THE THIRD WAY: *ENCORE*

IN A RELATIVELY RECENT ARTICLE appearing in *The Thomist* Father John Quinn contends that the Third Way's first part, the part in which Saint Thomas concludes to the existence of a necessary being (beings?) in order to explain the existence *now* of anything rather than nothing, is basically sound.[1] Arguing that particular, univocal agents, each one itself corruptible, cannot in and by themselves account for either substantial change *or* the on-going cycle of generation and corruption-and, thanks to the latter, the quasi-perpetuity of natural species-Quinn thinks the Third Way is thus able to infer the existence of a universal *physical* cause of change, one which, evidently, must be a necessary being. He maintains, furthermore, that without such a universal generator (nowhere empirically identifiable, he admits) the universe of things possible not to be (" physical possibles ") would fall to naught, or be *annihilated.* Finally, he apparently views this defense of the Third Way as successfully meeting the objection, frequently raised nowdays, that its reasoning, "if each thing possible not to be at some time is not, and if all things are possible not to be, at one time in the pa.st nothing existed," commits the compos:ition fallacy (or, in terms of modern formal logic, involves an illicit quantifier shift).[2] Quinn, obviously,

[1] John M. Quinn, O.S.A., "The Third Way to God: A New Approach," *The Thomist* 42 (1978), 50-68.

[2] Indeed much of the recent literature on the Third Way has dealt almost exclusively with the question of its supposed composition fallacy. See, for example, the following: Rem B. Edwards, "Composition and the Cosmological Argument," *Mind,* LXXVII (1968), 115-17; *ibid.,* "The Validity of Aquinas' Third Way," *The New Scholasticism,* XLV (1971), 117-26; and Thomas Mautner, "Aquinas's Third Way," *American Philosophical Quarterly,* 6 ,(1969), 800-01. However, as I will show later above (and in a way that has not been done before), the composition fallacy charge is logically ill-founded.

finds nothing wrong with this piece of reasoning, since, again, according to him, without a universal physical cause (also a necessary being) there would be no substantial change, consequently no generation of new substances and thus an eventual " collapse into nothingness."

Since, in my view, Quinn's article, unfortunately, contains several major errors, some of physical philosophy, others of metaphysics, it warrants a reply. However, rather than confine the discussion of this paper to such a narrow, polemical purpose, I should like instead to locate my criticisms of Quinn's defense of the Third Way within a somewhat broader context, namely, one in which I consider the more general and fundamental question of the argument's overall soundness. As Quinn correctly sees, much of the Third Way's difficulty lies not with the composition fallacy charge to which one of its inferences is exposed (and which, I will show, it can successfully meet) but with its presumed capacity to justify its first part's conclusion-the existence of *some* necessary being. Central to this endeavor is the reasoning I have placed in quotation marks above; for it is here not only that the alleged composition fallacy supposedly occurs but also that we are faced with a very dubious premise, one that has proved particularly troublesome for most commentators on the Third Way to justify. While I will accept the truth of this premise and also the subsequent reasoning of the Third Way's first part, I will nonetheless argue (I) that its inference to the existence of a necessary being lacks the conclusive support of sound physical philosophy and (2) that what the Third Way's first part succeeds in establishing is only the existence of *s01nething* necessary, something which need not, however, be identified with an incorruptible substance whether spiritual M material.

There are, moreover, certain difficulties with the Third Way's oft-neglected *second* part, the part in which Saint Thomas concludes to the existence of an *uncaused* necessary being whom he then confidently calls God. While these difficulties are largely of a hermeneutic nature, they can hardly be ignored in any discussion seeking to appraise the Third Way's

overall soundness. There is, in this connection, the infinite series objection which Saint Thomas thought it appropriate to consider in the final section of the argument yet actually *need not* have bothered with in the case of the cause of necessary beings. There are also the following two questions which this part of the argument fails to raise explicitly but whose answers are nevertheless quite important to the argument's completeness: (1) In what precise sense can a necessary being be said to have its *necessi,ty* caused? and (2) Why must there be only *one* uncaused necessary being (as its conclusion so clearly implies)? In my treatment of these questions later on in this paper, I will indicate how their answers serve to bring out the key role played in this argument by a doctrine central to Saint Thomas's metaphysics but which, most likely because of its presumed familiarity, is only implicitly at work in the Third Way's second part. Perhaps this last remark may help explain why many recent commentators on the Third Way have tended to neglect this very important feature of the argument from " the possible and the necessary" to focus instead almost exclusively upon its first part. [3] In sharp contrast, my paper will, in its last main section, present a reconstruction of the *tertia via* in which this doctrine figures prominently.

Accordingly, in what follows I propose to discuss the following topics: I. A Dubious Premise (and the alleged composition fallacy); IL The Failure of the Third Way's First Part; III. The Third Way's Second Part; and IV. A Reconstruction of the Third Way.

•See, for example, C. G. Prado, "The Third Way Revisited," *The New Scholasticism,* XLV (1971), 495-501, and Thomas P. M. Solon, "Some Logical Issues in Aquinas's *Tertia Via," Proceedings of The American Catholic Philosophical Association, XLVI* 78-83. Both these writers seem to think that the nerve of the Third Way's argument is to be found in its first part and that its principal conclusion is to the existence of an ultimate cause of change (in Solon's case, an ultimate efficient cause, and, in Prado's, an ultimate final cause).

I

A Dubious Premise

1. *The alleged composition fallacy.* In an argument of the Third Way's first part we find the following inference;

A. (1) What is possible not to be at some time is not.[4]
if all things are possible not to be, at some time nothing existed.[5]

[4] For a good discussion of the controversy waged among certain modern scholastics about the truth of this proposition see Thomas Kevin Connolly, "The Basis for the Third Proof of the Existence of God," *The Thomist,* XVII (1954), If for no other reason, Connolly's article merits attention for revealing how most, if indeed not all, of the major objections lodged against the Third Way ii.. Anthony Kenny's *The Five Ways* (New York: Schocken Books, 1969) have already been raised and answered during the course of this controversy. One further point by way .of caution. As Connolly's article textually shows, when Saint Thomas speal<s in the Third Way of being "possible not to be," he is not referring to being whose non-existence is conceivable (since even God, according to Aquinas, would fall under *that* category). Nor, correspondingly, by a" necessary being" does he mean one whose existence cannot be denied without contradiction (i. e. a "logically necessary " being, to use the description of certain contemporary Analytic philosophers). By "being possible not to be" he is clearly referring to beings whose essences contain the potency of matter and which are also subject to substantial change; and by " necessary being '" he means one which cannot cease to exist *(assuming it erists)* or else (as in the case of a being whose necessity in being is of itself) the self-existing being. However, this point has already been well argued in Patterson Brown's " St. Thomas' Doctrine of Necessary Being," *The Philosophical Review,* LXXXIII (1964), 76-90, and I merely call attention to it here to inform the reader of what meanings of " possible not to be " and " necessary being" will be operative in this paper.

[5] This argument, which I have designated "A," appears in the following context in the Latin text of the Leonine editi0n: " Invenimus enim in rebus quaedam quae sunt possibilia esse et non esse, cum quaedam inveniantur generari et corrumpi et per consequens possibilia esse et non esse. Impossibile est autem omnia quae sunt talia semper esse, quia quod possibile est non esse quandoque non est. Si igitur omnia sunt possibilia non esse aliquando nihil fuit in rebus." However, the line which reads " Impossibile est autem onmia quae sunt talia semper esse" would seem to be a less preferable rendering than the variant reading "Impossible est autem omnia quae sunt, talia esse" not only because the latter accords more with the Maimonidean exemplar but also because it avoids the ambiguity of the statement "it is impossible that all such beings always exist," since that statement could imply that it is possible for some such beings always to exist-something which Saint Thomas would wish to deny.

Today it is widely thought that *A* contains a composition fallacy, or, in terms of modern formal logic, "an unacceptable interchange in the scope of the universal and existential quantifiers." [6] Those who make this charge evidently do so because they think that the inference from *A* (1) to *A* (2) entails the following argument:

B. (1) Each thing possible not to be at some time is not
(2) Therefore, all things possible not to be at some time are not (missing premise)
(3) Consequently, if all things are possible not to be, at some time in the past nothing existed. [7]

In other words they think that Aquinas must have used another premise in his move from *A* (1) to *A* (2) and they supply *B* (2) as the logical candidate. While Saint Thomas, I would agree, does omit certain premises in his move from *A* (1) to *A* (2), *B* (2) cannot possibly be one of them. He could not have reasoned *B* (1)-B (2), not because he would have seen this inference to be fallacious (although I think this too is true), but basically because he was philosophically prepared to allow that beings possible not to be could, as a class, continue in existence *indefinitely* provided that *not all* beings are possible not to be. In this respect, he would be simply following Aris-

[6] Thomas P. M. Solon, *op. cit.* 80. To put this quotation in its proper context allow me to quote the argument in which it appears: "In fact, from the standpoint of the predicate calculus, Aquinas's argument may be shown to involve an illicit reversal of quantifiers. *He coiri;ends that: 5. Each p•ossible being at some time is not.* 6. *Thus there is a time when al,l possible beings are not.* The general quantificational pattern of this particular inference is *5.* (x) (Ey) Ryx. 6. .'. (Ey) (x) Ryx. Between *5* and 6 there occurs an unacceptable interchange in the scope of the universal and existential quantifiers and, consequently, such reasoning is invalid." (My italics.)

[7] See that portion of Solon's argument that I have placed in italics above. Some other examples of this very same interpretation of *A* are to be found in: Alvin Plantinga, *God, Freedom and Evil* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1974), p. 80 and Anthony Kenny, *op. cit.,* p. 56. It is truly remarkable that so many recent writers on this subject who could, not immodestly, admit to a certain logical expertise have understood *A* to entail *B.* As far as I can determine the earliest suggestion of this charge, at least in modern times, is to be found in Paul Geny, S. J., in his article "Les preuves thomiste de !'existence de Dieu," *Revue de Philosophie,* XXXI (1924), 586-588.

totle, who, as is well known, maintained the eternity 0£ the world and the perpetual existence (as a class) of corruptible things. While Saint Thomas did not share Aristotle's assumption regarding the eternity of the world, he would still acknowledge that God *could* have created such a world and that in that world, assuming it is just like the actual world in other respects, beings possible not to be would, as a class, always exist even though each one 0£ them must necessarily, at some time or other, corrupt.• Moreover, as I have said, he would certainly insist, regarding the actual world, that such beings *could,* as a class, continue in existence forever (provided that some necessary being, or beings, existed) . Accordingly to *B,* however, the truth 0£ *B* (2) is supposed to follow logically (or necessarily) from the truth 0£ *B* (1).

What is more, according to *B's* version of *A, B* (2) should read

B (2') All things possible not to be at some time *in the past* are not.

if we are to make any sense out of *A* (3), the consequent of which asserts "at some time (in the past) nothing was in existence." Yet, as is abundantly clear from the data he selects from which to argue the Third Way, Saint Thomas admits the existence, even *now,* 0£ beings possible not to be. Thus, it is a mistake to think that in *A* Saint Thomas was actually arguing *B.* Rather, his argument here, in standard form, is the following:

C. (1) If each thing possible not to be at some time is not *and* if all things are possible not to be, then at some time in the past nothing existed

(2) Each thing possible not to be at some time is not

[8] An argument may resemble *in form* a composition fallacy but, materially, may not be one. For example: (1) Each part of the house has been painted white; (2) therefore, the whole house has been painted white. This is a perfectly valid inference. For a composition fallacy to occur, then, the attribution to the whole of a property belonging to each of the parts would have to ignore a qualitative (or quantitative) difference existing between the whole and its parts when it comes to possessing, or not possessing, a property belonging to each of the parts.

(3) Therefore, if all things are possible not to be, at some time in the past nothing existed.[9]

That there is nothing in this argument that logically entails *B* should now be obvious.

Perhaps the following argument by analogy will serve to confirm the correctness of my view. Let us assume that each woman at some time ceases to exist (something evidently true) and argue:

D. (1) Each woman at some time ceases to exist
(2) Therefore, all women (as a class) at some time cease to exist.

Dis clearly a case of the composition fallacy. But let us introduce into *D's* argument the following premise (by assumption) *all human males* (as a class) *at some time cease to exist.* Then we could argue, validly *and* soundly;

E. (1) If *all* human males at some time cease to exist *and* each woman at some time ceases to exist, then there would be a time when, by then, all women would have ceased to exist
(2) There is a time when all human males cease to exist
(3) Therefore, if each woman at some time ceases to exist, there is a time when, by then, all women would have ceased to exist.

E does not commit a composition fallacy even though *E* (3), taken isolatedly, would seem to commit such a fallacy. *E* does not commit this fallacy because *E* is obviously a sound argument: for if there are no human males, there can be no human reproduction (we may exclude here parthenogenesis, miracles, and cloning) and thus no new human females to replace those who have already perished.[10] So too, *A's* argument proceeds 011 the assumption that *all* things are possible not to be and

• The argument in form is validated as follows:
1. (q. *8*
q (p *s)* Exportation, 1.
3. *q*
4. *p* *s.* Hypothetical Syllogism, 3, 4.

[10] One may want to keep this example in mind when it comes to the question of justifying *O* (I) above.

draws the inference that at one time in the past nothing existed (assuming, also, that each thing possible not to be at some time is not).

