term "emotion," both in ordinary modern usage and in scholarly analysis (such as that of Frijda), has that wide meaning. We might be able to differentiate within the range of emotion between feeling and affection (or possibly between passion and sentiment[23]), but the fluidity of terms should not be allowed to obscure the fact that emotion has a comprehensive sense; it was recognized by Aquinas and is acknowledged in modern study. A being with an intellect, if it is to be an agent, must have a will; and if a will, then emotion.

I think the fundamental reason for our difficulties in understanding the problems of divine emotion and the relation of emotion and reason in human action, and why Thomas did not devote any special treatment to the term *affectus* (which would have helped a great deal), is that the modern view of the will has shifted from the biblical and Augustinian view that incorporated affect, to a mere decision-making faculty independent of and often opposed to emotion.[24] Thus I believe that Aquinas presupposed in his use of the term *voluntas* the affective properties argued for here. A reformed moral psychology must not only revive the proper category of emotion, but continue to dismantle the Cartesian view of intellect and will.

[23] A suggested by A. Kenny, *The Metaphysics of Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 58.

[24] Many aspects of the relation of intellect and will in human action are dealt with in my book, *Right Practical Reason: Aristotle, Action, and Prudence in Aquinas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

THREE-PERSONED SUBSTANCE: THE RELATIONAL ESSENCE OF THE TRIUNE GOD IN AUGUSTINE'S *DE TRINITATE*

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WITH THE RECENT resurgence of interest in the doctrine of the Trinity, there is a need not only to attempt to speak to the concerns of our time but also to be attentive to the tradition of the Church. In this latter task, it is impossible not to take account of Augustine's work in *De Trinitate*. Theologians who have already written constructive accounts of the doctrine of the Trinity often set their positions in contrast to Augustine's understanding. Those who are concerned to stress God's relationality often view Augustine's position as a barrier to this understanding because Augustine is taken to have given priority to the one substance over the three persons. Thus, it is said, he has stressed absolute essence at the expense of relationality.

In this paper, I would like to offer an alternative interpretation of Augustine's understanding of substance and person as it is stated in *De Trinitate*. To show how my reading is an alternative, I will first indicate how Augustine is often understood by highlighting the main points of one analysis of *De Trinitate,* that done by Catherine Mowry LaCugna in her book *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life.* There, LaCugna presents Augustine as producing a conception of the immanent Trinity in which essence or substance precedes and has priority over relation. In contrast, I will try to show that rather than giving priority to substance over relation, Augustine is trying to bring the reader to an understanding of God in which substance is itself three-personed. The substance itself is the relations of the persons.

I

In LaCugna's view, one should speculate about God's nature only insofar as that speculation is rooted in God's economy. *Theologia* (the mystery of God) and *oikonomia* (the mystery of salvation) belong together, and "the fundamental issue in trinitarian theology is not the inner workings of the 'immanent' Trinity, but *the question of how the trinitarian pattern of salvation history is to be correlated with the eternal being of God.*"[1] In her view, when one links *theologia* with *oikonomia*, one gets a theology of relationship that has consequences for Christian life and praxis. Unfortunately, trinitarian theology has suffered because the essential connection between the threefold pattern of salvation history and God's being has been lost. LaCugna discusses what she calls the "emergence and defeat" of the doctrine of the Trinity in great detail, and her discussion encompasses the period from before the Council of Nicaea to Gregory of Palamas in the fourteenth century. For the purposes of this paper, it is important to note only that in her view Augustine's way of understanding substance and relation paved the way for a concern in Western theology to discuss God's relations *in se,* without much regard for God's acts in salvation history.[2]

Though she recognizes that *De Trinitate* begins with an account of the divine missions and the biblical record of salvation, LaCugna yet maintains that for Augustine the unity of the Trinity takes precedence over the economy and even becomes his real "starting point."[3] She will not go so far as to say that Augustine's theology is noneconomic, but she does think that Augustine has a hard time keeping his development of the doctrine of the Trinity connected with the economy.[4] There are three decisive elements of his thought that, in her view, have contributed to the division between *theologia* and *oikonomia:* 1) a

[1] Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 4 (original emphasis).

[2] Ibid., 81.

[3] Ibid., 99.

[4] Ibid., 98.

preoccupation with processions over missions; 2) the emphasis on the unity of divine essence over the plurality of divine persons within salvation history; and 3) the relocation of the economy away from the events of salvation history to within the human soul, a relocation that she describes as an "interior economy" in which one "becomes perfected by knowing and loving God through knowing and loving self."[5] These three elements are manifested in two principles of Augustine's theology that later became standard to Western Trinitarian theology: 1) the works of the Trinity *ad extra* are one (*opera trinitatis ad extra indivisa sunt*) and 2) the doctrine of appropriations. In LaCugna's view, the first principle blurs the distinction between the persons in salvation history and leaves us with a unitary relationship with God. The second is a compensating strategy to make up for the mistake of the former. Augustine's preoccupation with processions, his relocation of the economy to the soul, and these two principles are all related to starting with the unity of substance.[6] It is important, then, to see on what LaCugna bases the claim that this is indeed Augustine's emphasis.

LaCugna finds the evidence for the priority of essence over relation primarily in Book VII. She notes that in Book V, as he argues against the Arians that the Son is equal to the Father, Augustine has made ingenious use of the category of relation. Nothing is said of God according to accident, but, Augustine maintains, not everything is said of God according to substance. Some things are said according to relation. Because it is eternal, the Son's relation to the Father is not an accident; but this relation is not a predicate of the substance either because the Father is not called Father with reference to self (*ad se*) but with reference to another (*ad alterum*). Similarly the Son is called Son not *ad se* but *ad alterum*. The Father is God according to substance, the Son is God according to substance, and the Spirit is God according to substance, but the Father is Father according to relation, the Son is Son according to relation, and the Spirit is

[5] Ibid., 97, 98.
[6] Ibid., 99, 101, 102.

Spirit according to relation.[7] This ingenious use of relation she believes to be undermined in Book VII. There, she says, Augustine loses the relative character of a divine person when he equates person with substance.[8] She cites what she calls "a famous and difficult text" in which, using LaCugna's translation, Augustine says:

> [I]n God to be is not one thing, and to be a person another thing, but it is wholly and entirely one and the same. When we say the person of the Father, we mean nothing else than the substance of the Father. Therefore, as the substance of the Father is the Father Himself, not insofar as He is the Father but insofar as He is, so too the person of the Father is nothing else than the Father Himself. For He is called a person in respèct to Himself, not in relation to the Son or to the Holy Spirit, just as he is called in respect to Himself, God, great, good, just, and other similar terms.[9]

In interpreting this passage, LaCugna says:

> Earlier in the treatise Augustine had cited Father, Son, and Spirit as relative terms, but in this passage he denies the relative character of a divine person and equates person with substance. The person of the Father is the same as the being of the Father. The person of the Father is thus absolute, without relation to Son and Spirit.[10]

LaCugna points out that the passage to which she refers has been an "embarrassment" to subsequent theologians because of its inconsistency with what Augustine has said before. The difficulty lies in reconciling the two statements: "to be and to be a person are identical in God" and "a divine person subsists in relation to another."[11] Attempts to reconcile the two statements have not been satisfactory, and even Augustine himself ends Book VII admitting that he cannot explain precisely what a divine person is. Still, LaCugna offers her own interpretation of what Augustine means in this particular passage:

[7] Ibid., 85.
[8] Ibid., 89.
[9] Ibid., 88-89.
[10] Ibid., 89.
[11] Ibid.

What Augustine is trying to express here is that when two subjects are in relation to each other, such as master to slave, one can differentiate between the master in him/herself, and the master in relation to the slave. In this sense essence precedes relation. Applied to God, one can differentiate between the Father in the Father's self, and the Father in relation to the Son; similarly, the divine essence in some sense precedes relation. Augustine means that to be God and to be the Father (or Son or Spirit) are one and the same.[12]

It is this idea that she feels becomes dominant in Augustine's thinking and that contributes so much to the breakdown of the connection between *theologia* and *oikonomia.* It is my contention that there is more of a connection between *theologia* and *oikonomia* in *De Trinitate* than LaCugna sees, and it is her failure to see this connection that leads her to say that Augustine prefers essence over relation.

II

To see how the economy shapes what Augustine has to say about God's being and our understanding of it, one must read Books V-VII in the context of the work as a whole. Augustine points out at the beginning of Book I the several ways in which people may err in their conceptions of God. The problem for all who conceive God wrongly is that they have not been purified, morally and cognitively, so as to see God rightly. Those who err, however, do not accept talk about their "unfitness" as a genuine reason for their failure to understand. Rather, they see such talk as an excuse to mask the ignorance of those who defend the orthodox faith. Augustine says, then, that he is undertaking "to give them the reasons they clamor for, and to account for the one and only and true God being a trinity and for the rightness of saying, believing, understanding that the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are of one and the same substance or essence."[13] By offering them intellectual reasons for the Trinity, Augustine hopes they may actually realize that this supreme goodness does

[12] Ibid.

[13] Augustine, *De Trinitate*, I:4, trans. Edmund Hill, O.P. (Brooklyn, N.Y.: New City Press, 1991).

exist, that it can be truly grasped only by purified minds, and that they have not yet seen it because their minds, like any human mind, must be "nursed back to full vigor on the justice of faith" in order to concentrate on the overwhelming light.[14] The first step in his process is to show that scripture does indeed authorize the kind of faith about which he speaks, and this step occupies his attention through Book IV.

Augustine's problem in this part of his task is to show how scripture can be understood to affirm the Catholic faith about the Trinity, namely, that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are a divine unity in the inseparable equality of one substance, so that there are not three gods but one God; that, still, the Father begets the Son, who is not the Father; that the Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son; and that despite their coequality and inseparability, only the Son became incarnate, only the Spirit descended at Jesus' baptism and at Pentecost, and only the Father's voice spoke from heaven.[15] Scripture itself presents a problem for this Catholic understanding, though, because it contains texts in which the Son is spoken of as equal to the Father and also texts in which the Father is spoken of as greater than the Son. Augustine proposes reading these texts as ascribed to the Son in different ways. Statements that indicate equality are made "in virtue of the form of God." Statements that indicate subordination are made "in virtue of the form of a servant."[16] There is a third kind of statement about the Son, though, seen in those that "mark him neither as less nor as equal, but only intimate that he is from the Father."[17] In this third category of statements, Augustine finds a link between the Son's being and work. He says that "the life of the Son is unchanging like the Father's, and yet is from the Father; and that the work of Father and Son is indivisible, and yet the Son's working is from the Father just as he himself is from the Father; and the way in which the Son sees the Father is simply by being the Son."[18] Augustine has linked

[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid., I:7.
[16] Ibid., I:14.
[17] Ibid., II:13.
[18] Ibid., II:3.

being and work so that the work is distinct yet inseparable in the same way that the being of the divine persons is distinct yet inseparable.[19] Both the Son and the Son's work are from the Father. Augustine examines more closely the force of the word "from" with regard to the sending of the Son. First, because they already fill the universe, the Son and Spirit do not "go" to someplace where they were not. Second, the sending cannot be interpreted to mean that the Father alone sent the Son. The work of the three is inseparable, so all three participated in the sending; but the Son alone is "sent" in the sense that it is the Son who appears in the flesh and not the Father or Spirit. Here the adverbial qualifications that Augustine has already established become important. The Son "in the form of God" participates in the sending, but the Son "in the form of a servant" can be said to be sent. The same argument can be used to explain the sending of the Holy Spirit.[20] The reason for the sendings of both Son and Spirit was to present them in a manner suitable to the human senses, because the senses are incapable of perceiving the substance of God.[21]

Book IV takes up the purpose of this sending and shows the influence of neo-Platonism on Augustine's thought. Humans are exiled from unchanging joy, and yet we yearn for it. So, Augustine says, "God sent us sights suited to our wandering state, to admonish us that what we seek is not here, and that we must turn back from the things around us to where our whole being springs from."[22] In order to bring us back, God had to persuade us of two things: first, of how much God loves us; and second, of what kind of people we are, namely, people who are blinded by depraved desires and unbelief. We are people who need to be enlightened, and "our enlightenment is to participate in the Word, that is, in the life that is the light of [humans] (Jn. 1:4). Yet we were absolutely incapable of such participation and

[19] See also Edmund Hill, "Karl Rahner's 'Remarks on the Dogmatic Treatise *De Trinitate*' and St. Augustine," in *Augustinian Studies* 2 (1971): 67-80, where the same point is made using evidence from Book VI.

