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## NATURE AND THE PROCESS OF MATHEMATICAL ABSTRACTION [1]

THE PRESENT paper is conversant with the relation of scientific thought to reality, both in mathematics proper and in the mathematical interpretation of nature. Our main issue can be formulated as follows. Does the subject of physics retain, at least within the phase of the fundamental definitions, the character of a thing of nature? Or should it be said that from the beginning the physicist deals with subjects modified by mathematical treatment? From both a doctrinal and an historical point of view a reflection upon

[1] This article by Professor Yves R. Simon, originally dictated to his wife during a stay at the University of Chicago Clinics and completed at home in South Bend with the help of his secretary, Mrs. Pauline Ryan, was composed during the two last years of severe illness. A few very minor changes have been made in the text by its editor, Dr. Edward D. Simmons, Marquette University, according to his own judgment or because of minute corrections brought to his attention by Mrs. Yves Simon and seconded by Mr. Powell Boyd, of Albuquerque, and Dr. John 0. Riedl, Marquette University.

Cartesian idealism seems to be an appropriate approach to this issue.

Let it be recalled, first of all, that in the philosophy of Descartes, thought does not apprehend things directly; its operations are primarily relative to *ideas,* which are modes of the thinking self. It cannot be taken for granted (that is, held uncritically) that ultimately thought transcends its own modes and attains reality. Every experience of illusion reminds us that there are modes of thought which do not resemble any part or aspect of the real world. The transition from idea to thing raises a problem. There would be no such problem if ideas were merely instrumental in the attainment of things. Again, there would be no such problem if the philosophy of Descartes were an absolute idealism and held that the objects of our ideas are not possessed of any being distinct from their being known. But in the system of Descartes there exists a world of reality faithfully represented by *some* of our ideas, and we shall know this real world with perfect certainty if only we make the difference between the ideas which actually represent things and those which lead nowhere. Clarity and distinctness are the needed criterion. The idea of extension is clear and distinct, the idea of red and that of sweet are not. Extension is real, whereas sense qualities are nothing else than modes of consciousness. Thanks to the criterion of clarity and distinctness, a causal inference enables the mind to go beyond its own modes and to attain things.

The theory of ideas is only the first and best known aspect of Cartesian idealism. We still have to inquire into the kind of reality represented by the clear and distinct ideas, for this reality may itself be affected by some development of the idealistic principle. On this subject, there is a most enlightening passage from the *Treatise on the World* where Descartes discusses the definition of motion.[2] He quotes Aristotle's definition, " act of a being in potency as such," and declares it nonsensical. Then he goes on to indicate that when he himself

[2] *Le Monde ou le Traite de la Lumiere,* c. 7 *(Oeuvres de Descartes,* Adam and Tannery, Paris, 1909, vol. 11, p. 89).

speaks of motion he has in mind what the geometricians mean when they say that a line is generated by the motion of a point or a surface is generated by the motion of a line. These expressions are unmistakable: the concept of motion, in the physics of Descartes, expresses a physical reality which has already been processed by mathematical abstraction. This conception of the physical world warrants Descartes' well-known paradox: " I do not accept in physics any principles that are not accepted in mathematics." [3]

In order to determine the significance of this statement, it is necessary to ascertain Descartes' views on the truth value of physical science. The decisive question is whether a physical theory is supposed to explain reality or may still be good if it merely" saves the appearances," according to the famous words of Simplicius. [4] Sense appearances being what they are, we may place under them constructs, hypotheses, from which they follow of necessity. A system made of such constructs achieves economy of thought, provides a unified vision of things, and makes prediction possible. However, other hypotheses might account for the facts of experience with equal or greater success, and, whereas the data can be deduced from the theory, the theory does not necessarily follow upon the data. Concerning the worth of physical theories so understood, minds are divided into three groups. Some hold that physics cannot validly produce anything else than constructs which successfully save the appearances. The most radical exponent of this view is also the best historian of the subject, Pierre Duhem. Others consider that two approaches are possible in the study of nature, one of which is merely aimed at saving the appearances whereas the other proposes to explain physical reality in terms of unqualified truth. Such is the position of St. Thomas Aquinas. For him, the astronomer represents the saving the appearances method. Aquinas sharply contrasts these two thinkers: the

[3] *Principia Philosophiae,* p. *fl,* prin. 64 *(Oeuvres de Descartes,* Adam and Tannery, Paris, 1909, vol. 8, p. 78).

• See the admirable book of Pierre Duhem, *Essai sur la notion de theorie physique de Platon a Galilee,* Hermann, Paris, 1908.

physicist *(physicus, philosophus naturalis),* who is supposed to explain nature demonstratively, and the astronomer *(astrologus),* whose hypotheses *(suppositiones)* merely account for the data of our experience. Finally, some reject the saving the appearances method altogether and hold that natural science, in all its parts, must be a demonstrative explanation of nature. This was the position of Averroes, whose disciples tried hard to work out a philosophical astronomy. As for Descartes, his dogmatism excludes the saving the appearances method, as well as any method which would not promise unqualified certainty. Thus, the mathematical vision of the physical world expressed in the texts that we have quoted, cannot be interpreted as a mere system of constructs. When Descartes says that motion, in his physics, is nothing else than the kind of motion referred to by geometricians in their definitions of line and surface, his statement must be understood in terms of absolute reality. The physical world of Descartes is that of a partly idealistic philosophy. It is not reducible to ideas, but it is not entirely independent of mental influences. Though real in some respects, it has been conditioned by the mind. A certain treatment, in which we recognize the characteristics of mathematical abstraction, pertains to its constitution. The conception of matter and physical reality is controlled by a great epistemological design. Descartes' philosophy of matter is what his theory of physical science wants it to be.

* * *

Let us now consider, through the analysis of a simple example, the contrast that we do not find in Descartes, viz., the contrast between a physical thing and its mathematical counterpart. The word " triangle " may designate a gadget used to draw (approximately) right angles. Such a gadget can be purchased in any office supply shop. It is made of wood, plastic or metal; and, in the contingencies of physical becoming, it behaves like any other thing made of the same material. Under impact, it may lose its shape or break into pieces. If exposed to high temperatures, the triangle made of metal will melt and

the triangle made of wood will disappear into smoke and ashes. Now, the same word "triangle" may also designate an object that money cannot buy and that fire cannot destroy. Much can be learned from the difference between this indestructible triangle and the gadget available in office supply shops. There are triangles that are not make of wood or metal. They are not made of anything involved in the course of physical events, e. g., changes in temperature or pressure. Out of what are they made? If "out of" refers to such things as wood, plastic or metal, it is appropriate to say that they are made out of nothing, and that their having no cause of the "out of" description is the ground of their indestructibility.

A cause of the " out of " description is what philosophers call matter or material cause.[5] But it is in varying degree that the character of material cause belongs to the things that are material causes. Consider the furniture of a home, preferably as set in order by felicitous arrangement: chairs, tables, bookcases, beds and davenports are that "out of which" the orderly set is made; but., prior to their function as material cause of an orderly set, these things had fully determinate constitutions as works of human art. Again, that out of which a table is made has a constitution antecedent to its being shaped into a table. It is wood, and this word, though vague and confused, expresses with certainty the preexistence of a natural determination. To identify the matter by reason of which the gadget called " a triangle " is a thing physical, engaged in the contingencies of the physical occurrences, and subject to destruction, we have to follow down to its extremity the line of the material causes. At this extremity we find matter

[5] Matter, considered in relation to the whole of which it is a part, has the character of a cause " out of which," and this is the primary and most fundamental aspect of its intelligibility. Considered in relation to the other part of the whole, i.e., the form, matter has the character of a cause " in which." In Descartes, matter is the thing extended. Essentially, it is neither an "out of which" nor an "in which"; it is a complete substance whose characteristics are sharply opposed to those of the other complete substance, the thinking thing or mind. This completeness of matter, in Cartesianism, in most modern philosophies and in current rhetorical usage, is a serious obstacle to the understanding of Aristotle's philosophy of nature.

in an absolute sense, the prime matter of Aristotle, the thing which owes its first constitution to something other than itself, and which accordingly cannot exist by itself. Ultimately, it is the presence of prime matter which makes the difference between the triangle that money can buy and the triangle that fire cannot destroy. In the familiar proposition that mathematical objects are abstracted from matter [6] or, as St. Thomas puts it with greater precision, " can be understood without sensible matter," [7] it is fundamentally prime matter that the word "matter" stands for.

* * *

The role of abstraction in the constitution of the various scientific discourses often is obscured by usages which originate in empiricist philosophies. In these philosophies, " abstraction " generally designates the process by which a sense impression evolves from a state of individuality and high complexity to a state of relative simplicity which allows it to stand for a multitude of individual cases. Simplicity has distinct advantages in the handling of signs. But, so far as representation is concerned, abstraction understood in the empiricist way proceeds from the same to the same. There is less of the same in the so-called abstract representation than in the crude sense impression, but no transmutation has taken place.

To understand the role played by abstraction in the constitution of the sciences, let us turn to the theory of intelligibility which is, in fundamental ways, common to Plato and Aristotle. In a celebrated passage of the *Phaedo*, empirically perceptible relations of equality are described as an aspiration toward unqualified equality, toward the essence of equality, which will never disclose itself in any experience.[8] True, the experience of such things as pieces of wood which, at times, appear equal and at times unequal, is necessary for us to conceive equality itself: but Plato has cautiously invited the reader to notice that

• *On the Heavens,* 3, 1, 299a15; *On the Soul,* 3, 7, 431bl2.

[7] *In Boeth. de Trin.,* q. 5, a. 1, c.; *In I Phys.* 1. 1, n. 2.

[8] *Phaedo,* 74.

the experience of a thing may bring to our mind what is unlike it just as well as what is like it. The *Phaedo* simultaneously explains that such an object as equality itself is purely intelligible and that its understanding does not originate in sense experience. Thoughout the dialogue and in many other passages of Plato's work, an attitude of aversion to the senses is powerfully suggested. The meaning of Plato's theory of recollection may be open to discussion. When Plato speaks of a previous life, in which the soul would have contemplated the world of the intelligible, does he use a myth to show that our apprehension of the intelligible can neither be reduced to sense experience nor derived from it in any way whatsoever? This question does not need to be decided here. What is relevant is that Plato, in connection with the theory of intelligibility, recommends an attitude of aversion to the senses and of *ccmversicm* to the innermost parts of the soul. Translators [9] happen to use the word " abstract " to characterize Platonic types as opposed to the things of this world. No term could be more infelicitous, for it is not by *abstraction* but by *conversicm* that the soul has access to equality itself or beauty itself. Of all the lines or surfaces or weights of which we say that they are equal, we have no way to know, beyond certain limits of approximation, whether they are equal or not, and the probability is that they are not equal. As W. F. Clifford puts it, it is only in a practical sense that the chemist, as well as the grocer, asserts that a thing weighs one pound. But this practical notion of equality involves a steady approach to an equality that we can never find in our experience. It makes sense because of a constant reference to an intelligible form, equality, which can never be experienced or verified but without which it is impossible to speak of things within our experience as equal.

In any issue involving the relation of the intellect to the world of sense experience the behavior of Aristotelian thought contrasts so obviously and significantly with that of Plato that one may be tempted to overlook the features common to the

• E. g., Jowett.

two philosophies. Yet, Aristotle remains a member of Plato's school inasmuch as he holds as firmly as Plato that there is an infinite metaphysical distance between sensible and intellectual representations; the mere working out of sense impressions, their refinement, their subtle reduction to clear and simple outlines, will never cause the intelligibility of a thing to be perceived. Sense and understanding belong to different orders. But Aristotle's attitude toward the world of sense experience is made of eagerness and confident expectation. The Platonic theory of conversion to the world of intelligibility implies that the union of the rational soul with the body and the senses is, in some way, unnatural. A Platonist is almost necessitated to assume an original catastrophe as a result of which spirits have been forced into bodies as prisoners into a jail. The wise man, far from being afraid of death, considers it as a return to the normal state of affairs. For Aristotle, on the contrary, the union of soul and body is natural. But whenever principles are united by nature., their union is beneficial to the highest of them: if this were not the case, the law of natural finality would be broken and nature would be absurd. Being natural, the union of understanding and sense is beneficial to understanding. The Aristotelian concept of abstraction is an answer to the crucial difficulty raised by a simultaneous adherence to these two propositions: (1) there is between sensible and intellectual representations a metaphysically infinite distance, (2) all our intellectual knowledge is derived from the senses. The intellectual process must start somewhere. It must start with an act antecedently to which all that exists in the human mind pertains to the sensible order. It must start with an act of abstraction that is not directed by any antecedent act of intellection. The first ideas of the human intellect, those which cannot be reduced to antecedent ideas, result from acts of precognitive abstraction. Aristotle gave the name of " active intellect " to the power by which the precognitive abstraction of our first ideas is effected. He likened it to light, and thereby related his own concept of *abstraction* to the concept of illumi-

nation, so often represented in the Platonic tradition. [10] **But on** the " active intellect" Aristotle wrote only a few lines.[11] **It** is the glory of medieval genius to have understood the significance of his obscure remarks on such a crucial subject. The diversity of the interpretations and the size of the debates show that the philosophers had understood what the creation of intelligibility means in a system which does not admit of any innate ideas and yet holds that it is impossible to obtain the slightest bit of intelligence by mere working out of sense impressions. The first acts of abstraction, those that are directly traced to the " active intellect," consist in the disengagement of forms from the data of sense experience. As the intellect carries on the work of differentiation which enables it to come ever closer to and adequate grasp of things through a diversity of standpoints and foci, it is, again, the disengagement of forms that the word "abstraction" designates primarily. The operation that Cajetan calls " *abstractio totalis* "– in opposition to " *abstractio formalis"* [12]-plays but a secondary and strictly subordinate role. *Abstractio totalis* is the abstraction of a universal whole from its subjective parts. Considering, for instance, the features common to diverse species, the working out of a generic concept is an *abstractio totalis.* A universal whole, e. g., a generic concept, has been disengaged from the various subjects of which it may be predicated. These two operations, the abstraction of a form and the abstraction of a universal whole, bear opposite characteristics. Most importanly, whereas the process of formal abstraction, as it goes on, tends to bring about higher degrees of intelligibility and definiteness, the process of *abstractio totalis,* all other things being the same, is directed toward vagueness and indetermination. This is nicely expressed by the everyday use of the word " specific " in the sense of determinate, precise, unmistakable. To know the genus of a plant without being able to say what distinguishes this particular

[10] See Etienne Gilson, "Pourquoi S. Thomas a critique S. Augustin," *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Litteraire du Moyen Age,* 19!'l6, p. 61.

[11] *On the Soul,* 3, *5,* 430al0.

[12] *In de Ente et Essentia,* 1, l.

species from other species of the same genus is to know this plant vaguely. The change which takes place when the perception of the specific properties is added to that of the generic features can be described as an actualization. To know specifically is to know a species in act, but to have a merely generic acquaintance with a species is to remain in the state of potency with regard to the specific properties. Thus, a certain kind of abstraction does not consist in the disengagement of a form. But it is easy to see that the abstraction of a universal whole from its subjective parts is necessarily preceded and often accompanied by the more fundamental operation which consists in disengaging a form from some kind of matter: without the antecedent abstraction of a form, the concept of the universal whole would have no content.

Let us, now, try to characterize, in terms of the two ways of abstraction described by Cajetan, the process which results in the constitution of physical concepts, which discloses-in various degrees of clarity-the intelligibility of physical things, and which makes possible a science of nature. The transition from the individual instances apprehended in sense experience to the universal, whether generic or specific, obviously is the abstraction of a universal whole from its subjective parts. But it is equally obvious that, whether the universal under consideration is still vague, potential and generic, or already enjoys the fully determinate intelligibility of the species, an abstraction of types, of forms, has been effected. Texts of great significance describe physical abstraction as the abstraction of a universal whole, an *abstraotio totalis,* as if it were nothing else.[13] But it is clear that, like any abstraction consitutive of a scientific system, it implies a disengagement of types from a definite matter. If we understand precisely from what matter the intellect abstracts in the constitution of physical concepts, we shall understand why it is correct to describe physical abstraction as the abstraction of a universal whole. In our initial

[13] *In Boeth. de Trin.,* q. *5,* a. S, c: "Tertia secundum eandem operationem quae est abstractio universalis a particulari; et haec competit etiam physicae . . ." cf. also *In III De Anima,* 1, 12, n. 784.

remarks about the triangle that fire can destroy and the triangle that money cannot buy, we found that the first includes absolute matter, prime matter in the sense of Aristotle, whereas the second comprises no such matter. The inclusion of matter is no less essential to the universal concept of a physical thing than to the representation of a physical individual. For instance, if man, taken in the state of universality, were conceived as a being which does not comprise the principle by reason of which physical things are perishable, our concept of man would be not only inadequate but also mendacious. Thus, the science of nature does not abstract from matter. But, like every science, it deals with universal objects. Since matter is, in composite things, the origin of the distinction of individuals within a species, to consider universals alone is indeed to abstract from a certain matter, namely from matter as principle of individuation. Here, the two abstractions coincide strictly. To abstract a universal whole from its subjective parts *(abstractio totalis* of Cajetan) is also to abstract a type from its individual bearer, and this constitutes a "formal" abstraction. To say that physical abstraction, the abstraction of the first order, is merely an abstraction of the universal whole from its subjective parts is correct indeed but conveys a risk of misunderstanding. It is perfectly true that, in order to have the concept of a thing physical, all we have to do is to disengage the universal features of that thing. Should the process of abstraction be carried any further, the resulting concept would no longer be that of a thing physical. But, by abstracting universals from singulars, we have effected the abstraction of types from matter considered as principle of individuality. Here, as well as elsewhere, it is a character of formal abstraction which defines and distinguishes a scientific order.

The Cartesian concept of motion shows that there is no science of nature in the system of Descartes. This is perfectly consistent with Descartes' ontology. A first insight would make you believe that, when Cartesianism displaced and replaced the philosophies more or less inspired by Aristotle, a great simplification was all that happened: where Aristotle perceived an

immense multitude of natures, Descartes defines only two things, namely, thought and extension. On closer examination, the great simplification effected by Descartes is also a radical transmutation., for thought is not a nature, and extension, which could be called space just as well, is not a nature either. The notion of nature, actually, does not appear in the philosophy of Descartes. His physics is not about nature, but about something else, which is related to nature as the geometrician's definition of motion is related to the definition of Aristotle which Descartes declares unintelligible.

St. Thomas states that in physics " the intellect abstracts the species of a natural thing from individual sensible matter, but not from common sensible matter." [14] This is to characterize physical abstraction both as abstraction of a universal whole and abstraction of a form. By abstracting from the principle of individuation, the mind enters into the realm of the universals where the possibility of science begins. And by abstracting a physical type from the principle of individuation, the mind effects a certain kind of formal abstraction., the formal abstraction which defines the science of nature properly so called.

Before we begin to consider the problems of mathematical abstraction, it is indispensable to recall present uncertainties regarding the object and nature of mathematics. Prior to the 19th century, it was almost universally held that mathematics was the science of quantity. This common definition would be unsatisfactory if it were not an abbreviation implying the special state in which mathematics considers quantity. The philosophy of nature and metaphysics also study quantity, but from points of view and according to methods which are far remote from those of the mathematician. The relevant thing is that, until the 19th century, there was almost universal agreement that quantity should be mentioned in the definition of mathematics. This is seriously questioned today. Many say that logic and mathematics are indistinguishable, whether

[14] *Summa Theol.*, 1, 85, 1, ad 2.

mathematics is held to be a branch of logic, or logic a branch of mathematics.

Whenever we are confronted by such problems of unity and distinction, the wise thing is to look at the most typical cases before considering those whose type is less definite and which stand in the vicinity of the uncertain borderline. We can safely hold that we are in mathematics when we consider figures as they are treated in the geometry of Euclid, and numbers as they are treated in elementary arithmetic. Correspondingly, we are sure that we are in logic as long as we consider such things as, say, the rules of validity in the diverse categorical and hypothetical syllogisms. Thus, let it be said that, even if it should be ultimately concluded that mathematics and logic are indistinguishable, nothing can be lost by examining the question "What is mathematics?" primarily in relation to those parts of the science which deal with quantity.

It is hardly necessary to recall that quantity, one of the supereme genera or categories of Aristotle, does not admit of a logically correct definition; yet, in lieu of a definition, a description may work as a satisfactory approach to this indefinable concept. There is in front of me a desk which I may consider in terms of quality or in terms of quantity: the contrast between what I gather from these two standpoints may constitute the approach that we need. In terms of quality, I would say that this desk is black; yet, its color is not uniform. It is much lighter in the areas where the elbows of the reader have rubbed off part of the paint; also, sunlight gives a strikingly different appearance to the parts that are not covered by the shade of the curtains. This desk is made of hard wood; its edges are sharp. A more elaborate description is unnecessary. In terms of quantity, this desk is a thing rectangular. I am free to consider its upper surface as a rectangle and to describe it as if the qualities mentioned above, as well as the many left unmentioned, did not exist. Then the striking fact is the *homogeneity* of the parts. As my attention moves from one area to another, it moves from a thing of a certain kind to another thing of the same kind. In the qualitative description, this area is darker

and the area next to it is lighter; as my attention moves from the first to the second, it moves from a thing of a certain kind to a thing of a different kind. Thus, quality appears as a principle of heterogeneity. But aU the parts of a purely quantitative whole are of the same kind. And yet they are distinct from one another. Likewise, in discrete quantity, the units which make up a set may present all sorts of qualitative differences. Of ten persons gathered in a room, one is an infant and another is an old man, one is known for his unusual kindness and another is really wicked, etc. All these diversities are ignored when I simply count the persons in the room. Each of them is, in the same way, a unit. Considered as members of a certain set, they are of the same kind. They are indistinguishable from each other so far as kind is concerned. And yet they are distinct from each other. Even though diversities of kind are completely left out of the picture, these ten remain distinct and no two units are fused together. This is expressed by the following substitute for a definition: quantity is an accident which causes parts to be distinct from each other-even though they be identical in kind-by causing them to be external to each other.

Quantity can be studied by the philosophy of nature and by metaphysics. The philosopher of nature considers things in reference to, and within the limits of, mutable being, the proper and specifying object of his discipline. The metaphysician reconsiders the case by treating quantity as the first member of an analogical set which comprises as well properties of being which are not restricted to the world of mutability. In either case, though more definitely in the second, what is worked out is an ontology of real quantity. The crucial thing is to perceive the difference between the formal abstractions which lead to the physical or metaphysical science of quantity and the way of abstraction which distinguishes mathematics. This last is a formal abstraction by which quantity is considered apart from all that pertains to sense experience and to the substantial mutability of things. This is what is meant by St. Thomas when he speaks of "abstraction from sensible matter." The

desk in front of me displays a variety of qualities perceptible to the senses. But if, from that thing rectangular, I abstract a geometrical rectangle, all sense qualities disappear, and, together with sense qualities, prime matter as that by reason of which things belong to the world of sense experience and the world of universal mutability. The triangle that fire cannot destroy has no color and no sense quality whatsoever. But, if a triangle is stripped of all sense qualities, it is also pulled out of the perishable world.

In his description of the three orders of abstraction, St. Thomas says that the object of mathematics is abstracted from sensible matter, but not from intelligible matter.[15] This expression, "intelligible matter" *(hyle noete),* is used by Aristotle in very few instances. It seems that it has two meanings. On the one hand, it may designate a logical entity, viz., the genus, which is analogous to physical matter inasmuch as it is determined by the specific difference just as matter is determined by form.[16] On the other hand," intelligible matter" may designate the matter of the mathematicals, an intrinsic principle of individuation and multiplicity without being simultaneously a principle of change.[17] It is the second sense that St. Thomas has in mind when he defines mathematical abstraction. He understands intelligible matter to be substance considered precisely and exclusively as *that which lies under* quantity and without which quantity can neither exist nor be understood.[18] Quantity is not a property of being as such. It exists only in the material world, it follows upon the presence of prime matter. Not all aspects and effects of matter are left out by mathematical abstraction. The consideration of quantity implies the presence of material substance as bearer and as cause of quantity. Even the triangle that fire cannot destroy retains the mark of prime matter inasmuch as it is a thing extended, a thing whose parts are distinguished from each other, independently of any quali-

[15] See *supra,* note 7.
[16] *Metaphysics,* 8, 6, 1045a7.
[17] *Metaphysics,* 7, 10, 1036a9.
[18] *Summa Theol.,* 1, 85, 1, ad 2; *In II Phy.,* 1, 3, n. 5.

tative diversity, by being external to one another. From the beginning the situation of mathematical thought is, so to say, ambiguous, and may be expected to occasion various paradoxes. Mathematical abstraction takes forms out of the world of mutability, yet what it considers primarily, viz., quantity, is a proper effect of the universal principle of mutability, viz., matter.

* * *

After having compared physical and mathematical objects from the standpoint of intelligibility, we now propose to compare them from the standpoint of reality. We have been taking for granted that some mathematical beings have physical counterparts. The right triangle of elementary geometry has its counterpart in the gadget used to draw right angles, the sphere in such things as billiard balls and globes, number four in any collection of four things, such as four apartments in a house or four persons around a dinner table. But whether every mathematical entity has its counterpart in the physical world remains to be seen.