I believe I have now sufficiently established that *A,* when properly understood, does not ·entail a composition fallacy. We have now to determine whether *C* (A's argument expressed non-enthymematically) is a sound argument (I have already established, in a footnote, the somewhat trivial point of its validity). We may safely assume *C* (2) to be true in light of arguments presented elsewhere.[11] What remains, then, is to decide whether *C* (1) is true. As in the case of *C* (2) Saint Thomas offers no proof here (or anywhere else to my knowledge) of its truth. Consequently, defenders of the Third Way have been left with the task of explaining why he thought it to be true or, even more to the point, of actually justifying it. Before presenting my own defense of *C* (1), let us call it the "dubious premise" (actually it entails an inference), I would like to review for the reader what certain other past and recent commentators on the Third Way have had to say in its (i.e. *C* (1)'s) behalf since I believe that most of them have in one way or another misunderstood it.

9!. *Unacceptable views of the" dubious premise."* According to one view, that proposed by Gilson-Copleston, *C* (1)'s truth can be established by means of the following explanation.[12] (1) Assume, as the argument of the Third Way does assume,

[11] See Connolly, *op cit.* In this discussion the chief argument to support the premise *what can not-be at some time is not* is the following: What exists forever must have the *capacity* to exist forever. Hence, if a corruptible did not at some time corrupt bnt continued to exist forever, this could only be because it has the power to do so, in which case, however, it would simultaneously possess both the power to exist forever and the potency not to exist forever-an implicit contradiction. This argument is also found in Aristotle's *De Coelo,* I, 12,

[12] See Etienne Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas,* trans. by L. *K.* Shook (New York: Random House, 1956), pp. 69-70; and F. C. Copleston, *Aquinas* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1955), p. 120. I have placed Gil.son's name first in their hyphenated names above since I believe that Copleston is merely following Gilson here.

that past time is *infinite.*[18] (2) Assume, also that everything possible must, given an infinite time, be realized (even realized, apparently, in an infinite *past* time). One may then argue:

F. (1) If each thing is possible not to be, all things, collectively, are possible not to be
(2) In an infinite past everything possible must be realized (assumption (2) above)
(3) Past time is infinite (assumption (1) above)
(4) Therefore, if all things are possible not to be, at some time in the past nothing existed.

I find a number of difficulties with *F's* defense of *C* (1). (1) It renders one of the premises of Saint Thomas's argument, namely, *C* (2), actually superfluous and thus would not seem to accord with Saint Thomas's own view of the argument.[14] (2) *F* (1) possibly commits a composition fallacy.[15] (3) Granted that everything possible (or possible to a *species)* must be realized in the course of an infinite time, there is no reason to suppose that everything possible (to a species) must be realized in an infinite *pa.s-t* time.[16] (4) Finally, it is certainly not obvious

[18] As Saint Thomas observes in *Summa oontra Gentues,* Book I, Ch. 13, after presenting the Aristotelian argument from motion for the existence of God: " The most efficacious way to prove that God exists is on the supposition that the world is eternal. Granted this suppositi-0n, that God exists is less manifest. For, if the world and motion have a first beginning, some cause must be clearly posited to account for this origin of the world and motion." *On the Truth of the Catholic Faith,* trans. by Anton C. Pegis *et al.* (New York: Han-0ver House, 1955) pp. 94-95.

[14] Actually, this premise, "whd is possible not to be at some time is not," does not appear in Maimonides's statement of the argument, the exemplar of Saint Thomas's Third Way· Thus Gilson's interpretaLion of *C* (1) ab-0ve would seem to be based upon a close following of Maimonides's argument. See Moses Maimonides, *The GuU:le of the Perplexed,* trans. by Shlomo Pines (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), II, 1, Sa (pp. 247-48).

[15] On this point see David A. Conway, "Possibility and Infinite Time: A Logical Paradox in St. Thomas's Third Way," *International Philosophical Quarterly,* XIV (1974), 201-02. See also Alvin Plar.tinga, *God and Other Minds* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1967) pp. 14-15. However, Plantinga is willing to allow that such an inference may still be (materially) sound.

[16] Gilson apparently agrees with Maimonides's version of the argument and holds, with him, that everything possible *for a species* must be realiz·ed in an infinite time. See Gilson, *op. eit.,* p. 69. Furthermore, he argues "where there is infinite

that everything possible, or possible to a species, must be realized in the course of an infinite time. For example, assuming the human species to be eternal (as Aristotle erroneously thought) it is by no means clear that, at some time in the course of infinite time, man must perform a certain type of morally evil act, even though such an act would, in fact, be possible for him. Moreover, what is possible to a species in one possible world (e. g. a certain size or number) may not be possible to it in another. Hence not everything absolutely possible (to a species) need be realized given an infinite time. I think we have shown good cause for dismissing the Gilson-Copleston version of *C* (1) *either* as the latter's acceptable defense *or* as a likely explanation of how Saint Thomas himself would have gone about justifying it.

Others have proposed explanations of *C* (I) closer to what I believe Saint Thomas really had in mind when he asserted it to be true. C. G. Prado, for one, has argued that this proposition is indeed true *given* the context of Aristotle's physics.[17] Within that context, Prado reminds us, the existence of necessary beings (the heavens, their unmoved "movers") is absolutely required to explain the continuing cycle of generation and corruption in our terrestial realm. Consequently, he points out, without such beings this cycle would, on the Aristotelian theory, come to an end and, with its cessation, a static universe would ensue (one that would be likened today to a cosmic state of entropy) , a situation supposedly tantamount, for an Aristotelian, to a *state of nothingness.*[18] With this cosmology

duration, it is unthinkable that a possible worthy of the name be not realized." Aside from begging the question, this comment does not inform us why everything possible (to a species) must be realized in an infinite *pm1t* time, presumably what the Third Way is arguing.

[17] See C. G. Prado, "The Third Way Revisited," *The New Scholasticism,* XLV (1971), 495-501.

[18] To quote Prado completely on this point: " What we seem to have, th.en, is the contention that if all things are corruptible, a time will come when they all hav.e corrrupted ... Our first cine is our impulse to say that even if all things *did* corrupt, there would still be something: the matter or stuff to which they corrupt. But a little reflection will show that if corruption is inevitable,

in mind Saint Thomas could have justified C (1) by the following argument: if each thing possible not to be at some time is not (and if all things are possible not to be), there would come a time in the (infinite) past when, by then, all changes would have ceased and a static universe would result-in other words, a universe equivalent to a state of nothingness.

Yet despite a certain degree of plausibility, Prado's account of our dubious premise cannot possibly be correct, basically for the following two reasons. (1) Saint Thomas would *not* have equated a universe in which substantial changes no longer take place to a state of nothingness. Indeed, according to him, at the "end of the world" the movements of the heavens *will* cease and, with their cessation, substantial changes also.[19] Nonetheless, the universe, in a renewed form, namely, one of immutability, will continue in existence forever.[20] Hence, Saint Thomas would be most unwilling to accept the view Prado wants to attribute to him here in the Third Way, namely that a static universe (or, more precisely, a biologically lifeless one) should therefore be understood as a *non-existing* one. (2) When Saint Thomas asserts in C (1), "if all things *(omnia)* are possible not to be ... then at some time in the past nothing ex-

cumulative, *and* irreversible, such an end product would be a universe *not in proceas,* i. e. a wholly static universe. Now this is in fact a notion as incoherent to us as it would have been to Aristotle and Aquinas .... In any case, the suggestion is that for Aristotle or Aquinas there is no difference between saying on the one hand that all things cease to exist and on the other 'that *process* ceases." Page *500.*

[19] See Saint Thomas Aquinas, *On the Power of God,* trans. by Lawrence Shapcote, 0. P. (Westminister, Md.: The Newman Press, 1952). According to Saint Thomas's teaching here (in Question 5); 1) The heavens will cease to be in motion when the number of the elect is complete (Q. 5, a. 5); fl) The elements will cease to be corrupted and remain in substance when the external cause of their corruption ceases, which cause must be reduced to the heavenly movement (Q. *5,* a. 7); 3) When the heavenly movement ceases, in this lower world the action whereby the " medium " is illumined and affected by sensible things will continue but not the action whereby matter is transformed and which results in generation and corruption (Q. 5, a. 8); and 4) In the renewal of the world no mixed bodies will remain except the human body (Q. *5,* a. 9).

[20] See *ibid.,* Q. 5, a. 4 and a. 7, *ad* 17. See also *Sumnia Theologiae,* I, Q. 104, a. 4.

isted," his words should be taken at face value.[21] That is, the word "*omnia*" should be taken to include even matter (prime matter) and the words "*nihil fuit in 1·ebus*" to mean just that, viz., absolute non-being. When understood literally, then, Saint Thomas can only be arguing that if all things *(including* matter) are possible not to be, at some time in the past nothing *(no* being) existed. Prado, however, apparently sees matter as something outside the scope of "*omnia*" in the premise (or inference) under discussion. Now while Saint Thomas did think that matter was, in the physical sense, not something possible-not-to-be, it should not be concluded on that account that he did *not* intend to include it within the scope of "*omnia*" when he supposed, for the sake of the argument, that *all* things are possible not to be and had still to establish, by a *reductio ad absurdum,* the existence of something necessary. 1\-foreover, as I have already pointed out, Prado erroneously equates a static universe with one equivalent, in Saint Thomas's mind, to a state of nothingness. For these reasons, then, we can set aside Prado's somewhat ingenious but nonetheless inaccurate explanation of why Saint Thomas considered our dubious premise true.

Another explanation of *C* (1), one very similar to Prado's is that proposed by Father Quinn in the article to which I referred at the beginning of my paper. Unlike Prado, however, Quinn sees his account of the matter not only as accurately reporting Saint Thomas's own unexpressed argument here (or as an actual justification of *C* (1) given the truth of Aristotelian physics) but, going one important step further, he actually views it as *unqualifiedly* true. According to Quinn, the reason why *C* (1) is true is because without the existence of some necessary being, in this case a universal physical agent causing substantial change, there would no longer be any generation of new substances.[22] Yet without the generation of new sub-

[21] In the Leonine edition the passage reads: "Si igitur omnia sunt possibilia non esse aliquando nihil fuit in rebus."

[22] Quinn, *op. cit.,*

stances, he argues, " the inevitable extinction of all beings of nature is simply a matter of time and the whole of nature is thus determined to collapse into nothingness." [23] Again, Quinn's claim here is not simply that his explanation truly represents Saint Thornas's thought, but that it is also philosophically sound. I will now argue that his explanation not only is *not,* on this matter, in complete accord with the mind of Saint Thomas, a serious enough criticism, but that it is also philosophically untenable.

To begin with, Saint Thomas would not maintain that, given the cessation of substantial change, the universe would soon collapse into nothingness. As I have already pointed out in my rejection of Prado's account of *C* (1), he is actually willing to allow the continuance of a " static " world once the movements of the heavens have ceased. Nor can it be argued in Quinn's behalf that Saint Thomas would allow this continuance only because he already assumes God's existence and, therefore, a divine conservation, but that otherwise he would acknowledge how a universe lacking a universal physical cause causing substantial change would indeed collapse into nothingness. Besides possibly begging the question, such a defense overlooks the fact that the divine conservation (and concurrence) is also required for the universe which Quinn describes as the actual universe, namely, one containing his cosmic agent. Consequently, the absence or presence of this universal generator is incidental to the conservation of the universe (in some form) in existence. I will have more to say on this subject in a moment. But to return to our original point, the universe described by Saint Thomas as existing after the " end of the world "-a universe including certain material beings-was one which *he* obviously thought could exist without collapsing into nothingness due to the absence from it of the causality of the universal physical cause. Therefore, Quinn's contention "without the generation of new individuals material species would perish " is certainly false according to Saint Thomas's teaching. What *is* true, ac-

••*Ibid.,* 6!il.

cording to that teaching, is that without the generation of new substances *biological* species would perish. Again, Quinn (like Prado) has apparently confused an inert and biologically lifeless world with a non-existing one, or, at any rate, has erroneously inferred that with no generation of new individuals *all* species of material things would eventually cease to exist. Yet Saint Thomas did think it the case that without the motion of material necessary beings the cycle of generation and corruption would end and, consequently, beings that would be *actually* subject to corruption. That would mean, on this theory, that even right now there would nowhere be found beings genuinely liable to corrupt-something quite obviously contrary to fact. In this respect, but only in this respect, can Quinn's (and Prado's) explanation of C (1) be said to accord with Aquinas's view.

There is also a metaphysical argument against Quinn's position concerning the dire effect on the universe given the absence, from it, of a universal physical cause. According to Saint Thomas's teaching, the absence of such a cause (or of its causality) would *not* bring about the annihilation of material things since only an *infinite* being has the power to annihilate.[24] Since, as Saint Thomas says, creation is not effected through the instrumentality of any creature, the removal of any creature, no matter what role we wish to assign it with respect to causing change and new being, would not result in the annihilation of any other creature.[25] In a word, only the Self-Existing Being, the universal cause, has competency over the very *to be* of things; only He, therefore, can effect the annihilation of any creature.

Finally, Quinn's arguments for a universal physical cause of change, an " equivocal " agent ultimately required to effect

[24] In the words of Saint Thomas: "No creature has the power either of making something from nothing or d reducing a thing to nothing. The fact that if God ceased to uphold creatures they would return to nothing is not due to the creator's action but to the creature's defect, as stated above." Q. *5,* a. 3, *ad* 15.