[20] *De Trinitate*, II:10.

[21] Ibid., II:12.

[22] Ibid., IV:2.

quite unfit for it, so unclean were we through sin, so we had to be cleansed."[23] This cleansing has to do with Christ's mediation, which Augustine takes up more extensively in Book XIII. There, he recalls the point he made at the beginning, that what was needed for our salvation was a demonstration of God's love, and he discusses at some length both in Book IV and in Book XIII the justice and result of God's action in sending his Son to die for us.[24]

For the purposes of this paper, the important point to be made with regard to the mediation is that it is accomplished by temporal means in order to lead us to eternal things. In distinguishing between temporal knowledge gained from salvation history and eternal wisdom, Augustine says:

> Among things that have arisen in time the supreme grace is that [humanity] has been joined to God to form one person; among eternal things the supreme truth is rightly attributed to the Word of God. That the only-begotten from the Father is the one who is full of grace and truth means that it is one and the same person by whom deeds were carried out in time for us and for whom we are purified by faith in order that we may contemplate him unchangingly in eternity. . . . Our knowledge therefore is Christ, and our wisdom is the same Christ. It is he who plants faith in us about temporal things, he who presents us with the truth about eternal things. Through him we go straight toward him, through knowledge toward wisdom, without ever turning aside from one and the same Christ.[25]

The Christ who is known in temporal salvation history is the same Christ whom we contemplate in unchanging eternity. Temporal knowledge of Christ brings us to the faith by which our minds are purified so that we can see the truth of the eternal Christ. In Augustine's view, we were incapable of grasping eternal truth because of the weight of our sins, which we contracted by our love of temporal things. We needed to be purified, but God could only get our attention, as it were, in order to purify us by adapting himself to the temporal realm to which we were bound. It is right, then, to accord faith to the temporal things

[23] Ibid., IV:4.
[24] Ibid., IV:11.
[25] Ibid., XIII:24.

done for our sake, because we are purified by means of them. The Son became human in order that by allying himself with us in our temporal condition God might provide a bridge to eternity. But as we are purified, sight and truth succeed this faith. Augustine says, when our faith becomes truth by seeing, our mortality will be transformed into a fixed and firm eternity, that is, eternal life.[26] The actual mission of the Son is, then, for the purpose of eliciting the faith by which we are purified in order that we may contemplate the truth.[27] The temporal mission acts as a bridge to eternal truth because it manifests the divine procession of the Son from the Father. We see in time that the Son is "from" the Father, so we have an indication that the Son is "from" the Father in eternity and thus begin to know God as God truly is.[28] The temporal mission by itself, however, is misleading. Because the eternal truth of the processions cannot be manifested inseparably in the created order, the temporality of the sending gives the appearance of separability among the divine persons.[29] Eventually, even this temporal understanding has to be given up, but the temporal missions act as a crucial bridge to that eternal truth and are an irreplaceable step along the way toward purification. I will return to this point shortly.

First, I need to deal with Books V-VII, in which Augustine turns his attention to elaborating this eternal truth as fully as it can be elaborated in temporal speech. He reminds the reader that no temporal thought or speech can grasp God as God truly is, but he makes the effort to speak of God both because the faithful out of piety burn to know the divine and inexpressible truth and because he intends to dismantle the arguments of the heretics.[30] Rather than rehearse Augustine's complex arguments here, I shall highlight the main points. As LaCugna has noted, Augustine begins by discussing how statements refer to God in order to find an answer to the Arians who say that the unbegot-

[26] Ibid., IV:24.
[27] Ibid., IV:25.
[28] Ibid., IV:29.
[29] Ibid., IV:30.
[30] Ibid., V:1; IV:32.

ten Father and the begotten Son are of two unequal substances. Augustine points out first that since in God there are no accidents, nothing can be predicated of God with reference to accident. Not all things, however, are said with reference to substance. Some things are said with reference to eternal relations. The question then arises about which things are said of God in which way. Father, Son, and Spirit present a particular problem. For instance, "Father" signifies only the Father, but not in such a way as to indicate a separate substance. The Father is called with a name proper to itself (*per se*), but is called that name with reference to another (*ad alterum*). Anything that the Father is called with reference to substance (*ad se*) it is called with the other (*cum altero*).[31] In other words, anything that is said properly or peculiarly of any person ("Father," "Son," "Spirit," and later he will include "Word" and "image") is not said with reference to self but to another.[32] Other things, such as "good," "great," "eternal," or even "God," are said with reference to substance and are said with the others. "Good," for instance, refers to God's substance because God does not participate in goodness but *is* goodness. It is not one thing for God to be and another to be good, or great, or eternal, or God.[33] To be, for God, is to be good. To be is to be God. Because Father, Son, and Spirit are of the same substance, they are equally good, great, and so on. Any of these—good, great, and so on—may be said "three times over about each of the persons," but to say it three times over does not indicate three good ones or three gods but only one good one or one God.

This discussion of how things are said of God with reference to substance leads to two questions: one is about multiplicity in God and the other is about how substance predicates apply to the three persons. Since the answer to the latter question sheds light on the former, I shall take it up first. In a long series of arguments that are too involved to go into here, Augustine explores the problem of how substance terms, such as "wisdom," "being,"

[31] For this formula, see footnote 1 to Book IV of Edmund Hill's translation of *De Trinitate*.

[32] *De Trinitate*, V:12.

[33] Ibid., V:9.

and even "God," apply to the Trinity. To understand what he is doing, one must keep in mind that, for him, these terms are interchangeable by virtue of God's simplicity. What one says about God's wisdom one must also say about God's goodness, etc., because they all have to do with God's very being. I Corinthians 1:24, however, presents a problem. This passage says that Christ is the wisdom and power of God, and it seems to indicate that the Father is not power and wisdom but the begetter of power and wisdom. The problem, and thus his arguments, center around how to understand the Son as the wisdom of God, in accordance with scripture, and yet acknowledge that it is God and not just the Son who is wise. In Book VII, Augustine puts the question in this way:

> whether we can predicate of each person in the Trinity by himself, and not just together with the other two, such names as God and great and wise and true and omnipotent and just and anything else that can be said of God with reference to self as distinct from by way of relationship; or whether these names can only be predicated when the trinity or triad is meant.[34]

He explores the problem from various angles. If wisdom is said individually of the Son only with reference to the others, in the way that "Word" or "Son" is, then the Father *begets* wisdom instead of *being wise*. The Father, then, would not be wise in self but only with the wisdom of the Son. The absurdity of this position becomes even more clear if we substitute "great" and "God" for wisdom. We would then be saying that the Father is great only with the greatness that the Father begets and that the Son is the Godhead of the Father. Augustine says: "This means that apart from being Father, the Father is nothing but what the Son is for him . . . . Are we not then forced to say that he is the Father of his own being just as he is the Father of his own greatness, just as he is the Father of his own power and wisdom?"[35] But perhaps wisdom is said of the Son individually but not with reference to the others. This move fails also because we lose the relation between the Son's wisdom and the Father's wisdom. Since we

[34] Ibid., VII:1.
[35] Ibid.

may substitute "being" for "wisdom," we would also lose the crucial relation between the Son's being and the Father's being. We would no longer be able to say that the Son and the Father are of one being. The problem, then, cannot be solved by assigning the terms to the Son individually. But it cannot be solved either if the terms are assigned to the three only with reference to each other and not in self. If Father, Son, and Spirit do not have being in themselves but only with reference to each other, then we are left with the "unexpected conclusion that being is not being, or at least that when you say being you point not to being but to relationship."[36]

There appears to be an intractable problem, but Augustine presses on. He says, "[E]very being that is called something by way of relationship is also something besides the relationship."[37] If, for instance, the Father is not something with reference to self, then there is nothing there to be talked about in relationship. Augustine then affirms:

> the Father is himself wisdom, and the Son is called the wisdom of the Father in the same way as he is called the light of the Father, that is, that as we talk of light from light, and both are one light, so we must understand wisdom from wisdom, and both one wisdom. And therefore also one being, because there to be is the same as to be wise.[38]

The same reasoning would apply to any substance term, such as "good," "great," and so on. Augustine has tried to show that when one talks about the substance of God, there is both an aspect of speaking of each person with reference to self and with reference to each other. The Son may appropriately be called "wisdom" when we speak of the Son "in the form of a servant" because Christ was sent to manifest God's wisdom to us so that we might imitate it. But the wisdom that is manifest temporally, and thus incompletely, is the wisdom that Father, Son, and Spirit are.[39] We should take the option given in the second half of his question and name the triad itself as wise and good and God.

[36] Ibid., VII:2.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid., VII:4-6.

When thinking of God as triad, though, the question is bound to come up: "If not three gods, then three what?" Augustine reserves the term "person" for this answer and discusses its meaning in Book VII. It is here that the "famous and difficult passage" to which LaCugna refers appears. In it, let us recall, Augustine says:

> as the substance of the Father is just the Father, not insofar as he is Father, but insofar as he just is; so too the person of the Father is nothing but just the Father. He is called person with reference to himself, not with reference to the Son or Holy Spirit; just as he is called God with reference to himself, and great and good and just and anything else of that sort. And just as it is the same for him to be as to be God, to be great, to be good, so it is the same for him to be as to be person.[40]

Since Augustine is calling to our attention the similarity in the use of "person" to other substance terms, such as "good," it is well to keep in mind what he has already said about how those terms apply. There is in his mind no simple dichotomy between self- and other-reference when speaking of God's substance. There is not necessarily, then, the contradiction that has been such an "embarrassment" for scholars. Still, as is commonly noted, Augustine himself finds the term "person" inadequate for speaking about the mystery of God. In fact, the discussion in Book VII is designed to show the inadequacy of the term. Augustine asks questions, gives tentative answers, but then dismantles the answers he has given. What is not commonly noted is how this inadequacy plays into his larger argument. He has been trying in part to give reasons for believing, thinking, and understanding that Father, Son, and Spirit are of one and the same substance or essence.[41] This is precisely what he has done in Books I-VII to the extent possible through ordinary reasoning. The other part of his plan, however, is to show that the supreme goodness the reader now understands to exist cannot be grasped truly by minds that have not been purified. With the discussion of the term "person," Augustine has reached the limits of ordinary human thought and speech. The question, "Three what?" simply

[40] Ibid., VII:11.
[41] Ibid., I:4.

cannot be answered as long as one continues to think in spatial and temporal categories.[42] The last part of Book VII consists of a frank admission that the mind cannot grasp the truth of the Catholic faith until it has been purified. He is making a transition into the project he undertakes in Books VIII-XV, namely, the effort to purify the mind and raise it, to the fullest extent possible in human understanding, to the vision of God. It is to this second project that we now turn.

III

Augustine says at the beginning of Book VIII that he will continue to discuss the same things as before, but this time they will be discussed in a more inward manner. What humans seek is God, the unchangeable good, and we are able to know and love God because this good is not far from us. It is that in which we live and move and are because we are made in its image.[43] Still, though the good is so close, we misconceive it because our minds are flesh-bound. We cannot love what we do not know, and we do not know God rightly. We must, then find a way to come to know the unknown God; and we can begin to do that by way of comparison with what we do know in ourselves. Since God is the best of all that is, we look for analogy in that which is the best part of us, the intellect.