Let our first question be, "Do such mathematical objects as a sphere, a cube or a real number really exist?" No doubt, there exist in the real world approximately spherical things, approximately cubic things, and numerable collections.[19] But when a mathematical entity comes to exist in the real world, when, over and above the objective existence that it enjoys in the mind, it comes to assume existence in the world of reality, it ceases to be a mathematical entity and has become a physical one. Even those mathematical entities that are closest to the real, e. g., a sphere or a cube, imply a condition which forbids them to exist except in the capacity of objects of thought. This is the ground of Aristotle's well known remark that, whereas there is truth and beauty in the world of mathematics, mathematical objects are not good.[20] The true and the beautiful do not imply the relation to existence that the good implies. In

[19] Whether an infinite collection can exist actually remains a problem.

[20] *Metaphysics,* 3, fl, 996a29; 13, fl, 1078a3!'l.

order to be true and beautiful an object does not need to exist: but in order to be good, that is, lovable, desirable, it needs to possess, or at least to be capable of, real existence. Many people love mathematical sciences, which are real perfections of the mind; but, whereas it is possible to covet a gadget called a triangle, it is impossible to fall in love with the triangle that fire cannot destroy or with the square root of a negative number.

At this point, it is necessary to recall some fundamentals pertaining to the division of being into real being and being of reason. A being of reason is an object so constituted that any proposition implying that it really exists would be contradictory. Some beings of reason involve internal contradiction and many do not. One discipline is concerned with beings of reason exclusively: it is logic, which studies the properties that accrue to things in virtue of the second existence that they enjoy in the mind. Since logical properties are born of what is particular to the existence of things as objects of understanding, it would be contradictory to say that they exist in another capacity than that of object. Yet, there is no internal contradiction in any logical entity. All beings of reason are shaped after the pattern of real beings; however, they are not said to be grounded in things unless they derive, from their relation to reality, necessary laws and, consequently, admit of scientific analysis. Chimeras, undines, zombies and social engineers do not belong to science; but logical properties do, as well as many fictions worked out by the sciences of the real. Thus, in metaphysics, evil, which is a privation, is spoken of as if it were a positive form, and we cannot study the transcendental properties of being without using relations of reason. Let us also notice that a being of reason involving internal contradiction may play a very important part in scientific thought. An imaginary number such as $\sqrt{-1}$ implies contradiction plainly, and yet no one would question the significance of imaginary numbers.

The common distinction between imaginary and real numbers warns us that not all mathematical entities enjoy the same status in terms of reality. The $\sqrt{16}$ has a counterpart in the

real world, $\sqrt{-1}$ does not. Let it not be said that mathematical entities are beings of reason: this would amount to denying, in all cases, the existence of physical counterparts. But let it be pointed out that even those mathematical entities that are closest to the real world imply a *condition of reason* which makes it impossible for them while remaining mathematical to exist outside the mind. Mathematical abstraction terminates in objects that are beside the world of reality. This law entails., so far as the being of reason is concerned, an attitude strictly proper to mathematics. When a science of the real-say, metaphysics-uses beings of reason, it is for the sake of understanding better the properties of real being. And logic, whose whole object is made of beings of reason, is entirely subordinated to science; it is essentially a *useful* discipline.[21] Thus, in these two cases, that of a science of the real which happens to consider beings of reason, and that of a discipline which, directly at least, considers nothing else, the study of the being of reason has a character of utility. It is not because of a dignity of their own that metaphysical or logical beings of reason are studied, but for a better intelligence of things.[22] The case of mathematics is profoundly different. Because mathematical abstraction,, from the beginning and as a minimum, brings about a condition of reason, it establishes also, from the beginning, a framework in which a being of reason is just as worthy as a real being. This is fairly exampli:fied by the familiar rule that real numbers and imaginary numbers should be considered as equally possible values of a complex which, itself, is neither determinately real nor determinately imaginary.

John of St. Thomas has something to say on this subject. As he discusses the proposition that every being is good, John of St. Thomas, after St. Thomas himself and Cajetan, encounters the objection derived from Aristotle's point that there is no goodness in mathematical entities. His answer is that

[21] The utility of which we speak is in no way related to the practical order: it is for knowledge itself that logic is useful.

•• "Things," here, covers mathematical entities, whose relation to reality we are trying to define.

goodness pertains to being, qua existent or capable of existence. But by reason of the abstraction which is properly their own, mathematical objects are excluded from the realm of existence. [28]

Greater precision in the discussion of the whole issue can be obtained by comparing the effects of physical and of mathematical abstraction on a thing's ability to exist. If things that have been processed by mathematical abstraction cannot exist, should it not be said that things are equally unable to exist in the state of physical abstraction? Granted that physical abstraction consists merely in the abstraction of a universal whole from its subjective parts, and implies no formal abstraction except that of a natural genus or species from individuating matter, it remains that universals cannot exist in the state of universality. We come to wonder whether there is anything distinctive in the case of mathematics. The answer is easily

•• *Cursus Theologicus,* vol. 1, disp. 6, a. *i'l,* Solesme ed., vol. 1, p. 533: "To understand this [viz., the texts of Aristotle on the subject], let us notice with Cajetan *(Commentary* on the text that we are discussing, *Summa* 1, *5,* 3) that quantity can be abstracted in two ways. (1) By abstracting the genus or the species from individuals, the nature and whatness of quantity remaining entire, as happens with all the other natures when they are conceived in the state of universality. This abstraction is effected by the intellect which universalizes natures, and this is how quantity is abstractly considered by the metaphysician. It has lost neither the character of perfection nor that of the good. (i'l) The abstraction of quantity can also be effected by stripping it of what makes things perceptible to the senses. This second kind of abstraction is the work of imagination. Thus, we imagine a distance of quantity in a vacuum in which our imagination places lines or surfaces. Such an abstraction is not of the universal from the particular; it consists only in disengaging unterminated or imagined quantity from the quantity that falls under senses. Likewise, if in relation we considered exclusively the *to* [something] and not the *in* [something], we would be considering what is common to the real relation and the relation of reason, and we would not be considering the perfection and the reality found in relation. Thus, the first abstraction does not remove from quantity the predicates which constitute it and make up its perfection; these predicates are the ground of goodness. In quantity, as well as in other natures conceived in their universality, goodness remains, although its pursuit and its power of motion are not exercised except in the singular. But the second abstraction removes the character of goodness because it strips quantity from any sensible aspect and leaves it in a condition in which it can only be imagined. Imaginary quantity is not, of itself, prossessed of any goodness. In order to have goodness, quantity must be perceptible to the senses and exist really as the determination of a subject; otherwise, its concept applies indifferently to fictitious and true

obtained by remarking that in physical abstraction the only thing to be affected is the state of an essence: the essence itself is not affected in any way. It is one and the same essence, one and the same intelligibility, which exists in the real world as identified with an individual being and in the mind as disengaged from individuating matter and provided with positive unity. To ask whether an object of physical knowledge, say a plant or a chemical, admits of real existence is not to ask whether " cherry tree " or " copper " admits of real existence in the state of universality. The meaning of the question is this: can the essence designated by " cherry tree" or " copper," which exists in the mind in a state of abstraction and positive unity, exist also, in the real world, in the state of individuality? The answer is obviously in the affirmative as far as physical objects are concerned. Let us now ask the question of whether

quantity ... *Now it is clear that in mathematical demonstrations imaginary lines and figures and real ones behave in exactly the same way* [italics supplied by Simon); for instance, if lines are imagined in a vacuum, the mathematical demonstration will be just as good. And if there is a line in a real matter, the mathematician does not consider its real whatness (this would be the concern of the metaphysician), but only its mathematical proportion. This is why, by reason of a certain kind of abstraction, he [i.e., the mathematician) leaves out the character of goodness. What is being considered in quantity is not its perfection or its agreement [with some desire) or its ability to lead to some goal, but only imagined extension inasmuch as it has continuity, commensuration or proportion. Here it is objected that when it is so conceived, it is stripped not only of goodness but also of being, for it has become an imaginary entity. "The answer is that mathematicals by the force of their appropriate abstraction and mode of conception exclude from quantity the condition of being perceptible to the senses, and do not consider quantity with the character of reality which makes it possible for the senses to apprehend it, but exclusively as imaginable extension, for, as we said, lines and figures shaped in imagination ... suffice for mathematical demonstration ... Mathematical quantity is expressed by the positive concept of an unterminated quantity in such a way that it can be either imaginary or exist with the character of true being and be attainable to the senses. To conclude, the behavior of mathematical quantity toward the notion of real and true being can be expressed by saying that it [e. g., mathematical quantity] *admits of* [italics supplied by Simon) real and true being; it does not include it positively and does not consider it adequately, nor does it positively exclude, by any kind of repugnance, the reality of quantity itself. And this is how it differs from purely imaginary quantity, which is a being of reason. Mathematical quantity is not determinately a being of reason; neither is it determinately a real being, but it is indifferent to either condition and admits of either of them."

a mathematical square or circle which exists, indeed, in the mind, in a state of abstraction from individuating matter and of positive unity, exists also in the real world, as identified with an individual square or circle. The answer is obviously negative, because of the *condition of reason* resulting from mathematical abstraction. In the case of the physical essence, all the difference is one of *state.* In the case of the mathematical essence, the difference affects not only the state of an essence but also its constitution. Physical abstraction leaves the constitution of the physical essence unmodified. This is clearly expressed by St. Thomas when he writes that physical objects can neither exist nor be understood without sensible matter. [24] *Ne,ither ... nor ...* expresses the similarity of two conditions. As to metaphysical objects, St. Thomas says that they can both be understood and exist without matter. Again, *both ... and ...* expresses the similarity of two conditions. Thus, between the first and the third orders of abstraction, between two cases marked by similar conditions for objective and for real existence, there is a case marked by *discrepancy:* mathematical objects *can* be understood without sensible matter, but *cannot* exist without it.

The next phase of our research will consist in determining precisely why there is in mathematics, and in mathematics alone, a discrepancy between the conditions for being and the conditions for being understood. Let us briefly remark that the sheer fact of higher abstraction gives no answer. Metaphysical objects are more abstract than both the physical and the mathematical objects, and yet nothing interferes with their real existence, whether in association with matter or in a state of separation. It is in the unique relation of quantity to the components of physical nature that we are likely to find the explanation of the unique behavior of mathematical entities with regard to real existence.

Mathematical abstraction is made possible by the order which obtains between quantity and the sense qualities. Both

•• See *supra,* note 7.

quantity and sense qualities emanate from material substance, but according to a definite order. It would be impossible to consider color apart from quantity, for any color is the color of a surface. But it is possible to consider points, lines, surfaces and solids independently of color or smell. Sense qualities do not pertain to the intelligibility of quantitative forms and relations, but they are inseparable from their reality. Here we find the root of the discrepancy between conditions necessary for being understood and conditions necessary for existing. Quantitative forms can be understood without sense qualities, but without sense qualities they cannot exist. This proposition becomes clear as soon as we consider the relations that quantity on the one hand and sense qualities on the other hand have to matter. Quantity originates in the matter of things. Sense qualities, considered precisely as qualities, originate in the form, but, considered as qualities perceptible to the senses, they are a consequence and an expression of the material component of bodies. The ceaseless changes which take place in our sensorial environment signify the presence, in the substantial reality of things, of a principle, viz., prime matter, which, in the words of St. Augustine, is mutability itself. Quantity is intelligible without sense qualities, but, as soon as it is stripped of these qualities, it is also disconnected in a sense from prime matter, in which it originates. Thereby, it ceases to be real. *Mathematics is by no means an ontology of real quantity.* If we want to know about real quantity, we shall consult sciences that consider quantity in and with the conditions of its real existence: these are the philosophy of nature and metaphysics.

Ever since the time of Aristotle, at the very latest, enough has been known about mathematical abstraction for people to understand that mathematics does not deal with physical reality, that it does not say what real quantity is and that, accordingly, its truth cannot be measured by a relation to the real world of nature, which definitely is not its object. Although these things have been known for many centuries, it seems that it is only with the advent of the non-Euclidean geometries and other revolutionary changes which occurred in the 19th

century, that the ideal of a mathematics which would be both a natural science and the most exact of the rational sciences ceased to haunt the minds of men. In most cases, the realization that mathematics was not the science of real quantity and that its truth did not consist in a relation of conformity to the quantitative aspects of things, promoted the belief that mathematics was indistinguishable from logic and enjoyed a truth of the logical description. Unvoiced in most cases was the postulate that the only possible forms of truth were physical and logical, and, close to it, the postulate that the only thing which may cause scientific objects not to be real is the standpoint of the logician. We are suggesting that the unreality of mathematical objects has a proper cause, irreducible to what causes logical entities to be beings of reason. Logical entities are beings of reason because they are properties that the things known assume within the mind as a result of their being known, as a result of the second existence that they enjoy, qua objects, within the mind. Here, the factor of unreality is a mode of existence, the objective existence that the things possess in the mind and cannot possess anywhere else. We are suggesting that this is not the only factor of unreality in scientific objects. Another one consists in the relation of quantity to sense qualities and to prime matter. This relation we have tried to describe. If our suggestions are correct, the alternative concerning the truth of mathematics would not hold. Mathematical propositions would possess a truth of their own, reducible neither to a relation of conformity to nature nor to mere consistency.

t YVEs R. SIMON

# THE INTERIOR TESTIMONY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

## A CRITIQUE oF CALVINIST DocTRINE

### INTRODUCTION

IN THE FOUR centuries which have elapsed since the Reformation, the dialogue between Catholics and Protestants has evolved through several distinct phases. In fact, it is possible to distinguish :five literary genre of this dialogue.

The first reaction of Catholic theologians toward the doctrines of the Reformers was to engage in a point by point refutation. St. Robert Bellarmine's *Disputationes de controversiis Christianae fidei adversus hujus temporis haereses* is the *chef d'oeuvre* of this type of literature. Taking the Apostles' Creed as the point of departure, Bellarmine noted that in the first two centuries of the Church's history the first article of the Creed was the disputed point. In the following period the mystery of Christ had to be defended, while in the ninth century the heresy at issue concerned the mystery of the Holy Spirit. Finally in the second millenium heretics erred concerning the last articles of the Creed-the Church, the communion of Saints, and the remission of sins. In this category Bellarmine places the Reformers of the sixteenth century. For this reason his work is divided into three parts: (I) the section in which he refutes the Protestant doctrines concerning the Church, Christ her invisible head, the Pope, Christ's vicar, and, finally, the members of the Church, taken either collectively (under this head he treats the subject of the ecumenical council) or individually; (2) a section dealing with the communion of saints and the seven sacraments; (3) finally, a treatise on the remission of sins, including a discussion of grace, Christian liberty, and justification. It is interesting to note that Bellarmine places at the head of these sections the

more fundamental question concerning the Bible, its interpretation, and oral tradition.

In retrospect, it is possible to see that this minute refutation, which proceeded according to a scholastic method, lacked a global or synthetic view of the Protestant position and failed to examine the dialectic at the origin of the Protestant theses. Nevertheless, especially in the work of Bellarmine, there is a presentiment of the organic unity of the Protestant dogmatic. This particular author actually attempted to reduce all the differences between Catholic and Protestants to a primary disagreement in the manner of conceiving the Eucharist-1

A second genre in the field of Protestant-Catholic literary contact is exemplified by the work of L. Bouyer, *Spirit and Forms of Protestantism.* Here polemics are put aside, and the accent is placed upon the common spiritual heritage of Catholics and Protestants. The attempt is made to place in the best possible light the positions of non-Catholic brethren. One can justly name this literary genre, the " Concordances." [2]

A third distinct tendancy of the interconfessional dialogue is that of the "critical history." This genre of literature is characterized by the intuition that every religious community is a dynamic reality, the subject of development, based upon fundamental principles. In this regard the work of the seventeenth century Oratorian, Richard Simon (1638-1712), is remarkable. He was interested mainly in the reunion of the East and the West, and he saw clearly that much of the misunderstanding between Rome and the Eastern Dissidents was based on a lack of comprehension, rooted in tum in a centuries-long inde-

[1] Another author of this same period, Thomas Stapleton, had a remarkable insight in this same direction. In his *De principiis doctrinalibus fidei* (1579) and *Relectio principiorum fidei scholastica* (1596), he expressed the opinion that the lack of success of the interconfessional polemic was due to a concentration on particular problems and a negligence of general, fundamental questions. According to Stapleton these questions can be reduced to one: the authority of the Church. See M.-J. Le Guillou, 0. P., "Des controverses au dialogue oecumenique," *lstina,* 1958, no. 1 (January-March), p. 86.

• Le Guillou *(op.* cit.) notes that this type of work is more evident in the dialogue between Rome and the Eastern dissident Christians.

pendent development of doctrine and cult. He applied his principle to the relationship between Catholics and Protestants in his *Moiens de reunir les protestants avec l'Eglise romaine,*[8]

The work of J. A. Moehler [4] marks a definitive passage from the traditional opposition of thesis vs. thesis to a fourth genre. Moehler was convinced that it is necessary to go to the root of the affair and rediscover the leading idea of a given system, the intuitions which are at the base of all opposition.

It would not be a minor success, if one were able to concentrate upon the primary object of the debate, and to maintain the conviction that positive progress has been made when the persisting differences are situated upon their veritable terrain; for then the adversaries can meet one another with the seriousness and loyalty which are so necessary in the case of such a grave difference. This is the only way to collaborate in accomplishing the design which Providence had in permitting such a lamentable division.[5]

The limit of Moehler's contribution to the evolution of the ecumenical dialgue is the fact that he considered almost exclusively the " Confessions of Faith." In the preface to his *Konfessionskunde,* Konrad Algermissen [6] notes the necessity of taking into account other elements, especially the worship and spirituality of a given Christian community. One might add, regarding the Protestant communions, that the consideration of various theologians is especially important, since the " magisterium " of protestantism is virtually constituted by the tradition of theological interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures.

Finally, the phenomenon of the ecumenical movement outside the Catholic Church, a phenomenon of the twentieth century, has been paralelled by a new development in the interconfessional dialogue. On the basis of the recognition that each

[8] Cf. Le Guillou, *op. cit.,* p. 93.

• *Symbolik oder Darstellung der dogmatischen Gegensiitze der Katholiken und Protestanten nach ihren offentlichen Bekenntnisschriften,* Mainz, 183!'l. English translation by J. B. Robertson. New York: Benziger Bros., 1906.

• *Ibid.,* preface.

[6] *Konfessionskunde,* 7• vollstiindig neugearbeitete Auflage, Celie, Verlagsbuchhandlung Joseph Giese!, 1957.

Christian confession must be understood as a *whole,* and that, although the Protestant communities are rooted doctrinally in the sixteenth century, nevertheless, the present situation of protestantism has not the clearly defined characteristics of "formal heresy," Catholic theologians are engaging in a dialogue which may be called properly ecumenical. The attempt is being made to reinterpret the various Protestant confessions in relation to the ecumenical movement itself, and to present objectively the data in view of a discussion which, it is hoped, may ultimately result in a reintegration into the visible Mystical Body of Christ.

In this historical context, the present study of the theme of the " Interior Testimony of the Holy Spirit " is an extremely modest contribution. It is concerned with the Bible, and in that measure it is related to the first literary genre. We have already noted how St. Robert Bellarmine placed this treatise at the head of his *Disputationes.* No one needs to emphasize how fundamental this question is to the ecumenical dialogue. We must say at the outset, however, that this problem is going to be considered in its singularity, and that the criticism is to be made of the Calvinist doctrine at a theological level; for, after all, the only hope for a successful ecumenical dialogue is a sound theology-and in this respect the doctrine of St. Thomas has tremendous import in regard to ecumenical questions.

## PART ONE

## THE CLASSICAL AND MODERN CALVINIST POSITION

### SECTION 1: JoHN CALVIN

Since the limit of the one term of this comparative study is the thought of John Calvin, the first task is to determine the place occupied in his synthesis by the doctrine concerning the establishment of the divine authority of the Bible. Perhaps the easiest manner of making such a determination is to take a brief look at the way in which Calvin proceeds in his principal

and only really synthetic work, the *Institutes of the Christian Religion.*[7] The aim of Calvin in presenting his doctrine in this particular form was " to prepare and qualify students of theology for the reading of the divine word." [8] This statement is significant insofar as it gives an indication at the outset of the primary role which the Bible will take in the entire work. The whole purpose of theology, in the mind of Calvin, is to make the Scriptures better understood. In another place this purpose is stated in a broader fashion-" The design of the author in these Christian Institutes is twofold, relating, first, to the knowledge of God, as the way to attain a blessed immortality; and, in connection with and subservience to this, secondly, to the knowledge of ourselves "–[9] but the meaning is the same. The knowledge of God is the ultimate term of everything to be proposed in the *Institutes.* In this regard there is a remarkable coincidence between the method of Calvin and that of St. Thomas Aquinas in the *Summa Theologiae,* wherein the Angelic Doctor states: " The principal intention of this sacred doctrine is to deliver the knowledge of God." [10] Nevertheless, according to Calvin, such knowledge is to be obtained only by reading and understanding the divine word in the Sacred Scriptures.

The framework which Calvin uses to present this doctrine,

[7] " The first draft of the *Institutes* came from the pen of Calvin in 1534 or *1535,* but the work did not finally leave its author's hands in its definitive edition until a quarter of a century afterwards, in the late summer of *1559"* (from the literary history of *Institutes,* by Benjamin Warfield, which is placed at the beginning of the English translation of the work used herein. *Institutes of the Christian Religion,* transl. from the Latin and collated with author's last edition in French by John Allen (7th Amer. edition). Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, 1936 (2 vols.) . The translation from which citations will be made is based on that definitive revision of *1559.* Cf. *Corpus Reformatorum* (CR), Vol. xxx, *Institutio Christianae Religionis ... Joanne Calvina Autore, 1559,* ediderunt G. Baum, E. Cumitz, E. Reuss. Brunsvigae, apud C. A. Schwetschke et Filium, 1864. The same editors published, the following year, the definitive French translation of the *Institutes* (CR, xxxi) .

[8] *Inst.,* Author's Preface; vol. 1, p. 18 (CR, xxxi, 7-8).

• *Inst.,* General Syllabus; *op. cit.,* vol. I, p. 41.

[10] *Summa Theol.,* I, 1, Intro.

the elucidation of what pertains to God as contained in the Scriptures, is one familiar to Christian tradition.

> In the prosecution of this design, [the author] strictly follows the method of the Apostles' Creed, as being most familiar to all Christians. For as the Creed consists of four parts, the first relating to God the Father, the second to the Son, the third to the Holy Spirit, the fourth to the Church; so the Author distributes the whole of this work into four Books, corresponding respectively to the four parts of the Creed.[11]

In the execution of this plan, therefore, Calvin begins with the consideration of the knowledge of God as Creator, and it is in this first part of his work that the reflexive treatment of the Bible is contained. The direction of his thought may be summed up as follows: There are, it is true, various modes of coming to the knowledge of God. In the first place all men are endowed with an innate and instinctive knowledge of Him. Furthermore, the created universe mirrors the divine perfections in an intelligible fashion, so that men can also come to a knowledge of God in this second way. Due to the so-called noetic effects of original sin, however, it is impossible for men to profit either from the innate knowledge or that which is attained through the created universe. Therefore, it is necessary that God be known in a manner provided immediately by God Himself; and this is none other than the written word of God, the Sacred Scriptures. [12]

[11] *Loc. cit.* This methodology raises a question which does not pertain to this study, but which is, nevertheless, primary to the ecumenical dialogue: to what extent do the Christian communities that stem from the Reformation *use* the tradition of the Church?

[12] The first book is on the knowledge of God, considered as the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the universe at large, and of everything contained therein. It shows both the nature and tendency of the true knowledge of the Creator-that this is not learned in the schools, but that every man from his birth is self-taught it– yet that the depravity of men is so great as to corrupt and extinguish this knowledge, partly by ignorance, partly by wickedness; so that it neither leads him to glorify God as he ought, nor conducts him to the attainment of happiness. Though this internal knowledge is assisted by all the creatures around, which serve as a mirror to display the Divine perfections, yet man does not profit by it. *Therefore* to those, whom it is God's will to bring to an intimate and saving knowl-

It would be a mistake to suppose that Calvin did not consider the possibility and the fact that God has revealed Himself to man in a way other than by means of the written word. This latter mode, however, he restricts to a particular moment in the history of the world, viz., to the era of the patriarchs. In that period alone, he affirms, man was instructed by God in such a way that the minds of the patriarchs " were impressed with a firm assurance of the doctrine, so that they were persuaded and convinced that the information they had received came from God." [13] The matter stands differently now, however, because" at length, that the truth might remain in the world in a continual course of instruction to all ages, he determined that the same oracles which he had deposited with the patriarchs should be committed to public records," [14] In the present dispensation, therefore, it is impossible that " man have the least knowledge of true and sound doctrine, without having been a disciple of the Scripture." [15] This, it may be noted, is the first place in the *Institutes* where Calvin states what has since been designated the " formal principle " of the Reformation, *sola Scriptura.*

Beyond noting the mere fact of the establishment of this principle, however, one is constrained to ask why Calvin posited a revelation beside that knowledge of God which comes to us either spontaneously or by a consideration of His perfections in the mirror of creation. Evidently the word of God is conceived by him, in the first place, as remedial, insofar as the other modes of knowledge have proved to be fruitless. This interpretation is confirmed by the following passage:

> Though the light which presents itself to all eyes, both in heaven and in earth, is more than sufficient to deprive the ingratitude of men of every excuse, since God, in order to involve all mankind in the same guilt, sets before them all, without exception, an exhibition

edge of himself, *he gives his written word;* which introduces observations on the Sacred Scriptures--that he has therein revealed himself. *Ibid.*

[13] *Inst.,* I, 6, 2; *op. cit.,* vol. 1, p. 82 (CR, xxx, 54).