[25] See *ibid.,* Q. *5,* 4. See also *ibid.,* Q. 3, a. 4, and also *Summa TheologW.e,* I, Q. 45, a. *5,* and *ibid.* Q. 104, a. 3.

substantial change, are, I regret to say, not very convincing, not even to a Thomist.[26] They originate, in part, from the Aristotelian (and medieval) theory that the heavens are incorruptible and act as " equivocal " causes and, also, that the causality of the " lower," more proximate agent requires the causality of the "higher," more universal physical cause in order to effect substantial change.[27] While a modern Thomist could agree that the divine concurrence is ultimately required for the actions of all finite beings, he could hardly accept the outdated view that material agents in the terrestrial realm act as *instrumental* causes of the " heavens " in the work of generation and corruption or in effecting preliminary accidental changes. Nor does Quinn argue that the heavens, or any of the recognized heavenly bodies, act as the universal cause he holds to be necessary for the continuation of material species (a somewhat plausible view, one might remark, where it concerns the survival of biological species on this planet), since he apparently acknowledges that the heavenly bodies, at least those that we do know, do not qualify as necessary beings. Instead, he postulates a universal physical agent which he willingly concedes " we are not able, and probably will never be able, to put our finger on."[28] Surely, to allow that the existence of such a cause may never be empirically verified seems, particularly-I would think, to any bona-fide Aristotelian-to argue a *pri,ma facie* case *against* its existence. After all, we are not concerned here with *intrinsic* principles of changing being (or even with the ultimate extrinsic cause of all

[26] See Quinn, *op. cit.,* 59-65.

[27] See, in this connection, *On the Power of God,* Q. 5, a. 8. Since Saint Thomas's view of the role of the heavenly bodies in causing changes in bodies in the terrestial realm is based on the erroneous supposition that the heavenly bodies are incorruptible and of a higher degree of actuality than corruptible bodies here, the non-acceptance of such a supposition ought to lead to a modification of his position concerning the precise causal role the "heavens " have to play with respect to causing change in the world below. In other words, it could hardly be urged today that the lower, terrestial bodies act as *instrumental* causes of these " higher," heavenly bodies in causing change.

••Quinn, *op. cit.,* 67.

motion or change), none of which, admittedly, are subject to " empirical " verification, but presumably with a visible, quantified body exercising its causality through space and time. To say, then, that we are presently unable, and perhaps never will be able, to verify its existence savors, to this writer at least, of the *ad ignorantiam* fallacy and thus renders the arguments which have been presented in its favor doubly suspect. So much, then, for Quinn's defense of *C* (1).

3. *A good explanation of the "dubious premise."* The best defense of *C* (1), as well as the most likely explanation why, in fact, Saint Thomas thought it to be true, has already been given, at least in its general outline, by certain other commentators on the Third Way.[29] My statement of it here will be somewhat more complete. (1) Assume at any one mo:rnent in an infinite past the existence of any finite number of beings possible not to be. Then (2) if each one of these beings at some time ceases to exist and (3) if, furthermore, each of them has also a time span in existence less than a time span extending through an infinite past up to any arbitrarily chosen present moment, then (4) if *all* beings are possible not to be, then (5) there must come a time in an infinite past when, by then, all these beings we originally posited would have ceased to exist (we are assuming, of course, no replacement by way of substantial change since that would imply the existence of something necessary, namely, matter) and nothing would be in existence. When explained in this way *C* (1) appears no longer to entail a dubious inference but appears to be true, even convincingly so, and in view of its obviousness, one can safely assume that this explanation of *C* is precisely the one Saint Thomas himself would have used to justify it.

However, only one thing would seem to spoil the above explanation: it apparently proceeds on a *false* assumption. It proceeds on the assumption, a dual, one, that past time is

[29] See Connolly, *op. cit.,* 288. Here Connolly summarizes A. D. Sertillanges 'sexplanation of *C* (1) abov.e. See also Patterson Brown, *op. cit.,* 86-88.

infinite *and* all things are possible not to be. **But** this assumption would seem to entail something impossible, namely, that there can *be* an infinite past without something permanent in existence. In other words, I think it can be successfully argued that there cannot be an infinite past without the existence of something "physically" necessary to found its duration.[30] In other words, no finite number of things physically possible not to be, no matter how long their duration in existence, can, it would seem, either singly or collectively, account for an infinite past. Perhaps, then, in the final analysis what Saint Thomas's argument here really proves is that there cannot *be* an infinite past if all beings are possible not to be. In that case, however, he should perhaps have argued, as procedurally more sound, the following:

G. (I) Either past time is infinite or finite
(2) If past time is infinite, then something necessary must exist to account for infinite past duration
(3) If past time is finite, then the physical world had a beginning
(4) If the physical world had a beginning, then it must

[80] I am indebted to David A. Conway's article, "Possibility and Infinite Time: A Logical Paradox in St. Thomas's Third Way," *International Philosophical Quarterly,* XIV (1974), 201-208 for suggesting this point to me. In this article Conway convincingly argues what he detects to be an inher.ent contradiction in the argument of the Third Way's first part. According to Conway (who here accepts the GilsoncCopleston version of our dubious premise, *C* (1)), this argument assumes (1) that there is an infinite past, (2) that everything possible must be realized in an infinite past time, and 3) that among things possible is the nonexistence of all things (if, indeed, all things are possible not to be). However, Conway points out, a hidden contradiction lurks in these assumptions, as evident from the following argument: For any time *t* that one cares to select as the time in an infinite past at which the possibility of all things not existing is realized, there is an infinite time prior to *t;* but during this infinite time prior to *t* there would also b.e a time, let us call it *t,*. at which this possibility of all things not existing would be realized; hence, on this argument, all things would actually cease to exist prior to any time one cares to select as the time in an infinite past when they have, supposedly, ceased to exist-an obvious contradiction. One might wonder how this affects our interpretation of *C* (I) above. I believe it clearly points out the impossibility of assuming an infinite past, on the one hand, and, on the other, that *all* beings are possible not to be (again assuming that each being possible not to be at some time is not).

have been efficiently caused to exist by a necessary being[31]
(5) Therefore something necessary exists.

In any event, one can still agree with Saint Thomas's conclusion here that " not all things are (physical) possibles but there must be something necessary in reality." Still the question remains whether this " something necessary " has to be something other than matter. Saint Thomas evidently thought so and we have now to determine whether his position on this question can be supported by sound argument.

II.

The Failure of the Third Way's First Part

In concluding to the existence of something necessary Saint Thomas tells us nothing, explicitly, about its nature or number. However, from the wording of the Third ·way's second part, one may infer that he has in mind here, not matter, but some *actual* being *and* that he is also prepared to recognize a plurality of such beings. This impression is confirmed by what we know about his physical philosophy generally and by what he has stated textually Thus, inasmuch as it is only the potential principle in the substance of a corruptible being, *matter* (prime matter) is not a necessary *being;* furthermore, as something purely potential, it cannot account for the existence *now* of actual being. In order to do that, Saint Thomas believed, one would have to look to the causality, and hence to the existence, of some actual being, but one which is also a *necessary* being. As to the number of such beings, that, he would likely say, would depend upon the number of heavenly bodies and their spheres and also upon the role assigned to angels in the governance of the world.[33] Consequently, while Saint

[81] See *Summa contra Gentiles,* Book I, Ch. 15 (6).

[82] See *ibid.,* Ch. 15, for an argument that closely resembles the Third *Wavr* in form and which would seem to support the above interpretation.

[38] See *Summa Theologiae.* I, Q. llO, a. 1, *ad* 2. However, Saint Thomas does not limit the number of spiritual creatures to the number of movers of the heavenly bodies.

Thomas makes no use of a *causal* argument here to infer the existence of something necessary in being, it is reasonable to suppose, in view of his statements elsewhere, that he evidently saw a cause-effect relationship obtaining between the necessary being (s) whose existence he was certain he had now established and the on-going generation, in our terrestrial realm, of new individual substances. Otherwise, according to him, one would be at a loss to explain why certain classes of substances (particularly plants and animals) continue to exist nigh endlessly and to exercise their generative powers (£or " whatever is moved is moved by another ") .

In connection with what I have just remarked above, it should be recalled that Aristotle's theory of incorruptible heavenly bodies was a universally accepted part of medieval " physics " and that these bodies were believed responsible, as universal causes, £or the perpetual cycle of generation and corruption observed in the " sublunar " world. Given such an outlook, it is easy to see how Saint Thomas could find, in empirical reality, ready confirmation of something to which he thought the Third Way's first part had correctly concluded, namely, the existence of necessary being. Moreover, he also shared with Aristotle the view that the heavenly spheres were moved by spiritual substances, although, as we have seen, he would substitute angels £or Aristotle's "star-souls". Consequently, when Saint Thomas concluded here to the existence of necessary being, he was, in effect, at the same time acknowledging the existence of *immaterial* being. Admittedly, in terms of what the argument has to say explicitly, this point is by no means clear; yet in light of what I have just argued and what we know to be his philosophy generally it is, nonetheless, true. However, and this observation I deem extremely important, he was certainly not prepared at this stage of the argument to identify the existence of any necessary being *with* God. He was not prepared to do so because he clearly recognized that his conclusion here, in the first part of the Third Way, was simply the existence of the cause of *motion* in the world, not the existence of the cause of *existence,* namely, the Self-Existing

Being. Since, as in Aristotle's philosophy, a plurality of necessary beings could be postulated to explain, as more or less ultimate causes, this motion (and other changes resulting therefrom), and since none of these beings would have to be seen as self-existing, further argument would be required if the Third Way was to conclude to *God:s* existence. Hence its second part.

At this point I believe we are now ready to settle the question concerning the Third Way's first part. Can we today accept its argument as actually establishing the existence of necessary (i. e. incorruptible) being? As I have indicated earlier, it does point to the existence of something necessary. However, I am also convinced it does not prove the existence of *any* incorruptible substance. As I have explained above, in order to arrive at such a conclusion Saint Thomas had, in keeping with the physics of his day, to suppose that the continued existence of corruptibles as a class was something to be explained (in part) by imperishable heavenly bodies, their movements, and their movers. Can we today accept such a supposition? I believe the answer is obvious. We no longer view the heavenly bodies as incorruptible, since science has persuaded us otherwise. Nor do we find it necessary to explain their movements by recourse to spiritual movers. The existence of man-made satellites orbiting the earth and space vehicles moving towards other planets is a constant present-day reminder of the erroneous character of Aristotle's (and Thomas's) theory concerning the motion of bodies (or at least of their theory concerning the cause, or causes, of such motion). As for the continued existence of material species, particularly organic substances, I see no reason why that cannot adequately be explained, at least on the level of finite causes of change, by the " necessary " uniform movement of the planets about the sun (I consider here only *our* solar system) and the regular causality of physical agents (each one corruptible) causing changes and new being. In this respect we would, for the most part, be simply acknowledging the same causal influences recognized by Aristotle and Aquinas to account £or the continuance of generation and

corruption and the preservation of biological species, without, however, admitting the existence of *incorruptible* substances and certainly not ones to be identified with the heavens and their supposed spiritual movers.

If, on the other hand, we were to allow, as I think we must, that the planets and the remainder of the "heavens" did have an origin in time, we *would* then have a basis for inferring the existence of an immaterial agent. However, this would involve us in another argument for God's existence (perhaps some form of the First Way), clearly one different in form from the Third Way's first part. What the Third Way's first part does seem to conclude to, soundly, is, as I have said, the existence of *something* necessary. Still, need this be really anything other than the underlying principle of substantial change-prime matter? I see no reason to think so. However, I am also prepared to extend the notion of " necessary " to the laws of mass-energy and motion. Explained according to scholastic principles, this latter necessity would be something due to the natures given to material things by the creator. It would also presuppose the continuance in existence of a plurality of bodies. Given all this, along with the regular causality of material agents, I believe we have a good explanation, at least on the level of finite causes of change, why certain classes of corruptible beings (particularly biological species) continue to exist rather than cease to exist. Contrary to Quinn's position, then, I see no need for a universal *physical* cause of change; natural agents, by virtue of their own active and passive powers, are able to effect and undergo such changes as are required to continually populate reality with new individuals of the different material species (I do not, of course, rule out the need for the divine concurrence). One would have to conclude, therefore, that the Third Way's first part does not, of itself, establish the existence of a necessary being, not even a caused one, and that, consequently, at least as originally formulated, it brings us no closer to knowing that God exists than we were at its beginnmg.

III.

The Third Way's Second Part

At the beginning of my paper I noted certain difficulties about the Third Way's second part which, as I said then, cannot properly be ignored in any discussion of its overall soundness. One concerned the reason why Saint Thomas thought it necessary to inquire into a cause of a necessary being's necessity. Presumably, any necessary being would have its necessity of itself, that is to say, by virtue of its own incorruptible nature. Another raised the question why he maintained, as the Third Way's conclusion clearly implies, that there can only be *one* uncaused necessary being. Finally, there was also the question, one pertaining more to the argument's formal structure than actually to the question of its soundness, why he considered it appropriate to entertain an infinite series objection in the case of caused necessary beings. According to his mature teaching on this subject, necessary beings, if caused, can only be caused by creation and *only* God can create. [34] To none of these questions does the Third Way's second part, at least as explicitly formulated, give us even a clue to an answer. However, as would be expected, Saint Thomas has indicated elsewhere in his writings how he would respond to at least the first and second of these questions. It will be noted how in these responses a central doctrine of his metaphysics figures prominently, thereby revealing the essential metaphysical character of the Third Way's second part or why it manages to conclude to the existence of the *self-existing* being (i. e. God) .

••In a very early text *(The Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard,* II, D. I, Q. 1, a. 8) Saint Thomas did not rule out the possibility thait the creative power could be communicated by God to certain creatures so that they could act instrumentally in the production *de nihilo.* In later works, however, he argues the impossibility of creatures acting instrumentally in creation. See, for example, *On the Power of God,* Q. 8, a. 4; see also *Summa Theofogiae,* I, Q. 45, a. *5.*

I. *How a necessary being may also be a caused one.* In what sense, if any, can it be claimed that a necessary being has a cause of its necessity? Saint Thomas's response to this question would be, as certain texts clearly show, to point out that while a necessary being, *only granted that it exists,* has it of its nature to be always in existence, it can still depend upon another being *for its existence.*[35] In his view such a dependency would apply to every finite necessary being whether spiritual *or* material (as we have seen, he also believed the latter type existed) . Consequently, Aquinas would inform us, while of its nature incorruptible a necessary being could not exist incorruptibly if it did not, first, *exist.*[36] In this way, then, a necessary being *can* depend upon another for its necessity in being, that is, if it depends upon another being for its existence. Briefly put, Saint Thomas's reply to our question would be as follows: necessary beings can owe their necessity in being to a being to whom they would owe (and continually owe) their existence. Why he thought that necessary beings (or certain necessary beings) would need to have their *existence* caused, we have yet to consider.