Augustine leads the reader through a series of trinitarian analogies by which he draws the reader closer and closer to the analogy that is most fitting. In Books IX and X, he explores the operations of the mind and discovers in it a threefold pattern of memory, understanding, and will that resembles what he has said about the Trinity in Books V-VII. The mind in remembering itself remembers itself as a whole, and the same goes for understanding and willing itself. In this way, wholes are in wholes, though each is distinct. Each of the three is perfect in itself, yet the three are inseparable from each other. But it is important to note that this threefoldness of the human mind is not by itself the image of God. The image of God is realized

[42] Ibid., VII:12.
[43] Ibid., VIII:5.

when the threefold mind exercises its remembering, understanding, and willing on God rather than on itself.[44] Even though contemplation of self is an important step along the way, it is not entirely accurate to say that Augustine has relocated the economy to the "interior" so that we know God by knowing ourselves. If we contemplate only ourselves, we never truly know God. Instead, this step is followed by one that is decisive—remembering, understanding, and willing the temporal manifestation of God, the incarnate Son. Here, the link with salvation history is clear. As we have already seen, this temporal manifestation performs the crucial task of persuading us of God's love. It also acts as a bridge to eternal truth so that we may contemplate God rightly by enabling us through the missions to have some understanding of the processions. Through the temporal manifestation of God, we are brought to the faith that is necessary for gaining eternal wisdom; but we also hope to move beyond faith. When we strip away even the bodily elements of the temporal manifestation of God, we give up faith for sight and attain the vision of God that restores the image of God in us and gives us true wisdom.[45] Though one gains this wisdom individually, Augustine's interest is not strictly individualistic. He says in Book IV that Christ wants his disciples to be one in him so that they may overcome their divisions of will and become bound in the same fellowship of love that binds the Father and the Son together.[46] The oneness with God that comes with the vision of God is the precondition for this united fellowship and so occupies most of his attention, but there is indeed a practical consequence of this concern for knowledge of God's being that should not be overlooked.[47]

In Book XV, Augustine says that though we can begin to understand the Trinity through the image of the Trinity that is in

[44] Ibid., XIV:15.

[45] Ibid., XIV:3, 15, 23-26.

[46] Ibid., IV:12.

[47] For a discussion about the practical value of recovering the trinitarian image of God, see Rowan Williams, "Sapientia and the Trinity: Reflections on the *De Trinitate*," in Bernard Bruning, Mathijs Lamberigts, and Jozef van Houtem, eds., *Collectanea Augustiana: Mélanges T.J. van Bavel*, vol. 1. (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1990), 317-332.

us, even our perfected image falls short of the Trinity that God is. A human is not the same as memory, understanding, and will. One can say, "I *have* these three," but not, "I *am* these three." With supreme simplicity, though, God *is* Trinity.[48] Because for Augustine God is Trinity, I do not think that it is accurate to say that essence precedes relation. Nor is it accurate to say that "person" is simply equated with absolute "substance." Rather, the persons, which are defined by their relations, are nothing other than what the substance is. It is not that "person" equals "substance," but that the substance is three-personed. Just as for God it is the same thing to be as to be wise, for God, it is the same thing to be as to be triune. Anything that is said with reference to substance is said of all three persons because the three persons are the substance. According to Augustine, it is on this point that our human understanding fails us. We can grasp much of the truth, but because we still live a temporal existence, we cannot fully understand what it is to *be* Trinity rather than *have* a trinity of some sort in us. For that understanding, we will have to wait until we have been transformed fully from mortality to eternity.

IV

I hope I have shown that Augustine should not be set aside as unhelpful to new constructive understandings of the doctrine of the Trinity simply because he is taken to have a bias for essence over relation or a preoccupation with God's immanent relations over God's economy. However his work may have been utilized in the centuries that followed, Augustine was, I believe, in his own way trying to be faithful to the economy in the understanding of God that he presents. He has been concerned precisely with what LaCugna believes to be the important question for theology, namely, how to correlate the trinitarian pattern of salvation history with the being of God. In fact, one might say that for Augustine as for Rahner, LaCugna, and many others, "The economic Trinity *is* the immanent Trinity." Though neo-

[48] *De Trinitate*, XV:42.

Platonism informs his conception of God, one need not share his neo-Platonism in order to appreciate his concerns. For instance, many would object to the dualism between eternal and temporal things in his project; but as long as one recognizes that God is not simply one object alongside others, that God is the Creator and not one of the creatures, one can recognize the need to make category distinctions when talking about God and the created order. Augustine's point, then, that language taken from experience in the created order may be misleading when applied to God is one that bears reflection. Furthermore, it is important to see that Augustine was redefining a neo-Platonic understanding of God in important ways on the basis of Christian faith. He is not talking about God as monad. What concern he has for stressing the unity of God does not come, I think, from a bias for essence but rather from a need to address the perennial problem of what Christians mean when talking about the one true God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a problem that is presented by scripture's own varied witness to the economy and one that should be of concern to any theologian. Augustine is aware that assigning separable actions to separable persons leads to tritheism, and his talk about the indivisible *opera ad extra* should be seen in this light. The unity that he sees, though, is not simply absolute. It is the unity of relational essence. Augustine's vision of God as three-personed substance may prove to have more similarities with contemporary concern for relationality than once thought. It may also be that Augustine can remind us that a concern for unity and essence has its place as well. In both respects, his work may provide fertile ground for constructive work.

BOOK REVIEWS

Nonfoundationalism. By JOHN E. THIEL. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994. Pp. 123.

This work initiates a new series entitled *Guides to Theological Inquiry* edited by Kathryn Tanner and Paul Lakeland. The guides, which will include topics such as hermeneutics, critical social theory, and postmodernity, are meant neither as simple surveys nor as exhaustive monographs. They seek, rather, to provide "reliable, programmatic statements" of the main lines of central contemporary issues and "assessments of their theological impact."

The present work on nonfoundationalism proceeds in three chapters: nonfoundationalism as a philosophical movement; the impact of nonfoundationalism on contemporary theology; and critical questions addressed to nonfoundationalist thought. The author makes clear from the outset that the nonfoundationalism envisioned here is not of the deconstructive variety, but of the more moderate position holding that one cannot speak of ontological or epistemological foundations for knowledge that serve to ground other claims. The ultimate point of nonfoundationalism is to show that foundationalism promises "an epistemic security, completeness and stability that knowledge does not possess" (12).

While acknowledging that foundationalist thought extends back to Plato and Aristotle, Thiel begin his story with the modern epistemological quest for certitude. The Cartesian search for self-justifying first principles was continued by the British empiricists, Locke and Hume, who turned toward sense experience as a ground for philosophy, and by the German idealists, Kant, Fichte, and Schelling, who stressed the *a priori* first principles provided by human cognition. But it is precisely this idea of a *prima philosophia* that is now called into question by nonfoundationalist thought.

Thiel sketches, briefly and deftly, the pragmatic precursors of philosophical nonfoundationalism who are currently enjoying a renascence: James, Peirce, and Dewey. Central here is the reservation of these thinkers about the modern search for Archimedean starting points and their concomitant celebration of a consensual notion of truth issuing from the network of beliefs and social contexts of the community of inquiry. This unmasking of universal perspectives and methods is echoed and developed in the work of Wittgenstein. Moving beyond the early positivism of the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein later argued that various socio-cultural circles comprise specific "grammars"

shaping the contingency and particularity of meaning. Meanings and logical rules thrive only within unique and untranslatable frames of reference determined by convention and social circumstance.

The postpositivist empiricism of Sellars and Quine is another important pillar of contemporary nonfoundationalism. The former's Myth of the Given calls into question the foundational and authoritative givenness of sense data, while the latter's Myth of the Museum reproaches the notion of a fixed, objective meaning separable from conceptual and linguistic formulation and usage. Meanings are so enmeshed within original contexts and coordinate systems that any alleged transferability is simply unfounded. Thiel concludes the chapter with discussions of the well-known thought of Davidson, Rorty, and Richard Bernstein.

In chapter two, Thiel takes up the theological implications of nonfoundationalism. For the most part, nonfoundationalism is used by certain theologians in confrontation with mediating theology or *Vermittlungstheologie*. Since Schleiermacher, there have been attempts at reconciling Christianity and post-Enlightenment culture. These "mediating" theologies seek to establish common ground between theology and secular culture by using such bases as "general human experience," a particular anthropology, or an epistemological or communicative theory (46). Nonfoundationalist theology, however, opposes mediating or apologetical theories because they often seem to compromise the absolute truth of the Christian gospel. Thiel discusses the work of several nonfoundationalist theologians: Barth, Lindbeck, Thiemann, Tanner, and Frei. The central themes of their works are now familiar. At its worst, mediating theology can: justify revelation before the bar of modern philosophy and culture; subordinate the Word of God to finite, sinful human experience; abandon theology's specifically ecclesial context; and, ultimately, reduce theology to anthropology. Mediating theologies, nonfoundationalists conclude, are simply another ploy of fallen human nature seeking to justify itself.

In their place, Lindbeck proposes the specificity and normativity of the cultural-linguistic model, arguing that it must be the religion proposed in Scripture that defines being, truth, and beauty. All non-scriptural exemplifications of these need to be transformed by the gospel (59). Similarly, Ronald Thiemann's polemic against mediating theologies is based on the central thesis of the prevenience of God's grace. Arguing that apologetical theologies are too concerned with epistemological justifications, Thiemann concludes that modernity, in its philosophical and anthropological dimensions, cannot be taken as normative without compromising the truth of the gospel. Nonfoundationalism holds, then, that much modern theology has become dangerous precisely because it has committed itself "to the apologetic enter-

prise undertaken . . . [as] fundamental or foundational theology as a way of validating the intelligibility of Christian claims before the epistemic demands of post-Enlightenment culture" (60-61).

In the final chapter, Thiel offers critical observations on nonfoundationalism. He says, astutely, that nonfoundationalist theology appears committed to the latest philosophical developments yet offers an approach to theology that seems premodern (79). This theological style fears that extrabiblical theory or universal experience will become the norm for the gospel, thereby jeopardizing the revelational authority of the Christian tradition. Nonfoundationalism resists the idea that the logic of Christian reasoning needs the extrinsic validation of philosophical speculation. Thiel notes that nonfoundationalism has found a home particularly in Protestant theology because of its traditional judgment that "metaphysically inclined reasoning . . . substituted its own claims for those of divine revelation" (98). Thiel wisely cautions that the insularity of the nonfoundationalist approach can make theology too resistant to change and development.

The author succeeds according to the stated intentions of the series' editors. The basic architecture of nonfoundationalism is clearly outlined. Thiel has boiled down to a slim volume an enormous amount of complicated material and sifted through several authors and difficult issues—presenting them with coherence and clarity. Some criticisms remain: In a volume of this size the author cannot examine all of the pertinent issues; he notes at several junctures that the works and topics treated are illustrative not exhaustive. Thiel narrows his compass excessively, however, when he places virtually his entire emphasis on the pragmatic and postpositivist empirical tradition. Mention of Heidegger is scant and Gadamer is not to be found in the index. But surely contemporary nonfoundationalism is the result of the confluence of two rivers: the postpositivist turn in analytical philosophy and the move in Continental thought toward hermeneutical phenomenology. Indeed, one may cogently argue that Heidegger's critique of *Dasein*'s burial of historicity in questions of truth and ontology is the major engine fueling nonfoundationalism. No doubt this will be treated in the forthcoming volume on hermeneutics, but some mention of this should have been included here.