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] *Ibid.*

of his majesty, delineated in the creatures-yet we need another and better assistance, properly to direct us to the Creator of the world. Therefore he hath not unnecessarily added the light of his word, to make himself known unto salvation. . . . And it is not without cause that he preserves us in the pure knowledge of himself by the same means; for otherwise they who seem comparatively to stand firm, would soon fall. For, as persons who are old, or whose eyes are by any means become dim, if you show them the most beautiful book, though they perceive something written, but can scarcely read two words together, yet by the assistance of spectacles, will begin to read distinctly-so the Scripture, collecting in our minds the otherwise confused notion of Deity, dispels darkness, and gives us a clear view of the true God.[16]

Calvin notes a second reason for a special divine revelation.

I speak not yet [i.e., in the foregoing section] of the peculiar doctrine of faith which illuminated [the patriarchs] into the hope of eternal life. For to pass from death to life, they must have known God, not only as the Creator, but also as the *Redeemer;* as they certainly obtained both from his word.[17]

Thus Calvin perceives a two-fold necessity for God's speaking to man in a special way: first, because the human mind is clouded by sin and ignorance as to the true nature of the Creator so manifest in His creatures, i. e., to remedy the noetic effects of sin; second, because it is necessary for man to know things about God of which creation does not speak, namely, that God is a redeemer.

Although this section of the present study is rather expository than critical, a brief pause to consider the significance of these principles may be profitable, since the later critique will focus on the superstructure of this foundation rather than the foundation itself. The first noteworthy element in the development is that for Calvin, as for all the men of his time, man is still in touch with reality. Even though he harshly diminishes the ability of man to profit by knowledge gained through natural means (and *profit* in this context refers to salvation or a loving contact with the God who is known in Creation), still

[16] *Iwt.,* I, 6, 1; *op. cit.,* p. SO (CR, xxx, 53).
[17] *lnst.,* I, 6, 1; *op. cit.,* p. 81 (CR, xxx, 53).

he would not think of affirming that man's nature has been changed to the extent that he is completely shut off from God. It follows also that when God presents himself to man by special revelation in Scripture, the content of that revelation will in itself be tailored to the understanding of man, i. e., it will also be intelligible.

The second point to be noted from what Calvin says here about biblical revelation is that the total content of that part of revelation which is supernatural (i.e., above and beyond what can be known of God by natural means, especially if man be considered in his original state) is concerned with the mystery of the Redemption. This is the import of the passage in *Institutes* which states that for the patriarchs " to pass from death to life, they must have known God, not only as the Creator, but also as the Redeemer."

If it is a question of the deposit of divine revelation, i. e., of knowing where the divine oracles are preserved intact, we have seen Calvin's unqualified assertion that the Scriptures are the sole and unique mode. " It is *only* in the Scriptures that the Lord hath been pleased to preserve His truth in perpetual remembrance." [18]

From this assertion follows the pri:mary importance for Calvin's judging as to the divine origin of the Bible, taken as a whole. When man is confronted by this written witness, its real value to him depends on whether or not he can say with certainty, "This is God speaking to me." If he cannot make this certain judgment he is bereft of all profitable knowledge of God. To use Calvin's own words, "[The Sacred Scriptures] obtain the same complete credit and authority with believers *when they are satisfied of its divine origin,* as if they heard the very words pronounced by God Himself." [19] Otherwise man is condemned to remain in what is practically complete darkness.

Therefore, the question almost spontaneously arises-and Calvin places it himself-" Who can assure us that God is the

[18] *Inst.,* I, 7, I; *op. cit.,* vol. I, p. 85 (CR, xxx, 56).
[19] *Ibid.*

author of the Scriptures? "[20] With this simple question John Calvin recognizes the necessity of some criterion by which man judges of the divine origin of the Scriptures. That God is the author of the Bible (through inspiration), and, furthermore, that God speaks to man in the Bible, furnishing him with a rule for his faith (so that the word of God is said to be canonical or to possess canonicity): these are facts which will have a key position in all the doctrine which is to be discussed in the whole course of the *Institutes*, the purpose of which is to " prepare and qualify students of theology for the reading of the divine word." Man will come into contact with these objective facts through a judgment. "This is God's word, and it is directed to me in such a way as to be normative of my faith." To make this judgment man needs a foundation, a criterion, an assurance, as Calvin puts it. What will this assurance be?

In Calvin's time, even as now, the Catholic Church proposed certain definite ideas concerning the process involved in affirming the divine authorship of the Bible, " the sole saving source of divine revelation." Therefore, to establish his own doctrine, Calvin endeavors first of all to dispose of these notions, which he reputed as totally false and disruptive of true religion.[21]

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 86 (CR, xxx, 56).

[21] The supposition here is that the doctrine which Calvin is ultimately to defend as his own has its origin with him, that he inherits it from no one in the history of Christian thought. A Calvinist author of this century asserts as much. "Calvin had no predecessors in the formulation of the doctrine" (Warfield, *Calvin and Augwltine*, p. 116). The same author, however, is at pains to point out what he terms as certain " historical relations " between the system that Calvin is to adopt as his own and the thought of some earlier Christian writers, especially St. Augustine. St. Justin Martyr, St. John Chrysostom, and St. Hilary are cited as examples of a tendency to consider the interior illumination of the Holy Ghost as necessary for the accrediting of God's word *(ibid.)* . It is evident from an examination of the texts, however, that these writers were not concerned specifically with the question of a universal criterion by which the authority of God's written word might be established, but were speaking rather in a general sense of the role that the Holy Spirit plays in opening the mind of man to the understanding of the revelation of God. Since the thought of Augustine on this point must be considered explicitly and more in detail in a subsequent section, it does not seem relevant here to attempt to refute Warfield's assertion (p. 117).

Calvin's own understanding of this doctrine is thus formulated:

> It depends, [say they], on the determination of the Church to decide what reverence is due to the Sacred Scriptures, and what books are to be comprised in the canon.... The Sacred Scriptures have only so much weight as is conceded to them by the suffrages of the Church, as though the eternal and inviolable truth of God depended on the arbitrary will of men.[22]

To this last inference Calvin adds: "How will the impious ridicule our faith, and all men call it in question, if it be understood to possess only a precarious authority depending on the favour of men! "[23]

Calvin's refutation of the Catholic doctrine, as he has understood it, has a two-fold foundation. First he goes to the Bible itself, using a scriptural text to show that the Catholic position is not tenable. He strengthens this conclusion with testimony from that doctor of the Church for whom he had such a predeliction, St. Augustine. This latter argument is occasioned by the assumption on the part of some Catholic authors that the expressed testimony of St. Augustine is a sure witness to the finn foundation of the Catholic doctrine. The passage in question has been the center of much controversy since Calvin first fashioned his own doctrine.

The Scriptures themselves, Calvin affirms, gainsay the Catholic doctrine on judging the divine authority of the Bible.

> [It is] completely refuted even by one word of the Apostle. He testifies that the church is built " upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets" (Eph. fl: flO). If the doctrine of the prophets and apostles be the foundation of the Church, it must have been certain, antecedently to the existence of the Church. . . . If the Christian Church has from the beginning been founded on the writings of the prophets and the preaching of the apostles, wherever that doctrine is found, the approbation of it has certainly preceded the formation of the Church; since without it the Church had never existed.[24]

[22] *Loc. cit.*
[23] *Ibid.*
[24] *Inst.* I, 7, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 86 (CR, xxx, 57).

A paraphrase of Calvin's argument here could be stated in this way: To accord the Church the right to pass judgment on the divine authorship of Sacred Scripture is to reverse an order established by God, since the Church rather takes her origin from the Bible. The Church does not have the right to pronounce approbation upon the documents from which her very being is derived.

Realizing that the authority of St. Augustine was commonly brought forth to give strength to the Catholic tradition in this matter, Calvin next discusses the position of that author. The Latin doctor, as Calvin cites him, had made this statement: " **If** you were to come upon a person who does not yet believe the gospel, what would your reply be to his,' I do not believe'? Indeed, I myself would not believe the gospel, unless the authority of the Catholic Church compelled me to do so." [25] Having quoted the saintly Bishop of Hippo, he continues:

How falsely and unfairly this is cited in support of [the Catholic] notion, is easy to discover from the context. He was in that [place] contending with the Manichees, who wished to be credited, without any controversy, when they affirmed the truth to be on their side, but never proved it. Now, as they made the authority of the Gospel a pretext in order to establish the authority of the1r Manichaeus, he inquires what they would do if they met a man who did not believe the gospel; with what kind of persuasion they would convert him to their opinion. He afterwards adds: 'Indeed, I would not give credit to the gospel, etc.,' intending that he himself, *when an alien from the faith* could not be prevailed on to embrace the Gospel as the certain truth of God, till he was convinced by the authority of the Church. . . . Augustine, therefore, does not maintain that the faith of the pious is founded on the authority of the Church; nor does he mean that the certainty of the gospel depends on it; but simply that unbelievers would have no assurance of the truth of the Gospel, that would win them to Christ, unless they were influenced by the consent of the Church. [26]

According to Calvin, then, this passage from Augustine, adduced by the Catholics, is quite beside the point in the issue

[25] *Contra Epistolam Manichaei quam vocant Fundamenti* (ML 34, 177).

[26] *Inst.,* I, 7, 3; *op. cit.,* pp. 87-88 (CR, xxx, 57-58).

at hand. The Doctor of Grace is but affirming the Church's role in recommending the Gospel to an unbelieving world. This is to say nothing of its relation to a person in his acceptance of the Gospel (which represents the entire Scriptures) as the word of God. For such a one the Church ceases to function in this capacity, as Calvin is prepared to demonstrate.

The Reformer of Geneva has thus far been concerned with arguments that are negative, his endeavor being to show that the doctrine of the Catholic Church is without foundation. It is at once contrary to the word of God itself, and to the sentiment of a Father of the Church as renowned as St. Augustine. Now he turns to his own positive exposition of the criterion of certain judgment on biblical inspiration.

In order to be able readily to classify the criterion that Calvin upholds in the *Institutes,* as it appears from the very text, it will be helpful to note here that there are really only three generic possibilities. The triple element involved in the transmission of God's revelation by the written word are (1) God Himself, the inspired human author (with no delineation of the specific character of this inspiration), and (3) the term or result of the cooperation between God and the hagiographer, the inspired book. Now the criterion for the divine authority of this product of God and man (however their cooperation be conceived) will be some internal mark of the book, or, if that is not sufficient, a testimony exterior to the book, made either by God or by the human author. These two only are competent to testify to that which is, properly speaking, their own. Given the statements of Calvin in his positive defense of that which he deems as the correct choice, one should be able to place his thought in one of these categories.

The core of Calvin's doctrine in this regard is contained in a few brief statements, which occur in close sequence, thus confirming and explaining one another.

> The question, how shall we be persuaded of the divine original ... is just as if anyone should inquire, how shall we learn to distinguish light from darkness, white from black, sweet from bitter? For the

Scripture exhibits as clear evidence of its truth, as white and black things do of their colour, or sweet and bitter things of their taste[27]

In the section which follows almost immediately:

The principal proof, therefore, of the Scriptures is everywhere derived from the character of the divine Speaker .... Now if we wish to consult the true interest of our consciences; that they may not be unstable and wavering, the subjects of perpetual doubt .•. this persuasion must be sought from a higher source than human reason, or judgments, or conjectures-even from *the secret testimony of the Spirit.*[28]

Again,

I reply that *the testimony of the Spirit* is superior to all reason. For as God alone is witness of Himself in his own word, so also the word will never gain credit in the hearts of men, till it be confirmed by *the internal testimony of the Spirit.* It is necessary therefore that the Spirit, who spake by the mouths of the prophets, should penetrate into our hearts, to convince us that they faithfully delivered the oracles which were divinely entrusted to them.[29]

Just a little further on:

Let it be considered then as an undeniable truth, that they who have been *inwardly taught by the Spirit* feel an entire acquiescence in the Scriptures, and that ... it obtains the credit which it deserves with us by *the testimony of the Spirit.*[30]

Finally,

It is such a persuasion ... as requires no reasons ... in which ... the mind rests with greater security and constancy than in any reasons; it is ... such a sentiment as cannot be produced but by *a revelation from heaven.*[31]

Apparently led by a consideration of the first of these texts S. Zarb, O. P., was inclined to place the criterion affirmed there as internal to the Scriptures themselves. According to this author, Calvin "asserts that the Sacred Scriptures are made known by the very writings themselves. The Scriptures carry

[27] *Inst.,* I, 7, 2; *op. cit.,* p. 87 (CR, xxx, 57).
[28] I, 7, 4, p. 89 (CR, xxx, 58-59).
[29] *Ibid.,* p. 90 (CR, xxx, 59).
[30] I, 7, 5, p. 90 (CR, xxx, 60).
[31] *Ibid.,* p. 91 (CR, xxx, 60).

with them a sense of their truth no less clear than that which white objects or black have of their own color, and sweet and bitter foods of their taste." [32] Then he adds:

> Beyond this that doctrine is attributed to Calvin which asserts that Sacred Scripture is inspired not only passively but also actively, i. e., in so far as they breathe forth God. The reader of the divine Scriptures feels in his heart that he is reading the word of God. This testimony of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the faithful results in this, namely, that no one is deceived with regard to the books that are truly sacred and canonical.[33]

It must be granted that Calvin did lay great emphasis upon the power of the Scriptures to move the heart of the reader so that he is inclined at once to affirm the divine character of these writings. Yet, on this basis, to say that his ultimate criterion is internal to the Scriptures does not seem to square with the texts that follow in quick succession upon this first one. As a matter of fact the text to which Father Zarb refers, and which is reproduced at the head of the series of texts placed together, occurs in that section of chapter seven of the first books of the *Institutes* in which Calvin is dealing explicitly with the adversaries of his doctrine, and, in particular, the position of the Catholic Church. It is separated somewhat, therefore, in its context from the positive defense of what may be said to be proper to Calvin. To this it may be added that the entire next chapter in the *Institutes* is devoted to what Calvin styles as rational proofs to establish the belief of Scripture. The evidence here is that for Calvin all these internal marks result either in mere probable persuasion, viz., that these books be accepted as from God, or in a confirmation of a conviction already held. In concert with writers, Christian or not, of every era he recounts a number of such attributes: the loftiness of scriptural doctrine, the beauty of the literary style, antiquity, miracles and prophecies recounted and accomplished, and the resistance of the Sacred Scriptures to all possible forces of destruction.

[82] Zarb, S.M., 0. P., *Il Canone Biblico',* Rome: Angelicum, 1937, p. 42.
[88] *Ibid.*

The conclusion of this chapter, however, is that all of these, taken singly or conjointly, cannot meet the demands of a criterion that is ultimate and certain. In light of these considerations it is questionable whether or not the best expression of the genus of Calvin's criterion is to say that it is an internal character of the Scriptures.

What most clearly appears in this exposition of the doctrine of Calvin is his acute awareness of the necessity of a divine criterion to correspond to a divine fact. The sixteenth century Reformer was literally eaten up with the realization that before us in the Sacred Scriptures is the Word of God, in a proper sense; and he would insist on this point with just as much vehemence as those authors who are most loyal to the divinely transmitted Catholic doctrine of the inspiration of the biblical text. Therefore, the position of J. M. Voste, 0. P., namely, that the criterion, as Calvin conceives it, is properly the testimony of God Himself, i. e., a testimony *external* to the Bible-this position seems preferable to that of Father Zarb.[34]

This distinction, however, is not of such great importance as is the total import of the few but telling texts that can be gleaned from the *Institutes.* From these statements Calvin's doctrine may be epitomized in this wise: the exclusive, sufficient, universal and ultimate criterion on the basis of which a believer may affirm, " This book is the word of God," (meaning thereby that this book is part of the inspired canon of Sacred Scripture), is the inward testimony of the Spirit of God. To be sure, this testimony takes place concurrently with the reading of the sacred text; but it is, nonetheless, something really distinct from those qualities that are inherent in the text. Calvin's own summary of this line of thought is as follows: " The Scriptures will only be effectual to produce the saving knowledge of God, when the certainty of it shall be

•• Voste, J.-M., 0. P., *De Divina lnspiratione et Veritate Sacrae Scripturae* (editio 2•). Rome: Collegio Angelico, 1932, p. 28. "Calvinus ac plerique primaevi pseudo-reformatores docuerunt ipsum Spiritum Sanctum, Scripturae auctorem, inspirare lectores credentes, eisque non tantum sensum Scripturae adaperire, sed et indicare quidnam sit necne verbum Dei."

founded on the internal persuasion of the Holy Spirit." [35] He expresses this same thought in another way later, in the discussion of the exact nature of the inward testimony:

The Lord hath established a kind of mutual connection between the certainty of his word and of his Spirit; so that our minds are filled with a solid reverence for his word, when by the light of the Spirit we are enabled therein to behold the Divine countenance; and, on the other hand, without fear of mistake, we gladly receive the Spirit, when we recognize him in His image, that is, in the word.[36]

It appears from the order in which Calvin presents his doctrine of the inward testimony that, having rejected the Catholic doctrine (although it is necessary to suspend the judgment as to whether or not he has conceived this latter correctly), he is doing his best to steer a middle course between what might be termed naturalism on the one hand and illuminism on the other. Naturalism he excludes in this way:

It is true that, if we were inclined to argue the point, many things might be adduced which certainly evince, if there be any God in heaven, that he is the Author of the Law, and the Prophets, and the Gospel. ... Yet it is acting a preposterous part to endeavor to produce sound faith in the Scriptures by disputations .... Though anyone vindicates the sacred word of God from the aspersions of men, yet this will not fix in their hearts that assurance which is essential to true piety. [37]

Our author is just as loathe, however, to conceive of the necessary internal witness of the Spirit as a new revelation. In this sense he is clearly opposed to illuminism., a doctrinal current that was one of the first by-products of the Reformation, and which had already appeared at the time that Calvin was composing the *Institutes.* The entire ninth chapter of the first book is devoted to an exclusion of this error. The burden of this particular chapter is that there is, in the present economy of salvation, an intrinsic connection between the objective word

[35] *lnst.,* I, 8, 13; *op. cit.,* p. 104 (CR, xxx, 69).
[31] I, 9, 3; *op. cit.,* p. 108 (CR, xxx, 71).
[37] I, 7, 4; p. 89 (CR, xxx, 59).

of God in the Bible and the subjective illumination, if it may be termed as such, of the Holy Spirit. God only witnesses to His truth in the presence of the written word. The internal testimony of the Spirit of God is bound, as it were, to the divine revelation as it is comprised in the Sacred Scriptures. Later we shall have occasion to see how one modern interpreter of Calvin has modified his thought in this regard. For now it is enough to adduce this text of Calvin to illustrate the point:

> God did not publish his word to mankind for the sake of momentary ostentation, with a design to destroy or annul it immediately upon the advent of the Spirit; by whose agency He has dispensed his word, to complete his work by an efficacious confirmation of that word.[38]

Far from being an independent illumination, the testimony of the Spirit is a completion of the objective revelation in the Bible. Benjamin Warfield seems to have made a just estimate of the way that Calvin conceived the cooperation of the Scripture and the Testimony of the Spirit to produce a saving knowledge of God:

> Calvin's formula here is, the Word and the Spirit. Only in the conjunction of the two can an effective revelation be made to the sin-darkened mind of man. The Word supplies the objective factor; the Spirit the subjective factor; and only in the union of the objective and subjective factors is the result accomplished. The whole objective revelation of God lies, thus, in the Word. But the whole subjective capacitating for the reception of this revelation lies in the will of the Spirit. Either, by itself, is wholly ineffective to the result aimed at-the production of knowledge in the human mind. But when they unite, knowledge is not only rendered possible to man: it is rendered certain .... "By His Word and Spirit!"-therein is expressed already the fundamental formula of the Calvinistic doctrine of the " means of grace." In that doctrine the Spirit is not conceived as in the Word ... conveyed and applied wherever the Word goes: nor is the Word ... conceived as in the Spirit of revelation and truth. The two are severally contemplated, as separable factors, in the one work of God in producing the knowledge of Himself which is eternal life in the souls of His people;

[38] I, 9, 3; p. 108 (CR, xxx, 71).

separable factors which must both, however, be present if this knowledge of God is to be produced. It is the function of the Word to set before the soul the object to be believed; and it is the function of the Spirit to quicken in the soul belief in this object: and neither performs the work of the other or its own work apart from the other.[39]

A scholastic theologian might be inclined to inquire further into the psychology of the testimony of the Spirit, but it is impossible to seek in the text of Calvin an answer to such a question as, "How does the testimony of the Spirit affect each of the several faculties of man?" Neither is it necessary to make these precisions. It is certain that Calvin does not hold that the testimony is a new revelation in the sense that the illuminists would have it. The very nature of it, however, demands that the testimony be expressed in a proposition that is distinct from any proposition found in the Bible itself, namely, "This collection of Sacred Literature is truly and entirely and exclusively the Word of God." Evidently this is an act of faith, the nature of which demands that the mind and the will of man be involved, each in its own order, the will under the influence of a divine impetus moving the mind to assent to a truth, for which assent it is disposed by an illumination from God.

Calvin proceeded in an extremely orderly fashion in the exposition of this particular doctrine; so much so that it is easy to sum up the procedure in a more or less strict scholastic form.

1) He sets forth the Catholic doctrine.
   a) The Church determines the sacred canon.
   b) This determination has certain necessary consequences.
      aa) Objective: the eternal inviolable truth of God depends on the arbitrary will of man.
      bb) Subjective: our faith is based upon the favor of men.

[39] Warfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-84.

2) He refutes the Catholic doctrine thus conceived.

a) By an appeal to the Scriptures themselves. An institution whose origin is posterior to a document of divine origin, which, moreover, has its very existence from this document, is not competent to judge (or determine) the divine validity (authority) of this document. According to St. Paul the Sacred Scriptures antecede the Church and give her existence. Therefore, the Church lacks competence to determine the authority of the Scriptures.

As to the major: it is self-evident.

As to the minor: We are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone (Eph. 2: 20) .

b) By an appeal to the context of a passage of St. Augustine often used by Catholics to support their doctrine.

aa) The text of Augustine itself: " I myself would not believe the gospel unless the authority of the Catholic Church compelled me to do so."

bb) Calvin's interpretation: in the context Augustine speaks as an unbeliever, in whose eyes the Church is a powerful witness. The believer, however., has no need of such a witness.

8) He proposes his own doctrine, arguing by an analogy. The believer's faith in the divine authority of Sacred Scripture corresponds to the prophet's certitude regarding the divine oracles delivered to Him.

God alone (by the internal prophetic light) is witness of Himself in His own word to the prophet. Therefore, only God, by the "internal testimony of the Spirit," can furnish a sufficient, ultimate and universal criterion as to the divine authority of Sacred Scripture.

After having seen the place of this doctrine in the synthesis

of the *Institutes*, and also the actual presentation of the case for the testimony of the Spirit, it is possible to conclude this section with a judgment on the importance of the doctrine to the system of Calvin, and the Protestant position which he represents. Our own judgment, moreover, can very well be based upon the observation of E. Reuss, the nineteenth century Protestant theologian and historian.

> This theory of canonicity based on the interior Testimony of the Holy Spirit is not an isolated idea, an accidental concept, an expedient, a product of the imagination set forth for the needs of polemics. . . . On the contrary, it is related in a most intimate and natural manner to the fundamental theses of protestantism, to the dogmas of regeneration, justification, faith, and finally to that element so precious, namely, the *evangelical mystique.* [40]

What, precisely, is the intimate relation of which Reuss speaks; and above all, what is this " evangelical mystique " of which the doctrine of the Internal Testimony is an expression? Such questions are properly answered in the section of this study devoted to a criticism of this doctrine, but it seems to be evident at the outset that Reuss is speaking not of a material, but of a formal relationship, and that the evangelical mystique is the total expression of this form. This is to say that, contrary to the Protestant doctrine on the nature of regeneration, justification, and faith, Calvin's idea on the testimony of the Holy Spirit has a source other than the text of the Bible itself. Materially, therefore, they differ. The formal relationship, then, consists in this, that in every case the emphasis of Calvin and the Protestant school is upon the *immediate* contact of God and the soul of man. This immediate contact is apparently what Reuss chooses to call the " evangelical mystique," and if the term evangelical be used provisionally to designate this particular school of theology, the choice is apt. Now it is possible for us to see how the testimony of the Spirit, the prime analogue, as it were, of the evangelical mystique, has been translated into more modern contexts.

•• Reuss, E., *Histoire du Canon*, Second edition. Strasbourg: Truttel and Wurtz, 1863, p.

## SECTION 2: THE TESTIMONY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE REFORMED CONFESSIONS OF FAITH.

The burden of the present section is to show how the doctrine of Calvin on the interior testimony of the Holy Spirit has been received, expressed, expounded, and interpreted in that segment of Protestantism which is called the Reformed Church. The reason for excluding from the consideration the Lutheran tradition is simply that, in accord with the emphasis that the German Reformer placed upon the *content* of the Scriptures as the ultimate criterion of their divine character, his disciples have never wholeheartedly embraced Calvin's solution of the problem.