When, therefore, Saint Thomas arrived (so he thought) at the existence of some necessary being (s) at the conclusion of the Third Way's first part, he could still meaningfully inquire whether its (or their) necessity was caused. As I have previously indicated, at this stage of the argument he had, to his

[35] To quote Aquinas on this point: "Avicenna held that all things except God have in themselves a possibility of being and non-being. Because seeing that existence is something besides the essence of a created thing, the very nature of a creature considered in itself has a possibility of being, while it only has necessity of being from another whose nature is its being... Accordingly, a possibility of non-being is in the nature of those things alone whose matter is subject to contrariety of forms: whereas it belongs to other things by their nature to exist of necessity, all possibility of non-existence being removed from their nature. And yet this does not imply tlmt their necessity of existence is not from God: since one necessity may cause another *(Metaphysics,* V). For the created nature to which everlastingness belongs is produced by God." *On the Power of God,* Q. *5,* a. 8. See also *Summa Theologiae,* I, Q. 44, a. 1, ad *!il* and Q. *50,* a. *5, ad* S.

••See *ibid.,* Q. 44, a. 1, *ad* 2.

own mind, only concluded to the existence of a cause of *motion* or *change* in the world (yet perhaps not the ultimate cause), not to the cause of *existence.,* Since, in his view, a plurality of such beings-universal causes of motion or change in the world-could not be ruled out, he had also to raise the question whether their necessity was caused or not. It should, I think, be obvious that what he was now actually asking was whether such beings have their *existence* caused. However, because he chose to follow closely here the argument's original wording-he had derived it from Maimonides-his phrasing of the Third Way's second part has, apparently, obscured its meaning for many. Yet otherwise understood, except perhaps within the context of an Avicennian emanation theory to which, in point of fact, he did not subscribe, the question of a cause of a necessary being's necessity, or of a series of such causes, simply makes no sense. One may conclude, therefore, that the main philosophical question of the Third Way's second part concerns the self-existing-or non-self-existing-character of the necessary being (s) presumably already demonstrated to exist.

2. *Inference to the uncaused Necessary Being.* When interpreted in this fashion the Third Way now seems able to conclude directly to the existence of an *uncaused* necessary being whom one can truly call God. For, as Saint Thomas had previously argued in a much earlier work in a text of capital importance whose teaching he would never basically alter, if existence is not intrinsic to a being's essence or nature, it must he *efficiently caused* in that being, ultimately by a being which is self-existing. [37] In his view, no finite being, no matter

[37] To quote Saint Thomas on this matter: " Now whatever belongs to a being is either caused by the princip1es of its nature, as the capability of laughter in man, or it comes to it from some extrinsic principle, as light in the air from the ,sun's influence. But it is impossible that the act of existing be caused by a thing's form or quiddity (I say *caused* as by an efficient cause); for then something would be the cause of itself and bring itself into existence-which is impossible. Everything, then, which is such that its act of existing is other than its nature must needs have its act of existing from something else. And

how superior its nature, would be a being whose essence is its own act of existence; consequently, it would have to be said to receive its existence from another, ultimately (or directly) from the self-existing being. Once given the existence of *any* necessary being, then, as a conclusion of an argument from change (be it substantial or accidental change), one would also have to conclude to the existence of a *self-existing* (necessary) being which is, therefore, uncaused. This is unmistakably true according to the principles of Saint Thomas's philosophy.

In view of what I have just stated, it is not difficult to see how Saint Thomas would have answered our second question, why not a plurality of uncaused necessary beings? Doubtless he would first point out that a self-existing being is one which is infinite and, therefore, unique. [38] It is infinite because, unlike finite beings whose essences are just so many different potentialities (or *limiting)* principles *for* existence, *its* existence is not received (and therefore not limited) by a distinct, limiting principle of potential existence. [39] It is, in a word, a Pure (or Unlimited) Act of Existence. He would end by noting that this Self-Existing Being would necessarily be the ultimate source of existence to all other beings, which are only beings by participation. [40]

Yet if my account of what the Third Way's second part is really, though only implicitly, arguing is correct, how explain

since every being which exists through another is reduced, as to its first cause, to one existing in virtue of itself, there must be some being which is the cause of the existing of all things because it itself is the act of existing alone." *On Being and Essence,* trans. by Armand Maurer (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1949), p. 47. Saint Thomas had earlier argued in this chapter (Chapter 4) that there can be only one Self-Existing Being and that all other beings entail the composition of essence and existence.

[38] " The fact that the being of God is self-subsisting, not received into anything else, and is thus called infinite, shows God to be distinguished from all other beings, and all others to be apart from Him." *Summa Theologiae,* I, Q. 7, a. 1, *ad* 3.

[39] See *ibid.,* c.; use also *ibid.,* a. *fl.*

[40] See *ibid.,* Q. 44, a. I.

why Saint Thomas also found it necessary in this same part of the argument to raise and reject the possibility of an infinite series of caused necessary beings? In other words, why should he have bothered to consider an infinite series objection in an argument in which he supposedly recognizes that if a necessary being is caused it is only because it is not self-existing and, therefore, must receive its existence from the one self-existing being-God? This question has particular force in the present context, since, as I have already mentioned, according to his later teaching creation is the work of God alone (and necessary beings, if caused, can only be caused by creation). As I see it, this difficulty admits to two possible solutions: one would liken his procedure here to one which he employs in an important early work which I have already cited; the other would explain it as involving more a point of the argument's historical antecedents than a part of Saint Thomas's own philosophy. I happen to favor the second explanation.

The first, as I have said, directs us to an important early work, *De Ente et Essentia,* where Saint Thomas, after noting that beings whose essences and acts of existence are not one and the same must have their existence extrinsically caused, concludes to the existence of a self-existing being under pain of proceeding *ad infinitum* in causes of existence.[41] While he neglects to mention why he thinks an infinite regress in causes of existence is impossible, it is most likely because he saw how such a regress would leave the existence of *every* being ultimately unexplained. In other words, his position here would be, I believe, that given such a regress there would be no sufficient reason why there should be anything in existence at all. in this particular text he was not concerned with the question of an infinite series of caused *necessary* beings, where each one in the series would, presumably, have *its existence* from a prior necessary being, but with the more

[41] *On Being and Essence,* Ch. 4. Saint Thomas simply observes here that "if that were not so, we would proceed to infinity among causes, since, as we have said, every being which is not the act of existing alone has a cause of its existence." (Maurer trans., p. 47).

general case of *any* being which must have its existence caused (and which possibly could derive its existence, as from a proximate cause, from another finite being). Thus, perhaps in the Third Way's second part Saint Thomas wishes to show that an infinite series of caused necessary beings is also impossible, it too would imply that the existence of such beings has been left without an ultimate explanation. Indeed, he does refer us here back to the Second Way, in which he has already rejected an infinite series of essentially ordered causes of a thing's coming into existence (through change) presumably because this, ultimately, would leave the effect without a cause (and thus without explanation).

However, as I have pointed out above, where it is a question of the cause of a *necessary* being's existence there can be no possibility of any series of causes, not even a finite one. Such a being's existence can only be accounted for by God, as Saint Thomas consistently teaches in his later works. Hence, the more likely explanation of this puzzling step in the argument would seem to be the following. One should recall again that Saint Thomas derived his Third Way directly from Maimonides; its striking similarity to an argument for God's existence developed by this 12th century Jewish philosopher-theologian leaves little doubt of that.[42] In his own formulation of the argument, Maimonides, following Avicenna, allows for a series of necessary beings whose necessity is caused but concludes to a being which has its necessity of being from itself. In adopting Maimonides's argument Aquinas also retained this part of it, quite likely to show that, even within an emanation theory, one must arrive at one uncaused necessary being "whom all men call God." Actually, then, as I would explain it, this step of the Third Way is more a concession of its author to the argument's original pattern and thus to a philosophical theory then historically in vogue-and which, incidentally could be cited to support the demonstrability of God's existence-than it is for him a strict requirement of this

[42] See Moses Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed,* II, 1, 8a-8b.

particular proof of God's existence. In any event, it is certainly true that in Saint Thomas's philosophy a plurality of necessary beings points to the existence of one, and only one, uncaused necessary being, since only one being can be self-existing.

I think, by now, I have sufficiently established that in the Third Way's second part Saint Thomas seeks to demonstrate the existence of one uncaused necessary being by arguing, albeit implicitly, that its causality is actually required to explain the existence of any necessary being which is not self-existing. Admittedly, one finds no textual indication here that the argument rests upon a prior recognition that a necessary being need not be self-existing. In other words, we are not told that this inference to the existence of an uncaused necessary being is also an inference to the existence of the self-existing being and thus presupposes a doctrine central to Saint Thomas's philosophy, namely, his doctrine of participation.[43] However, in light of what he has stated elsewhere about necessary beings requiring a cause, there seems to be no other possible way to interpret the argument of the Third Way's second part so as to make sense of its inquiry into a cause of a necessary being's necessity. When understood in this way, the argument can be seen to conclude directly to the existence of a self-existing (and, hence, absolutely necessary) being, which is uncaused, absolutely unique, and the cause of the existence of *all* finite beings.

IV.

A Reconstruction of the Third Way

What, then, may be finally said about the value of the Third Way as an actual proof of God's existence? While a Thomist could find little to object to in the argument's second part (except, perhaps, its lack of explicitness concerning the essence-

•• In other words, the doctrine of the real distinction of essence and existence in all beings save one (namely, God). This doctrine implies that such beings are participated beings and hence efficiently caused by the Being.

existence composition in certain necessary beings), yet inasmuch as that part *rests upon* the first part's conclusion-a conclusion we have seen to be unwarranted by sound physical philosophy-the entire argument must, logically it would seem, be rejected. Still there may be a way of reformulating this argument from the "possible and the necessary" to have it serve its original purpose. I have pointed out how part of the Third Way (the second) makes use of, although implicitly, a doctrine Saint Thomas employed elsewhere to establish God's existence. Might not this doctrine be used again, this time to better advantage, in a different formulation of the Third Way, one which happens to avoid the erroneous physical philosophy of the original? I believe it can. The reformulation I have in mind consists in a relatively brief argument and can be presented in the following five steps:

H. (1) What undergoes generation and corruption has a subject of generation and corruption which, itself, is not subject to generation and corruption and therefore is something necessary

(fl) Certain things do undergo generation and corruption

(3) Therefore something necessary exists

(4) This something necessary is not self-existing

(5) Therefore, it must receive its existence ultimately from a being which is self-existing and who is, traditionally, called God.

In proof of *H* (1) we can argue that if a thing comes into being or ceases to exist as a result of change, then there must be some *subject* of change remaining throughout the change, something " out of which " the effect came and which "supports" the new determination (or form) of existence. Otherwise, something would be coming into existence " out of nothing," which would entail, *not* change, but *creation.* In Aristotelian philosophy, this subject of change, at least where it is a question of *substantial* change, is prime matter. Since matter, in this sense, is the subject of the ultimate (i. e. substantial) change, it itself cannot be subject to such change and is, therefore, something necessary. Moreover, this principle

is either eternal (as Aristotle believed) or something created (or, more exactly, co-created with form) in a temporal beginning of the universe. If, in fact, the latter, then obviously there exists a creator, a necessary being. However, if matter is eternal, then the question can be raised: why does it exist rather than *not exist?* It is certainly not something *self-existing.* (I will return to this point momentarily). But even if one were to reject this Aristotelian concept of matter, by denying substantial change, he would still be required to acknowledge the existence of *something* necessary, something which endures or remains throughout change. Today, many philosophers (most empiricists) prefer to identify this" necessary" substrate of change with matter thought of as mass-energy. [44]

H (2) is, quite evidently, a fact of experience. Even those who deny substantial change would still agree that certain things may be said to be " generated " (i. e. come into being) and certain things "corrupted" (i. e. cease to exist). From what has been discussed above regarding *H* (1), and from *H* (2), *H* (3) follows of necessity. We must now prove *H* (4), namely, that matter, regardless of how we understand it (i. e. either in its Aristotelian or in its modern sense) is not self-existing. Let us take first the concept of matter as mass-energy. Aside from the fact that matter, viewed in this way, is a mere *abstraction* (if there exists a plurality of different *kinds* of material substance, no one of them could, in essence,

[44] James W. Corman and Keith Lehrer would seem to subscribe to this view in their *Philosophical Problems and Arguments: An Introduction* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1974), pp. 360-367. So also would Anthony Kenny in *op. cit.*, p. 69, where he states: "In order to show that the uncaused everlasting being must be God, he (Aquinas) offers no proof, and we may ask why might it not be perpetual, indestructible matter! If the first part of the Third Way has any force at all, the matter of an everlasting world would be matter with a natural power of everlasting existence. And what better explanation could one want of an everlasting existence than a natural power for everlasting existence? In what way would God's eternal existence be more self-explanatory than the everlasting existence of matter with a natural indestructibility?" As I will argue above shortly, Saint Thomas's answer to Kenny's question would be that matter does not have *existence* intrinsic to its essence or nature and therefore would require to receive its existence from a Self-Existing Being whom we call God.

be simply mass-energy; it would have to be mass-energy of a certain *determination, form* or *structure)* , it is also something which is found in many and, as it exists concretely, is in potency to change. For a Thomist this could only mean that it is not its own existence, but that it is in potency to existence. What is self-existing (i. e. a being whose very essence is the same as its existence) is absolutely one (unique) and nowise in potency. It is, in a word, a being of pure (or unlimited) act. The limitations just noted with respect to matter thought of as mass-energy would also apply, *a fortiori,* to matter viewed in its Aristotelian sense. Since matter, therefore, *is not its own existence,* it must receive its existence (prime matter would receive existence through its form) from another-ultimately (assuming instrumental causes to be operative in the communication of *new* existence through change) from a self-existing being, one whose proper effect is the universal effect *(existence)* and who, as the Unparticipated Being, is the universal cause. While I, personally, find this argument sound, I would not suggest, not even for a moment, that it could ever convince a non-Thomist. After all, it depends radically upon Saint Thomas' s doctrine of essence and existence (or participation); and if *that* doctrine is not accepted as philosophically sound, so neither will my reformulation, nor perhaps any reformulation, of the Third Way be so accepted.