What are the some of the specific concerns raised by nonfoundationalism, particularly in light of Catholic theology? Two important issues emerge: One major theme of nonfoundationalist thought—that philosophy not establish a Procrustean bed for the gospel—is relatively uncomplicated. Catholic theology, even when foundationalist in kind, traditionally takes for granted that it is the gospel shaping philosophy rather than vice-versa. Christian theology cannot now take modernity as an absolutely equivalent interlocutor anymore than it once took Platonism or Aristotelianism as such. This is the position championed by Przywara, von Balthasar, and Bouillard in defending the Catholic use of the *analogia entis* against Barthian attacks arguing that a general ontology was now determining the gospel. All three authors argued

that analogy was a principle "abstracted" from revelation for the sake of revelation's own intelligibility; priority, however, was always afforded to the act of faith.

From a different angle, De Lubac and Chenu maintained that the malleability of philosophy to faith was precisely the reason for encouraging the church to develop philosophical pluralism. The church "canonizes" no system (even if it recognizes some as particularly adequate). It uses philosophy insofar as a particular conceptual system or framework can aid the church in expressing the truth of Christ's gospel. This understanding was clearly ratified by Vatican II (as well as by post-conciliar magisterial documents) in its endorsement of legitimate and authentic pluralism. With one major theme of nonfoundationalism, then, Catholic theology is in agreement: the hegemony of revealed truth over culture or philosophy. When Thiel concludes that nonfoundationalist theologians hold that Athens will always be involved with Jerusalem, but on Jerusalem's terms (108), it should be added that this is the proper foundationalist position as well.

The second and less tractable question about nonfoundationalism is this: Can Catholic theology use nonfoundationalist thought when it seemingly militates against any theological ontology and epistemology, and particularly against any form of metaphysics? Is nonfoundationalism capable of supporting the universal and perduring truth-claims that are maintained by the Catholic dogmatic tradition? Can it justify the reconstructive notion of hermeneutics that this tradition apparently needs? Does the nonfoundationalist approach adequately sustain the church's commitment to theological realism? Must we not admit that the nonfoundationalist hesitancy about metaphysics and epistemology is largely born from the traditional Protestant fear of nature and the *sola gratia* position? Lindbeck and the nonfoundationalists present us with an either/or: One must affirm either the truth of the gospel or foundationalist, mediating theologies. But this leads, of course, to the traditional rejoinders: Must nature be jettisoned in order for the truth of the gospel to appear? Should a radical divide be introduced between the orders of creation and salvation? Cannot one defend both the prevenience of grace, the hegemony of revelation, *and* foundational and mediating approaches, properly understood? Foundationalists are not necessarily philosophical Pelagians, as sometimes charged (56), but one wonders if, to revive Przywara's term, nonfoundationalists are not guilty of epistemological concupiscence with regard to nature. Thiel knows all this and hints at it at several points (89, 99), but the style of the book prevents a full-fledged examination of these questions.

Of course, any defense of foundationalism must be highly nuanced since a large part of twentieth-century Catholic theology has been spent overcoming conceptualism and emphasizing the contextual, social, and perspectival elements that inform knowing. Inasmuch as nonfoundationalism has done

much to bring to light the existential contingencies, ideologies, webs of meaning, and networks of belief affecting thought, it has made enormous contributions. The sophisticated foundationalist theologies of Lonergan, Kasper, and Rahner have been at pains to incorporate successfully the historico-hermeneutical elements that saturate the noetic moment while still maintaining the realistic epistemology and the metaphysical/transcendental subject apparently essential for sustaining the fundamental affirmations of Catholic thought. The perduring question affecting theological issues is this: Is it theological *legerdemain* to continue to defend nature, realism, and stability of meaning amidst the thick welter of elements influencing thought and being?

Thiel's work will help to clarify the issues surrounding this question.

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The Christian God. By RICHARD SWINBURNE. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1994. Pp. 253. $55.00 (cloth); $22.00 (paper).

In this the third volume of his magisterial series on the philosophy of Christian doctrine, Swinburne deals with belief in the Trinity and the Incarnation. His aim is to give a coherent account of the meanings of these doctrines, and the kinds of reasons one might have, given a prior belief that there is a God, for supposing that they are true. While he maintains that reason alone can show that God is triune, he does not believe that the same is true of the Incarnation, which is after all a matter of what God has freely chosen to do; but he does think that one can show that there were good reasons for God to become incarnate and thus that God was quite likely to do so. To judge in addition that this actually happened, further arguments are needed, and are supplied by Swinburne, from revelation and history.

The first part of the book is concerned with general issues of metaphysics, with the nature of substance, necessity, time, and causality. With the aid of these concepts, Swinburne, expounds the nature of the Western God, and shows how this understanding of God develops quite naturally into belief in the particular doctrines constitutive of Christianity. God's essential properties, as Swinburne sees it, all follow from God's having "pure, limitless power." Now this essence belongs to God in virtue of what God is; it is not a "relational" property, dependent on the divine relations with other things that are or may be—to use Swinburne's terminology, it is metaphysical rather than ontological. It follows that God is the greatest conceivable being, and the doctrine of divine simplicity, properly understood, also follows quite logically—though it seems to Swinburne that the late patristic and early medieval authors expounded this in a way so misleading as to give the doctrine a bad

name, by claiming God was somehow identical with the divine properties. How could any entity, he asks, even God, be identical with its properties? And how could properties such as omnipotence and omniscience be identical with one another? But, in spite of these errors, the authors concerned were trying to bring out something true and important—the fact that "there is no more to God than essential properties" (163).

Now, by "monadic" properties Swinburne means those that belong to something quite apart from its relations with anything else; he distinguishes "monadic" from "relational" properties. While monadic properties characterize something as the *kind* of thing that it is, it is relational properties that constitute it as *the particular individual of that kind* it is. If there are different divine individuals, they must be individuated by virtue of their relations with one another. The first divine individual will actively cause another, and in cooperation with that other will cause a third. Is there an overriding reason for the first divine individual thus to cause others? (The withers of Western Christian theologians, though not I think of Eastern, will be wrung by this talk of "causality" within the Trinity; but the difficulty, such as it is, is merely terminological.) According to Swinburne, the love of God is such a reason; love involves giving and receiving, and cooperating with another to benefit a third party. "Love must share and love must co-operate in sharing" (178).

Given that God has created a universe with human beings liable to sin, and so in need of reconciliation, is it necessary for God to become incarnate? Some theologians, notably Anselm, have held that it was necessary; but the majority, followed by Swinburne himself, have maintained that it was not. Divine concern for our plight need not have expressed itself in an incarnation; but there is "a generous propriety" (218) in its having done so, as can be shown in many ways. Having created such a good thing as human nature, it seems as proper for God to assume it as it would be for the designer of a sort of coat to wear it himself. The Incarnation teaches us the dignity of human nature, and shows us the extent of God's love for us, as well as an example of how to live a human life. Also, propositional revelation is more convincing as coming from a divine human being than through a mere prophet. Furthermore, it is fitting for God to share with creatures the suffering to which they have been subjected for their greater good.

Granted these reasons why an incarnation would be appropriate, what kind of evidence could we have that such an event has actually happened? The main evidence would be that the human being concerned has lived a life that would be appropriate to the fulfillment of the aims that have been mentioned—that he lived a life of perfect goodness that showed his love for us, and taught us important truths that we could not otherwise have known. We should understand the Resurrection as God's seal of approval on the teaching and mission of Jesus; given the a priori reasons for expecting such a miracle

(argued in Swinburne"s book on Revelation), the historical evidence for this event need not be strong. The Church's teaching about what the Lord said and did is to be believed as authenticated by God. "Revelation confirms the public evidence that Christ lived the sort of life that God Incarnate would be expected to have set himself to live" (221).

Unfortunately, immense scholarly erudition is incompatible neither with intellectual incompetence nor with triviality of mind; obviously it would be invidious to cite examples, but they are legion. This only serves to set in relief Swinburne's combination of philosophical power, detailed knowledge of orthodox Christian doctrine, and just appreciation of its intellectual riches, for it is as admirable as it is rare.

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Biblical Faith and Natural Theology: The Gifford Lectures for 1991. By JAMES BARR. Oxford: The Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1993. Pp. vii + 244. $48.00 (cloth); $17.95 (paper).

The subject of the Gifford Lectures is "natural theology"; so when a prominent Old Testament scholar is invited to give these lectures, one might reasonably expect him to discuss the degree to which his own research has warranted the designation of the texts he studies as employing "natural theology." And this is precisely what James Barr did in his 1991 Lectures—in about three of the ten lectures. In others, he ranged widely over almost every other subfield of theological inquiry, including New Testament studies, literature, philosophical and systematic theology, and moral theology. The results, in the published version of these lectures, is a relatively small amount of analysis of the Old Testament and the Jewish tradition, and much speculative assertion about the implications of these claims for other theological disciplines.

Such is the province of the Gifford Lecturer; having achieved enough notoriety to be invited to give these prestigious lectures, one can say whatever one wishes. Barr did not waste the opportunity; he used the lectures to attack, with vigor, all opponents of natural theology—especially Karl Barth, but also T. F. Torrance and "Barthians" generally. The result is a very uneven book, providing interesting insights into the Old Testament and its background while making some very dubious claims about the theological endeavor generally, and about certain of its practitioners in particular.

The book begins by defining natural theology—a matter that would ordinarily need little comment, except that here Barr lays the groundwork in ways that provide a positive prejudice for the arguments made later in the book.

Natural theology, says Barr, means that "'by nature', that is, just by being human beings, men and women have a certain degree of knowledge of God and awareness of him, or at least a capacity for such an awareness; and this knowledge or awareness exists anterior to the special revelation of God made through Jesus Christ, through the Church, through the Bible" (1). Barr then describes several narrower definitions, but returns to the original (and widest) one, which seems to subsume all the others. Natural theology is thus defined so widely as to include almost every human activity—a tremendous advantage as Barr turns to attack its critics.

Barr turns to the dispute between Karl Barth and Emil Brunner over the subject of natural theology, culminating in Barth's angry pamphlet *Nein!* But despite the sustained attack on Barth, Barr offers little analysis of this all-important text. Instead, he focuses on Barth's own Gifford Lectures (1937-38), in which (on Barr's tendentious reading) Barth refuses even to admit the *existence* of natural theology. As is well known, Barth's position was motivated in part by his opposition to the *deutsche Christen*; in his view, natural theology too easily became a rationalization for human striving. Barr admits this, yet refuses to read Barth as a contextually-motivated theologian (despite a citation of Stephen Webb's fine book on the rhetorical nature of Barth's theology). Indeed, Barth's later retraction of his early extreme position on natural theology is mentioned only briefly by Barr. By the beginning of chapter two, Barr speaks of "Barth's complete rejection of all natural theology" (21). Only by this narrow focus on the most extreme version of Barth's argument can Barr justify the intensity of his attack.

The attack is carried out in three major stages. The first stage, comprising chapters two and three, focuses on St. Paul—including his apparent invocation of natural theology (e.g., in the Areopagus speech in Acts 17, and in Romans 1, to name the two most notable examples), and then exploring the degree to which this invocation would have seemed natural in light of Paul's Jewish background. That background is explored in the second stage of argument (chapters four and five), first in terms of the intertestamental Wisdom literature, then focusing on the Old Testament, suggesting that a form of natural theology is already present in the Bible itself.

Finally, in the third stage, Barr returns to the modern discussion, arguing that because the Bible itself employs natural theology, one cannot deny it while appealing to the Bible. This is, in fact, the thesis of the book—which unfortunately seems (to me, at least) something of a non sequitur. Barth would no doubt have argued that he cared only about natural theology attempted *outside* the biblical witness; the problem, as already noted, was that natural theology justified human self-aggrandizement. The inspired Biblical writers could never fall into the trap of arguing from "purely human" motives. Besides, the Bible's "natural theology" never exists in isolation from revelation; even if Paul did appeal to the Athenians' general acceptance of the existence of higher powers, he certainly did not isolate this from his preaching of

Christ crucified. And so Barth would have probably applauded Barr for his assemblage of natural-theology-like arguments from the Bible, and then responded that these did not affect his argument that natural theology was not the business of twentieth-century theologians. In other words, the mere occurrence of such arguments in the Bible does not invalidate the claim that there is no "point of contact" between God and human beings outside of the revelation of Jesus Christ.