The first moment, so to speak, in the development of the thought of Calvin is merely its crystallization in the various Confessions of Faith which were framed in the early years of the Reformation, most of them during Calvin's own lifetime. As will be universally true even up to the present day, the doctrine of Testimony, as it may be found in these Confessions, is always imbedded in the presupposition that the Scriptures are the sole font of revelation. In the first place, therefore, let us see how that fundamental thesis appears in the various Confessions.

*The Catechism of the Church of Geneva* is a work that comes from the pen of Calvin himself, but we may consider it as an expression of the Faith of the Reformed Church insofar as it was used from the beginning, especially in Geneva itself, the heart of the Reformed movement, to instruct children in the faith of that Church. The work dates from the year 1541, two years later, therefore, than the first expression of the doctrine of Testimony in the *Institutes.* The Catechism expresses the unique character of the Scriptures in the following manner: " What is the means of coming to such a great good as the knowledge of the truth? To accomplish this, God has left us his holy Word, which is to us an entrance into the heavenly

kingdom. But where do you find this Word? As it is comprised in the Holy Scriptures." [41]

The statement as it appears in the Catechism is not as strong as the more ample explanation given in the *Institutes,* but the Confessions of Faith that were composed by Calvin's immediate followers reproduced the absolute quality with which he desired that the doctrine be expressed. Thus in Scotland, under the aegis of John Knox, the Protestants who gave their allegiance to Calvin affirmed that, " the doctrine taught in our churches is contained in the written word of God ... in those books, in the which we affirm that *all things necessary to be believed for the salvation of mankind is sufficiently expressed."* [42]

The Belgian Confession of Faith (1561), which seems *to* be the most orderly presentation of the Calvinist doctrine that was produced in that spring of the Reformation, is just as clear: " We believe that this Sacred Scripture *perfectly contains* the will of God and that *whatever is necessarily believed* by men in order to be saved *is sufficiently taught therein."* [43]

The disciplinary decrees, published in connection with the so-called Heidelberg Catechism (1563), indicate how this principle of *sola Scriptura* was translated into the life of worship of the Calvinist community of that time: "Since the [Word of God] is *fully contained* in the canonical books, all preaching ought to have them as its source and be founded thereon." [44] This is an inevitable practical conclusion of the principle, of course, and is of all the greater importance because of the place that the *Predigt,* the preaching of the Word of God, holds in the worship of the Calvinist community and indeed of the Protestant world as a whole.

[41] " Que! est le moyen de parvenir a un tel bien? Pour ce faire, il nous a laisse sa sainte Parole, laquelle nons est comme une entree en son Royaume celeste. OU prens tu cette Parole? Comme elle nous est comprise en saintes Ecritures," " Le Catechisme de l'Eglise de Geneve," Niese!, W., *Bekenntnisschriften urul Kirchenordnungen.* Zurich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1942, p. 34.

[42] " The Confession of Faith professit and belevit be the Protestantes within the Realme of Scotland," (1560), *Bekenntnisschiften,* pp. 102-104.

[43] " Ecclesiarum Belgicarum Christiana atque Orthodoxa Confessio," *Bekenntnisschriften,* p. 121.

[44] " Kirchenordnung der Kurpfalz," *Bekenntnisschriften,* p. 142.

One last witness may be adduced to complete the formation of the background upon which the early Calvinists expounded the doctrine of Testimony. It is a text which brings us back to Switzerland, the birthplace of the Calvinist movement, and it belongs to the Confession of Faith of the Swiss Church of 1566. The importance of this text lies in the fact that the Confession was to be adopted as the norm of the faith of the Calvinist Churches not only of Switzerland, but also of Poland and Hungary. In this latter country Calvinism was to blossom forth and gain many adherents, so that even to this day the Calvinist Church of Hungary is an important element in the Hungarian community. The text, moreover sums up in a trenchant way the affirmations of the previous formulae: "We believe and confess that the canonical Scriptures . . . are the true Word of God.... In these Holy Scriptures the universal Church of Christ has exposed [for herself] *whatever pertains to salvifio faith* and also that which pertains to the right formation of a life pleasing to God." [45]

None of these statements can be said to be a development of the doctrine of *sola Soriptura* as first affirmed by Calvin. Taken together, however, they do show the solidarity with which the Churches of the Reformed movement followed his lead in this regard. The same solidarity will be noted in the way in which the Confessions echo the thought of Calvin specifically on the doctrine of Interior Testimony.

Once again the Catechism of the Church of Geneva, written by Calvin, but adopted by the Reformed Church, is the most primitive text.

Are we able to attain true faith by ourselves, or does it come from God? The Scriptures teach us that it is a singular gift of the Holy Spirit, and experience shows the same thing. In what way? In so far as our understanding is too weak to comprehend the spiritual wisdom of God, who is revealed to us by Faith. Moreover, our hearts are inclined to diffidence, or, rather to a perverse confidence

[45] "Confessio et Expositio Simplex orthodoxae fidei et dogmatum Catholicorum syncerae religionis Christianae concorditer ab Ecclesiae Christi ministris, qui sunt in Helvetia, etc." *Benkenntnisschrijten,* p.

in ourselves and creatures. But *the Holy Spirit enlightens us.* to make us capable of understanding that which would otherwise be incomprehensible to us, and strengthens us in certitude, sealing and imprinting the promises of salvation in our hearts. [46]

This particular passage occurs in a context where the subject is the articles of faith in general. Later, in a section where the Catechism deals with sacraments, the same testimony is repeated in equivalent terms:

In what way can we use the Scriptures to draw profit from them? By receiving them with full certitude of conscience, as truth which has come from heaven, by submitting ourselves to them in strict obedience, by loving them with a true and whole-hearted affection, and by having them imprinted on our hearts to follow them and conform ourselves to them.

Is all of this in our own power? Not at all. It is God who works within us in this way *by His Holy Spirit.* [47]

Neither of these texts, however, is nearly so explicit as is that of the *Institutes.*

What the Catechism of Geneva may lack in clarity, or at least fullness, is more than supplied by the subsequent documents of early Calvinism. The Church of Scotland took a rather negative point of view in its summary of the question, however:

As we beleve and confesse the scripture of God sufficient to instruct and mak the man of God perfect: so do we affirme and avow the aucthoritie off the same to be of God and nother to depend of men nor Angelis. We affirme thairfore, that sicke, as alledge the scriptur to haif na authoritie but that quhilk it resaveth from the Kirk, to be blasphemous aganis God and iniurious to the trewe Kirk, quhilk alwayis heareth and obethe the voce of hir awin Spousse and Pastor, but taketh nocht upoun hir to be Maistre over the same. [48]

This passage corresponds to that section in the *Institutes* which removes from the Church the right to declare definitively con-

[46] *Bekenntnisschriften,* pp. 14-15.
[47] *Bekenntnisschriften,* p. 34.
[48] " Confession of Faith of 1560," *Bekenntnisschriften,* p. 104.

cerning the divine character of the Scriptures. There is not a word, however, concerning the testimony of the Spirit. May we understand from this that the Scotch Calvinists did not agree with John Calvin on this point, or was it a case of having the doctrine from another source? The latter is the more probable.

The "Confession de Foy Ecclesiastique," composed by the French Calvinists in 1559, and also the "Ecclesiarum Belgicarum Confessio" of 1561, have statements that do the doctrine of Interior Testimony more justice. The first of these is the less complex.

> We recognize these books as canonical and the certain rule of faith not so much by the common accord and consent of the Church as by the testimony and interior persuasion of the Holy Spirit, who makes us discern them from the other ecclesiastical books, upon which no article of faith can be established, even though they may be useful.[49]

The phrasing of this canon indicates that the men who framed it did accord the Church some function in the accrediting of the Scriptures, the definitive decision being that of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer. The Belgian Confession contains more elements, and it seems to be the richest source with regard to the Interior Testimony.

> We confess that the Word of God was neither given nor transmitted by the will of man; but that the holy men of God spoke, influenced by the Holy Spirit ... and that later God, because of the singular care which He has for us and for our salvation, commanded the Prophets and the Apostles to consign these, his oracles, to writing. . . . For this reason the writings are called the holy and divine scriptures.
>
> It is only these books that we accept as sacred and canonical so that we draw from them the rule of faith and learn and are strengthened upon them as upon a foundation. We believe without any doubt all that is contained therein, not so much because the Church receives and approves of them as such, but *in the first place because the Holy Spirit testifies in our hearts that they come from*

[49] *Bekenntnisschriften,* p. 67.

*God,* and because, moreover, they themselves bear His approval. For even the blind perceive, as if by touch, that the things that are pronounced therein do come to pass.[50]

In this short passage is contained a rather beautiful statement of the primitive Calvinist theory of divine revelation, a theory which gravitates toward the Interior Testimony of the Holy Spirit as toward the ultimate term of expression and the logical foundation. In the first place, the " holy men of God " receive the divine oracles. This would be revelation, properly so-called. Then the Prophets and the Apostles receive the mandate from God to put these oracles into writing; and in obeying this command they are *inspired,* so that the term of result of their labors is really the word of God Himself. Therefore, the written oracles may be looked upon as the rule of faith. Now in the establishment of this last moment in the sequence of events, namely divine faith in the written word of God, the same Holy Spirit who gave the " holy men the oracles," who inspired the Prophets and the Apostles so that they could transmit them faithfully, breathes within the faithful soul "testifying in our hearts that they come from God." Finally, the Holy Scriptures may be said to bear the divine credentials insofar as even the obtuse can see that what they have predicted has come true. This expression of the theory is faithful in its entirety to the principles laid down by Calvin. Especially noteworthy is the emphasis it places upon the necessity of divine credentials to verify or certify a divine reality, a necessity of which Calvin himself was acutely aware and which he found could only be solved by recourse to the immediate witness of the Holy

From these authentic sources of early Calvinism it appears how the formulation of this doctrine by Calvin himself was only confirmed by the various churches in Europe which answered his call to a return to a truly evangelical religion. They are unanimous in proclaiming the absolutely unique character of the Bible as a source of revelation, as a point of contact between God and man; and they are in substantial agreement

•• *Bekenntnisschriften,* pp. 120-121.

that the only valid means of certifying this contact is a divine activity which consists in a private and interior experience on the part of the Christian, by which he feels the Holy Spirit impelling him to accept the Word of God as such.

## SEcTION 8: THE TESTIMONY oF THE SPIRIT ACCORDING TO KARL BARTH.

When the doctrine of Interior Testimony first appeared in the sixteenth century, it was expressed in a context that one might term as classical. Although by comparison with Catholic doctrine, Calvin and the other Reformers exaggerated the effects of original sin upon human nature, still the Protestant system as it was then formulated was characterized by a relative optimism about the situation of man. In other words, according to Calvin once contact has been re-established between God and man by divine revelation, that contact will be continuous, particularly in the souls of the elect. From the moment their hearts have been sealed with the interior testimony and faith has been conceived these chosen ones are living in an atmosphere of which the divine is the very life breath. Thus for Calvin the work of the testimony of the Spirit and the operation of divine grace of which it is the foundation is meant to re-establish a harmony between God and man, the presupposition being that human nature, for all its corruption, remains essentially capable of being healed and raised to the level of permanent communication with God.[51]

To suppose, however, that this system, expressed as it is within the categories of what one writer has called the "philosophy of common sense," is on the only possible framework in which the doctrine of Interior Testimony can find a place would be an unwarranted judgment. As a matter of fact in these latter days one may find the doctrine in the writings of such a theologian as Karl Barth, whose departure from the classical

[51] We may note, however, that this permanent communication is far from being the life of grace as it is conceived according to Catholic theological principles, namely, an elevation to an order that is intrinsically and substantially supernatural.

categories is well recognized. For this reason, it is somewhat necessary, before showing how he has expressed the doctrine of Testimony, to recapitulate a few cardinal points of his system which have a direct bearing on this particular subject.

What then, according to Barth, is the present relationship between God and man, especially as regards contact which has an intelligible content? It may be summed up in this phrase, one that the present day Protestant theologian is fond of repeating: *Peccator non capax verbi divini.* This statement, moreover, must be taken in an absolute sense. This is to say that the privation of a capacity for receiving the word of God is a wound of human nature that cannot be remedied. It is a permanent state, one that will never be altered so long as man is living on earth. The early reformers, by the doctrine of the extrinsic imputation of the merits of Christ, had insisted that the *will* of man, even after justification, remains so perverse that it is impotent to accomplish any just work in the eyes of God. Barth goes a step further and affirms that the *intelligence* of man is subjected to a blindness in the face of divine truth that is of an equal degree in its own order. Both the intelligence and the will are radically incapable of having any contact whatsoever, even if it be purely passive, with the gift of God.[52] This means, of course, that the knowledge of God which is clearly spoken of by St. Paul in the Epistle to the Romans, as attainable from the creatures of this world which mirror His perfections, is not only fruitless (and this Calvin himself vigorously affirms), but even impossible. Whether it be directly due to original sin or not, understood in the traditional sense, the fact is that in the mind of Barth, God is utterly out of the reach of the human intelligence, and to affirm the contrary is a scandal to him as a theologian.

Yet Barth *speaks* of a knowledge of God; or, perhaps, better, he, precisely as a theologian, speaks of God. From this one

[52] A well documented summary of this part of the Barthian synthesis may be found in the work of Fr. J. Hamer, O. P., *Karl Barth,* Bruges: Desclee de Brouwer and Co., 1949. (Eng. transl. by D. M. Maruca, S. J. *Karl Barth.* Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1962). See especially pp. 48 ff.

might legitimately suppose that he has fashioned a way of escape, so to speak, from the impasse that seems to confront man in his search for divine truth and its verification. This passage-way is the Barthian doctrine of the Word of God, a term which has its own proper signification (as do others in the system of the Swiss theologian). For Barth the Word of God or revelation has a meaning that is in no way derived from the thought of his remote progenitor in the Protestant movement, John Calvin. Barth's doctrine in this respect may be summed up in the following propositions: 1) The Word of God is fundamentally identical with the divine substance. 2) The activity of the Word of God depends entirely upon the divine free choice. 3) In relation to man this activity is an intermittent event, having nothing permanent about it. 4) The event which is the result of this activity remains opaque to the man with whom God chooses to come into contact, so that there is no direct and certain knowledge of it.[53]

It is upon such a background that Karl Barth affirms, in no less uncertain terms than did John Calvin and his faithful disciples, that the Holy Scriptures are the sole font of divine revelation. Here Barth represents a radical reaction to the liberal rationalism of the nineteenth century, wherein the contact between God and man is no more than the extension of a psychological experience. For him, as for other Protestants of the present day who are re-examining the foundation of their position, the Bible must be accepted as a norm outside the spirit of man. In this return these present day theologians, true to the Protestant tradition, make the Bible, moreover, the umque norm.

For all this fidelity to the Protestant position in this narrow sphere, however, the doctrine of Barth even regarding the Scriptures must be qualified carefully. The modifications stem, of course, from what he has established as the character of the Word of God, in its generic sense. In the first place the genesis of the Scripture will have a specifically Barthian character. If

[53] See Hamer, *op. cit.*, pp. 168 II.

the Word of God is essentially an event that is imperceptible to the man who is its object (one can scarcely speak of man as the *subject* of a Word that has no permanency about it), it will follow that Inspiration of the Bible, a doctrine so well developed in the Calvinist system, will be correspondingly elusive. Indeed, if one may speak of Inspiration of the Scriptures at all, it will only be insofar as at the moment of the production of the Sacred Text the hagiographer is possessed by the Divine Substance, manifesting Himself in a transient manner and in such a way that once that experience is a thing of the past, the result of the labor of the human author remains nothing but *his* work. Intrinsically, therefore, the Bible has nothing divine about it: it is merely a sign of an event of the past, and so it is necessary that once again it *become* the Word of God.

> [The Bible] is there and always there as a sign, as a human and temporal word-and therefore also as a word which is conditioned and limited. It witnesses to God's revelation, but that does not mean that God's revelation is now before us in any kind of divine revealedness. . . . The men whom we hear as witnesses speak as fallible, erring men like ourselves. What they say, and what we read as their word, can of itself lay claim to be the Word of God, but never sustain that claim. It can be subjected to all kinds of immanent criticism, not only in respect of its philosophical, historical and ethical content, but even of its religious and theological. ... We may have to admit that we can make little or nothing of large tracts of the Bible, as is often the case with the records of other men. We can take offence at the Bible. And in the light of the claim or the assertion that the Bible is the Word of God-*granting that the miracle of faith and the Word does not intervene* -we are bound to take offence at it.[54]

This *becoming* of the Word of God, here and now, through the medium of the reading of the Scriptures is exactly the place where Karl Barth makes use of the Calvinist doctrine of the Interior Testimony of the Holy Spirit. It is evident that, given the nature of the Bible as he has described it-and the fallible character that follows from it-Barth will have to posit some

[54] Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (Eng. transl. edited by G. W. Bromley and T. F. Torrance), Edinborgh: T. T. Clark, I, 2, p. 507.

force by which the Christian of the present day will be able to profit from the reading of this human word. That force is the Interior Testimony; and in this Calvinist doctrine, Barth, having departed from Calvin right from the beginning of this own synthesis, appears to meet the thought of the early Reformer in this fundamental thesis.

Reconstructing the process by which Barth affirms the Scriptures are accredited, however, is not quite so simple as this. Calvin had to take into account the existence of a visible Church, and so does any present day theologian. For this reason, it is possible to distinguish in the thought of Barth at least three different types of judgments with regard to the certification of the Scriptures.

In the first place, Barth will say that the Bible needs no criterion whatsoever, that it stands by itself. "The Bible is constituted by itself as a Canon. It is the Canon because it imposes itself forcibly as such upon the Church and will always do so." [55]

This statement must be understood, however, in the light of the whole Barthian system. Barth will actually go on to discuss the criterion for establishing the divine character of the Bible, at least in the moment in which it appears as such. Therefore, it seems that there he is merely emphasizing the absolute freedom of the Word of God in its communication to man, namely, that it cannot be brought down from heaven but rather comes as the result of a supemely free divine choice. That choice cannot be prejudged; it has no criterion. It follows, therefore, that the result of the activity stemming from this choice, also is free from all exterior judgments.

Karl Barth is well aware, however, of the existence of a Church, and thus he is constrained also to attribute to her some role in the accrediting of the Scriptures. To begin with he affirms that,

whatever [the individual's] private judgment may be, even his private judgment of faith, however much it may diverge, he must

•• See Hamer, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

always listen to the Church. . . . The so far unaltered judgment of the Church radically precedes as such the judgment of the individual, even if it is the judgment of quite a number of individuals who have to be reckoned with seriously in the Church.[56]

Taken by itself this statement seems to be a departure from the Protestant and Calvinist conception of the place of the Church in the economy of salvation. Indeed, it is evident that Barth is acutely aware that the visible Church has an integral part in God's plan for man; but one should be guilty of self-deception to conclude that this is a return to the traditional Catholic way of thinking. In a passage which follows a few paragraphs after that cited above Barth says:

The Church can ... regard and proclaim its decision [with regard to the Scriptures] as a direction-an indication seriously meant and therefore to be taken seriously. If it is not to call in question the lordship of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit, and therefore revelation and its own being-it cannot regard and proclaim it as a divine law. In respect of the Canon, it will always be open to further instruction.[57]

This is a remarkable expression of the thought once formulated by Calvin himself, insofar as each author considers that the relationship between the Word of God and the Church is that which exists between a cause and an effect. Calvin, it will be remembered, argued to this from the text of St. Paul: " You are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and the prophets." Here Karl Barth states that the Church is " constituted " by the revelation of God. Of course, it is not possible to conclude that the minds of these two Protestants leaders, one of the sixteenth century and one of the present day, are expressing the very same thought; because each of them presupposes a definite concept of the Word of God. Thus there is some equivocation involved, but it is an equivocation that is susceptible in some respects of a common criticism.

If Calvin and Barth coincide materially in their judgment with regard to the relation of the Church and the Word of God,

[56] *Op. cit.,* p. 480. [57] *Ibid.*

the similar mode of expression is even more striking when it comes to stating definitely how the Christian is to share in the revelation that God offers to man. In recapitulating Barth's thought, as it is contained in his *Dogmatics*, it may be useful to distinguish his general affirmation, which foreshadows in some way his approval of the doctrine of Interior Testimony, and his specific adoption of the doctrine of the *Institutes.* Texts of the first genus might be multiplied, but the following will suffice to indicate the direction of this thought:

> The Bible is God's Word so far as God lets it be His Word, so far as God speaks through it. [We cannot] abstract from God's free act in which and through which here and now He lets it be true in us and for us, that man's word in the Bible is His own Word.[58]

Also," the Lord who gives the Word is also the Lord who gives faith. The Lord of our listening, the Lord who gives faith, the Lord through whose act the openness and readiness of man for the Word is true and real-is not another God but the one God in this way-and *that* is the Holy Spirit." [59] For Barth then there are two moments in the transmission of the Word of God. Here, again, he agrees materially with Calvin. The first of these is the occasion when the word is first given by God to the prophet, leaving aside the manner in which he himself is able to receive that word. This event is traditionally given the name, biblical inspiration. The second moment is that in which the believer is confronted here and now with that word in its written form, the moment in which that word is rejected as such or else faith is conceived.

In this respect Barth sees himself as returning to the authentic expression of the primitive Reformation. In his mind this return is necessary because of the apostasy especially of the nineteenth century neo-protestants, such as Schleiermacher, who reduced religion to mere sentiment and did away with the necessity for the Bible as the sole means of coming to the knowledge of God. Here it will be helpful to quote him somewhat at length:

[58] *Church Dogmatics,* I, 1, p. l!'l3.

[59] *Ibid.,* p. !'lOS.

The Reformers restored the context in which the inspiration of the Bible must be understood on the other side as well. As Luther insisted in innumberable passages the word of Scripture given by the Spirit can be recognised as God's Word only because the work of the Spirit which has taken place in it takes place again and goes a step further, i. e., becomes an event for its hearers or readers. . . . And it was on the same point that Calvin expressed himself so vigorously. As he worked it out in *Instit.* I, 7, 4 and the *Commentary on 2 Tim. 3:16* (CR, 52, 383), his view was this. There exists an exact correspondence between the certainty with which the word of the apostles and prophets was the Word of God in itself, or for them, and the certainty with which it as such illumines us. In both cases only God can bear witness to God: *Deus solus de se idoneus est testisin suo sermone,* first, and then in *hominum cordibus.* And in both cases the God who attests Himself is the Spirit: no one else, but the same Spirit; *idem ergo Spiritus, qui per os prophetarum loquutus est, in corde nostro penetret necesse est.* In the very same power in which the Word of God dwells in the human word of the biblical writers and goes out from it, it must come to us, i. e., must be known and received by us as the Word of God, so that we see that God has used the prophets to teach us *(eorum se ministerio usum esse ad nos docendum)* and they faithfully transmitted, what was commanded them *(fideliter protulisse quod divinitus erat mandatum).* That is how the concept of inspiration begins and ends on this side. We cannot speak of the inspiration of the Bible without that royal act of the original inspiration in which the risen Christ gave His own a part in His own divine Spirit. But no more can we speak of it without that other royal act-which is only a continuation of the first-in which the inspiration is imparted to us, in which here and now we are forced out of our position as spectators of the word and work of the biblical writers, in which the calling of the prophets and apostles becomes an event to us by the ministry of their word and work.[60]

For the most part this text speaks for itself and needs no comment. It may be helpful, however, to point out two salient features of Barth's use here of the doctrine of Interior Testimony. First of aU, it is characterized by that acute realization, which is his heritage from the most authentic expressions of Calvinistic Protestantism, that there must be a perfect corre-

[60] *Church Dogmatics,* I, 2, pp. 521-522.

spondence between the divine activity which is productive of the written word of God and the recognition of that word as such, so that this recognition must be founded also on a divine witness. We are reminded not only of Calvin's own insistence upon this point, but also of the development of the argument by the theologians of this school of the seventeenth century. The second mark of this text, which serves to distinguish Barth's thought somewhat from the previous expressions of the doctrine (even aside from the obvious insertion of it in a synthesis that is distinct from that of Calvin himself) , is the manner in which Barth makes the recognition of the word of God by the reader a function of inspiration, " so that we take part essentially in the vocation of the prophets and the apostles."