Conclusion

In this paper I have tried, among other things, to show how Saint Thomas's Third Way does not commit the composition fallacy with which it has been frequently charged in recent years. I think I have done this successfully; hence the argument ought not to be rejected on that score. However, I have also argued that its first part's conclusion entails an erroneous piece of physical philosophy which vitiates the entire argument. Despite its failure to establish the existence of any necessary (i. e. incorruptible) being, I thought it important to examine certain questions legitimately raised concerning the Third

Way's second part in order to show how Saint Thomas's doctrine of essence and existence (or participation) has a key role to play in this argument, although one ostensibly "offstage." That this fundamental doctrine of Saint Thomas's metaphysics should figure in some way in a Thomistic proof of God's existence should not in the least surprise us. As I took care to note in the course of my discussion, it is deeply involved in one of Aquinas's earliest arguments for God's existence and, I might add here, it is also very much implied in the argument from "gradation in being" (the Fourth Way). While an argument from change (the First and the Second Ways) based on the principle of change ("whatever is moved is moved by another") is undeniably easier to grasp than a metaphysical argument for God's existence, a fact which may perhaps explain the First Way's popularity with many Thomists of the past, I think it should be clear that any argument from change can only conclude to an ultimate cause of change, an unmoved mover, but not to a being which would be seen as the cause of existence (and, thus, as the self-existing being). To arrive at that conclusion, namely, the existence of the self-existing being, God, one is required, I am convinced, to make use of an argument which in some way acknowledges the essence-existence composition in the beings of our direct and immediate experience (or, in other words, their "participated being" character). In my reformulation of the Third Way, I have simply tried to apply that conviction to practice.

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TOWARD A RENEWAL OF SACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY

NO TASK FACING CATHOLIC THEOLOGY is today more urgent than that of recovering the meaning of the sacramental worship of the Church, whose reality is that of the Church in history and in the world. What this reality may be is contested, and the classic theology of sacrament and Church seems no longer able to respond to the issues posed by the contemporary mind, stated as they are in a language borrowed from the modern disciplines of history, psychology, sociology and hermeneutics. The ontological interest of scholastic theology, and the nominalist juridical-ontological mentality of the counter-reformation theologians find few echoes in modern historical consciousness, before whose criticism their notions of reality are found charged with a non-historical naivete. Included in that indictment is most of the language by which the Church's worship has been designated: a certain distaste for all talk of sacramental objectivity and historical concreteness is manifest in much of the contemporary discussion. The corollary, no novelty in the history of the Church, is a considerable dilution of the Catholic confidence in the sacramental immanence 0:£ Christ in the world of our daily encounter.

And yet, there are other naivetes than the ontic: if the classical theological realism threatened to become a mechanics of grace, the contemporary socio-historical hermeneutic, equally intent upon the identity of history with its phenomena, threatens no less to become a statistics. [1] Both tendencies illus-

[1] Such a statistics of grace results when reliance may not be placed in the efficacy of any particular sacramental event, as, e.g. a magisterial definition, a Eucharistic consecration, a baptism or ordination. The Church's "indefectibility" in grace and truth then has no cash value in any particular instance, and amounts to no more than an actuarial description of a reality which in the concrete is always indeterminate.

trate the simplism which accepts the common-sense dichotomies of reason as regulative of theological truth. Particularly within the Thomist tradition, these dichotomies have made a wasteland of Catholic systematic theology, for they have subordinated the treatment of grace to the Aristotelian category of accident, thereby forcing upon that theology the notion of a natural creation constructed on Aristotelian lines and having only a nominal, because intrinsically inexplicable, substantial contingency. The pre-Vatican II emphasis upon the natural (as in natural law, the natural knowledge of God, the natural virtues) has recoiled upon its scholastic advocates, for its cosmological and quasi-sacramental meaning, taken for granted by St. Thomas, is now displaced by an entirely secular calculus of value. This has had its most profound consequences in moral theology, for many of whose adepts the Church can claim no privileged insights *in re morali,* but equivalent implications also infect the theology of history; there too natural secular freedom and historicity are held in contrast with a pseudo-existence, lived in ecclesial suppression.

But such poised alternatives are the stuff of dualism, nor is that ancient mistake avoided by recourse to the systematic vocabularies of the newer disciplines of the humane sciences. The name under which reality travels is not a magical means of controlling it; the history of speculative thought can summon a host of witnesses to the inescapability of reason's dichotomies, dichotomies whose paradigm is the classical enigma of the one and the many. Whether we theologize under the aegis of ontology, of sociology, of history or of whatever other mode of synthesis, we are engaged in the task of understanding the revelation given in the Christ, a task whose *prius* is that we do not subordinate that Truth to any methodological criterion of the true, however, sophisticated.

For in this revelation the most fundamental dichotomy of all is overthrown: that which has isolated God from man, from history and from the world. This isolation, the commonplace of all dualism and the implication of all autonomous rationality, is contradicted by the a priori of Christian theology, the Good

News which is given us in Christ. The first consequence of this a priori is that creation is no longer ambivalent, for it is created in Christ: it is charged with His significance; it is holy, awaiting its full redemption; it is mysterious, bearing a truth which is truly its own but not yet known in its fullness. A relation is then established between what is and what shall be when creation is fulfilled in the Kingdom. This relation is as concretely actual as the Christ in whom it is founded; in it, the truth of our world subsists, insofar as Catholic theology can be concerned with the world and with its history. This theological concern inevitably embraces the entire range of the humane sciences; these, by accepting the normative Truth of the revelation, become theological disciplines. Apart from that transformation, they only continue to generate their own dichotomies, incapable in their autonomy even of integrating those data which their methodologies exist to integrate.[1]

Nonetheless, the intellectual optimism which is the hallmark of Catholic theology can by no means become an intellectual arrogance without immediately falling victim to the same sterility which marks any other delusion of humanistic self-sufficiency. The rational constructs of the theological enterprise guard their value only as hypotheses, as possessing no truth of their own save that of the relation they bear to the revelation. That relation can be no more than an expression of the human indigence for the Truth which we cannot command, however fully it be present for our worship.

Thus the crises of Catholic theology are not transcended by recourse to regnant disciplines heretofore neglected; these lights also will fail whenever they are employed to compensate for the immanent deficiencies of their predecessors. No doubt it will al-

[1] The dissolution, from Duns Scotus onward, of the Augustinian unity of philosophy and theology marks the beginning of what will become under Descartes the selfconscious attempt of modern philosophy to re-establish through autonomous reason the inteUectual certitude which Augustine knew to be given only by divine illumination. This quest for certitude has rediscovered all the dichotomies long ago uncovered by the pre-Socratics in their own equivalent quest for the unity of reality and shares their failure.

ways be necessary to pose the perennial problematic in a terminology as topical as may be, but all such terminologies must suffer an intrinsic change of meaning by the mere fact of becoming theological; they thus lose their facility, their immanent logic, for they engage a problem transcendent to it, and those most accustomed to their secular denotation are most troubled by their theological translation, and particularly by the rejection of the familiar dichotomies which that translation or transforation must entail. The dichotomy whose rejection is found most scandalous is the primordial one, between divine and human autonomy, and in our day it is in the theology of the sacraments that this scandal is most poignantly renewed.

The scandal is not to be avoided, and only a badly mistaken ecumenism will attempt to do so. From any *status quo ante,* whether that of Greek ontology or German sociological hermeneutics or Roman law or Anglo-American linguistic analysis or whatever other humanism may be in point, the theological use and conversion of the rational and autonomous dynamic of scientific inquiry is unwarranted and illegitimate. The theologian's task is of course easily misunderstood, but it is most scandalous when it is not misunderstood.

There can be little need to detail the profound uneasiness experienced by the contemporary consciousness in its encounter with Catholic theology's employment, with reference to God's immanence in humanity and the world, of language generally thought sacred to the empirical sciences: the language of objectivity, concreteness, historicity, actuality and the like. To the immediate objection that such a usage effectively reduces God to a thing, that theology has replied that the proper denotation of these terms is sacramental, not simply empirical or pragmatic, as the scientific mentality confidently supposes. Of late, this reply has been given less frequently and with a greater diffidence, for theologians have been discovering a defect in the classical theology of the sacraments which, when remedied, seems to undercut the entire project. This failure, the lack of 'historical consciousness' now thought to have prevailed in Catholic theology until the eve of Vatican II or

thereabouts, is generally taken to be the absence of any awareness in the Church that its doctrine, and a fortiori all systematic entry into that doctrine, are alike contained within and subordinate to an autonomous temporal process of uncovenanted change,[2] a process whose elements submit to no rationale of 'development' whereby a given statement of truth might change with time and yet remain itself.

Vatican II seems to have lent some offhand support to this view of historical consciousness by distinguishing the historical formulations of doctrine from the doctrine itself, thereby permitting the inference that the latter is immune to change because without essential immanence in any of its historical expressions.[3] It is unlikely that the conciliar £.athers intended to underwrite Schleiermacher's reply to the cultured despisers of religion,[4] but such uncautious *obiter dicta* may serve to indicate

[2] This tension between the Church and the history which conditions the expression of her faith is a commonplace of contemporary Protestant ecumenism: see Miceal Ledwith, "The Theology of Tradition in the World Council of Churches," *Irish Theological Quarterly,* vol. 43, no. 2, (1976) 104-123, for an examination of the contrasting Protestant and Catholic views (the latter as developed in *Dei Verbum,* the Vatican II Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation) of the relation of the Church to the doctrinal tradition. Ledwith finds Gerhard Ebeling's influence upon the W.C.C. deliberations quite evident.

[8] *Gaudium et Spes,* n. 62: " for the deposit and truths of faith are one thing, the manner of expressing them quite another." *The Documents of Vatican II,* ed. A. P. Flannery, Pilgrim Books, New York, 1975, p. 966. However, within the spirit of Vatican II, the freedom to gloss this text is limited, for *Dei Ve1·bum* teaches that the Church is the active historical subject of the process of tradition: this in contradiction to the W. C. C. Montreal Report (see note 2, *supra)* wherein the tradition is simply identified with Jesus on principles common to Barth and to Ebeling. For the latter, a continually new interpretation of tradition is necessary, since the linguistic form in which the faith is couched is essentially relative, and permits no infallibility anywhere: see Ledwith, *art ci"t.,* p. 119. Ebeling's own assessment of the Catholic-Protestant disagreement over the normative value of the Church's history may be found in his *The Word of God and Tradition,* tr. S. H. Hooke, the Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1968, particularly in the first essay, "Church History as the History of the Exposition of Scripture." He finds between the two positions an irreducible difference. However, his own interpretation of the Catholic view of Church history is badly skewed by the *sola fide* emphasis which dominates his theology.

•Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Rdigion: Addresses in Response to its Cultured Critics,* tr. with intro. and notes by Terrence N. Tice, John Knox Press, Richmond,

the seriousness of the problem confronting the theologian concerned for sacramental realism: it is precisely that concern for realism which is identified, by reason of its association with the ontological method of classical theology, with that theology's supposed lack of historical consciousness, while at the same time, historical consciousness is commonly understood in such a manner as to submit the Church's sacramental reality, in worship, in mission, in doctrine, to secular criteria which are in formal contradiction to the Revelation by which the Church subsists.[5]

The first issue to be faced in any attempt to renew Catholic sacramental theology is then that of discovering the sacramental meaning of history and of historical existence and consciousness. This issue dominates all the rest, which now are more and more dealt with as functions of it or elements within it.

The problem is not unfamiliar: it recurs whenever the autonomous mind is at work upon its autonomous subject, whether world, or man, or history, or being. The contemporary categorial shift from ' being ' to ' history ' may serve to free previously neglected contents within our consciousness for theological exploitation, but it is hardly the case that the shift is as

Va., 1969; see especially the second address, "The Essence of Religion," 139-145, in which the author's programmatic differentiation between " religion " and " knowledge " is first explained.