So might Barth have responded. But Barr never offers his opponent a chance to respond. Indeed, the attack on Barth is so polemical—at times even vicious—that the idea that he might have answered the charges made here does not seem to have crossed the author's mind. The tirade never ceases, though in some places it is mercifully less intense, as when Barr explores some of the implications of his analysis for certain related subjects: his rehabilitation of the "history of religions" approach to theology (chapter seven); his reconstruction of the doctrine of the *imago Dei* (chapter eight); and, in chapter nine, his exploration of "science, language, parable, and scripture"—especially valuable for its clear advocacy of the Bible as "the Church's book" (197-98). Because these chapters occasionally lay aside the anti-Barthian polemic, they are more readable and more valuable.

The first two stages of Barr's argument are (in my view) relatively persuasive readings of certain biblical texts as employing natural-theology-like arguments. But Barr will not allow me this view, because he does not believe that "readings" are worthy of the name of "theology" (205 n. 7). He believes that there is something more basic and essential that texts actually "say," that exists independently of their readers, and that he can disclose to us, via the method he has used since his 1961 book *The Semantics of Biblical Language*. Contemporary interpretation theory has cast considerable doubt on the proposition that semantic structures contain "meanings" that can somehow be rendered transparent by any skilled exegete. Yet Barr speaks, without apology, of concepts being "in" the Bible (e.g., 20, 83); he makes the text the subject of active verbs, such as *permits* (19) and *supports* (60); he even claims that the Bible can, all by itself, "point in a direction different from" a theologian's convictions. In short, Barr believes that texts place limits on their own interpretation—limits that are only evident to the semantically-alert biblical scholar.

Does this mean Barr is unware that readers actively "do things" with texts? No indeed; he tells us that Käsemann holds beliefs that "he most wants and needs to find in Paul" (47), that Barth superimposed certain theological constructions on texts (79), and that "Barthianism moulded past intellectual history in his own image" (105). Yet while Barr is sharply critical of others' interpretive efforts ("philological recklessness of a high degree," 86 n. 8; "theologically irresponsible," 161 n. 14), he seems to have no doubts about the pure objectivity of his own work.

As the book progresses, natural theology is claimed to be demonstrated whenever the Bible can be read in ways that show some influence of neighboring Near Eastern tribes (because "transreligiosity" is a sign of the acceptance of natural theology), or when it makes commonsense claims that could be made without access to special revelation (such as sensible modes of judicial administration, or statements of fact). As Barr piles up these examples, he actually makes his case *less* persuasive, since it begins to look as if Barth is defeated every time that someone in the Bible is said to think or act. This tendency reaches the point of self-parody in chapter seven, where Barr claims that because theologians must use their own "thoughts, reason, instincts, and experience" in order to interpret the text (152), this somehow invalidates any statement of opposition to natural theology. As if to say: "When Barth argues against natural theology, he has to *think* in order to do so; therefore his argument fails." Does anyone seriously believe that Barth's position is compromised by an argument such as this?

Barr might have provided the scholarly community with a very worthwhile service, had he simply surveyed the biblical text and offered his own reading of the Bible as a document in which natural theology plays a central role. But his effort to trip Barth up on his own devotion to the Bible leads him into uncharted waters, proposing a dissolution of the distinction between natural and revealed theology without any sense of what might be put in its place. For example, his final chapter suggests that our ethical sensibilities might be misled by the Bible but repaired by moral philosophy. This chapter contains an interesting discussion of those Old Testament practices that most offend us today (such as the *herem*—Barr calls it "consecration to destruction"—in effect, a genocidal obliteration of defeated Canaanite cities). However, as to *why* we should prescind from the claims of the Bible on this matter, Barr can only quote Stewart Sutherland's principle that "a religious belief that runs counter to our moral beliefs is to that extent unacceptable" (219). This principle looks very attractive when applied to the *herem*, but Barr fails to recognize that it would look equally attractive to the fascist or the torturer seeking to relieve himself of certain "religious" beliefs. While Roman Catholicism has a broad tradition of moral theology to fall back on in this regard, modern Protestantism does not; the removal of its base in biblical revelation would make it subject to the extreme individualism of the culture in which it has developed, with disastrous consequences.

And this is only one case in which Barr's insatiable desire to devour Karl Barth leads him out of his depth. For example, he spends considerable energy in chapter six ridiculing Barth for having learned his methodology from Anselm. Besides the fact that Barr has been misled into thinking that Anselm is a philosophical theist who forwards "proofs" (in the modern sense) of God's existence, he also accuses him of being "totally devoid of insight" (131) into the claims about the Bible made by Barth and others in the Reformed tradition—a statement that is hardly borne out by a thorough reading of Anselm.

Barr is an Old Testament scholar, and it is not his business to know every aspect of theology—unless of course he chooses to make the sweeping claims he so often makes in this book. It is, in fact, the book's *tone* that is most off-putting—from the self-promoting footnotes to the high-handed pronouncements on the illegitimacy of any approach to biblical interpretation besides Barr's own. Example: "the countless pages of wearisome, inept, and futile exegesis in the *Church Dogmatics*, especially in the later volumes, were only a testimony to the fact that the Bible cannot be used theologically when the work of biblical scholarship is brushed aside" (203). Such assertions of theology's dependence on historical-critical biblical scholarship are wholly unwarranted, especially given the consistently waning influence of historical criticism in contemporary biblical hermeneutics. Indeed, we are increasingly aware that some of our most profound insights into the biblical text come from writers like Augustine, Thomas, and Luther—despite the fact that they received no *imprimatur* from the guild of historical-critics.

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Seeking the Humanity of God: Practices, Doctrines, and Catholic Theology. By JAMES J. BUCKLEY. Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1992. Pp. xvii + 222. $14.95 (paper).

The enterprise proposed in this work consists in "seeking the humanity of God," as its title indicates. The author is eager to present his thesis explicitly:

> doing theology is relating the practices and teachings of the Catholic community to the practices and teachings of our common and not so common humanity in ways that engage what God is doing for all humanity in Word and Spirit. (19)

Or, stated as a practical recommendation:

> Seek the humanity of God in each and every particular joy and grief of our lives—our Scriptures and worship, our holy but sinful Church, the reasons we give to a world of diverse gods and unbeliefs, and all our quests for the new heaven and earth God is creating in Word and Spirit. (19-20; see 182)

How are we to seek theologically the humanity of God?

> Still further, the thesis is about seeking the humanity of God *as* we seek and inquire into specific practices and doctrines and patterns of relationships—as we use our Bible, celebrate liturgies, enact the common goods of the Church, give reasons for the hope that is in us, and identify with and identify the joys and griefs of all humanity. (22; original emphasis)

After a first chapter, which acquaints us with Buckley's project, the fol-

lowing ones put forward five sub-theses—each of them italicized at the beginning of every chapter. Thus, chapter two begins with the context set up by the Christian initiation; chapter three deals with Jesus Christ and Scriptures; chapter four discusses views of salvation; chapter five tackles the doctrine of God; and chapter six takes up the issue of the meaning of world history.

A look at the table of contents makes it clear that every chapter is subdivided in the same fashion: A, B, and C. The author explicates this threefold architecture: "each chapter describes a particular 'practice,' articulates a specific 'doctrine,' and proposes a theological way of relating those practices and teachings to other practices and teachings" (x).

As far as A is concerned, he remarks that the practices with which he commences each chapter are "not catholic 'practices in general' but Catholic practices" (20). (In Buckley's usage, "Catholic" = "Roman Catholic"; see xi.) The role of such practices is highlighted "by describing 'samples' of 'competent speakers'—or 'paradigmatic ideals' of Christian *praxis*" (20; original emphasis). As far as B is concerned, "each chapter will then provide an instance, a sample, or example of inquiry into teachings or doctrines . . . suggesting ways to articulate teachings about specific topics or subject matters in particular context" (20). Finally, as far as C is concerned, "each chapter will provide an example of proposing patterns of relationships between Catholic practices and teachings and other practices and teachings" (21).

If readers pay close attention to what is actually going on in his sections A and B, however, they might wonder whether the distinction between practices and teachings is not often blurred. The author finds many of his practices in texts, which are said to be narratives and which include teachings. Moreover, he constantly talks of "relationships." But the manner in which he relates practices and teachings may appear hazy. Consider, for example, how he recapitulates his first sub-thesis:

> I have proposed that because baptismal inquiry is the presiding ritual context of Christian inquiry which drives and is driven by the catechumenal rule, the Christian life is a permanent catechumenate constituted by continuing schooling in weaving the inquiry into Christ with inquiries into our world in a way that conforms to what God is doing with our world. (51)

Are these general considerations insightful, or are they mere truisms? Many readers will ask, along with the author himself: "Where does this leave us?" (51).

Proceeding by models or types also leaves much to be desired. For instance, in the "Three Patterns of Relationships Between Truths" (44), can we ascribe inclusiveness (and validity) to the first model—"natural theologians"—that is based on Swinburne but does not correspond with the thought of Aquinas or of Vatican I?

Buckley tells us that he has "tried to keep in mind an audience of college students (along with the theological experts who teach them) who need to

know what prompts theological inquiry, how it relates to other inquiries, and whether it is worth undertaking" (xii). No doubt the book makes readers more aware of the several contexts—liturgical, christological-scriptural, soteriological, theistic, and cosmological—in which theologizing develops. Furthermore, in accord with Buckley's conviction that we cannot do theology but from the vantage point of a particular tradition (10), the documents he examines are "Catholic": the "Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults" (chapter 2), Vatican II's *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* (chapter 3), Vatican II's *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, followed by volume VII of *Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue*, entitled *Justification by Faith* (chapter 4), excerpts from Vatican II on God (chapter 5), and again Vatican II's *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* (chapter 6).

Given Buckley's insistence on theologizing from a particular viewpoint, it is surprising that he does not inform his intended audience (especially the "college students" he addresses) that his whole problematic, far from being "Catholic," is the one framed by Karl Barth (more comprehensively, Lessing-Kierkegaard-Barth) and developed by thinkers associated with Yale University. In this regard, what he writes in his Preface (xv) is not explicit enough. For all the many interesting theological suggestions made by Frei, Lindbeck, Christian, Ford, Thiemann, Marshall, and others (see the index), the limits of their approach ought to have been adumbrated. It also remains doubtful whether Buckley sheds additional light on what members of that "Yale School" have already brought up.

If, as its subtitle indicates, this work is supposed to be an exercise in "Practices, Doctrines, and Catholic Theology," how is it that it discusses almost exclusively *twentieth-century* documents and writings? Is it not characteristic of Catholic theology to move beyond the mere interaction between Scriptures and the way that they must be appropriated in our days, and to take the time, on each issue, to learn from the great patristic and medieval doctors? Except for rare allusions, this book ignores nineteen centuries of Catholic thinking.

Buckley asks grand-scale questions that cover almost everything in matters of Christian practice and doctrine. In 183 pages of text, he wants to relate Catholic pedagogy, the sacraments, biblical hermeneutics, soteriology, the treatise on God, and world religions. His treatment of those topics is generally "narrative" in a very broad sense. Moreover, his use of words is not technical, but "common sensical," as he says himself. For him, theology is inevitably "particular" and therefore imbedded in liturgical and catechetical practices that are expressed in common sensical language.

Does not Buckley's stance run against the whole intellectual evolution, in the patristic and medieval ages, from common sense to theory? This extraordinary evolution was marked by accounts of truth, made by such great minds as Augustine, Anselm, and Aquinas, that have become basic to Catholic the-

ology. For example, on the issue—rightly central to Buckley—of whether Christian beliefs that *look* particular can nevertheless be held as universal, that is, valid for all minds, they had strong views and they gave good reasons to support them. Buckley does not mention those views on truth or their supporting reasons.