After having followed to its ultimate term Karl Barth's doctrine of the transmission and recognition of the word of God, it is possible to summarize briefly his line of thought in this regard. Barth begins his whole treatment of the question by assuming that God is, so to speak, *totaliter aliter*. To the fallen rational creature He is *entirely* unintelligible. Nevertheless, this seemingly infinite chasm is bridged by the Word of God, God revealing himself, in a manner, however, that leaves Him quite opaque to the human intelligence. This divine activity might be called an *illapsus divinus* that is momentary and wholly dependent on the free divine choice, and, moreover, beyond the grasp of man. In the present economy of salvation the condition of this activity on God's part is the Bible. It is only by this means that the Word of God leaps from his throne on high. The Bible, since it is the product of an entirely free divine choice, stands by its own self, though it is received and approved by the visible Church, of which it is the very foundation and canon. In the final analysis the Bible itself can only become the Word of God, here and now, if God once again chooses to make it the *occasion* (and this is the word aptly chosen by Fr. J. Hamer to characterize the whole Barthian

system with regard to divine revelation) of this revelation to men who are existing today.[61]

Barth speaks for himself in this summary fashion:

> The Bible must be known as the Word of *God* if it is to be *known* as the Word of God. The doctrine of Holy Scripture in the Evangelical Church is that this logical circle is the circle of self-asserting, self-attesting truth into which it is equally impossible to enter as it is to emerge from it: the circle of our freedom which as such is also the circle of our captivity .... Unfortunately, Calvin found many later imitators in the enumeration and development of [the] secondary grounds, but not in his definitely expressed perception of the abysmal difference of these grounds from the one primary and real ground. The *testimonium Spiritus sancti internum,* on which alone he and the Reformation as a whole based faith in the Bible as the Word of God, at a later date gradually but irresistibly became one ground with others, and the other grounds gained an interest and acquired an importance as though they were, after all, autonomous. . . . When we say ' by the Holy Spirit ' we mean, by God in the free and gracious act of His turning to us. When we say ' by the Holy Spirit ' we say that in the doctrine of Holy Scripture we are content to give the glory to God and not to ourselves.[62]

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*(to be continued)*

[61] Fr. L. Bouyer, in his recent book paraphrases Barth in this fashion: "The Word is not primarily, still less exclusively, *what* is said, thoughts which are communicated to us, but the living act by which God comes to us in person." *(Spirit and Forms of Protestantism,* Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1956, p. 127). In light of this just statement of the Barthian doctrine of the Interior Testimony it is difficult to see how Fr. Bouyer can criticize Fr. Hamer for "his complete lack of sympathy for this magnificent doctrine " *(ibid.)*. It is one thing to appreciate the intention which an author has in striking out on a given course and another to agree with him in the road he takes to achieve that objective. In this regard it seems that Fr. Bouyer concedes too much to the doctrine of the Swiss theologian.

[62] *Loc.* cit., pp. 585-587 *(passim).*

# THE PROBLEM OF SPECULATIVE THEOLOGY

## PART ONE

## THE POSSIBILITY AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SPECULATIVE THEOLOGY

SOME MINDS have always seen a fundamental opposition between "life" and the pursuit of knowledge. In the history of Christian thought, the antipathy for speculation has sometimes been expressed in strong terms; one finds a classic example in *The Imitation of Christ.* At worst, there appears to be a conflict between opposed demands; at best, a tension. When the question of the nature of theology arises, it is not surprising to see that it becomes the focal point of dispute and tension. This was especially evident in the thirteenth century. Again in our own time, this paradoxical problem has emerged as a subject which demands close attention and re-examination, for the antithesis between life and knowledge is affirmed with vigor by many modern thinkers. The importance and timeliness of examining the question of speculative theology is therefore evident.

### 1. *The Theory of the Subalternation of Sciences as Applied to Theology*

The likeness of theology to *scientia Dei et beatorum* is, in Thomistic thought, the fundamental reason for the speculative character of theology and for its contemplative end. By speaking of an impression of divine science in the theologian, St. Thomas indicates that there is a relationship of continuity and dependence.[1] The epistemological theory used in his later works to explain this is the subalternation of sciences. It is his application of this theory to theology which we shall first examine.

Speaking of sciences which are humanly transmitted, St. Thomas says that some of them must suppose their principles

[1] Cfr. Cajetan, In I, 1, 4 n. 5.

from superior sciences. This is the case with subalternated sciences, which supposed and believe from superior and subalternating sciences certain things which are not known *per se,* except in the superior sciences. Applying this to theology, he says that the articles of faith, which are the principles of this science, are related to the divine knowledge in such a way that those things known *per se* in God's knowledge are supposed in our science. In fact, we believe that which is indicated to us by His messengers, as the physician believes the physicist that there are four elements.[2] An extraordinary case, surely; nevertheless, the subalternation of our theology is comparable to that of other sciences. The role of faith is that of binding or joining our theology to the divine knowledge, which is its source. Theology as a subalternated science is only possible because of illuminating faith, which is its proximate principle and which effects the continuation of theology to its first source and bestows upon this science its dynamism to its last end.[3]

However, certain difficulties are attached to the application of the subalternation theory to theology. The well known and classic dispute to which these difficulties have given rise has been revived in our own time. We shall examine the difficulties here, for the answer which we think to be St. Thomas' own opens the way to the solution of the immediate problem-the problem of the possibility of a speculative theology.

The notion of subalternation of sciences occurs in the *Posterior Analytics* of Aristotle.[4] We shall briefly consider St. Thomas' commentary on this passage, for he gives here a purely philosophical interpretation of the theory, explaining it according to its original meaning. He distinguishes two ways in which a science may be understood to be under another. This occurs in one way, when the subject of one science is a species of the subject of a superior science, as, for example, animal is a species of natural body-and thus the science of animals is under natural science. It happens in another way, when the subject

• *In Boet. de Trin.,* q. a. ad 5 (Decker, p. 89).
[3] *Ibid.,* q. a. ad 7 (Decker, pp. 89-90).
'Book I, c. 7 (75 b. 14); c. (87 a.

of the inferior science is not a species of the subject of the superior science, but rather is compared to it as the material to the formal. An example of this is the subalternation of perspectives to geometry. Whereas geometry is about lines simply, perspectives is about visual lines, and thus it is under geometry by the application of what is formal to what is material. [5] In another passage in the same commentary, St. Thomas adds that one science (the inferior) in such a relationship uses *quia* demonstrations, whereas the other (the superior) uses *propter quid* demonstrations. [6]

In this purely philosophical work, therefore, St. Thomas admits two kinds of subalternation, both of which involve a distinction of subject. In the first case, the distinction between the subjects is as that between a species and the genus under which it is contained. In the second case, it occurs by reason of the addition of sensible matter. In both cases, consequent upon the distinction of subjects in the two related sciences, there is a difference of method.

An attempt to apply this conception of subalternation of sciences, as St. Thomas explains it in a philosophical context, to his teaching concerning theology as it is related to the science of God and of the Blessed, immediately reveals that this case of subalternation is extraordinary. He clearly teaches that God is the subject of our theology. He maintains that theology seeks primarily to know the divine essence, and to study other things, including human actions, insofar as they are related to the divine essence. St. Thomas does not, therefore, admit a distinction of subject in this case of subalternation. It is true that our theology is only a finite and dim reflection of *scientia Dei et beatorum,* but the theologian, enlightened by faith, seeks a knowledge of the *same* reality which is the object of God's knowledge. Moreover, one could hardly apply the distinction in " method," as if there were in *scientia divina* a use of *propter quid* demonstrations.

The subalternation of theology, therefore, does not follow the

[6] *In Post. Anal.,* lib. 1, lect. n. • *Ibid.,* lib. 1, lect. n. 6.

usual pattern. Since there is not, properly speaking, a distinction of subject, it is not " outside" the subalternating science, as the science of perspectives is in regard to geometry, or music in regard to arithmetic. What it does have in common with these " normal " cases, is that it proceeds from principles established by the light of a higher science-that is, there is the *dependence* which is characteristic of a subalternated science. On the other hand, our theology does not have the *autonomy* or independence which in a certain respect other subalternated sciences have, because of the fact that they have a new epistemological object. [7]

This lack of autonomy which sets apart the unique case of theology is very significant. In other cases of subalternation, the one who has the inferior science need not be curious about the superior science. He is not concerned with the same subject. In theology, on the other hand, there arises from its relationship of subalternation-from its non-autonomous nature-a dynamism to go beyond itself. We shall examine the implications of this richly suggestive conception further on. The question with which we are concerned here is the following: In view of the unique condition of theology, is it enough, simply on the basis that it receives its principles from the science of God and the blessed, to justify maintaining that it is truly a subalternated science?

Cajetan states that subalternating sciences proceed from principles which are known *per se*, whereas subalternated sciences proceed from principles which are not known *per se*, but by the light of a superior science.[8] The essential difference is that in the former the conclusions are " visible " from and in the principles immediately, that is, without any mediate habit, whereas in the latter the conclusions are seen from and in principles which are known mediately, that is, by means of the subalternating scientific habit. All the other conditions,

[7] Cfr. M-D Chenu, O. P. *La theologie comme science au XIII• siecle* (Paris: Vrin, 1957), pp. 80-85.

[8] In I, 1, 2, n. 2.

Cajetan says, are merely consequent upon this, making such and such a kind of subalternation, not subalternation as such. Elaborating further, he points out that it is true of every science that its conclusions are visible "in another." In the case of a subalternated science, its scientific status depends upon continuation or continuability to the superior science. Its habit of proximate principles is the subalternatng scientific habit. Moreover, the two sciences are not necessarily opposed on the part of the object, or on the part of the subject; in fact, they can exist together in the same subject.[9] Cajetan concludes in his commentary that the text in the *Summa Theologiae* intends subalternation *simply:* our theology is imperfectly but simply subalternated.[10]

This explanation differs from the Aristotelian theory, as interpreted by St. Thomas himself. The meaning of the term has changed, for subalternation of subject is no longer essential. All that is essential is that the conclusions of the inferior science be " visible " in principles known *per se* only by means of a higher scientific habit. His interpretation of the text, to mean that theology is simply subalternated, assumes that a distinction of subjects is accidental to subalternation. For this reason, Cajetan's solution does not seem to be altogether satisfactory.

John of St. Thomas, in the first part of his *Cursus Theologicus,* says that in theology there is found essential subalternation, which is on the part of the principles. He adds that there is no subalternation on the part of the subject and according to those accidental conditions which are not always required. Like Cajetan, therefore, he makes subalternation of subject non-essential. Our theology fulfills the essential condition, since its principles are known by the light of the science of God and the blessed. He says that it is the manifestation *(notificatio)* of these principles, not their revelation through faith, which St. Thomas reduces to the superior science. Explaining this, he says that if St. Thomas were speaking of the revelation of faith, he would not reduce the manifestation of our principles to the

[9] *Ibid.,* n. 3. [10] *Ibid.,* n. 10.

science of the blessed, since the manifestation of our faith is not made to us by the blessed, but by God.[11]

The interpretation of John of St. Thomas gives much insight. In stressing so clearly the basic dependence of theology for its knowledge of its principles, he puts into clear outline the non-autonomous status of our theology. Like Cajetan, however, he seems to depart from the Aristotelian conception of subalternation.

St. Thomas, it is clear, considers the subalternation of theology to be unique. It seems reasonable and consistent with his thought to admit that this is in fact a case which is *analogous* to the subalternation of other sciences, for not all of the conditions are present. Like other subalternated sciences, theology depends upon the superior science for its principles; unlike them, it does not have a distinct subject. To cover this situation, St. Thomas uses the expression " quasi-subalternata." He explains that one science can be under another in two ways: (1) by reason of the subject; (2) by reason of the mode of knowing. In the second way theology is under the science of God, for we know only imperfectly that which God knows most perfectly. Moreover, just as a subalternated science supposes something from a superior and proceeds through that as through principles, so theology supposes the articles of faith which are infallibly " proved " in the science of God. It believes these, and proceeds to prove those things which follow from the articles. St. Thomas concludes that theology is " *quam-subalternated"* to the divine science.[12] That is the term "subalternated" when used to describe theology is not to be taken in a strictly univocal sense.

The imperfect subalternation of theology is indicative of the excellence of this knowledge. It is true that theology is imperfect as science, insofar as it lacks the autonomy which is

[11] *Cursus Theologicus,* In I Partem, q. 1, disp. a. 5, n. 5: Solesmes ed., T. 1, p. 868.

[12] *In I Sent.,* Prol., q. 1, art. 8, sol. This passage is found in the Prologue of the *Commentary on the Sentences* in the Mandonnet edition, but probably belongs to the later writings.

usual even for a subalternated science. Yet, paradoxically, it is more perfectly contemplative than philosophy, for the following reason: the consideration of speculative sciences is a certain participation of true and perfect beatitude, which consists in the vision of God. Our theology of its very nature is ordered to this same vision. By reason of its lack of autonomy-of its lack of a distinct subject-it has a tendency to "over-reach" itself, to seek the vision which it can never attain in this life. For this reason, it participates in this fulfillment, which is the Beatific Vision, more fully than does any other speculative science. In this sense, it is more perfectly contemplative than philosophical wisdom.

### Q. *Subalternation and Positive Knowledge of the Divine Essence*

The doctrine of theology as a subalternated science is fundamentally incompatible with a negative conception of theology which denies that we can in this life participate in God's understanding of Himself. This is the position of Bernard Lonergan, S. J., who holds that any understanding we do attain is negative, that is, a refutation of objections or a grasp of the absence of inner contradiction. Fr. Lonergan maintains that although we do not understand God in any positive fashion, we can understand revealed truth in a positive way.[13] Opposed to this idea is the fact that the act of the believer does not terminate in the enunciable, but in *reality.* We form enunciables only in order that through them we may have knowledge of *things:* this is true both in science and in matters of faith.[14] In this perspective, it is inconceivable that we attain a positive understanding of the articles of faith but no positive understanding of God.

In order to support his position, Fr. Lonergan appeals to the idea of a subalternated science. He says that although the subject of theology is God, theological understanding is not of

[13] " Theology and Understanding," *Gregorianmn 35* (1954) pp. 630-648.
[14] II-II, 1, 2, ad fl.

God Himself, for then the science would not be subalternated but subalternating. [15] What he seems to be doing is applying the notion of subalternation in the strict sense, so as to require a distinct epistemological object for the subalternated science. However, as we have seen, St. Thomas himself does not force the issue of subalternation in the strict sense. Rather, he says that a science can be under another in two ways: (1) by reason of its subject; (2) by reason of its mode of knowing. Theology is under the science of God in the second way, and thus we know that which God knows, by a finite and imperfect participation of His knowledge.

For St. Thomas, therefere, the situation is quite the opposite of what Fr. Lonergan would have it to be.[16] In fact by the use of the theory of subalternation he explains that theology does attain God. In order to grasp this it must be understood that subalternation is not applied univocally to theology. This is a case of the *analogous* application of a term. If one lacks an awareness of the importance of analogy (we might call this awareness a "sense of analogy," for it is somewhat intuitive), there is always a strong possibility of misinterpretation both of the letter and of the spirit of Thomistic writings.

### 8. *The Subalternation of Theology and "Conclusionstheologie."*

The conception of theology as a subalternated science, if properly understood, is totally incompatible with the *Conclusionstheologie* which J. Beumer, S. J. sees as an evil of Thomism. Fr. Beumer thinks that the result of the application of the subalternation theory to theology is a dissociation of the science of conclusions from the understanding of principles. He sees this as a turning away from the Augustinian tradition. [17]

[15] *Op. cit.,* p. 635.

[16] In support of his position, Fr. Lonergan cites the wellknown passages f1·om II-II, q. 8, a. 2 and a. 7. These articles deal with the gift of understanding; it seems a questionable method, to apply these passages out of context to the case of theology itself.

[17] "Thomas van Aquin zum Wesen der Theologie," *Scholastik* 30 (1955), pp. 195-214.

However, there are two basic points of St. Thomas' doctrine which are clearly opposed to a *Conclusionstheologie,* that is, to a theology concerned only with deducing conclusions.

First: The role of reasoning is not merely to proceed from principles and then leave them behind in the process of drawing conclusions. Rather, *intellec.tus* itself is also the term of the reasoning process. There is an *exitus* and a *reditus,* in which reasoning leads to a greater understanding of principles. This basic idea is often repeated and emphasized.[18] Moreover, it is especially the case with divine science (natural or revealed) that it proceeds in this way.[19] First philosophy and theology tend, more than other sciences do, to understanding.

Second: There is a close connection between theology's tendency to understanding, to *intellectus fidei,* and the subalternation of theology. Faith is merely the *proximate* principle of theology, and faith is in us in order that we will come to understand what we believe. The reasoning process in theology is ordered to an understanding of its principles, the articles of faith, which have their evidence in the science of God and the blessed. It follows that theology, in seeking to penetrate its principles, tends to a certain participation of the vision of God.

This, then, is the " direction " of theology, and by reason of the fact that it is subalternated to *scientia Dei* such a conception is hardly reconcilable with a *Conclusionstheologie.* On the contrary, the unique perfection of theology which is implied in its status of subalternation to the science of God and of the blessed is indicated by the term " wisdom." It is wisdom, not only because it considers the highest cause, as does first philosophy, but also for an additional reason, which makes it to be wisdom preeminently. This reason is the manner in which it considers the first cause, which is not by the light of reason alone, but of reason illumined by faith.[20] Moreover, the

[18] *In III Sent.,* d. 85, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 2; *In I Post. Anal.,* lect. 1, no. 6; *In Bo,et. de Trin.,* q. 6, a. 1, c, sol. 1 and 8, *De Ver.,* q. 15, a. 1; q. 10, a. 8, ad 10.

[19] *In Br>et. de Trin.,* q. 6, a. I, sol. 8: Decker pp. 2ll-212. The text refers to first philosophy, but since theology uses metaphysics, it is applicable to our argument.

[20] I, 1, 6c.

superiority of theology is in the speculative order itself. Thus, it is not to be confused with that wisdom which is a gift of the Holy Spirit, and which judges of divine things by way of inclination; the wisdom which is theology judges by way of cognition.21 The reason why theology is wisdom in the speculative order is its special relation to *scientia Dei et beatorum-a* relation which finds its technical expression in the special application of the theory of subalternation of sciences.

In the light of what has been said, we must conclude that Fr. Beumer's interpretation of Thomism as a theology of conclusions fails to take into consideration the context and implications of the Thomistic notion of theology, and falsifies by taking the part for the whole.

### 4. *The Theological and Philosophical Context in Which Speculative Theology is Possible*

The conception of theology as primarily speculative, which takes its character from its continuity with and participated likeness to the knowledge of God and of the blessed, finds its setting in a view of the universe which is characterized by a fundamental paradox. In this view of the universe there is a hierarchy of orders of being and perfection, in which there is a continuity from one level to the next; yet, this continuity is possible only because of a real distinction between one order and another, between one nature and another.

The principle of distinction and continuity applies not only within the order of nature; it applies also to the relation between the natural and the supernatural worlds. Since grace does not destroy nature, but rather perfects it, so it is necessary that natural reason subserve faith, just as the natural inclination of the will serves charity. [22] That is to say, nature does not lose its essential identity. Rather, without losing the inclinations proper to it, it is elevated to operations of a supernatural order. These supernatural operations are not contrary to nature. Rather, they have a certain correspondence and fitting-

[21] I, 1, 6, ad 3.

[22] I, 1, 8, ad 2.

ness to the nature which is elevated; that is, there is a continuity between the two orders.

How can reason serve faith? The answer to this can be found by considering two points, which are in fact two expressions of this continuity. *First,* there is the reality with which reason is concerned. In the imperfect there is found an imitation of the perfect. So, in those things which are known by natural reason there are certain similitudes of what is transmitted through faith. It follows from this also that whatever pertains to philosophy cannot be contrary to that which pertains to faith, although the former is inferior to the latter.[23] *Second,* there is the faculty of reason itself, whose openness to faith is a manifestation of obediential potency. St. Thomas sees in the human soul, as in fact in every creature, a double passive potency. One potency is in regard to a natural agent; the other is in comparison to the first agent, who can reduce any creature to an act higher than that to which a natural agent can reduce it. The latter is called the obediential potency of a creature.[24]

It is possible for St. Thomas to maintain that there is continuity without confusion between the natural and the supernatural orders, because he holds that creatures possess intrinsically their own forms, by reason of which they *are.* It is true that they have being by participation and are thus totally dependent upon the first cause; nevertheless, they have an intrinsic ontological principle of stability. The idea of the participation of creatures in being is related to and complemented by the notion of efficient causality of things by God.[25] Creatures are really caused; thus, they are distinct entities. If elevated to the supernatural order, their natures retain their integrity. The unity of the natural and the supernatural orders is not a confusion; it is a true unity. That is to say, it presupposes a real distinction.

[23] *In Boet. de Trin.,* q. a. 3: Decker, pp. 93-94.
[24] III, 11, I.
[25] I, 44, lc.

### *5. The Philosophical Option of St. Thomas*

Whereas St. Augustine, after Plato, attributes the production of things to their participation in the divine ideas; St. Thomas, following Aristotle and pushing his doctrine of causality to the last logical consequences, attributes it immediately to the divine efficient causality. It is true that efficient causality and participation are to be found in both St. Thomas and St. Augustine. In St. Thomas, however, the conception of efficient causality achieves full force and meaning.

That St. Thomas was fully conscious of the difference between his own philosophical option and that of St. Augustine is indicated clearly in a well known passage from the *Disputed Question on Spiritual Creatures.* He says there that Augustine, who followed Plato insofar as the Catholic faith permitted, did not hold that the species of things are *per se* subsisting, but rather, placed the *rationes* of things in the divine intellect; he held that through these we judge of all things according to an intellect illumined by divine light. It is not that we see those *rationes,* for this would be impossible unless we could see the essence of God; rather, they are imprinted in our minds.[26] At the end of this brief summary, St. Thomas remarks that Aristotle proceeded in a different way. Gilson points out that in order to say that the philosophy of St. Thomas is the same as that of St. Augustine, it would have to be possible to describe him as he himself describes St. Augustine-as a man imbued with Platonic philosophy, who follows this philosophy as far as his faith permits. However, it suffices merely to open St. Thomas to establish that what Augustine does with Plato, he himself does with Aristotle.[27]

In choosing as his rational instrument the philosophy of

[26] *De Spir. Great.,* a. 10, ad 8.

[27] Etienne Gilson, " Reflexions sur Ia controverse saint Thomas-saint- Augustin," *Melanges Mandonnet* (Paris: Vrin, 1930), t. I, pp. 371-383. Cfr., by the same author, " Le Christianisme et !a tradition philosophique, *"Les sciences philosophiques et thfwlogiques* 1-2 (1941-42), pp. 249-266; "Pourquoi saint Thomas a critique saint Augustin," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et litteraire du moyen lige* I (1926-27), pp. 5-127.

Aristotle, St. Thomas selected a conception of nature, of man, and of human knowledge which is radically different from Platonism. This is not to say that one should adopt an over-simplified view of the historical situation, to the point of thinking that Platonism was a kind of" first" Christian philosophy, which was completely superseded by Aristotle. The fact is, however, that the metaphysical decision on the part of St. Thomas profoundly affected his rational development of the problem of the relation between nature and grace, and of the relation between reason and faith.

A consequence of this philosophical option is a fundamental difference between the noetics of St. Thomas and the illuminism of the Augustinians. The Thomistic conception is radically opposed to Avicennist Augustinianism according to which God is agent intellect and fulfills the functions of the separated intelligence of Avicenna. It is also different from those doctrines which combine the illuminism of St. Augustine with the notion of an agent intellect which is proper to the individual, and which produces concepts but is incapable of conceiving truth. For St. Thomas, the human mind is itself capable of conceiving truth from sensible reality. Abstraction is meaningful because creatures are recognized as capable of producing effects. Man is naturally endowed with the light of the agent intellect, which, without any special collaboration of a separate agent, is capable of producing the intelligible in the human souJ.[28] Given this philosophical context, some of the serious obstacles to the affirmation of the speculative character of theology, which were inherent in the Augustinian tradition, are removed.

### 6. *Positive Knowledge of God from Creatures*

Can creatures be the source of positive knowledge of the divine essence? The question is often disputed. Yet, if such positive knowledge is not possible, there cannot be a speculative theology. Such a theology intends a knowledge of the divine essence. Although its principles are revealed, it uses concepts

•• I, 79, 3c.

which are derived from creatures. If the judgments which it makes, using these concepts, do not attain in some positive, though imperfect, manner the essence of God as revealed, then this theology is hardly an *impressio divinae scientiae.* The possibility of a speculative theology rests upon the ability of reason enlightened by faith and using concepts derived from creatures to have positive knowledge of the divine essence.

Among modern interpretations of St. Thomas the position of Gilson is a seemingly moderate one; yet, his emphasis upon the negative aspect of our knowledge of God seems to place him quite close to the side of Fr. Sertillanges, according to whom we do not lmow at all what God is.[29] Gilson says that to interpret St. Thomas as teaching that we have a knowledge, at least imperfect, of what God is, is to betray his thought. He maintains, correctly, that St. Thomas denies that we can know in this life *quid est Deum.* Gilson interprets this to mean that our knowledge of God in this life consists finally in our aptitude to form affirmative propositions concerning Him. That is to say, that whereas the concept which we form from the effect cannot be transformed into the concept of God which we lack, nevertheless, we can attribute to God by an affirmative judgment the name which designates the perfection corresponding to this effect. We found ourselves upon the certitude that the creature resembles God.[30]

First of all, there seems to be a serious contradiction involved in Gilson's interpretation. He seems to forget that for St. Thomas the judgment, which is expressed by a proposition, attains reality.[31] If, then, we can form affirmative propositions concerning God, we do have some knowledge of what God is. Second, it is important to try to understand what St. Thomas means by the technical expression, *scire quid est.* Is his denial that we can know the *quid est* of God[32] equivalent to a denial

[29] "Renseignements techniques," *Some theologique* (Paris: Desclee, 19!'l6), t. IT, p. 383.