[5] A good illustration of this notion of historical consciousness is provided by Avery Dulles in his recent *The Resilient Church,* Doubleday and Co., Inc., Garden City, New York, 1977, p&ticularly in the second chapter. John O'Malley's article, "Reform, Historical Consciousness and Vatican II's *Aggiomamento," Theological Studies,* vol. 32 (1971) no. 4, 573-601, is still the dearest statement of this view of the Church's subjection to history as to an autonomous historical dynamism. See also the two issues of *Co-nciliurn* edited by Roger Aubert: *Church History in Future Pers-pective (Concilium,* v. 57), Herder and Herder, New York, 1970, and *History: Self-Understanding of the Church (Concilium,* v. 67), Herder and Herder, New York, 1971. The collections of essays edited by James M. Robinson and John B. Cobb, *New Frontiers in Theology,* 3 vols., Harper and Row, New York, 1963-1967, provide an invaluable entry into the complex inteITelations of hermeneutical theory and the thcdogy of history. Ebeling's contribution may be found in the second volume, *The New Hermeneutic:* " ·word of God and Hermeneutic," pp. 78-110.

drastic as has been claimed: a properly historical consciousness is not so easily attained. As long as history is understood to he an autonomous dynamism [6] transcending all finite reality, we have simply elevated a philosophy of history to that spurious eminence formerly occupied by such tenants of the mode as Aristotelian metaphysics; the latter thought to legislate for the ontology of the Revelation, while the former would do the same for its historicity. Neither can reckon with the higher Truth of the Christ in his Church without losing that autonomy which the contemporary secular version of ' critical intelligence ' demands for itself. Such autonomy must objectify its subject matter-history, in the case at hand-and so resists all immanence within it. This can hardly be the device by which a valid sense of historical existence is arrived at; to exist historically is precisely to recognize one's immanence within history, and consequently to refuse all those intimations of transcendence to which the philosophies of history are subject. No doubt ontologies are equally liable to this kind of triumphalism, as are all other exercises of critical reason. We are particularly aware today of the moral obligation underlying the use of the critical intelligence: it is no longer possible to urge a voluntaristic *sacri,ficium intellecfas* as an appropriate Christian piety. But it would be equally immoral to elevate that intelligence to the status of a prime truth before which even the truth of Christ must make obeisance: one cannot serve two masters. We may conclude that the theological conversion of critical reason is a refusal of the servile mind on the one hand, and of the over-weening mind on the other: neither is capable of doing theology.

• "Autonomous histQry " is no more than an illustration of the fallacy of misplaced concreteness until some attempt is made to come to terms with its implication of either (1) a self-sufficient historical method whose canons of interpretation await no higher legitimation, or (2) a self-sufficient community of *Herrenvolk* whose hermeneutical consensus is similarly normative for the human condition. Scholars such as Jacob Burckhardt, Karl Loewith, Christopher Dawson and Eric Voegelin have long recognized and stmggled with the problem of the intellectual dead end which is historicism, but very few of the Catholic theologians of this country have taken them seriously.

If the basis of doing theology is then to be neither an omnicompetent methodology of criticism nor an unwitting obedience to tradition, the question of its justification is not thereby avoided. Again, we cannot begin by presupposing the familiar dichotomies of an autonomous criticism; it is not by solving these that theology proceeds, but by affirming at the outset that their merely potential implications are undone by the actuality of the Truth. They are transcended and negated by the presence of Christ in his Church. It is this presence, radically liturgical and Eucharistic, that is the *prius* of all theology. The actual meaning of reality, its sacramental meaning, is disclosed in the Church's worship of the Risen Lord, in the Eucharistic celebration of the sacrifice by which the Church is caused, created.[7] To participate in this worship is to participate in all that it grounds; i. e., it is to participate in reality, in the Good Creation which it celebrates.

Part of this worship is intellectual, a continuing effort by the individual Christian to enter more deeply into the Truth which is there present as the sustenance of his understanding. This effort finds a partial expression in theology, the theoretical formulation of the *quaerens* of the faith. Such formulations have no autonomous value: their truth is that of questions, directed to the faith of the Church. This demands that the theologian sufficiently understand his question so as to be able to frame it with the precision and coherence of a methodologically controlled inquiry: the range of such inquiry is as. broad as the faith itself-nothing human is alien to it, including the philosophy of history, for when turned to the uses of Christian worship, this science undertakes the systematic analysis of the sacramental significance of fallen temporal existence.

That our existence is thus significant is a matter of faith, a historical consciousness inseparable from the Eucharistic worship of the Lord of history. This notion of existence, this historical consciousness, has the concreteness of the liturgy in which it is discovered; it transcends the tools of the systematic theology

[7] I Cor 10:17; *Lumen Gentium,* n. 7.

of history as actuality transcends possibility, as reality transcends abstractions, as the faith transcends its own *quaerens intellectum* .. And yet it is indissociable from the *qtui.erens,* and consequently is open to and compatible with the entire sweep of critical inquiry for so long as that inquiry respects the primacy in truth of the Revelation received in the Church as the cause of faith and of existence in the history which is the Lord's. Thus alone is history truly a theological discipline.[8]

Those who accept the legitimacy of this endeavor are those already in some manner involved in it: these, as worshipers, form the theological and hermeneutical circle in which the concrete project of theology proceeds.

It is within this circle that the theologian finds the concrete a priori conditions of doing theology: the conditions, not of its possibility, but of its actuality; these cannot be identified, save at the cost of identifying the hypothetical theological construct, i. e., the theological system, with the transcendent reality toward whose truth the theological system is related as a question, as a possible truth which is methodologically forbidden to confuse its possibility with the actuality, the Revelation received in the Church.

[8] David Tracy's much discussed 'revisionist' approach to fundamental theology, elaborated in *Blessed Rage for Order: Tlw New Pluralism in Theology,* Seabury Press, New York, 1975, would regard this inner-historical, because inner-traditional, theological hermeneutic as either an obsolete fundamentalist orthodoxy (24-25) or as a failure adequately t-0 " harmonize without conflating " faith and reason, a task which he thinks proper to any contemporary fundamental theology; see his "Religious Language as Limit Language," *Theology Digest,* vol. 22, (1974) no. 4, 291-307, esp. 302. This task, as Tracy sees it, proceeds under criteria which characterize a hermeneutical circle or community other than the community which is the Church. The impact of this hermeneutical community upon the Church's doctrinal traditions amounts to the 'revision' of that tradition. Avery Dulles ("Method in Fundamental Theology: Reflections on David Tracy's *Blessed Rage for Order," Theological Studies,* vol. 37, (1976) no. 2, 304-316) and Peter Berger (" S2cular Theology and the Rejection of the Supernatural: Reflections on Recent Trends," *Theological Studies,* vol. 38, (1977) no. I, 38-56), have been sharply critical of the secularizing thrust of Tracy's method, Berger going so far as to term it a reductionism. For a reply to this severity, see the "Responses to Peter Berger," by Langdon Gilkey, Schubert Ogden and David Tracy in *Theological Studies,* vol. 39 (1978), no. 3, 486-507.

Thus the theologian finds the conditions necessary for the work of theology in and by his participation in them; his actual relation to the community composing the theological circle is constitutive for his theological understanding. If he is engaged in the specifically Catholic task of Catholic theology, i. e., of sacramental theology, he cannot but accept the prior sacramentality of the theological-hermeneutical circle, his community of sacramental worship, for this is the *prius* of the sacramentality which he would understand.

But the hermeneutical circle, the a priori of the individual understanding, is equally the *prius* of the individual's historical and social existence; his truth is historical-traditional as well as it is social-communal. To recognize this can easily be made to be the first step in the reduction of this *prius,* the hermeneutical-communal-historical circle, to an abstraction, to a theory or methodology: in short, to an ideology, which would then function as the absolute transcendent to all the categories by which the concrete reality may be designated: history, society, being, truth. The self-stultification of such programs has never been able to discourage their enthusiasts, but their anti-historical thrust is generally recognized; quite evidently, they cannot serve the historical interest of Catholic theology, whose concrete Absolute, Jesus the Christ, transcends history not as an ideal abstracted from history, but only as immanent in history-and in history which is itself no abstraction, but the living community of worship, the Church, in and by whose worship the hermeneutical community subsists. For such a Catholic theology, history is time concretely qualified by the immanence of Christ, by the worship of the Church. This intrinsic qualification is simply freedom: by existence in Christ, the worshipper is removed from the fatal, futile insignificance of unqualified temporal duration, the ' sorrowful wheel ' of pagan pessimism, the ' bad infinity ' of post-Hegelian philosophy. Thus qualified, history is not other than eschatologically significant temporal existence, the temporal dimension of the fallen creation and therefore the temporal dimension of the hermeneutical circle, of the community of worship. Otherwise

put, the heremeneutical circle is salvation-historical: it implies a tradition in which one stands in order to understand that the creation is good, however fallen, and that one exists in an order of eschatological significance, in a sacramental order.[9]

The recognition that one stands in such a tradition, in such a circle, is inseparable from the recognition that one need not; the sacramentality of reality, of the good creation, is not a necessity of thought, but a free option, taken up within an existential experience or intuition of freedom and of personal significance-an experience, in short, of existing within a good creation which is at once history, community, and world. This is the experience of worship, sustained only by worship, of the Emmanuel, the Lord Who is with us, in His world.

The freedom of this commitment to tradition, to history, to worship, resists all rational analysis; it is gratuitous, with a gratuity which pervades existence, whether of the self, of the entirety of the good creation, or of the hermeneutical tradition in which the truth of this worship, of this existence, of this community, is given continual historical utterance in liturgy. And while the alternative to such freedom is necessity and determination, and while one is always conscious within the circle of worship of that alternative as a temptation, it has

• H. G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method,* Seabury Press, New York 1975, refers the historicity of truth to tradition (259 ff.) and tradition to the event-character of language (379). This historicity is intended to be highly concrete: it is legal, moral, ultimately theological, a fusion of the tradition presented in a document with the horizon of the interpreter of the document. But Gadamer's theological hermeneu.tic, like Ebeling's npon which it depends, is that of the Reformation; it is a liturgical hermeneutic, but it is one tied to a liturgy of word rather than of sacrament (274 fl'., 294 ff.) and consequently rejects the normative value of the historical tradition of the Church community. The attempt to identify language instead of the Church as the vehicle of historical tradition (345 ff.) fails, for it ignores the fact of what Orwell called " double-speak; " a common language does not imply a human community in tradition, i. e., a hermeneutical consensus. It then becomes necessary to look beyond language for the carrier of historical reality or tradition, and one is thrown back upon a choice between the dehistoricized faith of Scheiermacher in which the word has no indispensable concrete content, and. the concreteness of a tradition whose liturgical character is historical with the historicity of the Eucharistic event. This last is the Catholic option: cf. *Sacrosanctum Concilium,* n. 2, 7.

there only the negative reality of a temptation, of a possibility which cannot be made actual within that circle: to realize that possibility is to depart from the circle which experiences in worship the goodness of creation and the freedom of historical existence.

For the alternative to existence in the good creation, in the history of salvation, is not existence in some other and secular realm of being and history, but is rather that *aversio a D'eo* whose other face is an idolatry, an existential commitment to the void, the absence of the good creation which is nothingness.

For we have no basis for the excogitation of a world which God did not make good; the supposition that merely logical possibilities, formed after the false image of our autonomous reason, are in fact ontologically actual or creatable is entirely without theological warrant. The non-necessity or gratuity of our sacramental existence cannot be the justification for any postulate of a non-gratuitous truth or history or being: these are all appropriated in gratuitous freedom, or not at all. There is then no basis for the notion, time-honored in Catholic theology, of a 'double gratuity,' the one of nature, the other of grace: the *ex nihilo* of creation in Christ is precisely the *ex nihilo* of *gratia Christi,* the Gift of the Spirit which is the purpose of the Father's sending of the Son, and which is inseparable from the Incarnation as it is from the Eucharistic worship of the Church.

The refusal to be free is then the refusal of the good creation; as an ontological refusal, it tends not to a real existence in an alternative and necessitarian reality, but to annihilation. This tendency is innate in our humanity; it is a primordial datum of our consciousness. Opposing it and irreconciliable with it is another tendency, equally primordial, toward the personal appropriation of the good creation and of the history of salvation. Any rationalization of this bifurcate consciousness concludes to its disintegration; in this fallen world, only the optimism of faith in the Lord of history can found the sacramental hermeneutic of the good creation, in which all the dichotomies which our fallenness can fashion are overcome in

the mystery of the Word made flesh, the Eucharistic sustenance of our history, of our existence in Christ, of our reality redeemed.

This mystery is then the a priori of our humanity; our reality, our truth, our history are unified in Him in whom we exist, from whom we have fallen, in whom we are redeemed, the Creator immanent in His creation. Whether we theologize with insights drawn from anthropology, psychology, sociology, historical and literary criticism, law, ontology, or whatever other heuristic device, it is with this creation, specified and qualified as *in Christo,* that we are concerned, for there is no other. Its humanity, its historicity, its freedom, as its unity, truth and goodness, are not other than its relation to Him whom the Father sent to give the Spirit. This relation is that of total, absolute ontological dependence.

Sacramental theology is then the theology of creation in Christ. It requires that the prime fact of our absolute dependence upon the Son's immanence in His creation as its intrinsic formal and existential cause be the objective ground of all our theological hypotheses, and so of all theological systematization. Only thus may the ancient contradictions immanent in the classical theological problematic, the rational opposition of nature-grace, God-man, history-Kingdom, law-Gospel and all the rest be resolved, not by yet another flawed discovery of the autonomous mind, but concretely in Him by whom these dichotomies and their attendant pessimism are shown, revealed, to be false to the transcendent and yet immanent Truth of Good Creation, however native to our fallenness. To accept this Truth is to turn away from the false autonomy of our scientific methodologies, to convert them from their own futile immanence of autonomous rationality to an openness upon the Mystery which they cannot control, but from which they may continually learn. With this conversion to the real, they become theologies.

So to understand the theological task is to refuse at its outset all of those a priori mindsets which presume to transcend the Revelation by enclosing its mystery within their own necessities whether as ontologies, as historical methods, as

sociologies, as hermeneutical systems, or whatever. So to understand theology is to accept the truly theological a priori of the Church's worship, whose transcendence cannot be understood apart from one's immanence within it. This transcendence is not abstract; it has the concreteness of the One Flesh of the Eucharist, the creative and redemptive relation of Jesus to His Body, the Church. In this relation, all reality, however designated, subsists.[10] As this concrete relation is the focus of all Catholic worship, so it must be the focus of that element of the Church's worship which is theology. In this worship, all that is human is sustained and directed toward its eschatological fulfillment; by this worship, the Spirit of freedom is given, the gift of historical existence *in Christo.* History has no other formality than this, no other dynamism, and no :finality other than the mystery of the Kingdom. Historical consciousness, ontological realism and sacramental worship are at one with this existence in Christ, and cannot be isolated from it: the event of the Eucharist and the event of the Gift of the *Creator Spiritus* are inseparable. This is the event of creation in Christ, at once historical, ontological, and sacramental.