Buckley's fundamental interest seems to lie in the conflict between particularity and universality (the Lessing problem). Any good patristic or medieval thinker would take him to task for the very way he frames the tension between "Catholicity" and "catholicity." Among those of his readers who are theologians knowledgeable in the Catholic tradition, several are likely to ask: How can a book that purports to introduce college students to Catholic theology ignore the contribution not only of the ancient Catholic doctors, but of a brilliant contemporary Catholic author like Bernard Lonergan, who, in *Method in Theology*, comes to grips with the Lessing problem, namely, historicity and truth? Buckley's discussion of doctrinal "rivalries" could have profited from Lonergan's functional specialties (hardly sorted out in Buckley's book), differentiations of consciousness, or distinction between different *complementary* perspectives and different *incompatible* horizons.

When he introduces an issue, usually Buckley does not take a firm stance (44-50, for instance). At times, he suggests that it is preferable not to resolve problems: "the unresolved problems are what constitute it [soteriology] as an inquiry (in contrast, say, to a set of settled questions)" (120). Fortunately, he escapes—at least once—this fashionable yet unwarranted precept (of opting for inquiry at the expense of settling questions). Interestingly, it is when he adopts Karl Barth's settling of the question of how one can relate Christian and other soteriologies (113-117).

In sum, many readers will probably find useful Buckley's compendious endnotes and his formulation of the current difficulties involved in doing theology. For all its riches, however, the perspective adopted in this work is narrowly contemporary in its ignorance of relevant Catholic insights.

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Making Men Moral: Civil Liberties and Public Morality. By ROBERT P. GEORGE. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993. Pp. 241. $45.00 (cloth).

Making Men Moral, by Robert George of Princeton, is an intensive, provocative, and dispassionate contemplation of the nature of public morality and civil liberties. Although my last phrase reverses the order of the book's subtitle, this reversal of order accords well with the basic structure of George's argument. For he contends that the nature of the good is the foun-

dation of civil liberties, which liberties he derives from a "thick," i.e., content-filled, notion of the good.

George articulates this rooting of civil liberties critically, in response to "antiperfectionist" analyses that epistemically divorce civil liberties from the nature of the good, while also positively sketching a "perfectionist" account of civil liberties. The central "perfectionist" tenet that George sets out to defend is stated at the very beginning of the book. Having pointed out that law is not able of itself to make men moral, but only to command outward conformity, he nonetheless notes about the pre-liberal tradition of political morality that:

> According to this tradition, laws forbidding certain powerfully seductive and corrupting vices (some sexual, some not) can help people to establish and preserve a virtuous character by (1) preventing the (further) self-corruption which follows from acting out a choice to indulge in immoral conduct; (2) preventing the bad example by which others are induced to emulate such behavior; (3) helping to preserve the moral ecology in which people make their morally self-constituting choices; and (4) educating people about moral right and wrong. (p. 1)

This positive evaluation of the moral justification and helpfulness of legal constraints is frontally challenged by the liberal tradition. From the harm principle articulated by J. S. Mill, according to which wholly self-regarding action is viewed as beyond the just constraint of the law, to various schools of thought that consider "the right" to be prior to, and unfounded upon, "the good," liberals have tended to deny that any "legislation of morality" by the state can be a good thing.

George, in delineating the scope of his disagreement with the liberal tradition as it has evolved, takes care to point out that his principled arguments justifying laws concerning morals do not in themselves suffice to establish the reasonability of any particular law. Such considerations will involve determinations of prudence, and considerations of the distinctive needs and character of the society in question. Nonetheless, George does consider that the principled liberal arguments against morals legislation fail to meet critical tests of reason.

His book is divided into three principal sections. In the first he provides an illuminating analysis of one of the most prominent and important exchanges in legal philosophy of the twentieth century, namely that between H. L. A. Hart, the famed Oxfordian legal positivist, and Lord Patrick Devlin. Interestingly, Devlin himself assumed a noncognitivist position concerning morals—i.e., he considered morals to be unfounded in principled objective reasons but rather founded in sentiment and faith alone. Yet Devlin proposed in his powerful lecture (later published as *The Enforcement of Morals*) a utilitarian justification for the suppression of vice. The coherence of society, Devlin thought, was threatened by even seemingly "private" and self-regarding acts of vice. Hence society's interest and right in suppressing such vice was in Devlin's judgment cognate with society's interest and right in sup-

pressing treason, which—even when its results are not dire—is nonetheless an intolerable act striking at the roots of society.

Hart, whose writings exhibit little revulsion at noncognitivist theories of morality, focused his criticism upon Devlin's insistence that vice threatens to bring about social incoherence and breakdown. Either this is merely a matter of defining society as inconsistent with vice—in which case every minor change in moral sentiment is definitionally transmuted into a social revolution—or else it is an empirical matter. Since the first interpretative option leads to absurdities, Hart construed Devlin's thesis as an empirical one: societies necessarily break down insofar as vice becomes prevalent within them. For this latter proposition, Hart found no evidence, and hence rejected Devlin's thesis out of hand.

George rejects noncognitivist accounts of morality, and has no interest in sustaining Devlin's view that society may rightfully impose its sense of right upon persons irrespective of the truth. On the contrary, George argues forcefully for a cognitivist account of morality, under which a necessary but not sufficient condition of the rightfulness of the legislation of morals is that the enforced morals be objectively justified. Given this important dissent from Devlin's noncognitivism, however, he does suggest an exegetically refreshing interpretation of Devlin's thesis.

Rather than interpret Devlin's thesis as either an unfounded definitional assertion (tantamount to holding that society *is* its morality at any given time, which moral code cannot change or develop an iota without destroying the society in question), or as an empirical assertion for which there is no evidence (i.e., interpreting it as the assertion that the flourishing within a society of what it has in the past viewed as vice guarantees its descent into chaos, social disorder, and dissolution), George suggests a third option. One can read Devlin more profitably, he suggests, by supposing that Devlin meant to identify a good of social coherence beyond mere spatial proximity and the absence of violence. Clearly, vice may not cause social breakdown in the sense of necessarily promoting violence or social antagonism. The distinctive good of social coherence is not mere coexistence in peace, but rather

> . . . a state of affairs in which individuals identify their own interests with those of others to whom they understand and experience themselves as integrally related by virtue of common commitments and beliefs. On this assumption, the thesis that social disintegration is likely to result from the breakdown of a shared morality is neither trivial nor implausible. (pp. 70-71)

While George will have none of Devlin's relativization of the good, this more fruitful way of construing Devlin's argument is instructive. He illustrates Devlin's thesis, thus understood, with the case of a married couple who drift apart. Once they cease to harmonize their lives around common commitments and engagements, they may persist in coordinating their activities for reasons of convenience: but the relationship has changed, and a good has

been lost. "They no longer act precisely for the sake of the integration that is constitutive of that friendship considered as something good in itself" (p. 68). When combined with the cognitivism championed by George, this interpretation manifests the harm that objective immoralism can work upon community.

The second part of George's book constitutes a sustained criticism of various legal and moral theorists who embrace forms of *antiperfectionism* to ground their opposition to morals legislation. Ronald Dworkin founds his case against morals legislation upon a general right of all persons to be treated by the state with equal concern and respect. By contrast, Jeremy Waldron defends a "right to do wrong" in the sense of a right not to be interfered with while doing wrong; John Rawls argues for a theory of justice that putatively does not presuppose any controversial theory of the good but only a sense of fairness; and David Richards propounds the view that personal autonomy (not moral autonomy in the Kantian sense) is sufficient to constitute moral worthiness independent of the nature of one's actions.

In response to all these authors, George patiently uncovers basic *non sequiturs* that have gone unaddressed in the interests of *antiperfectionist* liberalism. For instance, there is nothing in the notion of "equal concern for all" that obstructs morals legislation: it may be precisely *because* of one's concern for those who harm themselves through immoral conduct that one supports some measure of moral paternalism. This paternalism is "unconcerned" or "contemptuous" only if one builds this into one's stipulative definition of moral paternalism—which is a move that requires some justification.

Waldron, George thinks, may be correct that at times one has a right not to be impeded in doing a wicked act—but not because one has a positive right to do wrong, but because others cannot rightfully constrain one owing to other goods and commitments that might be jeopardized by such suppression. As looters may have a right that government not use excessive force (but not a right to loot), so a vicious person may have a right to act unimpeded by the government when otherwise it would need to trample upon due process, or other important social goods, in order to impede him. But this is hardly a right to viciousness: it is a right that is a shadow of another's prior obligation.

George's treatment of Rawls is masterful. It shows that the putative neutrality of utterly fair "contractors" drawing up social rules in ignorance of their future substantive interests, convictions, and beliefs treats the concern of such contractors territorially rather than morally—i.e., those behind the "veil of ignorance" are more concerned with providing for the possibility that they might at some time in the future *hold* such and such a moral view, than with the worth of this view.

But, George avers, the mere fact that one holds a belief or interest is not an independent ground of value: one normally holds a belief because of conviction in its truth. Addressing legal order while abstracting from this basic datum of moral epistemology, is—in my words, not George's—something of a

con game, pre-determining a radically individualist trajectory for one's political theory. Of course, regarding Richard's assertions regarding the supreme value of autonomy *vis-à-vis* morality, George simply uncovers them as unfounded: there is little else to do with them.

The final section of the book is, in many respects, the most bracing. George considers the analyses of Joseph Raz, author of the seminal work *The Morality of Freedom* which attempts to found liberal views of morals legislation (and of the state generally) in a *perfectionist* rather than *antiperfectionist* account of the relation between the right and the good. Raz insists that autonomy is valueless when used for self-destructive, vicious ends. For him, Mill's "harm principle" concerning the alleged ethical impermissibility of penalizing "self-regarding" vices should be construed, not as a principle contrary to the enforcement of morals, but rather as a principle dictating "the proper way to enforce morality" (p. 182).

Raz argues that morals laws unduly constrain a miscreant's autonomy in general as the price for constraining and punishing particular vices, subjecting the offender to "global" and "indiscriminate" sanctions. While accepting the proposition that governments both can and should prevent moral harm, this stops short, for Raz, of being a just claim to punish "victimless" immoralities. Here George insists that all coercively enforced laws constrain autonomy, so that a distinctive reason must be given why so-called "victimless" immoralities are never to be subject to penalty. The reason why autonomy *seems* to augment the goodness of an act, George argues, is precisely its relation to practical reasonability—a good not possessed in the absence of autonomy, but also not necessarily possessed in its presence. He closes his book with a brief sketch of an argument founding civil liberties and rights upon morality. While professedly merely a sketch, this treatment is a valuable effort to outline the moral goods for whose sake civil liberties are finally valuable.

One must utter one *caveat* about this work. George throughout rejects any morally pertinent teleological hierarchy of basic human ends or goods. He posits basic goods not teleologically commensurated with one another. As Fr. Benedict Ashley and others have argued, this leads to the positing of several final ends—a kind of ethical multiple personality disorder. Insofar as knowledge of the hierarchy of ends—up to and including the natural contemplation of God—is a necessary (but not sufficient) condition of the good life, one will have reason to argue with the *inscape* of George's cognitivism and with his moral epistemology. Nonetheless, all persons devoted to rational reflection about moral and legal order should profit from the gem-like analyses and sustained reasonability of this fine volume.

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Virtuous Passions: The Formation of Christian Character. By G. SIMON HARAK, S. J. New York: Paulist Press, 1993. Pp. 180. $11.95 (paper).

Veritatis Splendor spoke of the need for theologians to make central once again the essential unity between body and soul, correcting those elements in contemporary thought that treat the body as an aside in moral considerations. Though not his expressed intention, G. Simon Harak promotes a similar end in his *Virtuous Passions*, reminding us of the significance of embodiment in a consideration of Christian virtue. While his efforts dovetail in a number of directions, they raise questions concerning the significance of embodiment, especially passions, in Christian morality. "It is my central concern in this book," he says, "to work out a moral theological account of that sense of the rightness or wrongness of passion, and further, to consider ways to transform morally blameworthy passions, and to foster morally praiseworthy passions" (2).