[30] *Le Thomisnw, 5e* edition revue et augmente (Paris: Vrin, 1945), pp. *155-157.*

[31] II-II, 1, *!'!,* ad *!'!.*

[32] For example: *I Contra Gentiles,* c. 30; *De Pot.* q. 7, a. *!'!,* ad 11.

that we can have affirmative knowledge of the divine essence? In the *De Veritate,* St. Thomas says that the intellect is said to know the *quid est* of anything when it defines it, that is, when it conceives a form which corresponds completely to that thing. Therefore, since whatever our intellect conceives of God is deficient as a representation of Him, the *quid est* remains hidden.[33] To know this would be to have definitive knowledge. There is every reason, therefore, to agree with Maritain that *scire quid est* is not exactly equivalent to" to have affirmative knowledge," and that a denial of the possibility of this total, definitive knowledge of God in this life is not equal to a rejection of all affirmative knowledge of Him.[34] Certainly, the possibility of the Beatific Vision in this life is excluded, but such texts do not exclude positive knowledge of some kind.

It is true that there are a number of Thomistic texts which emphasize forcefully the predominantly negative aspect of our knowledge of God.[35] However, every negation concerning some reality is founded upon something existing in reality. Thus, if ignorance is denied of God, this is because of something which is in Him, and so it is necessary to posit in Him the opposite of ignorance.[36] The understanding of a negation is always founded in some affirmation, which is evident from the fact that everything negative is proved through an affirmative. Hence, unless the human intellect knew something positive of God, it could deny nothing of Him:[37] Thus, the two aspects of our knowledge of God, affinnative and negative, are complementary and inseparable. The significance of the priority of the negative aspect can be seen only within the context of the three-fold way of naming God. We can say, for example, God is wise, because there is in Him the similitude of the wisdom which flows from

[33] *DeVer.* q. 2, a. 1, ad 9. Cfr. also *In Boet. de Trin.* q. 6, a. 3.

[34] Jacques Maritain, *Distinguer pour unir, ou Les degres du savoir,* 6e edition revue et augmentee (Paris: Desclee de Brouwer, 1959) Annexe III, pp. 827-843.

[35] For example: I *Contra Gentiles,* c. 30; *De Ver.,* q. 2, a. 1, ad 9; *De Pot.,* q. 7, a. 5, ad 14.

[36] *In I Sent.* d. 35, q. 1, a. 1, ad 2.

[37] *De Pot.,* q. 7, a. 5.

Him. On the other hand, we can say, God is not wise, because wisdom is not in God as we understand it. Yet, since wisdom is not denied of God because He is lacking in this, but because it is more supereminently in Him than is said or understood, it must be said that God is " super-wise." [38] So it is that the two aspects, which are emphasized separately in the way of causality and the way of negation find their union in the way of eminence, which itself is meaningful only if seen in relation to the preceding ways. There is a positive content in the way of eminence, as well as a negative content. To say that God is "super-wise" is not to say "super-x." We judge that there is infinite wisdom in God, and in so doing, although we are surrounded by darkness, we see well enough to say a name.

There is an extremely delicate balance between the two aspects of our naming of God. We cannot name Him in the sense of expressing a comprehensive knowledge of Him. In this sense, God has no name. [39] Yet absolute and affirmative names do not merely express remotion and causality. If such were the case, there would be no reason for using one term rather than another. Moreover, names said of God would then be taken in a secondary sense, and in a sense against the intention of those who speak of God. Rather, names which signify the divine substance are predicated substantially of God, although they fall short of a full representation of Him. Thus, when we say, God is good, we do not mean, "God is the cause of goodness," or" God is not evil." Rather, we mean, " Whatever good we attribute to creatures, pre-exists in God, and in a more excellent and higher way. [40] One sees the balancing of this tension between the negative and the affirmative aspects, therefore, in the way of eminence.

Our paradoxical and deficient manner of knowing God is due to the fact that names are properly said of God in regard to the reality which is signified, but not in regard to the mode of signifying. [41] The mode of signifying must necessarily be deficient, for it is taken from creatures, which represent God

[38] *Ibid.*, q. 7, a. 5, •• I, 13, 1, ad 1.

•• I, 13,

[41] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 1,

only faintly and imperfectly. Because God is the cause of creatures, names taken from them can analogously and properly he said of God in regard to the reality signified. Because God is not a univocal but an equivocal agent, they are not said properly in regard to the mode of signifying. However, this mode can be considered as accidental by the human mind, which knows that they exist in a super-eminent manner m God.[42]

We have noted a certain priority of the negative aspect. It is not the same case, however, with philosophical and theological knowledge of God. Even in theodicy there is a reconciliation in the way of eminence. However, this is only the high point of metaphysics, and it attains God only in regard to what He has, so to speak, proportionally in common with creatures. It does not attain the hidden mystery of God. The object of theology, however, is precisely this hidden mystery. For this reason it is more negative in a sense than theodicy. But because it proceeds by a higher light than that of reason alone, and because this light gives it its finality to the Beatific Vision, which is the only perfectly positive knowledge of God, theology by its tendency or finality is a more positive knowledge of the Divine Essence than is philosophical wisdom.

We have seen, then, that speculative theology, as St. Thomas conceives this, presupposes a continuity between theology and the science of God and the blessed. This is possible, because he sees a distinction and continuity between the natural and the supernatural orders. Moreover, because creatures are efficiently caused by God, they truly *are* distinct entities and are sources of true and positive knowledge of God. The concepts which man derives from creatures are used, by way of analogy, to form judgments which by the efficacy of the light of faith joined to the light of human reason, attain in a positive manner the divine reality. If the judgments which we make in theology could not attain the divine essence in some positive, though imperfect manner, a speculative theology would be impossible.

[42] On this point, the observations of C. de More-Pontgibaud are helpful, in *Du fini a l'infini* (Paris: Aubier, 1957), p. 84.

### 7. *Implications of the Role of Creatures as Source8 of Theological Knowledge*

The role of creatures as sources of theological knowledge, as this role is understood in Thomism, makes theoretically possible a rapport with profane science and culture, such as is incompatible with the Augustinian notion, according to which creatures have value for theology only as symbols. Since creatures have full ontological status, the concepts which are derived from them, when these are used in theological judgments, are instruments of knowledge in an especially efficacious way. While he does not deny the symbolic value of creatures and the legitimate use of metaphor-although it is possible that he did not place sufficient stress upon this [43]-St. Thomas emphasizes the role of creatures in supplying concepts which can be applied analogously in theology, without losing their literal meaning.

It is evident that the evolution of the sciences and of culture can affect theological thought. New problems, judgments, and arguments are gradually assumed into the texture of theology itsel£.[44] The theologican can accept with gratitude whatever relevant truth may come to him from any of the sciences, as helping toward an understanding and application of his own principles. The presentation of new problems forces him to re-examine some of his former interpretations, and should be a safeguard against narrowness. Moreover, the keen sense of history which is characteristic of modern thinking gives a certain sense of perspective, so that one realizes that what was emphasized in a certain country at a certain time need not be important or even essential. It is true progress in the understanding of revelation to distinguish that which is temporal, and perhaps temporary, and relative, from that which is ab-

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 35: "La valeur de la metaphore et du symbole et leur role dans la connaissance des choses divines n'ont pas ete suffisamment mis en relief par saint Thomas, qui ne semble pas percevoir le dynamisme de la metaphore."

[44] Some interesting possibilities along this line are explored by E. L. Mascall, in *Christian Theology and Natural Science* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co, 1957).

solute and timeless. Such perspectives are especially necessary for questions concerning the evolution of dogma, the Church as a society, and man in society. Such knowledge and such perspectives, however, do not arise from the formal source of theology, that is, from revelation. They come from a study of things pertaining to the temporal order. They have a right to a place in theology only if the ontological reality of that order is recognized.

We have said that this rapport with profane learning is *theoretically* more possible in Thomism than in a system of thought which places less or no stress upon efficient causality by God and the ontological reality of creatures, and this is because it is speculative in the strict sense and gives full play to creatures as sources of knowledge. This is to say that Thomism, by reason of its philosophyical orientation, opens the door to this influence into theology in a way which is unique and which has epistemological consistency. We have stressed the term" theoretically," because it is obviously not possible to make a statistical survey of Thomist and non-Thomist theologians on such a point, and at any rate such head-counting would be irrelevant. We merely point to the fact that in the thought of St. Thomas himself there is a bridge between the temporal and the supra-temporal, and between the natural and the supernatural. If his disciples often fail to use this bridge and if others often *do* use it, this is " per accidens."

We have said that one implication of the truly speculative character of theology is the possibility of a rapport with other sciences. It is more than a possibility, it is an obligation of the theologian, for a theology which is " open " to the natural world is by this fact committed to an acceptance of whatever relevant truth may become available from this leveU[5] It is clear that good judgment is required. Theology should avoid prematurely assimilating data from other sciences, before sufficiently examining them by its own light, for this can only result in a

[45] II *Contra Gentiles,* c. 4: "Manifestum est autem ex praedictis quod considerationem circa creaturas habet doctrina fidei Christianae inquantum in eis resultat quaedam Dei similitudo, et inquantum error in ipsis inducit in divinorum errorem."

superficial and temporary concordance. On the other hand, a misconception of the relationship, or a lack of awareness of the possibility of its existence, can result in a premature rejection of such data, and in a moribund conservatism which is as lacking in speculative depth as it is in courage.

A consequence of this conception of speculative theology and of the role of creatures is a removal of the confusion of this knowledge with experiential knowledge. To see the difference between these two ways of knowing is to take the first step away from the error of demanding of theology something which it is not intended to do, and toward respecting it for what it intends to do. Much of the hostility toward theology among modern Catholic writers can be explained on this basis: that they are asking of it something which it cannot give, and are therefore missing the point in regard to its real value. In other words, they are looking for an experiential, intuitive knowledge of God, for that which is traditionally called infused wisdom.

The valuable insights of Kierkegaard have stimulated many contemporary Protestant theologians, and without doubt his influence has been felt in Catholic circles as well. There is no reason to adopt a negative attitude toward this influence, which has helped to bring about a healthy reaction against the sterile text-book approach to theology. At the same time, there is a possibility of misapplying Kierkegaard's conceptions, of forcing them into an alien context. His either/ or approach to the problem of religious knowledge is expressed in the following words: " The existing individual who chooses to pursue the objective way enters upon the entire approximation-process by which it is proposed to bring God to light objectively. But this is in all eternity impossible, because God is a subject, and therefore exists only for subjectivity in inwardness." [46] Here Kierkegaard suggests that there are two ways of seeking God. One is objective and without value; the other is subjective and is the only way that matters. The first way appears to be a futile substitute for the seeking of God in inwardness. The following

•• *Concluding Un11cientijicPosfllcript,* in *A Kierkegaard Anthology,* ed. by Robert *BretaU* (New York: The Modern Library, 1946), p. 211.

statement of Kierkegaard reflects even more strongly this either/ or problematic:

> Now when the problem is to reckon upon which side there is the most truth, whether on the side of one who seeks the true God objectively, and pursues the approximate truth of the God idea; or on the side of one who, driven by the infinite passion of his need for God, feels an infinite concern for his own relationship to God in truth ... the answer cannot be in doubt for anyone who has not been demoralized with the aid of scienceY

However, one may well ask if the alternatives need be such as Kierkegaard proposes them. We have distinguished between theological and experiential knowledge. However, theological knowledge need not be purely " objective " in the sense intended by Kierkegaard. In fact, it cannot be such. It is not, as we have seen, a work of intellect operating in isolation from will. The theologian should be aware that God is a subject. He should feel an infinite concern and this concern is manifested in his pursuit of truth. He knows that he is in darkness, but that in this darkness there is also light. This is the true theologian: one who experiences the co-existence of two ways of knowing, between which there is a constant tension and a mutual influence, and between which there is a hidden harmony, which will be realized fully only *in patria.*

## PART Two

### THE NECESSITY OF SPECULATIVE THEOLOGY

In its most general and fundamental form, the problem with which we are now concerned presents itself as follows: Is the existence of a speculative theology a necessary consequence of the influence of faith upon human reason? This is a many-faceted problem, whose dimensions reveal their complexity in the process of seeking a solution. We shall consider the question from two aspects: (1) from a general or abstract point of

[47] *Ibid.,* p. 212.

view-on this level the problem concerns the necessity of speculative theology for human nature perfected by grace, or for the Church; from a particular or concrete point of view-here the problem concerns the individual's need for theology so conceived. Before attempting an adequate statement of this dual problem and a solution thereof, we turn our attention to the more general and ambiguous question of the necessity of *sacra doctrina.*

1. *Preliminary Consideration: "Sacra Doctrina"*

When St. Thomas wrote in the first article of the *Summa Theologiae* his response to the question: "Whether, besides philosophy, any further doctrine is required?" he left his disciples with a riddle which they have taken great pains to solve. The resulting interpretations are varied, and the problem of what was meant is still with us.

The position of M.-J. Congar, O. P. is that the term *sacra doctrina* means instruction proceeding from divine revelation. It goes beyond theology in the strict sense and includes with it Holy Scripture and all the modes of teaching of the Christian faith. Sacred Scripture and theology are, then, parts distinguished at the interior of sacred doctrine. [48] A certain ambiguity arises here concerning the relationship among the parts. Fr. Congar maintains that it is the teaching of St. Thomas that sacred doctrine merits the name of science in one of its functions or activities. [49] But how is this scientific function related to the others?

In his effort to develop the basic idea of Fr. Congar, which is that *sacra doctrina* means instruction proceeding from divine revelation, Fr. Gerald van Ackeran, S. J. makes certain precisiOns.

> Sacred Scripture, sacred doctrine, and the habit of sacred theology are distinct realities in a causal series proceeding from God, man's principal teacher, and terminating in the disciple's habit of acquired supernatural wisdom. Sacred doctrine itself is the action of a

[48] In *Bulletin thomiste* V (1938-39), pp. 495-496.

[49] " Theologie," in *Dictionnarie de theologie catholique,* XV/1, col. 379.

teacher received in a disciple terminating in the knowledge of salvation. Sacred Scripture is one of the instrumental causes of this action; the habit of acquired supernatural wisdom is the term of this action when it is adequately received by man here on earth.

[Thus] the habit of sacred theology is related to sacred doctrine as its proportioned final cause. Sacred doctrine itself is an action proceeding ultimately from God as principal cause, received in man through the instrumentality of human teachers and their verbal and written discourse, some of which is immediately inspired, and terminating successively in faith, understanding, and wisdom, according to the measure in which this action is received. Sacred doctrine can be defined as instruction in divine knowledge by way of revelation. [50]

There are certain difficulties which arise from the position of Fr. Van Ackeran. In this context of thought, it would appear that it is necessary for a full Christian life that theology be possessed by everyone. Moreover, it is difficult to see how theology's character as an acquired science is saved in this interpretation. [51] When *sacra doctrina* is restricted to mean precisely an action, which is instruction by way of revelation, and theology is understood as a final cause of such an action, the place of theology seems to become exaggerated or distorted.

Fr.Chenu also says that *sacra doctrina* is teaching proceeding from revelation. He does not press the point that *doctrina* means an action. Rather, he understands the term in a broad sense as including all the resources which flow from revelation, with all the treatments which it can admit of in the mind of man, from the reading of the bible to theological deduction. The term is, in fact, ambiguous, for the development of terminology had lagged behind the development of thought. It is a vestige of an earlier state of theology, when methodological diversification had not been accomplished." [2] This position avoids the pitfall of attempting to find great precision where in fact this does not exist. A forced interpretation can create as many problems as it solves.

[50] *Sacra Doctrina* (Rome: Catholic Book Agency, 1952), pp. 51-52.

[51] Cfr. J-H Nicolas, 0. P., "Chronique de theologie dogmatique," *Revue thomiste* 57 (1957)' pp. 357-362.

[••] *La theologie comme science au XIII siecle,* p. 79.

It is consequent to Fr. Chenu's interpretation that in the first article St. Thomas is not directly and explicitly proving the necessity of theology properly so called. He teaches here the necessity of instruction proceeding from revelation, and this obviously involves both the action of instruction and the knowledge which is its effect. Does this imply the necessity of theology? The answer to this question is suggested by the principle that everything which is imperfect is intrinsically ordered to its proper perfection. [53] Since knowledge held on faith or held for probable reasons is imperfect as knowledge, whereas science is perfect knowledge, the former is intrinsically ordered to the latter. Therefore, the relation of pre-scientific knowledge of doctrine to theology is not that of part to part in the sense that taken together they would constitute an integral whole which would be *sacra doctrina.* Rather, general and pre-scientific knowledge had by revelation is somehow ordered to theology. But a serious difficulty immediately imposes itself, for it would then appear that the normal development of the life of faith for everyone should be directed toward the acquisition of theological science.

## 2. *Statement of the Problem*

Some ambiguity is evident in the statement and application of the principle which we have given above: Since imperfect knowledge is ordered to science, knowledge had by revelation is ordered to theology. One may indeed immediately ask what is implied in the expression, "knowledge which is had by revelation," and one may want to know precisely what is meant by "ordered to theology."

If we consider the intellectual effort which is the fruit of the marriage of faith and reason, it is normal that this begin with probable arguments. The imperfect knowledge which is the result of reason's effort to understand faith is as a disposition

[53] This principle is implied everywhere in the *Summa Theologiae.* It is, for example, at the heart of the argument in I, 1: "Utrum aliquis intellectus creatus possit Deum videre per essentiam?" It is expressed succinctly in I, 6, 1: "Unumquodque autem appetit suam perfectionem."

to theological science. It is of itself ordered to science, as everything imperfect is *de se* ordered to its own perfection.[54] Here then, there is a case of an acquired disposition tending to the acquired habit which is its fulfillment. Such knowledge, that is, the acquired disposition to theology, the beginning of reason's effort to understand the things of faith, may be said to be ordered to theology.

However, to say that faith itself is ordered to theology as to an intermediate end is another matter. The ultimate end of faith is the Beatific Vision, which is *scientia beatorum.* It is not the case that theology is an intermediate end of faith and a necessary means to the Beatific Vision, in such a wa.y that faith, theology, and vision represent, so to speak, three stages in the same line of progression. It is evident that this is not the case, for these three realites do not pertain to the same order. Whereas faith is an infused supernatural habit, theology is an acquired habit. It is true however that theology is engendered by a union of faith and reason. That is, granted that it is essentially an acquired habit, its principles are of the supernatural order, and the rational effort involved is an attempt to understand these principles. We therefore pose the following question: Is the life of faith somehow necessarily ordered by its conjunction with reason to the engendering of a rational effort which culminates in this life in the possession of speculative theology?

It would seem that the answer must be at least in some way affirmative. Faith is in the intellect and orders the intellect to God. Moreover, in man there is a natural desire to understand. Since grace perfects nature, it would seem to follow that there is an intrinsic necessity that this tendency be assumed into the supernatural order, in an effort to understand what is believed. Speculative theology then would appear to be the normal fulfillment in this life of the life of faith.

In opposition to this is the evident fact that not everyone

•• This is, of course, not to exclude, but rather to imply, that it is ordered to wisdom, which includes science eminently and formally.

has the capacity or the opportunity to study theology. Moreover, there are others who have both the ability and the opportunity, but whose intellectual preferences are not in this direction. It would be foolish to judge the quality of their interior life on this basis. It is clear that the call to the intellectual life is a special call, qualified in many ways by outward circumstances and individual temperament. Even more particularized is the vocation to the intellectual life which is precisely that of a theologian. Briefly the possession of theology as a science is not for everyone, and its absence is not an indication of mediocrity as a Christian. [55]

This seemingly flagrant opposition suggests that the problem must be analyzed on two levels. We shall study it first on a universal or abstract plane. Here, the problem concerns the necessity of the existence of speculative theology for human nature perfected by grace, that is, for the Church. Second, we shall analyse the problem on the plane of the individual.

### 3. *The Neces8ity for Speculative Theology in the Church*

Since faith is an infused supernatural virtue and theology is an acquired habit, they are not of the same order. Faith in the human intellect gives birth to theology when the necessary dispositions and circumstances are present. Then the intellect's natural dynamism to understand is perfected in the supernatural order, for the object of faith is supernatural. It is evident, however, that the dispositions and circumstances which favor the fulfillment of faith's seeking to understand by the acquisition of theology are not always present. Of course, according to Christian teaching, there is another form of understanding and another kind of wisdom apart from the acquired habit of theology. These are gifts of the Holy Spirit and they are in all who have grace. It might seem, therefore, that these infused gifts fulfill the necessity for *intellectus fidei*, and that speculative theology, while it is satisfying to some types of

[55] I. Hl, 6; *Contra Gentiles* III, c. 58. It is not theological science, but the degree of charity which one has, which determines fullness of participation in the light of glory.

minds, is nevertheless peripheral and strictly speaking unnecessary. This position, moreover, would seem to have support from the fact that the gifts have always existed in the Church, whereas speculative theology was late in developing. Accordingly we shall examine the nature of experiential knowledge of God, in order to see if its existence precludes the necessity of speculative theology in the Church.

### A. *The Nature of Experiential Knowledge of God*

The knowledge of God which is experiential and affective, is distinct from the science of theology. Whereas theology is a habit acquired by study, this experiential knowledge proceeds from the supernatural motion and " instinct " of the Holy Spirit, that is, from a certain " connaturality " with divine things.[56] It is true that there is a certain likeness between theology and the gift of wisdom. Of the three wisdoms-metaphysics, theology, and the gift of the Holy Spirit-theology is somehow " in between." Its principles, its object, its motive, pertain to the supernatural order, and in this respect it is close to infused wisdom. However, the habit itself of theology is acquired by natural discourse and study, which accounts for its closeness *to* first philosophy, which is purely natural, and for its distinction from the gift.

The special light of experiential knowledge of God which is had in this life, seems to come proximately from the will. It is true that the will cannot formally illumine the intellect. However, John of St. Thomas explains that it can perfect the light of the intellect, insofar as it renders the object more united to itself through love, and immediately " touched and tasted."[57] It is true that love depends upon knowledge, for the will cannot go out to that which is totally unknown. Yet, on the part of the mode of attaining the object, the will can be better united to the object than as proposed to it by the intellect *since* the will is borne to the object immediately and *in se*.[58]

[56] John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theologicus, In lam Donis Spiritus Sancti*, a. 4, n. 17: Collectio Lavallensis: Sectio Theologica" III (1948) n. *596.*

[57] *Ibid.*, a. 4, n. 15 (Laval n. 592) .

[58] *Ibid.*, a. 4, n. 13 (Laval n. 589).

In fact, he writes: " affectus transit in conditionem objecti." This happens insofar as from such an affective experience the object is rendered more conformed, proportioned, and united to the person. Thus the intellect is borne to that object as experienced, and in this way love moves in the genus of objective cause.[59]

There is a difference, therefore, between the gift of wisdom and acquired wisdom, whether the latter be philosophical or theological, in the manner of knowing supreme causes. The gift of wisdom attains divine reality in an affective and mystical way. John of St. Thomas speaks of a" taste" and a" touch" by which the will has internal contact with spiritual reality. The soul is, as it were, connaturalized to divine things, and so it can distinguish them by " taste " from sensible and created things, in this life imperfectly, *per viam remotionis,* in the next life perfectly and by positive evidence.[60]

According to the doctrine of St. Thomas it is in fact the connaturality of charity which is used by the Holy Spirit in men. Uncreated Wisdom first unites itself to man through the gift of charity and consequently reveals mysteries to him, the knowledge of which is infused wisdom.[61] The inspiration of the Holy Spirit uses the connaturality of charity to make one judge of divine things. This happens in such a way that he attains, in the obscurity of faith, not only an object absolutely supernatural, as faith itself does, but moreover according to a mode of knowing which is itself supernatural.

All of this points to a certain superiority of this infused knowledge. The eminent dignity of this affective and " connatural " knowledge is suggested by St. Thomas in pointing out a likeness between the *scientia* which is a gift of the Holy Spirit and *divina scientia,* which is not discursive, but absolute and simple.[62] Moreover, he indicates the supereminence of this mode of knowing in saying that through the gift of wisdom man is transformed into a similitude of the highest causes.[63]

[59] *Ibid.,* a. 4, n. 11 (Laval n. 584).
[60] *Ibid.,* a. 4, n. 6 (Laval n. 563) .
[61] II-II, 45, 6 ad
[62] II-II, 9, I, ad I.
[63] *In III Sent.,* d. 34, q. 1, a.

It might appear in view of this dignity of " connatural knowledge " of God, that its existence precludes the necessity of speculative theology, which is acquired and discursive. This might seem to be all the more true, when we consider that the natural gifts and external circumstances which are necessary conditions for the acquisition of theology need not be present in order that the gifts exist and operate. These latter are in fact in a real sense universally available. If the wisdom which is theology is necessary, therefore, this can only be because there is an insufficiency on the part of this infused knowledge in relation to human nature. If theology is necessary, it is because human nature perfected by grace requires a certain complementing of infused wisdom, by an acquired wisdom having its source in faith and charity.

B. *The Incompleteness of Experiential Knowledge*

The superiority of experiential over theological knowledge of God is because in the former the mode of knowing itself is supernatural. It operates out of " divine instinct," rather than proceeding from the judgment of reason.[64] It attains God more closely, through a certain union of the soul to Him.[65] However, this mode of knowing, considered from another point of view, has a certain incompleteness. Precisely because of its superiority, it has, from a human point of view, an inherent insufficiency. That is to say, because it is a superhuman knowledge it is not communicable in human terms or strictly speaking " thinkable " in human concepts. The subjective certainty of the person having this knowledge may be great, but there is no way in which others can share in this certainty.