From this viewpoint, sacramental efficacy is in the order of substance, i. e., of creation, not of some less total kind of change or accidental transformation. This interpretation of the Tridentine *ex opere operato* doctrine is equivalent to an identification of the sacramental event *ex opere operato* with the event which is creation in Christ--or creation *tout court.* Inasmuch as the sacramental event par excellence is that which Trent has called transubstantiation, it is then necessary to frame a single systematic account at once of the Eucharist and of creation. Such an account, as an ontology, cannot be charged with nonhistoricity; neither is it burdened with any naive

[10] This term, used by Vatican II *(Lumen Gentium,* n. 8) to describe the dependence of the " Church of Christ " upon the Roman Catholic Church, also states the dependence of creation upon the immanence within it of the Creator Christ, whose Mission from the Father is His presence among us. That presence is Eucharistic; it is liturgical and historical. Its Truth is normative for that creation's history.

cosmological or anthropological presupposition inconsistent with the theme of creation in Christ. The entire transposition of the classical theological problem which this approach represents rests upon a single systematic postulate: the ontological identity of all contingency *ex nihilo,* whether it be thought of as creation or as *gratia Christi.* By this postulate, the last remnants of the nominalist dichotomy between nature and grace are rejected by the reduction of nature to a pure possibility of thought, whose intrinsic necessity removes it from all substantial contingency, i. e., from creation. There is here no 'Christomonism,' for the project intends no more than a coherent and orthodox theology of the Father's sending of the Son to give the Spirit, and the primary causality inherent in that Mission, to which the expression "creation in Christ" is a pointer, does not derogate from but in fact creates and sustains the secondary and sacramental efficacy of all human agency, whose ground and culmination is the worship of the Church.

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SENSIBILITY IN RAHNER AND MERLEAU-PONTY

THE PHILOSOPHICAL PROJECTS of Karl Rahner and Maurice Merleau-Ponty are similar in that both take human cognition to be the clue to the structure of human existence, and take human existence to be the chief clue to the understanding of the world. Rahner's *Spirit in the World* is a metaphysics of knowledge in which the dynamics of human cognition is the clue to the meaning of reality. Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* is a work in which perception is revealed to be the basic dynamism of human existence.

Key to the understanding of Karl Rahner is the comprehension of the nature and operation of sensibility in his work, as inherited by him from Thomas Aquinas. Key to the comprehension of Merleau-Ponty is the understanding of perception as the basis of man's cognition and motor activity, his access to the visible, and, through the visible, to the invisible. It is the thesis of this article that the understanding of certain areas in either of these thinkers will illuminate parallel areas in the work of the other. Work done by Merleau-Ponty can be used in support of Rahner, and vice versa. Thomistic metaphysics finds sympathy in phenomenological ontology.

In the philosophy of Karl Rahner sensibility is part of the ontological structure of the person, a condition essential to the definition of the human. It refers to all that is material in man, in so far as it originates in and is informed by man's spirit. Without spirit, matter does not achieve sensibility. Sensibility refers to the incarnation of spirit in matter, an incarnation that makes the body a person and its material surroundings a world.

The spirit gives rise to sensibility. By a process called emanation,[1] the spirit becomes other than itself without ceasing to be

[1] Karl Rahner, *Spirit in the World* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), p. 254.

itself, and identifies this otherness with itself. The otherness generated by finite spirit is matter, and spirit flows through its material otherness as sensibility. Sensibility is an important notion in philosophical anthropology, necessary to the theory of knowledge, in which it is referred to as sensation.

Sensation is not one kind of human knowing, nor is it an early phase dispensed with and departed from in the later phases; it is part of all human knowing. It has to do with spirit's pouring out of itself into matter, its own matter, as the condition in which extraneous forms can imprint themselves on this matter. From this spirit can later abstract the form, know it as a universal, and refer it back to its particular extraneous source in a judgment. [2]

Purely spiritual knowledge would be the intellectual knowledge of the abstracted form as universal. But this spiritual knowledge is immediately referred to the material phantasm from which it arises (conversion to the phantasm) ,[3] and it is further referred through the phantasm to the particular being experienced (judgment). Man does not have any knowledge that does not come from sensation, which is not referred to a phantasm, which is not at least implied in a judgment. His knowledge and his being are so much the same that any discussion of his knowledge is also one about his nature.

Man is a material being, by nature an incarnation of spirit in matter. Spirit is an unrestricted desire to know, and since its natural desire for ever more being and truth is suspended in matter, spirit immerses itself in matter, loses itself there in sensation, and then overcomes this absence from itself by a return to itself.4 Only upon its self-retrieval does it enjoy presence to itself. Man's presence to himself is a mediated immediacy in which it is necessary for him to know another in order to appreciate the truth of his own being.

Louis Roberts indicates three levels of knowledge in Rahner, [5]

[2] *Ibid.,* p. *U5.*

[3] *Ibid.,* p. £38.

•*Ibid.,* p. 117.

[6] Louis Roberts, *The Achievement of Karl Rahner* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), p. *£5.*

which he refers to as a "transcendental dialectic: " (1) sensation-the *praesentia mundi;* (2) knowing as thought---oppositio mundi; (3) knowing in its *unity-conversio ad phantasma.* These three-sensation, abstraction and conversion-are all phases of one knowing process, and even as such are completed as a knowing process only in the judgment, which bridges the intentional gap to the existing thing known.[6]

All knowledge begins as intuition. In intuition the object and the subject perform a single act. The subject enacts the act of the object as its own act. One act of knowing is supported by both subject and object:[7] " the act of the sensed object takes place in the matter of the sensing subject." The object is the cause of the knowing, because it impresses its form on the matter of the subject. The subject is cause of the knowing, because, as spirit, it sustains its own emanation receptively through the matter.

While intuiting, the subject pours itself into the otherness of its matter, becoming absent to itself, losing itself, being given over to the other, not being able to distinguish itself from the other. Following intuition and the suspension of spirit in matter comes objectification, in which the subject knows the other as other and knows itself apart from the other. This is the intellectual moment, transcending sensation, attaining to the knowledge of the universal. Sense intuits and intellect objectifies.

After intuition and objectification follows conversion to the phantasm. Here the intellect realizes that its activity is always an illumination of a sensible species, always referred to matter, to sensibility, to the world. In virtue of this it experiences its concept only in reference to a percept. Knowledge is incarnational in structure because man himself is incarnational in structure.

• *Ibid.,* p. !?8.

[7] Andrew Tallon, "Rahner and Personization," *Philosophy Today* 14 (1970), p. 48, and "Personal Becoming," *The Thomis.t* 43 (1979), p. 28, and James J. Condon, "Karl Rahner on Sensation," *The Thom-ist* 41 (1977), pp. 415-6.

[8] *Spirit in the World,* p. liii.

Rahner explains that conversion to the phantasm designates the unity of aU man's cognitive powers in the act of knowing. It integrates the knowledge of intellect, imagination and the several senses. It integrates perception and conception and prepares for judgment. It is through the phantasm that knowledge terminates realistically in the thing known.

The importance of sensibility in Rahner does not cease with cognition, but it reaches to conation or appetition as well. This we find in his theological work on the question of concupiscence.[9] Here Rahner reminds us that we can never have an act of spiritual cognition that is not an act of sensitive cognition, and conversely.[10] Man's desires have the same structure as his perceptions. Concupiscence is nothing but man's condition of sensibility considered on the level of conation.

In the question of knowing himself, man finds that his materiality is not transparent in its entirety. His presence to himself is never a complete recovery from the suspension of self in otherness. His self-enactment, or presence to himself, is always less than all it could be. Something of his selfhood goes unrecovered due to the viscosity and opaqueness of matter.

So, in the question of conation, there is only an incomplete domination of the reason over the sense as the various powers into which sensibility is divided. The senses are faculties of cognition and of appetition. Concupiscence is their tendency to move into action independently of the control of reason. The spirit that emanates through matter as sensibility only partially retrieves itself as self-presence, and this has its appetitive correlative in the lack of domination had by rational will over the senses.

Rahner goes to great length to explain that concupiscence is a part of the natural dynamism of man, and is not most basically a tendency to sin. Only in its narrowest sense is" evil concupiscence" a tendency to sin. This narrowest sense refers to the condition of resistance of the powers to the will, even

[9] Rahner, *Theological Investigations* I, translated by Cornelius Ernst (Baltimore: Helicon, 1961), pp. 347-382.

[10] *Ibid.,* p. 352.

after the dictate and decision of universal reason to the contrary.[11]

In the narrowest, and properly theological sense concupiscence is the tension between person and nature, between man as decider and his various natural orientations, which precede his decisions. When he makes a decision, the severalness of his conative orientations does not automatically disappear, but resists the decision, making it impossible for him fully to penetrate his own nature with his person. Man's objective nature has its own inertia, and is only partially directed by his personal decisions.[12]

In the widest sense, concupiscence is any conscious reactive attitude developed by a power, as opposed to a receptive or cognitive attitude.[13] It is the general human condition, morally neutral, of sensibility as the emanation and suspension of spirit in matter, without the actuality of complete self-retrieval and perfect luminosity. The reason none of us knows himself perfectly is the same as the reason none of us can perfectly fulfill the commitments of our will. 1_;here is a certain sluggishness of spirit due to its incarnation in matter. This is part of man's nature previous to and apart from all discussion of his actual sinfulness.

Divided into the several senses, human appetition is many-faceted and multi-directional. In their independence each pulls against the other and all pull against the rational appetite. This prevents us from ever putting ourselves fully into any decision. We cannot help holding back, retaining energy, remaining shy of total self-expenditure in any single commitment, be it good or bad. Concupiscence is the habitual ability of the sensitized appetite to move into act independently of and even in resistance to the control of free personal decision.[14]

As concupiscence, sensibility works both for us and against us. It does. not allow us to give ourselves totally in any com-

[11] *Ibid.,* p. 860.

[12] *Ibid.,* p. 860-9.

[13] *Ibid.,* p. 858.

"Conan Gallagher, "Concupiscence," *The Thomist* XXX (1966), p. fl58.

mitmeut, so that we can never do a totally good deed with total self-donation to the task, but neither can we ever perform a totally selfish or dastardly act. Only in death, with the opportunity for total freedom it brings can we totally penetrate our natures, both making and executing a total and perfect option.[15] In death's decision alone we leave our sluggish concupiscence behind and penetrate our natures totally with complete personal self-enactment.[16]

Spirit is a capacity to know all things, and this emanates as an insatiable curiosity in sensibility. Seen from the aspect of the appetitive, this explains the unquenchability of concupiscence. Man aches for an act in which he can totally enact himself as a person, but also aches for a mode of acquisition in which all the world, all experience, can he his.

Without compromising the primacy and ultimacy of the existential judgment in human cognition,[17] Rahner displays great interest in the question as a chronic condition moving us from judgment to judgment. The question is the cognitive mode for man's natural dynamism, a dynamism which is only to rest in possession of the infinite, a capacity only to be filled in a mode of possession which nature cannot fulfill. This unrest, this " obediential capacity " for something beyond nature, explains how man's judgments satisfy him only in a provisional way, and always leave him thirsting for more. In the judgment he attains to being, but this relative attainment of being only makes him feel all the more his capacity for an absolute attainment. This drive for more knowledge explains man's questioning; it is a drive for more being.

Spirit is the name for the power in man that reaches beyond all finite manifestations for being itself. It is a grasping movement that reaches beyond the physical, visible world. Even so,

[15] Rahner, *On the Theology of Death* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1961), pp. 88-9.

[16] *Theological Investigations* I, p. 282.

[17] Frederick Wilhelmsen, " The Priority of Judgment over Question: Reflections on Transcendental Thomism," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 14 (1974), pp. 481-2.

as spirit-in-the-world, it is through the world and its materiality that spirit grapples its way to the beyond. Spirit is drive or appetite for being as such; it is the capacity to know being as such, lured along by a " pre-grasp " of that to which it is drawn. Spirit is doubly oriented to Absolute Being and to the world in which it experiences the plurality of other beings and its own solidarity with other finite beings.

The dynamism of spirit is the root of the dynamism of matter as sensibility. Sensibility is concupiscent, because, spirit, oriented to the world, is never fulfilled with its finite intramundane experiences o.f living and being. The restlessness of spirit lies beyond the insatiability of the flesh. It is not a battle between spirit and flesh, but the struggle of one being who is both, trying to recover, unify and totalize himself, while spirit is diffused through matter, the very condition that makes his self-expression and self-enactment possible.

Sensibility, then, reveals a capacity for the infinite which carries out its searching in the world, through matter, as a sensitized primordial desire which is split up into the desires of the several senses. Sensibility is sensuality, the need of the senses for the pleasure of acquisition, with the constant let-down of not having acquired enough, of having over-indulged, or of feeling a deeper need in contrariety to a fulfilled superficial need. It is also ambiguously open to further, higher meanings which can be pursued as incarnated or symbolized in matter.

Having sketched out a summary of Rahner's positions on sensibility, I will now lay out a sketch summarizing Merleau-Ponty's positions on sensibility. These two sketches will be roughly parallel in development. I will closely correlate spirit-in-the-world with being-in-the-flesh (hyphenation is mine), concupiscence and motility, conversion to the phantasm and perception in the rich Merleau-Pontian sense.