Beginning with an overview of contemporary research among the sciences concerning the dynamics of human emotion, Harak challenges a number of contemporaries on the grounds that most conceptions of human action and emotion have some remnants of a "Cartesian" model of the self, i.e., a dualism that bifurcates the essential unity between the physical body and the "self." The effects of this trend are two-fold, both problematic according to Harak: an inability to account for the integrity of the embodied self in the domain of moral action; and a tendency to present the passions as mere "disturbances." Especially in terms of the latter, Descartes is blamed for the contemporary context, "for he, more than any other thinker . . . is responsible for the present prevailing model of virtue as a struggle for control of the passions by reason" (8).

Harak's attempt to place the blame for contemporary shortcomings at the feet of Descartes is certainly consistent with a chorus of similar postmodern projects that have chronicled the damaging effects of the Enlightenment. He effectively sets his reader up for an engaging reappropriation of a more "integrated" model of the passionate human person as presented by Thomas Aquinas. A more careful articulation of the limitations of Descartes's conception of "control" would have been helpful, however, in order for the reader to appreciate more fully the alternative model that Harak claims Aquinas offers. Without this further qualification, the reader is left to wonder about the significance of his criticisms against Descartes, who "came to provide us with our image of the *strong* and virtuous person: one who can *control* his passions and the *reactions* of his body to the *stimulus* of the other" (9).

For Aquinas, of course, passions are "controlled" through their participa-

tion in right reasoning, while Descartes (as Harak presents him) presents a wholly extrinsic model. Thomas's integrated, participatory model of the embodied human being fuels Harak's efforts in the second chapter, as he attempts to show that "Thomas' understanding of the passions is far more interactive than his commentators have grasped . . . and is quite congenial to contemporary biochemical and neurophysiological research" (69). He argues that Thomas offers an "interactive" model of human agency insofar as one allows "the other" to affect oneself through the passions in significant ways. Thus the meaning of our encounters with others and the world is, Harak suggests, largely a shared phenomenon between the "subject pole" and the "object pole." Harak is correct to note the essential receptive dimension of our passionate selves, and this marks one of the more important contributions of his work. Still, there are times when he comes close to a coherentist model of meaning in human actions in which the normative truth of things is wholly contextualized by the agents involved. He avoids falling entirely into this position, however, by stating that "the interaction cannot wholly define either interactor" (39). There is, in other words, "a distinctiveness to every human that precedes even such primary interactions" (39). That distinctiveness turns out to be human nature, which, as participating in the rational order of creation, supplies the normative context of moral action. Harak's recognition of the significance of our human teleology is an essential dimension of St. Thomas's interactive account of the passions, but his treatment of this aspect is far too brief.

His unwillingness to emphasize the normative dimension of *recta ratio* and the constitutive role that rational nature plays in Thomas's account of virtue leads to a distortion of St. Thomas's balance. It is certainly important to avoid a Cartesian reading of Aquinas, but Harak is almost apologetic for Aquinas's occasional "lapses" into notions of reason ordering the passions. It is true, for example, that St. Thomas says that we can love God more than we can understand Him, but this does not signal, as Harak seems to suggest, that "love and not the intellect is our best way of approaching God" (91). Had he sufficiently stressed that a proper love for God participates in reason (even though at times exceeding the mind's grasp), Harak might have avoided some of the imbalances in his account. He needed to discuss how our "passion" for God, as an expression of our rational appetite (the will), is complemented by the intellect.

Following this discussion, he takes up the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius of Loyola, suggesting that a connection exists between a Thomistic account of the passions and the *Exercises*. This is one of the more provocative aspects of his work, as more needs to be done to illustrate the ways in which a Thomistic account of the virtues relates to spirituality, though here, too, had he placed more emphasis on the place of reason and intelligence in the life of virtue, he could have established a stronger systematic connection to St.

Ignatius. According to Harak, a connection between St. Thomas and St. Ignatius lies in the affirmation of the primacy of the imagination. Though he admits that St. Thomas "is not strong in his discussion of the imagination in the Treatise on the Passions" (98), Harak never fully explains that the reason why this is so is that, for St. Thomas, reason (and not the imagination) is the most adequate guide to a life of virtue. Still, Harak is correct in recognizing that St. Thomas and St. Ignatius would agree that "our passions become neither moral nor holy by some kind of suppression or Cartesian control. They become holy through our habitual communion with Jesus, through our passion for God" (117). The Thomisitically motivated meditation on the *Exercises* (as well as the reflection on the life of non-violence undertaken in the last chapters) is spirited in its development and marks an important element of his work.

Harak's book serves as a catalyst for further discussion and inquiry into the possibilities of a contemporary engagement with Aquinas. Each chapter, taken independently, lights up aspects to be considered by those engaged in the questions of passion, virtue, and Christian moral maturity, though the connections among the chapters are not always clear. Notwithstanding the reservations mentioned here, the book could serve as an instructive piece, engaging Thomists, psychologists, and students of the Christian moral life alike.

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Letters from Lake Como: Explorations in Technology and the Human Race. By ROMANO GUARDINI. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Introduction byLouis Dupré. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans. 1994. Pp. 130. $9.99 (paper).

The new *Ressourcement* series extends the "Retrieving the Tradition" feature of *Communio International Catholic Review.* Guardini's book fits the purpose, for it could not have been written without St. Thomas's hylomorphic anthropology or epistemology of the existential judgment. Written in the 1920s, these letters show a chilling prescience of technology run amok. And they give a dramatic account of the gaining of their final insight. They form a trilogy with the later *Power and Responsibility* and *The End of the Modern World.*

The first letter seeks an integral metaphysics of technology and of human nature. The inhabitation and industrialization of the entire landscape from

Milan to Lake Como saddened Guardini. The problem was not the urbanity that is humanity. The sudden sight of a factory gave him a deep sense that death was somehow overtaking life. The second letter finds his sadness deepened, for a longing for untouched nature is a result of culture, not barbaric. Culture is human intervention in nature to serve the spiritual needs of persons within the natural world. Technology denies these needs and alienates us from nature. Both culture and technology are artifices, but culture respects natural limits. A sailboat distances us from nature as swimming does not. Naturally heavy, it is by human artifice light enough to be moved by the wind. But in it we retain a closeness to nature that suits our human make-up, minds above matter and yet integrated into it. An ocean liner is totally artificial, thus crossing a border that alienates us from nature. The problem is to identify that border.

The third letter begins an answer. Culture, as symbolic, mediates between nature and the human spirit even while creating a certain necessary distance between them. It draws us away from concreteness to find a universal rather than an ad hoc stance toward raw nature. The question intensifies: Is an alienating abstraction our only way to the universal? Guardini's answer is a strong Thomistic "No!" Human intellection reaches the universal in the singular, not in isolation from it. A false abstraction makes symbols ends in themselves. But, as a means, abstractions mediate our encounter with singular concrete realities, enabling us to integrate the universal and the particular. Human knowing attains the truth of things, which remains its constant criterion. Later theories of knowing would make abstract concepts the primary object of the mind, leading to the nominalism of modern science and the arrogance of the technological imperative.

A monstrously heightened cognition of the factual details of history, geography, and astronomy, and even of the human body and mind, is the topic of the fourth letter. It has come to be a general attitude, turning mental life into a series of interruptions that preclude the self-forgetful confidence required for human activities. The question evolves: Does consciousness itself take us across the boundary that separates the cultivation of nature from the domination of nature that is the death of culture and, finally, of nature and humanity as well?

The fifth letter shows how our ability to survey the earth has erased the distinction between inhabited and uninhabited territories, bringing a new, global frontier with newly urgent problems. The ordering of human relationships—family ties, national origins, and inter-cultural relations—now calls for criteria other than a normative Europe. New ways of ordering the resources of the whole are required. The ancient need to seek the intensive meaning rather than the extensive facts seems to be coming back under a new guise. It is the desire to know what is truly human.

The sixth letter meditates on mastery, an analytic separation of the parts

of a thing so as to rearrange them arbitrarily. Culture instead respects the inner unity of things and transforms them accordingly. Capricious mastery has become the general attitude even toward human beings. Guardini concludes, with deepening sadness, that a change in kind, not just in extent, is relentlessly bringing us not a new culture but barbarism.

The seventh letter attacks mass production, for culture requires a certain aristocracy of its participants. But the boundary between technology and culture is not mere quantity. A sail on the Lake has brought into view just a few artifacts—a couple of villas, a bridge. Like the great cathedrals, they required time for their production, time to clarify and then express inner forms. The inner formation of human participants in culture requires a parallel, slow effort. The recent inner vulgarizing of people has seen a reciprocal vulgarizing of films, of religious belief, of language, even. Mass production makes questionable the very possibility of human life.

The eighth letter uncovers the essence of culture. It is the product of living persons in organic relation to nature, their bodies informed by souls with properly human powers. Culture can make and use tools; as extensions of our bodily organs, they are human while remaining in harmony with nature. Hand-shaped stone steps on a donkey trail are an example of their products. But the organic connection to nature is broken by the analytic knowledge of modern science. The capricious will produces machines—such as automobiles, and highways for them—that display neither human nor natural form. Culture is then not just transformed but destroyed, succeeded by barbarism.

The theme of the ninth letter is the task that modern barbarism sets for us—an event rather than a formula, living human action. A new generation, taking full critical account of technology, must declare the past culture dead. A new Christian attitude will put us into immediate relation to God. Only so will we have the courage to distance ourselves from nature in order to construct symbols that will mediate our presence in it. Technology itself has become a monstrous raw material to be cultured. The task will require a new inner human form, an awareness that is not analytic, and a will that submits to the will of God. A new humanity must make a new world.

Guardini's final hope for the replacement of the technological barbarism of his day by a new human culture is breath-taking. The first entry of German inwardness into history brought a transformation in the culture of the past. Now the Enlightenment caricature of education must be replaced by a new formation of inner selves, paralleled by a new social and cultural ambience. Guardini sees precursors of these correlated inner and outer changes in some of the architecture and literature of his Germany, and in the members of his Catholic youth movement who, opposed to recent mechanization and individualism, were yet ready to humanize technology. Here was evidence of God's working in the depths. So the letters end. And then came the Third Reich.

Guardini could not have foreseen in the 1920s what he saw in the 1940s. He seems to have lived a private life after being dismissed, in 1939, from the University of Berlin for opposing the Nazis. In 1948 he was calling publicly for Germany to pay reparations to the Jews. In 1960 he appended to the fifth edition of his *Letters from Lake Como* his talk to the Munich College of Technology, "The Machine and Humanity." Here he dares to call for a technological culture in which artifacts, not machines, would extend what is truly human to global, even cosmic, limits. But we need an ethics of power, for we have turned ourselves into machines. Sobered, but still hopeful, he admits that, so far, humanly destructive forces have won out more often than not.

What can one say? Guardini could not have foreseen in 1960 what we have seen since, when the very beginnings and endings of human life have been mechanized for utilitarian purposes. His diagnosis was right, and the remedy remains the same: the choice to humanize ourselves as well as physical nature. That hope is now personified in the philosopher-theologian seated on the throne of Peter. But the culture of death must die before the civilization of love can be born.

This book, itself an instance of humanized technology, carries on its cover a painting by Jeroen Henneman, *Lake Returns Greeting*. The shoreline of a lake has the appearance of a man tipping his hat to an observer on the shore, who is tipping his hat to the lake. When man respects nature—both physical and human, nature—both human and physical—returns the compliment.

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The God Who Acts. Edited by THOMAS F. TRACY. University Park, Penn.: Penn State Press, 1994. Pp. 148. $28.50 (cloth); $14.95 (paper).