The experiential knowledge of the mystic, because of its supernatural mode, is less proportioned to the human intellect than is acquired wisdom. It is true that he himself may have no personal need for a porportioned, that is, conceptual knowledge, such as the science of theology. But this is no indication that such a need does not exist in the Church. In a society of men,

[64] I-II, 68, 1, ad 4. [65] II-II, 45, 3, ad 1.

an acquired and communicable wisdom is needed. Thus, the totality of the needs of nature perfected by grace cannot be judged by considering an individual case. There are, moreover, innumerable cases of persons who do experience the necessity for scientific theology, and these are sometimes-certainly this is the case with the great doctors of the Church-also highly " gifted " with experiential knowledge of God.

In fact, the need does exist in the Church for scientific knowledge of revealed truth because of the nature and structure of the human intellect. This is an intellect which draws its knowledge from the external world, from the senses. Given grace, there is another source: the Word of God. Speculative theology is the fruit of the union of these sources, and it is a fragile offspring, depending always upon them to give it continued and increased life. If it is cut off from either source, it soon is reduced to a skeleton (although in its assumed indeM pendence it can become quite arrogant for a skeleton) . Yet, granted its almost pathetic fragility, this speculative theology represents the union within the human mind of the natural and the supernatural orders.

### C. *The Interiority of theN eed for Speculative Theology in the Church*

Whereas many individuals do not need to possess scientific theological knowledge, it would be an unjustifiable generalization to say that there is no such need in the society which is the Church. In a society of men, some communicable form of knowledge is necessary. To have said this much, however, is not to have expressed the full dimensions of the necessity for speculative theology, for it might then appear to be reduced to a kind of functional necessity for the society which is the Church. However, far from being merely this, it is" an exigence springing from the interior of the human spirit, a result of the impression of faith upon man's reason." [66] It is the interiority of this exigence which we shall now try to bring into focus.

[66] A. Hayen, S. J., *St. Thomas d'Aquin et la vie de l'eglise* (Louvain: Publications universitaries, 1952), p. 43.

In order to see the dimension of depth in the Church's need for speculative theology, we shall do well to consider the alternatives to the existence of such a theology. What are these alternatives? We may reach the answer by considering that within the context of Christian thought it appears to many that there is a conflict or at least a tension between the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake and the exigencies of " the human condition." The human mind can take three basic positions in regard to this apparent conflict: (1) One may emphasize purely rational knowledge, in practice making philosophy the supreme science, while relegating all knowledge of revelation to the side of subjective experience, creating a schism between reason and faith; (2) One may stress affectivity, admitting the legitimacy of speculation only insofar as it is finalized by this; or (3) One may sustain a point of view in which the tension is accepted, so to speak, at white heat. That is, one may affirm with its fullest implications the Christian doctrine of the primacy of charity in this life, and at the same time affirm the absolute primacy of intellect over will and the full implications of this. There is no possibility in this attitude for the happy repose of the simplist, which may account for much of the resistence which it inspires. It is this last attitude which permits and sustains the existence of speculative theology. The first and second viewpoints suggest the alternatives. They seem to be: (1) the relegation to philosophy of all rational scientific effort to answer ultimate questions; (2) the development of a theology which is truly a work of *fides quaerens intellectum,* but in which the role of intellect is subordinated to that of the will and, consequently, in which the role of philosophy is lessened.

That these are the alternatives seems to be confirmed in the "laboratory" of history, at least according to F. Van Steenberghen's analysis of the three dominant orientations of thought at Paris in the second half of the thirteenth century. Under Siger of Brabant a school was constituted professing a Platonizing Aristotelianism of a radical and heterodox character. The conceptions of pagan philosophers were reassumed without regard for the teachings of Christian revelation. This rationalist

current provoked a strong reaction, among the theologians, against Aristotelianism. At the head of the opposition was Saint Bonaventure. The great conflict then was really between the philosophical spirit and the theological spirit, and this was resolved harmoniously by Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas, by elaborating a philosophy which was at once autonomous in its methods and fully compatible with Christian doctrine. [67]

The first of the alternatives to the development of a theology which is speculative in the strict sense amounts to an abandonment of the spirit of *fides quaerens intellectum.* It is simply a substitution of philosophy for theology, a failure to respond to the problem, resulting in a dichotomy of reason and faith. The second alternative is more promising, and it is the position of the second group mentioned in Van Steenberghen's analysis which is interesting for us to consider here.

In the Bonaventurian conception of theology, knowledge is subordinated to love; theology is an affective habit. [68] What are some of the implications of this? First, theology as an affective habit will be knowledge whose end pertains to the affective order; theology will seek a loving knowledge which is in fact that of the mystics. Second, it would seem that since such an understanding cannot be achieved directly by speculation which uses concepts taken from experience of the created universe, the role of creatures as sources of theological understanding will be minor. Third, it is logical that a theology which sees itself as an affective habit will tend to assign a humble role to reason, or at least to have little confidence in it, for it seeks a way of knowing which is quite beyond the pedestrian ways of reason. These implications of theology as an affective habit are not irrelevant, perhaps, to what happened in the neo-Augustinian school, after the time of St. Bonaventure. In William of Ockham the role of reason is devaluated to

[67] F. Van Steenberghen, "Le mouvement philosophique a Paris au XIII• siecle," in *Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Philosophy* (Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing Company, 1949), pp. 1110-1118.

[68] Saint Bonaventure, *In I Sent.,* Proem., q. 8: Quaracchi I, p. 13a.

such an extent that there is nothing left of *fides quaerens intellectum.* As Guelluy remarks, Ockham distinguishes acts but does not describe tendencies; he analyses the content of thought without interest in the movement by which it is animated. [69]

It seems clear that there was a deterioration, and if one seeks the reasons for this, the reflections of Fr. Hayen are suggestive. To the thirteenth century Augustinians, scientific rigor presented itself, he observes:

> as an exigency coming from the outside, and proper to philosophy. Thus they considered authentic theology to be the summit of an experience. It does not go so far as to be a speculative science, at once scientific and supernatural, truly scientific because truly supernatural. For them, as for the radical Aristotelians, there was a conflict between life and scientific knowledge.[70]

In the present life infused supernatural wisdom and the acquired wisdom of theology remain distinct, although their ultimate finality-the Beatific Vision-is the same. The temptation to blur the distinction is very strong; it is perhaps a manifestation of the desire for that simplicity of knowledge and unity of vision which belong to the next life. However, if one attempts to identify supernatural infused wisdom and acquired wisdom, the result is similar at least in one respect to the consequence of the rejection of theology in favor of philosophy. That is, the value of the rational effort toward *intellectus fidei* is minimized. The necessity for speculation concerning the truths of faith may be admitted, but there will be a tendency to see this chiefly in the functions of defending revelation, of preaching and of teaching. In this perspective, the necessity of theology is rather a utility. On the other hand, when the necessary distinction is affirmed, theology is seen as supernatural in its origin and ultimate finality, but in itself an acquired habit. It can then be seen that it is from the interiority of the human person whose intellect is formed by living faith that the exigency for theology arises.

[69] Robert Guelluy, *Philosophie et theologie chez Guillaume d'Ockham* (Paris: Vrin, 1947), p. 357.

[70] *Op. cit.,* p. 43.

### 4. *The Individual's Need for Speculative Theology*

It is clear that in many cases the desire for wisdom must be satisfied almost entirely on the plane of affective knowledge. It is true also, that without the attainment of this level in the individual, speculative knowledge is an empty shell. The fact remains that some recognize the need that two forms of wisdom find realization within themselves. With regard to acquired wisdom, it is true that this is not an absolute necessity. Rather, it is a means and a support without which their self-realization as Christians would be far more difficult to achieve. But now the simple and obvious question arises: For whom is theology necessary? Despite its obviousness, the answers proposed by modern theologians are often so cloaked in vagueness that one wonders if the question in its most primitive and fundamental sense has been understood.

#### A. *The Call to Possess the Wisdom of Theology*

If one asks who is called to possess theology, the answer may be generally formulated as it would be in regard to any vocation. That is, there must be a desire, an intellectual and temperamental capacity and fitness, and due circumstances. These requirements are essential for all times, but aside from their absolute dimension there is evidently a dimension of relativity, for human beings are born into the temporal order.

In examining this aspect of relativity, it would be well to recall some basic differences between the medieval society into which Thomistic theology was born and our own. In medieval society, outside of the world of the clerics, there was little intellectual life. Thus the " profane," thinking that the scrutiny of mysteries of faith did not pertain to their state, put their trust in the theologians.[71] Society was pervaded by a sense of hierarchy, and in this order the theologians occupied an eminent position. According to this hierarchical vision of life, which vision was somehow communicated even to the ignorant, it

[71] Robert Guelluy, "La place des theologiens dans l'Eglise et Ia societe medievales," in *Miscellanea historica in honorem Alberti de Meyer* (Louvain: Bibliotbeque de l'universite, 1946), p. 580.

appeared that the faith of the Church is perfect if the belief of " the little ones " is bound to that of the learned, and finds its justification and explication in the science of the theologians. [72]

However, economic and social developments brought with them the evolution of a class of educated bourgeois. There has been a steady evolution of a distinct lay culture, which shows little dependence upon scholasticism. Thus, whereas in the Middle Ages it was almost accurate to equate the educated class with the clergy, on the one hand, and the ignorant class with the laity on the other hand, this is now completely false/ [3] Moreover the rigid conception of hierarchy extending into all domains, which was acceptable to the medieval mind, is profoundly repugnant to this new intellectual elite, so strongly individualistic in its character and thought. These men and women place great value in the realization of their capacity to be complete human personalities. They do not want to have their thinking done for them.

If we return to our three criteria for the " vocation " to the possession of the acquired wisdom which is theology, it is evident that their application will be different in modem times from what it was in the past. First of all, let us consider the desire to know theology. It is evident that one is less inclined to desire that which he is not in any way prepared to receive. In the past, and until quite recently, only the clergy and a few laymen had access to an intellectual milieu in which intelligent curiosity about theological matters was stimulated. Today, the layman who is trained in the liberal arts and the sciences and whose Christian faith is alive is driven to question and to seek answers which cannot be obtained by occasional reading. In regard to capacity and fitness, it is clear that as universal education becomes more and more a reality, native intelligence is given a chance to develop. It is true that here nature has imposed a " hierarchy " and that the ineducable can never be

[72] *Ibid.,* p. 578. Cfr. II-II, 2. 6. Changing social conditions and educational opportunities make it more and more difficult to see a sharp and clear distinction in the concrete.

[73] *Ibid.,* p. 586.

educated. However, there is little correspondence between this hierarchy of nature and the distribution of opportunities which has existed in the past and which still exists in most countries.[74] It is hardly a small detail, for example, that one half of the human race was until recently automatically excluded from the possibility of full intellectual development. In regard to the third criterion, " due circumstances," this has already been sufficiently indicated and can be summarized in the simple observation that social conditions have developed in such a way that there are new countless Christians, men and women, who are not members of the clergy and who have become intellectually adult.

In the case of some of these adult Christian laymen the necessity to possess some degree of theological culture is clear and explicit. This exigence coming from spiritual and intellectual maturity is evidently not the same in all who experience it, nor are the circumstances the same. Many who are " called " to know theology are not called to become full-time professional theologians.

### B. *Inadequate Solution: Two Theologies*

A number of theologians writing in the thirties and early forties sought to provide a solution for today's needs by proposing a new " kerygma tic " theology. While this was not a monolithic group, one can describe certain general tendencies which were present from the beginning of the movement. Probably the most basic of these tendencies was the wish to develop a theology which adheres to Christ as its primary object. Although they did not all wish to do away with scholastic theology, some would have liked to see another theology developed along side that which is strictly scientific (F. Lakner, J. B. Lotz). This second theology would be a kind of knowl-

[74] There is perhaps no country in which the advantages and drawbacks of universal education have been made more explicit than in the United States. Despite the disadvantages attached to such a system, it has resulted in the saving and fostering of countless good minds. For this new elite, the absence of theological culture is a privation, whether or not it is recognized as such.

edge which is vivid and concrete, whose laws of development would be different from those of strictly scientific theology, and whose order of presentation would, of course, be different. It was proposed that whereas the progress of scientific theology is by way of clarification of concepts and logical connection of truths, this new theology would progress according to the vivid and concrete expression of Catholic doctrine. The movement later spread to America, where it seems to have developed into the notion that there should be distinct theologies for the clergy and the laity. [75]

The theory, as it was developed by its early proponents, lost popularity in Europe. [76] Such progressive theologians as Karl Rahner, S. J., have clearly rejected the idea that there should be two theologies. [77] It is true that much of theology does not bear witness for modem man, that a profound and far-reaching reform is needed. But the creation of a " second theology " only confuses the issue.

### C. *Participatirm in One Theology*

·Participated being is limited to the capacity of that which participates. [78] That is, a participated perfection is necessarily limited because it is shared in according to the capacity or potency of the participating subject. Such a limited perfection implies an unreceived and infinite perfection and also implies varying degrees of participation according to varying capacities or potencies into which the perfection is received. Theology may be considered in this way, as a participated perfection. Knowledge of God is possessed completely only by God, who alone has comprehensive knowledge of the divine essence. It is

•• There is evidence of this in some textbooks currently used in colleges and universities.

•• R. Aubert, *La theologie catholique au milieu du XX• siecle* (Paris: Casterman, 1954), pp. 47-48. " L'idee premiere . . . de mettre sur pied, parallelement a Ia science theologique classique, une seconde theologie, kerygmatique, semble de plus en plus abandonnee."

.. K. Rahner, S. J., "Kerygmatische Theologie," *l&dkon fiir Theologie und Kirche* 6, col. l!l6.

•• I, 75, *5,* ad 4.

possessed by the blessed in heaven in varying degrees, for one sees more perfectly than another, according as he has greater charity. It is obvious that it would be absurd to imagine that on earth our theology be had equally by all. It might be worthwhile to consider this last point more carefully, however.

First, there is always a danger that the participation of a perfection be considered in terms which are too quantitative. We speak of" more and less," and this is normally tied in our psychology to images of measure. It is important to remember that theology is a habit, that is, a kind of *quality.* It would be ridiculous to imagine it as a monolithic lump, of which some possess more, some less. There are qualitative differences in our possession of theology. The truth of this fact becomes more evident if we consider the great complexity of human psychology. Since none of us can fully possess theology-not even the greatest theologian-it is right that what is lacking be " filled up " to some extent by the vision of other minds, proceeding from different experiences and points of view, emphasizing different aspects. Infinite truth can be refracted in" an infinite variety " of ways. To recognize this is not to forget the unity of theology, but to see the richness within that unity.

A second observation in connection with the idea that theology is not had equally by all is that there is no neat line between theologians and non-theologians, between those who have the habitus and those who only have a disposition toward theology. It may seem convenient to speak of "the simple faithful " as opposed to " the theologians," but in fact it may be too convenient. Men and women who are truly developed in the study of philosophy, of the humanities, and of the sciences cannot remain " little ones " in theological matters without suffering a deep deformity within themselves. It is true that circumstances may prevent them from learning " much " theology in a quantitative and material sense. However, a habit is not intelligible in quantitative terms. It is not necessary that theology as presented to such people be qualitatively inferior, sub-scientific, and " concrete." In fact, the result of such a

presentation can only be contempt for the science thus caricatured.

## CoNCLUSION

The eminent Protestant theologian, Paul Tillich, has written:

> A theological system is supposed to satisfy two basic needs: the statement of the truth of the Christian message and the interpretation of this truth for every new generation. Theology moves back and forth between two poles, the eternal truth of its foundation and the temporal situation in which the eternal truth must be received. Not many theological systems have been able to balance the two demands perfectly. Most of them either sacrifice elements of the truth or are not able to speak to the situation. Some of them combine both shortcomings. Afraid of missing the eternal truth, they identify it with some previous theological work, with traditional concepts and solutions, and try to impose these on a new, different situation. [79]

It is worthwhile to consider the import of these words. There can be little doubt that the work of St. Thomas "balanced the two demands" in his temporal situation. There is a grave temptation, however, to imagine that this balance was achieved once and for all. But Tillich's point was precisely that such a thing cannot be "once and for all." Constant change and adaptation are necessary.

It has always been true, unfortunately, that the most deadly enemies-unwitting but deadly enemies-of a great thinker have been his disciples. There is evidence that St. Thomas has not escaped this curse. Karl Rahner has pointed out that much of theology does not have relevance for modern man.[80] Hans Kung lists "Thomism" among complaints on the part of Catholics (together with such items as Roman centralism, episcopal bureaucracy, scandals among the clergy, and the pilgrimage racket).[81] To fail to recognize any validity in this

[79] *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), Vol. 1, p. 3.

[80] *Op. cit.*, col. 126; also the opening pages of *Theological Investigations*, vol. 1, trans. by C. Ernst, O. P. (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1961).

[81] *The Council and Reunion*, trans. by Cecily Hastings (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1961), p. 230.

charge, to be defensive, is to confirm it in the minds of those who make it.

The Anglican Bishop Robinson's book, *Honest to God,* has had great popularity among Catholic intellectuals as well as among Protestants. [82] One of the astonishing things about the book is that many of the ideas which the Bishop seems to think are revolutionary, which appear to him as a break with traditional theology, are in fact very ancient. The Bishop-and .perhaps most of his readers-do not know how traditional he is, that what he is rejecting is in large measure a caricature of tradition. [83] The same phenomenon is common enough among critics of Thomism, and it is reasonable to suppose that this reflects a failure in understanding and in communication on both sides.

Speculative theology in its most profound sense is totally incompatible with ultra-conservatism (the" heresy" *par excellence* because it is most opposed to the life of the spirit), and yet this is its most deadly caricature, proposed and accepted as its real self. In fact, insofar as it is true to itself, it is open to the real world, the world of experience, and recognizes a need for growth and change. Welcoming all the new knowledge which the world can bring to it, a theology which is speculative in the deepest sense remains open to the future.

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[82] John A. T. Robinson, *Honest to God* (London: SCM Press, 1968).

•• Rev. Herbert Me. Cabe, 0. P. has an interesting review-article on Dr. Robinson's book in *Blackfriars,* July, 1968, in which he 'points to a number of specifics in which the Bishop actually takes a very traditional position while thinking himself to be very revolutionary.

# THE EUCHARIST: A REGENERATIVE SACRIFICE

SINCE EARLY times Christians have sensed that the sacraments have meaning at two different extremes. One extreme, or point of origin, is God and the economy of grace, and it yields nuggets of understanding only to faith. The other equally-mysterious extreme is Adam and the panorama of creation, and science's comprehension of the latter is quite as arduous and certainly more piecemeal. H the sacraments, like Christ, are stretched between heaven and earth, then the search for their intelligibility must go simultaneously upwards and downwards; and so in fact we find, in Christian thinking, two pursuits as distinct as astronomy and geology. A ready example of geology (but of astronomy as well) in primitive Christianity is Tertullian's *de Baptismo.* It spends several chapters establishing the dignity of ordinary water and water's innate suitability as matter for the sacrament of our rebirth. Much more recently Louis Beirnaert, following Mircea Eliade's *Traite d'Histoire des Religions,* goes further and shows how " on all planes--cosmic, anthropological, ritual-the waters bring death and rebirth. They are an abyss of destruction and a womb of regeneration." [1] As a specifically Christian thing, of course, baptism does not refer primarily to the " mythic *arche* but to the death and resurrection of Christ." [2] It is grounded in archetypes but validated by the new ingredient, Christian faith. Water, if you like, has been baptized.

In this essay I propose to examine the sacrament of the Eucharist, using the twofold method of Tertullian and Beirnaert. We will see how one aspect of sacrifice brought to light by Eliade is common to archaic and Hebrew-Christian thought, and consequently forms an important part of the sign-content of the Eucharist.

[1] Caoss CuRRENTS, Fall 1951, p. 69.

[2] *Ibid.,* p. 70.

### *Death and Life*

Already in the NT., in Paul, the opposites death and life have been used conjointly to illuminate the content of a sacrament, namely baptism:

> Know you not that all we who are baptized in Christ Jesus are baptized in his death? For we are buried together with him by baptism into death: that, as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life.[8]

We are going to find both death and life also present as a pair in the eucharistic sacrifice-we might have expected to find them there anyway simply on the grounds of the many other relationships which obtain between baptism and the Eucharist.

It is commonly held in Catholic theology that the separate or " double " consecration of the bread and wine is symbolic of Christ's death, reminiscent of the separation of his body and blood on the cross. The death-symbolism is more basic still: for the NT itself describes the rite of the Last Supper as a memorial of the passion of the Lord, and as the inauguration of of the new blood-covenant. As a sacrifice, then, and with special reference to the consecration of the elements, the Eucharist declares "the death of the Lord" (I Cor. 11:26). The *life* of the Lord, on the other hand, which we receive when we partake of the sacrificial meal at communion-time, is considered as a distinct phase of the Eucharist, with the result that the life-symbolism in its stands in isolation from, and in contrast to, the death-symbolism of the sacrifice-as-such.

It is the thesis of the present study, however, that life-symbolism can be found at the very heart of the sacrifice itself, quite apart from, and in addition to, the life of the Risen Lord present on the altar and received in the Sacred Meal. The very sacrifice spells life and death at one and the same time, just as baptism does.

[8] *Romans* 6:8, 4.

## *The Passion as Lifegiving*

It should not be taboo, even in these post-Durrwellian years, to connect our redemption with the death of Christ. Indeed, there is no intention of minimizing Christ's Resurrection or of emending Father Durrwell's contributions. What is said here leaves the Resurrection's causality intact. Let us leave modern Resurrection-theology aside, then, and take a look first at St. Thomas' position.

In St. Thomas' view, the redemption comes from Christ's death in one way, and from his Resurrection in another. He says:

> Justification is a new life of grace, and in this respect it can be viewed as coming from the Resurrection (as *terminus ad quem)* . But insofar as justification is a release from guilt, it seems to come more from the passion *(terminus a quo)* .[4]

Starting from zero (guilt), our first stage of participation in Christ's life (justification) is his act of liberation, trap-springing, effected by his kenosis. For just as surely as our rising to a new life is a co-ordinate of Christ's Resurrection, our dying to sin and the old man depends on his death and descent into the tomb. Seen from this limited perspective, the early and medieval theology of the harrowing of hell retains some validity.[5]

In the same article St. Thomas asks whether "the sacraments of the new law get their power from the passion of Christ." In answering, he states that the passion accounts for the destruction of sin in us. And what accounts for *life?* The passion, he says; he does not, in this place, include the Resur-

[4] *Summa theol.* III, q. a. 5 ad 3.

[5] An excellent theological development of the harrowing of hell is found toward the end of William Langland's *Vision of Piers Plowman,* which combines the classic-patristic and the Anselmian notions of the Atonement; for the classic-patristic, cf. G. Au!en, *Christus Victor,* tr. A. G. Hebert (SPCK 1931). For an important explicit linking of classical Atonement theory with the Eucharist, see the eucharistic prayer of St. Hippolytus of Rome discussed in J. Jungmann, S. J., *The Early Liturgy to the Time of Gregory the Great,* tr. F. Brunner (Notre Dame, 1959)' p. 67-73.

rection. In other words, not only is Christian death (dying to sin) referred to the passion, but the Christian's new life is as well, at least in one way. The life St. Thomas is talking about is the cult of God in the religion lived by Christians. Here is the passage:

> Christ freed us from sin chiefly through his passion, which provided the cause, the merit, and the necessary reparation. Likewise by the passion Christ put into effect the central rite of the Christian religion, " offering himself as an oblation and victim to God," as *Ephesians* 5:2 says.[6]

He thus temporarily suspends his Resurrection-theology to connect life (the life of worship) with the passion itself.

But in what way does Christian cultic life derive from the passion? Taking cultic life in function of the Church and the sacraments, the Fathers' and later theologians' opinion that the Church and sacraments were born from the side of Christ on the cross becomes apropos. St. Thomas uses the image at the end of article five:

> It is clear that the sacraments of the Church derive their efficacy mainly from the passion of Christ. The energy the passion released is transmitted to us when we receive them. As an illustration of this you have the water and blood flowing from Christ's side while he hung on the cross. The water and blood are reminiscent of baptism and the Eucharist, the two most powerful sacraments.[7]

Christ's death, then, is situated at the quiet place where Christian life originates. On Holy Saturday, something germinates. On the holy Sabbath, someone works. Put more technically, the Christian sacrificial cult, namely the passion together with its Eucharistic memorial, is a cult of vivification. Sacrificial immolation itself means life. Sacrificial death means regeneration. How so? Because of these words: "If a grain of wheat drops to the ground and dies it will be seed for a whole new wheat plant" (Jn. 12:25).

[6] *Summa theol.* III, q. 62, a. 5.

[7] *Ibid.*

### *Mythical Regeneration through Sacrifice*

According to Eliade in *Cosmos and History,* sacrifice involves, besides death, the re-creation, regeneration, or renovation of sacred cosmic energy. The two contrasting poles "death-regeneration" are often found linked, in the religious consciousness of archaic man, with sacrifice. And man's religious consciousness, being the this-world anchor of the sacraments, is not irrelevant. Since sacrifice is a religious act evidently invented by man himself, the meaning of the act, too, is left up to man. To say that sacrifice "is" this or that, it is enough to show that man attributes this or that meaning to it. Some meanings, however, are more valid than others-especially those corresponding to, or in harmony with, the original intentions of the inventors. This does not mean that a later user of the act cannot re-validate it, as it were, by superimposing a newer and perhaps more meaningful meaning on the earlier one., and so re-define the act; indeed, the concept " Christian fulfillment " requires some such openness in the natural acts of fallen man. It remains true, nevertheless, that even though archaic man's theories do not pre-empt the meaning of sacrifice once and for all, they do hold a privileged, or at any rate instructive, place in reference to our own interpretation of our Christian sacraments. Granting this methodological principle, then, let us survey Eliade's material.