This volume is intended to stimulate conversation between philosophers and theologians on topics of mutual interest. It contains four chapters: two by philosophers and two by theologians. Each chapter is followed by a response. The responses to philosophers are by theologians; the responses to theologians are by philosophers. By arranging the volume in this way, the editor has insured that it will provide examples of the sort of conversation that he hopes it will stimulate. Initial drafts of most of the chapters were presented at a conference that the editor organized at the University of California at Los Angeles. A brief introduction by the editor sets the stage for what is to follow.

The editor has divided the volume into two parts. The first is entitled "Particular Divine Action: Providence and the Problem of Evil." In it the

topic of conversation is issues raised by claims about particular divine interventions in the world. Maurice Wiles, a theologian, begins the conversation with an essay called "Divine Action: Some Moral Considerations," and Robert Merrihew Adams responds to Wiles in an essay with the title "Theodicy and Divine Intervention." William P. Alston, a philosopher, continues the conversation in an essay called "Divine Action: Shadow or Substance?" and James M. Gustafson responds to Alston in an essay with the title "Alternative Conceptions of God." The second part is entitled "Universal Divine Action: Creation, Human Freedom, and Sin." In it the topic of conversation is issues raised by the doctrine of divine creation and conservation of all contingent reality. Thomas F. Tracy, the editor and a philosopher, starts the conversation with an essay called "Divine Action, Created Causes, and Human Freedom," and David B. Burrell, C.S.C., responds to Tracy in an essay with the title "Divine Action and Human Freedom in the Context of Creation." Kathryn E. Tanner, a theologian, continues the conversation in an essay called "Human Freedom, Human Sin, and God the Creator," and William Hasker responds to Tanner in an essay with the title "God the Creator of Good and Evil?"

Each of these two conversations ranges widely over many issues of both philosophical and theological interest, and a brief review cannot do full justice to their scope. But each of them also has a central theme, and I shall focus my attention on these thematic unities.

The central theme of the first part is the revisionary proposal that belief in divine providential intervention in the created world be eliminated from Christian theology. Curiously, the two theologians, Wiles and Gustafson, are favorably disposed toward this proposal, while the two philosophers, Adams and Alston, oppose it. Wiles argues forcefully that "there are significant moral reasons against accepting the idea of direct or special actions of God in history of a kind that might appropriately be described as a form of divine intervention" (23). There are two moral objections to interventionist accounts of divine providential action. As they are portrayed in Christian scripture and tradition, God's interventions in history are very selective. They appear to be distributed in a way that displays an arbitrary partiality and thus casts doubt on God's fairness or justice. In addition, they seem often to promote relatively trivial ends when set in the context of horrors such as the Nazi genocide, which no divine intervention prevented, and hence also cast doubt on God's goodness. These two objections are, of course, specific forms of the problem of evil.

Wiles also suggests that there are metaphysical reasons for accepting "the incompatibility of a strong doctrine of God's transcendence and the idea of divine intervention" (23). When moral and metaphysical considerations are combined, he takes the result to be a case of formidable force for abandoning

interventionist accounts of divine action. He is prepared to pay a high price to remove such accounts from Christian theology. It includes acknowledging that miracles "should have no place in Christian theology" (26), conceding that the doctrine of the virginal conception has a "legendary character" (27), and thinking that neither the early New Testament witness to the physical resurrection of Jesus nor its role in Christian theology as a whole "requires an interventionist understanding of divine action in relation to it" (28). Many Christians would be unwilling to pay such a price. So it is important to ask whether the force of the moral objections to interventionist accounts of divine action proposed by Wiles can be blunted. Both Adams and Alston argue that they can.

Adams tries to outflank Wiles theologically by setting interventionist accounts of divine action in the larger context of a story of salvation. If there is life after death for human beings, then horrific evils can be defeated by great goods. But unless one believes that what survives death is a naturally immortal soul, it will seem plausible to regard life after death as a miracle that involves special divine intervention. Moreover, occasional miracles can provide a foretaste of the great goods of the afterlife. As Adams sees it, "we may well welcome signs of the greater good breaking into the present life, even if that involves some inequity in the distribution of the lesser goods and evils" (37). Many theistic stories of salvation depict it as taking place within the context of a personal relationship with God. If fostering such personal relationships with human beings is an important divine purpose, God has, Adams concludes, "a reason to intervene *sometimes*, and perhaps to work miracles *occasionally*, even if divine purposes regarding our freedom require that miracles should be infrequent" (39).

Alston's reply to the moral objections set forth by Wiles takes a different tack. Though he views them as serious difficulties, he argues that their force is diminished just because they are particular forms of the problem of evil. Quite apart from problems about divine interventions in history, there are plenty of unanswered questions about why God's creation contains the natural evils with which we are familiar. Adding in unanswered questions about the distribution of divine interventions does not make the problem of evil significantly worse than it would be in the absence of such questions. If theism is tenable at all, it is tenable despite the lack of answers to many questions about the presence of natural evils in creation, and so the lack of answers to further questions about the distribution of divine interventions cannot be a conclusive reason for rejecting theism. Alston's conclusion is this: "If our inability to answer such questions is a conclusive negative reason, then theism goes down the drain whether we accept divine intervention or not. And if it is not a conclusive negative reason, it leaves the belief in divine intervention standing" (56).

As I see it, considerations of the sort advanced by Adams and Alston show that the moral objections are, as Wiles admits, not decisive against interventionist accounts of divine action. Such considerations reduce but do not altogether destroy the force of the objections. Even though it is useful for theologians to explore alternative pictures, portraying God as an actor on the historical stage remains of live option for Christian theology.

The central theme of the second part of the volume is the relation between the divine action of creating and conserving all contingent reality and free human actions. Tanner proposes a very strong doctrine of creation, which is defended by Burrell and criticized by Tracy and Hasker. On her view, "everything nondivine, in every respect that it is, is dependent upon God's creative activity, which brings it forth" (113). This relation of dependence is direct or immediate. God does not act indirectly by first making creatures with causal powers of their own and then leaving them at liberty to exercise such powers on their own. Instead, since "God's creative calling forth is indeed unconditionally and necessarily efficacious," we are to suppose that "what God wills for the world as its creator must happen in just the way God wills" (114). Such a doctrine of creation is bound to provoke questions. Is it even consistent with there being creatures with causal powers of their own? Does it leave any room for human actions that are free in the libertarian sense? And does it make God the agent of and hence responsible for human sin?

Tracy argues that creatures cannot exercise causal powers of their own if God is the direct or immediate cause of every contingent event. There can, of course, be Humean regularities connecting contingent events even if all contingent events are directly caused by unconditionally and necessarily efficacious divine action. Such regularities, however, are not to be understood in terms of the exercise of creaturely causal powers bringing about effects; they are rather to be understood in terms of God treating the occurrence of an event of one type that he has directly brought about as the occasion on which he directly brings about the occurrence of an event of another type. "While classical theists do affirm that whatever active powers a creature possesses it has from the hand of God," Tracy notes, "it does not follow that absolutely any form of divine action will be compatible with the exercise by creatures of genuine causal powers" (86). And it appears that the particular form of divine creative activity proposed by Tanner implies a kind of occasionalism that precludes the operation of secondary causes in nature.

As Hasker argues, it also seems to imply theological determinism. To be sure, Tanner's view of God's creative action is consistent with the claim that some human actions are not determined by any factors within the created order. But even actions not determined at the creaturely level will be directly brought forth by God's creative activity and hence will not be products of human libertarian freedom. According to Tanner, "without jeopardizing God's

infallible efficacy, human beings can retain a kind of Lockean freedom 'to do whatever they choose to do'; they can in fact execute what they intend" (120). The logic of Tanner's position, however, seems to leave space for nothing more than a compatibilist understanding of such Lockean freedom.

Tanner insists that "a theologian holding our picture cannot deny that, given God's infallible working, human beings *must* choose when and what God wills" (127). In order to avoid making God responsible for human sin, she also insists that "if the creature sins, that is contrary to God's will in that God's will does not extend to the bringing to be of sin" (133). But since humans do sin, something not brought to be by, and contrary to, God's will occurs, and so it seems false that human beings must choose when and what God wills. Tanner supposes that the difficulty can be resolved by "multiplying, perhaps indefinitely, the outcomes that may conform to God's will for the world" (134). If God's will for the world is consistent with many outcomes, however, then God's will does not determine the world in all its details. As Hasker points out, such divine underdetermination would leave room for there to be "*many* ways God's will can be fulfilled, *depending on the decisions of the human agents*" (145). But in that case there would be some nondivine things, specifically those human decisions that are not brought forth by direct divine creative activity. So perhaps, as Hasker suggests, Tanner's position is inconsistent because she begins by affirming but, under pressure from the problem of human moral evil, ends by denying theological determinism. In any event, her position faces severe difficulties.

The quality of the essays in this volume is very high. They tackle tough problems in philosophical theology and make original contributions to the published literature devoted to discussion of these problems. And they set a standard of excellence for conversations between philosophers and theologians that future conversations of this sort should aspire to live up to, even though doing so will not be easy.

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Philosophy and Theology in the Middle Ages. By Gillian R. Evans. New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall, 1993. Pp. x + 139. $49.95 (cloth); $14.95 (paper).

An enormous amount of scholorship is condensed in this rather thin survey of philosophy and theology. Unlike most considerations of these disciplines in the Middle Ages, this work is not organized chronologically, but by topic. The first section treats primarily of the sources of mediaeval philoso-

phy, with an analysis of the basic problems of language and logic; the second section considers a series of topics, broadly following the outline of a *summa* of theology (God, creation and the cosmos, man). No attempt is made to distinguish between theology and philosophy, but the interplay between the two disciplines is evident throughout. The summary of the classical sources of mediaeval philosophy is quite handy, and the presentation of the problem of universals is clear and well-organized.

This is neither an introductory text, nor a specialized monograph. There is only the briefest possible biographical information about any of the writers cited (rarely more than the birth and death dates), and even within the individual topics presented a chronological order is not maintained (and thus the writer moves from Anselm to Aquinas to Augustine to Alan of Lille to Boethius to Albert the Great in one short section). A great number of authors are summarized in this work, the little no less than the great: along with Augustine, John of Salisbury, and Aquinas, we find Hugh of Amiens, Rudolph Agricola, and James of Venice. Almost all of the bibliographical references are to modern Latin editions of these authors' works.

Evans's work is most useful as an introduction to the basic topics under debate throughout the Middle Ages, beginning with the question of the suitability of philosophical discourse in theology, and ending with the continuity (and discontinuity) of scholastic discourse and method in the early years of the Protestant Reformation. This survey is a valuable springboard for discussion, and could be used with profit as an undergraduate text; the lack of a chronological arrangement, however, may lead to anachronism among those whose background is introductory. The selectivity in certain areas is also occasionally puzzling: in the treatment of "Ethics and Politics," a summary of parts of Marsiglio of Padua's *Defensor Pacis* is given, but there is only the briefest nod given to Conciliarist thinkers in the conclusion, and the connection between Ockham and Marsiglio is buried over lightly; the Condemnations of 1277, surely a significant point of reference in a consideration of the relation between philosophy and theology, receive scant notice and that only in the final conclusion.

On one topic, however, the consideration is much fuller and more complete: Evans uses the Eucharistic controversies of the eleventh and twelfth centuries on the nature of the sacrament as "a closer case study, to illustrate something of the texture of the philosophical treatment of theological problems in the Middle Ages." The vast majority of the author's sources in this work are from the twelfth century; Professor Evans's treatment of the sweep of the intellectual transformation of the mediaeval period is encyclopedic, however, and a worthwhile and vivid introduction to the debates of the millennium from the fall of the Western Roman Empire to the Reformation. There are few, if any, comparable texts available in English, and this thin book fills a large gap.

This work was first produced as the second volume of a series published in German; this English version, by the same author, contains only minor modifications and adaptations.

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