Archaic man was driven by his terror of the flux and contingency of historical time to try to place himself in the initial timeless period of creation when being had not begun to lose itself in becoming. His religious rituals were designed to re-establish the primordial instant so that time could begin again with a fresh and perfect start, free of misfortunes and faults. Sacrifice was one of the many means of re-inaugurating the " beginning ":

> The erection of an altar dedicated to Agni is merely the microcosmic imitation of the creation. Furthermore, any sacrifice is, in turn, the repetition of the act of creation, as Indian texts explicitly state.[8]

[8] Eliade, *Cosmos and History,* New York, 1959, p. 11. Also: "But if the raising

Sacrifice reactualizes creation because

> in certain archaic cosmogonies, the world was given existence through the sacrifice of a primordial monster, symbolizing chaos (Tiamat) .... [9]

Sacrifice had another function, especially sacrifice of the first-born. It kept up the "circulation of sacred energy in the cosmos (from the divinity to man and nature, then from man-through sacrifice-back to the divinity, and so on)." [10] The firstborn was considered a "divine" child (so it was, in a different way, with Isaac, Samuel, and Jesus). An unmarried girl often slept in the temple to supply herself with a suitable sacrificial victim: the priest or "stranger" with whom she had sexual relations was the god's representative. [11] Consequently,

> the sacrifice of this first child restored to the divinity what belonged to him. Thus the young blood increased the exhausted energy of the god (for the so-called fertility gods exhausted their own substance in the effort expended in maintaining the world and ensuring it abundance; hence they themselves needed to be periodically regenerated). [12]

I take it as established, therefore, that sacrifice, in archaic man's mythological world, was closely bound up with the notion of restoration of life. Life, life-energy, and regeneration were the product not of some other act over against sacrifice, but of sacrifice itself. Sacrifice in its own right was regenerative.

of the altar imitates the cosmogonic act, the sacrifice proper has another end: to restore the primordial unity, that which existed before the Creation. For Prajapati created the cosmos from his own substance; and once he had given it forth, 'he feared death' and the gods brought him offerings to restore and revive him. In just the same way, he who today celebrates the sacrifice reproduces this primordial restoration of Prajapati . . . with every sacrifice, the Brahman reactualizes the archetypal cosmogonic act ..." (p. 78).

• *Ibid.,* p. Also: "The sacrifice performed at the building of a house, church, bridge, is simply the imitation, on the human plane, of the sacrifice performed *in illo tennpore* to give birth to the world" (p. 30).

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

[11] A more widespread interpretation of temple-sleeping is that it procured "union with the divinity."

[12] *Ibid.,* p. 109.

### *Sacrificial Regeneration in the Old Testament*

Needless to say, the regeneration-creation sacrifices described by Eliade do not correspond exactly to Hebrew or Christian sacrifice. As J. Van der Veken points out, sacrificial theory depends on the theory of godhead.[13] Yahweh does not need to be regenerated. Christians do not need to abolish time and restore any original *arche.* Still, the difference is not total. There is, *mutatis mutandis,* a re-creation and vivification theme running through both Hebrew and Christian sacrifice. Near-Eastern cultures, in which we can safely assume an archaic mentality, lent lavishly to Hebrew religion. The Hebrew forms were, in tum, the model for most, if not all, of the NT cult. Of course, as sacrificial theory evolved, it underwent changes, differentiations, specializations, and extinctions, *pari passu* with God's own gradual self-revelation. For example, there is the gradual interiorization of sacrifice at the hands of the prophets. But this qualification need not imply that all pagan leitmotifs are absent from Hebrew and Christian sacrifice.

Let it suffice for our purpose here to review some OT insititutions in coarse outline. At an early date (beginning, say, with Abraham) Hebrew sacrifice sealed a *covenant* with God. As biblical theologians insist, " covenant " is a very central concept in salvation-history. What did the covenant do? It began, it begot, God's people; it marked their conception as a community existing before God's face. It was a creation, a new creation, a fresh start in a history of starts. Each sacrifice by the patriarchs was an enlargement of the fetus in the womb of God. The Sinai-covenant was the birth of the people; it reorientated, re-created, their life with God. And new covenant-creations continued throughout Hebrew history, though not always in sacrificial contexts. Thus the law written on the heart was a fresh beginning (in theory); Ezechiel's spiritual temple represented another; the important re-creation theme in *II Isaiah* is another.

[18] " Sacrifice in God's Saving Design," CoLLECTANEA MECHLINIENSIA 2:57, p. 288-41.

The *paschal sacrifice,* which is so natural an analogate of the Eucharist that Christ used it as the setting for the Last Supper and St. Thomas could take it as the summary of all OT eucharistic types,[14] was a new-life ceremony. The Israelite first-born were as good as dead men, but the lamb-blood turned the angel of death away, and they got a new lease on life. Again, the Egyptian exile was a no-life for the Hebrews; their exodus from that death was an entrance into fresh life, the beginning of a new creation.[15]

The sacrifice of *firstfruits* passed from natural religion into the Law-without, of course, child sacrifice or the need for "restoring God." Firstfruit offering is based on a desire for fertility in man, beast, and field. It is clearly a vestige of fertility religion and so pertains to the vivification theme with which we are concerned. The firstfruits ritual described in *Deuter-onomy* 26, for instance, includes a description of the land "flowing with milk and honey." The ritual further includes a recounting of the exodus-event which, as we have seen, was a passage from death to life.

Even the *Mosaic legislation* as such can perhaps be linked with vivification. Note two connections: first, the faithful execution of the Law was seen as having a causal influence on Israel's well-being-expressed as fertility:

> If you walk in my precepts and keep my commandments, and do them, I will give you rain in due season; and the ground shall bring forth its increase, and the trees shall be filled with fruit. The threshing of your harvest shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time ....[16]

When we recall that much of the legislation in the Torah is specifically sacrificial, a second connection-weak it may be-between sacrifice and vivification is established.[17]

[14] *Summa theol.* III, q. 73, a. 6.

[15] L. Bouyer, *Liturgical Piety* (Notre Dame, 1955), p. 120. C£. also C. Stuhlmueller, "The Holy Eucharist: Symbol of the Passion," WoRSHIP, 4:60.

[16] *Leviticus* 26:3-10.

[17] If it were within the limits of this survey we might go on to find traces of regeneration-vivification in several other OT themes (which, however, have no bear-

How far have we come from the re-creative sacrifice detailed by Eliade? Archaic man sacrificed to restore the cosmos and its gods-evidently not the case with the Israelites. But what did Hebrew sacrifice restore? The Israelites *themselves.* Covenant-sacrifice, which temple-sacrifice perpetuated, was their bond with God. It was their bounden share in the act whereby God kept them alive before his face. It was they, not Yahweh, whom the sacrifices regenerated.

### *Sacrificial Regeneration in the New Testament*

Christian sacrifice goes a step further in this new direction. Instead of man insuring God's vivifying action by sacrificing created goods, man's vivification is now accomplished by the self-sacrifice of the very author of life, God himself: "You killed the author of life, whom God raised from the dead" (Acts 8: 15). The NT consistently likes to describe Christ's redemptive work in the language of OT sacrifice. Christ is the "lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1: the immolated paschal lamb (I Cor. 5: 7), the lamb "slain before the beginning of the world" (Apoc. 18.8) who presides as Lord of history over the new aeon (Apoc. Clearly, Christ's voluntary death is conceived as a sacrifice. It remains to be demonstrated how this sacrifice can be said to deliver from sin, inaugurate a season of new-life, restore creation, and give man the possibility of becoming a new being.

Theology often understands Christ's sacrificial work as a propitiation or appeasement of divine wrath and justice, as a ransom or paying-off of a dept or price, as a scapegoat-substitute. Such notions as these are derived from profane Greek sources, however, and not from OT usage-if we accept the findings of S. Lyonnet, S. J.[18] *Lytrousthai,* for instance, sug-

ing on sacrifice): Jerusalem-delivered, the remnant, the Day of Yahweh (with the cosmic cataclysm which always precedes a new order of things), and messianism.

[18] *De Peccato et Redemptione 2: De Vocabulario Redemptionis* (Rome, Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1960). Much the same line is present in Protestant biblical scholarship as early as the thirties (C. H. Dodd, C. A. A. Scott, V. Taylor; references in J. Lawson, cited below).

gests not the payment of a price, but simply God's deliverance of his people from Egypt or other evil circumstances. *skesthai* does not mean that man placates God, but that God pardons sin; guilt is removed, but it is God himself who lovingly acts to remove it. Nor, finally, is the notion of Christ being a "scapegoat" biblical. Lyonnet's thesis has been roborated by L. Sabourin, S. J., who shows that the redemption accomplished through Christ's sacrifice is principally a *tion* which, like the exodus, is initiated by God.[19]

Christ's sacrifice is an announcement of deliverance, an act of obedience which reverses man's sinful attitude and elicits God's pardon. We can appreciate this perspective at once if we put Christ's death in the setting of his life as a whole. The Incarnation is a *kenosis*, as *Philippians* has it: "He emptied himself . . . and, found like man in form, humbled himself and became obedient unto death, death, indeed, by crucifixion" (Phil. 2:7, 8). Christ's sacrificial death brings the Incarnation to a sharp, unequivocally expressive point: complete giving obedience to God's will on man's part, complete generous self-giving to man-pardon-on God's part. When Christ went into the synagogue at Nazareth and announced his mission in terms of the Servant-song of *Isaiah* 61, he described his life-work and his death equally well, but without including the idea of "propitiation": "He has sent me to announce release for the captives . . . to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord " (Lk. 4: 18) .

It has been necessary to discuss, however briefly, the character of Christ's sacrifice in itself, since the eucharistic sacrifice is a re-speaking (as the Last Supper was a pre-speaking) of that exact same sacrifice. Now we are in a position to ask again, How is Christ's sacrifice, seen in the light of the above considerations, to be thought of as regenerative and vivifying?

We have first to note that *deliverance,* the common thread of OT-NT salvation history, can easily be taken as an entrance

[19] *Redempticm sacrifideUe: Une enquete exegetique,* Studia: Recherches de philosophie et theologie publiees part les facultes S. J. de Montreal 11 (Brussels: Desclee, 1961).

into a new condition or fresh hold on life. Secondly, the *new-covenant* in blood, the death which the Eucharist announces (I Cor. 11:25, 26), is, like the OT covenants, a source of life for those who share in it (Jn. 6). Thirdly, we observe that Christ's work (which we know was sacrificial) was seen as a *re-creation.* Paul's "new-being" theology takes that tack: "The old things have passed away-see, they are made new" (II Cor. 5: 17); also the "cosmic birth-pangs" of *Romans* (8: 19-23); also the "recapitulation in Christ" of *Ephesians* (1: 10); and the" second Adam" theme, in which the last life-giving Adam destroys death and assures our resurrection (I Cor. 15: *35-58).*

In the fourth place, the theme of *Christ-as-firstborn* merits closer attention. Already in the Synoptics (Lk. 2: 7) the Son of Mary is called "firstborn." The author of *Hebrews* applies the word to Christ (1: 6) and to the redeemed people (12: 23). For Paul, Christ is the firstborn of many brethren (Rom. 8: 29) -that is, we ourselves are not really born until we are called in Christ. Christ is the firstfruits (*aparche)* of the dead (I Cor. 15: 20), the redeemed being the rest of the same harvest. Most significant, though, is the liturgical hymn Paul uses in *Colossians.* Christ is:

> the image of the invisible God, firstborn of all creatures. For in him everything was created. . . . All things were created by him and in him.... He is the *arche,* firstborn from the dead.... Because in him, it hath well pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell: and through him to reconcile all things unto himself, making peace through the blood of his cross (I: 15-20).

Christ-the-first born begins the new creation. In him *Genesis* is done over again, this time with an everlastingly happy ending. The cosmos is restored, and man, by Christ's life-blood, is brought back to life and received by the Father. If we now re-read Eliade's texts, we cannot help being struck by the juxtaposition in the NT of the concepts " firstborn-sacrifice-regeneration-restoration." We may conclude at this point, or at least strongly suspect, that Christ's sacrificial death as such is regenerative.

### *lrenaeus: the Offering of Firstfruits*

St. Irenaeus of Lyons has surely connected regenerative sacrifice with the Eucharist. Now, it cannot be claimed that he proposed a thesis exactly like mine, but he came startlingly near it. It will not be a waste of time to inspect a few passages to see how regenerative sacrifice might work-does work-in terms of the Eucharist itself. What I have to say in this section is not a proof, but rather an illustration.

Irenaeus' redemption doctrine agrees, by and large, with the one outlined by Lyonnet and Sabourin.[20] Irenaeus holds, in his well-known teaching on "recapitulation," that Christ, the second Adam, went back over Adam's mismanaged work and corrected it. Christ did what archaic man longed to do, viz., *he restored things to their original state,* and so gave the human race a *new start.*[21]

> When He became incarnate, and was made man, He commenced afresh the long line of human beings, and furnished us, in a brief, comprehensive manner with salvation; so that what we had lost in Adam ... we might recover in Christ Jesus (3-18-1).[22]

Recapitulation also included the notion of "summing up, bringing to a climax." In this connection we must notice Irenaeus' frequent use of the word *firstfruits.* Christ is the initial fruitful instance in a long series of fruits derived from himself. It is the first-fruitful Christ who., in offering (sacrificing) himself, brings men back to life:

> [Christ descended] to those things which are of the earth beneath, ... and ascend[ed] to the height above, offering and commending to His Father that human nature which had been found, making in His own person the firstfruits of the resurrection of man (3-19-3).

The human nature he offers is his own; and it is a firstfruit; and its sacrifice recalls the rest of us to life.

Now see Irenaeus saying nearly the same thing in a Eucharistic passage:

[20] Cf. John Lawson, *The Biblical Theology of Saint lrenaeus* (London, 1948), pp. 144-49; 168-98;

[21] *Ibid.,* p. 143.

[22] References are to Book, chapter, and selection of *Against Heresies* in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (New York,

Again, giving directions to His disciples to offer to God the first-fruits of His own created things-not as if He stood in need of them, but that they might be themselves neither unfruitful nor ungrateful -He took that created thing, bread, and gave thanks, and said, "This is My body." And the cup likewise, which is part of that creation to which we belong, He confessed to be His blood, and taught the new oblation of the new covenant; which the Church receiving from the apostles, offers to God throughout all the world, to Him who gives us as the means of subsistance the firstfruits of His own gifts in the New Testament ... (4-17-5).

Archaic man, we saw, sacrificed to restore the gods just as the Hebrew, reversing the beneficiary, sacrificed to restore himself. Yahweh doesn't need sacrifice. Irenaeus found it necessary to labor this point-even Augustine had to, several centuries later (de *Civ. Dei,* X). The disciples, then, offered the Eucharist "that they might be themselves neither unfruitful nor ungrateful"; it is to *us* that Christ "gives the means of subsistence." And the *source* of our subsistence is those very "firstfruits "-which Irenaeus identifies with Christ.

We need not doubt, as Lawson does/[8] that Irenaeus means to call the Church's Eucharist a real sacrifice, or that it is Christ himself, as the bread and wine, who is sacramentally offered. For first, Irenaeus' " non-substitutionary exposition of the death of Christ " is in no way contradicted: the sacramental offerring is *theologically* (as well as numerically) identical with Christ's once-for-all deliverance-sacrifice. Christ's redemptive life simultaneously a) was offered kenotically *to God,* b) exercised nothing on God, but rather worked its effect on *men.* Irenaeus carefully distinguishes Christian sacrifice from any sacrifice imagined to be something God wants or needs. Nevertheless the Eucharist, which is over and over called on offerring, oblation., and sacrifice, is right in line with Hebrew sacrifice-with the difference that the Eucharist is a "pure" sacrifice (4-18-1) made by "freemen" instead of slaves (4-18-2).

We may also take exception to Lawson's belief that Irenaeus thinks of offering only the *material elements.* For Irenaeus

[23] Lawson, *op. cit.,* p. 270 and n. 1.

stresses " creation " in these Eucharistic pericopes to emphasize the fact that we are not giving God anything: what we are giving him is His-he *made* it. *He* created it; how could *he need* it? And so we do not have to restrict the" things offered" to the bread and wine *qua* created, as if the body and blood of Christ (which are *also* of the creation-Irenaeus insists against the Gnostics-3-19-3, 3) would thereby be excluded from the offering. Irenaeus nowhere implies that only *one* aspect of the Eucharist-the visible-is offered. The *Eucharist,* which is the body and blood of the Lord, is offered.

For we offer to Him His own, announcing consistently the fellowship and union of the flesh and Spirit. For as the bread, which is produced from the earth, when it receives the invocation of God, is no longer common bread, but the Eucharist, consisting of two realities, earthly and heavenly; so also our bodies, when they receive the Eucharist, are no longer corruptible, having the hope of the resurrection to eternity (4-18-5; cf. Frag. 37).

It is not thinkable that either the offering or the reception of the merely material reality would suffice to effect our resurrection; on the contrary, only the offering of the " human nature " of Christ makes the " firstfruits of the resurrection of man" (3-19-3). The "corn of wheat ... serves for the use of man"; but only after it receives "the Word of God" and " becomes a Eucharist, which is the body and blood of Christ " does it nourish us unto resurrection (5-2-3).

Our conclusion about Irenaeus' conception of the Eucharist as a regenerative sacrifice is this: in the Church's Eucharistic sacrifice we offer to God Christ, who stands at the center of the sacrifice as the firstfruits of the universe, the new creation in which we his members are the ones re-created. Here is Irenaeus one more time:

And as we are His members, we are also nourished by means of the creation (and He Himself grants the creation to us, for He causes His sun to rise, and sends rain when He wills). He has acknowledged the cup (which is a part of the creation) as His own blood, from which He bedews our blood; and the bread (also a part of the creation) He has established as His own body, from which He gives increase to our bodies

## *Conclusion*

The second offertory prayer of the Roman Rite Mass has an interesting reference to regeneration: [24]

> God, who marvelously established human nature, and more marvelously renewed it *(reformasti),* given us, through the mystery of this water and wine, the power to share Christ's divinity, since he designed to assume our humanity.

The Creator has renewed human nature in Christ. The original creation and NT renovation are referred to in the phrases in apposition to " God." Then " give us " begins a petition for renovation in the present, through the mystery of the water and wine now being offered. The daily Eucharist is, therefore, a continual source of renovation and renewal. And how? through Christ who, by partaking of our humanity, became the firstfruits of us.

Baptism, the sacrament of regeneration, does not outdo its sister-sacrament in creative outpour. Water is life-and death. Christ's blood is death-and life: Christ's death and life, and ours. The "burial" of baptism signifies both death and life in the one selfsame act. The Eucharistic sacrifice, in itself and quite apart from the Communion banquet, signifies life no less than death. Now:, the sacraments bring into being what they signify. And we have seen how the act of sacrifice, as it has existed on earth among men, including Hebrews and Christians, does express the idea of rebirth and re-creation. The Mass, then, by making present Christ's once-for-all sacrifice, in some sense effects a daily regeneration for us. A sentence in Emile Mersch catches the thought very nicely, and summarizes our thesis.

> We may say that the Mass is Christ's sacrifice which is the regeneration of mankind; it is Christ's sacrifice, the supreme human act, installing itself at the origin of all human activity. [25]

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[24] Cf. also the second communion prayer: " *vimificasti."*

[25] *The Theology of the Mystical Body* (St. Louis, 1955), p. *585.*

# NOTES ON OUR CONTRIBUTORS

t YVEs R. SIMON, Ph. D., who until his untimely death was affiliated with the Committee on Social Thought, University of Chicago, was the author of several books including *The Philosophy of Democratic Government* and *A General Theory of Authority* and contributor to numerous scholarly journals. The present article was edited by Edward D. Simmons and is published with the permission of Mrs. Paule Simon of Albuquerque, New Mexico.

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# **BOOK** REVIEWS

*Worlds Apart: A Dialogue of the 1960's.* By OWEN BARFIELD. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1963. Qll pp. $5.00.

Since C. P. Snow set off discussion on the problem of the " two cultures," the range of solution offered has been wide indeed. Jacques Barzum offers a basically humanist answer in *Science: The Glorious Entertainment;* at the opposite pole stands Dennis Gabor's *Inventing the Future.* In between, personal attempts are made to bridge the " gap " between science and the humanities by taking a stand in both camps-notable attempts of this kind have been made by Julian Huxley and by Snow himself. All these, and many other attempts besides, have sought to *discuss* the issue in one way or another; Owen Barfield, in *Worlds Apart,* attempts to *display* the" two cultures " gap, in almost shocking starkness, and in this way to point toward a solution.

Imagine a lawyer with intellectual interests broad enough to think Platonic dialogue practicable in the twentieth century. Imagine this lawyer rounding up a group of scientists, philosophers, and educators for a weekend retreat devoted to such Platonic dialogue on the very contemporary problem posed by the "two cultures" controversy. Imagine, finally, that the sessions are recorded on tape. Imagine all this, and you have the plan of Barfield's book in broadest outline.

To sharpen the focus and supply something of the flavor, it helps to get to know some of the characters Barfield has imaginatively assembled. There is Ranger, the technologically expert physicist, who shows all the wide-eyed enthusiasm of narrowly trained youth when made aware of broader speculative issues. There is, still within the same field but at the opposite extreme, an older and more reflective physicist given the name Brodie. He plays the respondent's role in a "staged" Platonic dialogue, which is the real core of the larger dialogue which makes up *Worlds Apart.* In this dialogue-within-a-dialogue Socrates is played by Burgeon (the narrator, who happens to be a lawyer with broad enough intellectual interests to think Platonic dialogue practicable in the twentieth century), and there are such deliberate slips as "I am not sure, Socrates-Burgeon, I mean." Brodie, for all his broadmindedness, finds Socrates-Burgeon an elusive adversary. Finally, there are five additional, equally interesting characters, ranging from an irascible, even rude, linguistic philosopher, to an effusive and thoroughly committed evolutionary biologist.

*Worlds Apart,* obviously, is a clever and imaginative attempt to face the " two cultures " issue at once squarely and in broadest scope. The work is thoroughly serious in intent and deserves every recommendation. Whether

the attempt succeeds or not is another question. To this reader, it seemed to fall short of its intended mark if only because (a) it is questionable whether Platonic dialogue *is* practicable in the twentieth century, and (b) the very attempt at fidelity to the real situation could leave a definite impression that the " gap " is unbridgeable. Even so, one can only admire the author for his originality and hope that his attempt will convince at least someone of the urgency of the issues involved.

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*William of Auxerre's Theology of the Hypostatic Union.* By WALTER H. PRINCIPE, C. S. B. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1968, (Studies and Texts, # 7). Pp.

Authority and the use of *auctoritates* are essential to the methodology of theology. Hence, an historical study of an outstanding theologian of the past is always of genuine interest. For, as the medieval expression has it, " Authority is like a putty nose: you can twist it any way you like." If theological science is not to be twisted " any way you like," the *auctoritates* must be understood as well as used. For that, an intelligent grasp of their temporal theological context is indispensable. Fr. Principe is attempting to reconstruct, at least in part, by this offering and three subsequent volumes the theological context in which the medieval masters were produced and worked. {The volumes now in preparation also deal with the theology of the hypostatic union: according to Alexander of Hales, Hugh of St. Cher, and Philip the Chancellor.)

The present volume's subject is the best-known of the "William of Auxerre's," the secular Master, who began teaching at Paris well before His principal work was done in Christology and Sacramental Theology. William's appointment by Gregory IX to a commission for the correction of editions of Aristotle to be used in the schools points up one value of studying his work: it is a concrete instance of how much Aristotle influenced the developing Parisian theology. Yet, William was a " logical realist," inheriting his essentialist view of reality from Boethius, through Alan of Lille, and Simon of Tournai. (His attempt to render intelligible the fundamental Christological dogmas without a distinct notion of *existence* vividly illustrates the value of the later work of St. Thomas.) However, William was one of the first to aim at a genuine sythesis and he was not above a good deal of eclecticism, bringing philosophical doctrines of widely divergent origin to bear upon the Christological problems of his day.

A detailed presentation of William's thought is impossible here. It is enough to say that Fr. Principe presents that thought and elucidates its context with admirable skill. Unlike previous studies, his makes detailed analysis of William's philosophical position in vital areas, such as the use of the term, *esse,* individuation and singularity, personality. Moreover, he is carefully concerned to compare and contrast William's position on these and properly Christological questions with those of his contemporaries-making his book truly a door opening upon the whole theological period. In addition he has given the reader a compendious set of explanatory and source notes, a critical text of pertinent parts of William's chief work, the *Summa Aurea* (done by Fr. Principe), a copious bibliography, and a complete index. We hope the subsequent volumes will meet the standard of this one. Together they will provide an admirable source for understanding the context in which many authoritative statements, used in the present-day Christological debates, were hammered out.

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