In a discussion of Merleau-Ponty's notion oi sensibility, it is most helpful to point out that for him sensibility and visibility are the same thing. The terms visibility and invisibility correlate exactly with the less frequent sensibility and insensibility. It is also helpful to point out that the body is that

aspect of man which is visible, but that the body is the incarnation of consciousness, which is invisible. To speak of man and his world we must speak about the visible and the invisible, the sensible and that which cannot be sensed, but which nevertheless comes to be known through the sensible.

On the cognitive level, sensibility manifests itself as perception. Perception embraces the relationship between the incarnate cogito and the entire world as the horizon of its experience,[18] against which particular objects appear. Perception includes aspects of the world that are visible, and those that have to do not with manifestation but with meaning, and that are therefore invisible. The network of filigrees interlacing body and world is never completely visible, but its invisible presence conditions what is visible.

The intentionality between body and world is not purely cognitive, of course, but is appetitive as well. This Merleau-Ponty expresses in his notion of motility.[19] Motility, or motor intentionality, is equiprimordial with perception. We never simply perceive an object, but we take up an attitude toward it, reacting to it in some way, construing it as obstacle or opportunity. As we perceive things, we inchoately judge what to do with them, how to use them. They are there for our enjoyment or employment; they are deployed for our use.

Motility means bodily action. It is the spontaneous movement of the body in reaction to perceptual meanings. It is pre-personal, pre-rational and pre-reflective, and may move into action independently and in advance of the reflective powers. The reflective powers sculpture the body's motility into desirable patterns or habits. Undesirable habits may be extremely difficult to remove, showing that the body has a motile-perceptual inertia at the pre-rational level.

Motility and spatiality are closely connected. The body sets itself up as a center of orientation for motor activity.

[18] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenom.enology of Perception,* translated by Colin Smith (New York: The Humanities Press, 1970), p. xiii.

[19] John Bannan, *The Philosophy of Merleau-Pon"ty* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc., 1967), p. 70.

Objects surrounding it become tools for its motor projects. Meanings arise on the perceptual level with a motor significance. The body's space is never originally an "objective space" of distances between objects among which the body is an unprivileged example. The body's space is a "phenomenal space" or a " lived space " from which it deploys itself and employs other objects for its own motor purposes.[20]

Motility is rooted in basic intentionality, or "operative intentionality." Merleau-Ponty refers to it as "beneath intelligence," and even as "beneath perception." As such, intentionality is an " intentional arc," " a vector mobile in all directions like a searchlight." It is this arc which brings about "the unity of the senses, of intelligence, of sensibility and motility." It is a "projective activity" which uses the objects around it as " springboards from which to leap towards other spontaneous acts."[21]

On top of this basic operative intentionality,[22] there is a" thetic intentionality," which operates on the rational level, generating more meaning from meanings which are originally given at the level of perception and motor intentionality. Meaning does not originate with reason and reflection, but these carry forward a process already initiated on a more fundamental level. Reflective activity is always incarnate in and referred to perception: knowledge is basically one, and reasoning is never a permanent departure from perceiving.

Intentionality is never a purely intellectual process, but is oriented to operation as well as to cognition, carrying with it the operative tendencies and dynamisms to enlist for its own projects the objects it perceives. The world and its contents, although they offer resistance to the projects of the body, are also unfinished realities, requiring human presence to bring them to completion.

The world has more meaning, and so do its contents, than it ever reveals in one experience. The invisible side of man has

[20] *The Phenomenofogy of Perc:eption,* pp. 105ff.

[21] *lbid.,* pp. *135-6.*

[22] *Ibid.,* p. 429.

more meaning than it is ever able to represent completely in his visibility. These conditions help constitute the ambiguity of the world, the condition by which it supports many interpretations, none of which are ultimate or irreplaceable. Life is full of meaning-we are condemned to meaning, says Merleau-Ponty-but no meaning for any single experience reigns supreme with everlasting tenure over all the others.

Ambiguity is closely allied with sensibility, because it is the condition by which man's identity may be reduced neither to his consciousness nor to his body. It is also the condition by which the world is irreducible to any set of fixed or finished significanoes.[23] The openness of everything, of subject and object, to further meaning and interpretation is ambiguity, and ambiguity is due to an invisibility structuring visibility from within, never exhausting itself in any particular manifestations.

The essences of all things are incarnate in their manifestations.[24] .Man's consciousness is embodied in his flesh. Being is incarnated in its expressions. Silence is enfleshed in speech, but not exhausted there; experience is so related to language, inexhaustible and not whoily discharged into any of its descriptions. The tension of the visible and the invisible, neither wholly reducible to the other, yet neither available without the other, structures Merleau-Ponty's systematic approach to many problems; this incarnational and organic approach uses man's perceptual structure as a model for understanding all cultural realities.

The ambiguity of the body rests in the fact that it is the percipient of the world, and it is at the same time perceived by others. It is both subject and object. When I touch one hand with the other, I am both touching myself and being touched, and these two operations never wholly melt into one another.[25] It is this ambiguous subject-object relation that I am perceptu-

[23] Bannan, pp. 78-80.

•• *Ibid.,* p. 154.

[25] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible,* edition by Claude Lafort and translated by Alphonso Lingis (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), p. 254.

ally to myself that serves as the ground for all other experiences in which I am subject and others are objects. It prepares me to suspect subjectivity in other objects like myself. This suspicion, untouchable and invisible, makes me capable of interimbjectivity as intercorporeality.

My consciousness is incarnate in my body, and my body in turn is incarnate in the world. There is one " flesh of the world," [26] one sensibility shared by both me and the world. To myself I am a privileged zone of this sensible and sensing flesh, but I can also understand perceptually how to others I am the sensed. The non-sentient but sensible world has as its inner invisibility Being. Being is the ultimate invisible, the inner to which the flesh of the world is the outer dimension.

Being is ever incarnate; it embraces both the visible and the invisible. " As an expanse of meaning, Being consequently is both visible and invisible, the strands of sense that run from being to being and render them visible and expressive. The stance of being is that of a question: in their visibility and in their expressive character, things ask of the eye and hand what can be seen and touched, and of language what can be said." [27]

Behind the essences and expressions of the sensible which the world ministers to as horizon and context, there is a higher solidarity, the solidarity of being. Originally raw and unposited, being, as first discovered by Merleau-Ponty, is a presence or a within of the objects manifesting themselves. Slowly he lets it dawn on him that the being showing itself through objects is the same being that makes him a sensible in the world. Now being is brought with essences to the level of the reflective consciousness, and a phenomenological ontology is achieved.

The invisible operates in Merleau-Ponty on two levels. First is the level of pereption itself, the level in which each object is invisibly interwoven with the world and with other things, with hidden textures and latent lines,.rays and filigrees. Second there

•• *lbUl.,* p. 248 and p. *255.*

••Garth Gillan, *The Horizons af the Flesh* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1973), p. !W.

is the level of thought, of mind and idea, which is incarnate in perception, but which is more than perception; it is concerned with truth and falsehood, fantasy and fact. The second level requires the first, on which is already achieved a perceptual faith in the objectivity of the world.

So, if sensibility is synonymous with visibility, Being embraces both the visible and the invisible, and is responsible for the movement of meaning between visibles and from the invisible to the visible. Being is not to be had in any pure state, distilled from its incarnation and pluralization in sensibility, yet it is more than what is sensible, and embraces the insensible as well. The world is a flesh and has organic unity, because of the sustaining, self-manifesting and yet self-concealing, presence of Being, incarnate within it.

It is Being that makes the sensible thinkable. " The essential is to describe the vertical or wild Being as that pre-spiritual milieu without which nothing is thinkable, not even the spirit, and by which we pass into one another, and ourselves into ourselves... " [28] Being serves as a universal ground of meaning and thought, and especially in thinking what are known as essences.

In rational cognition the essence reaches out to consciousness through one of its profiles, and the incarnate cogito, as a system of equivalences for things, intuits. within its global act of perceiving the essence as an intelligible minimum that " cannot be varied without the object itself disappearing." There is no divorce of essence from fact; the knowledge of one always entails the knowledge of the other. [29]

" There are not two knowledges, but two different degrees of elaboration of the same knowledge." Essence is always incarnate in fact and thought is always incarnate in words. An object is always perceived in the cultural world with reference to certain words, relating to the languages one speaks. This "verbalized object" [30] is what we perceive. Words possess a

[28] *Ibid.,* p. 22.
[29] Bannan, pp. 152-3.
[30] *Ibid.,* p. 156.

certain generality which allows them to be applied to similar objects. He describes words as" emotional essences" that have become generalized or detached from their" empirical origins." Thought is the selective applying of certain words to certain facts. There is no thought that is utterly detached from words.[31]

The human world, the social world, the world of language and of culture contain the same question as the question of thought: essence and fact,. the general in the particular. In the human world it is a question of communication and solitude, presence to others and presence to oneself. Neither is the more basic; both are equally original. There is a pouring out of the self into otherness, and a withdrawal of the self into itself and away from its engagements. I give myself over to the generality of my worldly situation, and again I recoil into the particularity of my inalienable presence to myself.

Words and gestures are behaviors which symbolize essences and meanings. They are material embodiments of meaning, available for communication in the social world. There would be no thinking without this prior symbol-making activity which is equiprimordial with perception and intersubjectivity. The succession of symbols, verbal and otherwise, build up as a sediment into a cultural world which conditions all of our experiences. The flesh of the world is not experienced as raw, brutal and undisciplined, but is pre-constituted by a host of sedimented cultural meanings. It is not up to each of us to invent language anew, but to learn the accumulated social meaning of words. Even so, such spoken language must give way to new applications in actual speech, which is the spontaneous completion of experience by verbalization in symbols. For Merleau-Ponty, learning to think is learning to use words both correctly and creatively.

Reflection has a temporal structure. I reflect on a past event, perceiving its meaning differently than I did then. I explain an earlier statement of mine. I begin to question facts or interpretations I had not previously questioned. It is my absence

[31] *Ibid.,* pp. 156-7.

or remoteness from a situation, due to the passing of time, that gives me the distance to perceive it anew, change my perspective, interpret in light of the comments of others, and therefore, more objectively. The mind in its temporal reflectiveness is basically interrogative. Every present judgment gives way to a future of reappraisal, a new absence in which new judgments may be formed. The discovery of the importance of the absence between presences coincides with the exaltation of the interrogative.

Perception, according to Merleau-Ponty, is not simply a prereflective grasp of meanings on the part of a conscious body in the world, but it is a commitment on the part of a body to a world which is only partly given, and which must be brought to completion by the body's own activity. Sensibility, then, is not a merely passive and receptive condition, but is such only as a quality of a world in which there are conscious bodies, the passive moment of an active and spontaneous initiative sharing one flesh with other bodies and objects in the world.

Sensibility is for action, for motion, for commitment. In it the body is given over to the world, and given over to itself objectively as a part of the world. It is materiality as infused with consciousness, and brute matter as waiting to be completed in the projects of surrounding bodies. It is a common tissue of worldliness through which empathies compenetrate and constitute one another, a single organicity infused with the invisible singleness of Being itself.

The coincidence of the visible and the invisible in a relationship of incarnation and the ambiguity of this coincidence allows us to speak of an absence within a presence, withdrawal from the sensible fact to behold its essence, invisible and silent, and immediately to express the essence in words alluding to it but not exhausting its meaning. Just as no profile taxatively expresses an object's essence, so, no word exactly strikes the always somewhat tacit meaning it conveys. Such is the condition of sensibility, that which allows all perception and cognition to take place, but which also sets up an ineradicable margin of resistance between the visible and the invisible.

An Integration of Rahner and Merleau-Ponty

In examining sensibility in these two thinkers, we are discussing matter on its highest level, on the level of its incorporation into the human organism. Matter at this. level, however, reveals its potential at every level. The most trivial puff of inorganic stuff has as its possibility, and perhaps as its destiny, incorporation into a rationally sentient body. Truly, there are things to be known about the matter of the universe that can only be known by the study of human existence and knowing. There is a completion that can be brought to matter only as it becomes the tissue of a human organism.

The sensible or the visible includes for Merleau-Ponty all of matter. The flesh of the world is matter. Sensibility is a property of the entire world; bodies are privileged zones in which the flesh is sentient as well as sensed. There is an insensible, an invisible, an immaterial component shot through this flesh. In the most general sense this component is Being itself. On a less general scale it is the fabric of relationships and influences among objects as they serve as a context for one another. On a very particular scale in bodies, it is consciousness incarnate in the flesh.

In Rahner's explanation of sensibility, cognition is described as a three-phase operation (actually, four, if judgment is included). The first phase (sensation) and the third phase (conversion) involve sensibility. Merleau-Ponty does not divide cognition into three or four phases, but he does describe the tension of solitude and communication in ways that closely parallel abstraction and sensibility in Rahner. The Frenchman's sensibility (visibility) would, as described, include the German's sensation and conversion. Merleau-Ponty holds sensation and conversion as one and describes abstraction or derivation of the essence as a process totally incarnate in sensibility. It is the invisible actively embodied in the visible.

Motility and concupiscence make sense in the same way as the dynamism or appetition of personal sensibility toward the world and toward objects. They are grounded in a root

intentionality that gives an organism its outwardness and sense of motor purpose. They enjoy the full scope of sensibility itself, including a global orientation of body toward the world, and particular projects involving both self-suspension in matter and self-gratification, expressing a creativity and inventiveness in the deployment of objects about itself to its own convenience or advantage.

The distance between cogito and body, or between spirit and sensibility, is most keenly felt when the personal and rational powers direct the organism in one way and when the habits or spontaneous inclinations incline the organism in another. This inner dividedness or resistance of one zone of sensibility to the general movement through the matter of the organism testifies to the abiding ambiguity of that relationship called incarnation.

The unity of the organism, experienced even in dramatic cases of concupiscent resistance to itself, is mirrored constantly in its knowledge. Following the intellectual phase of abstraction in which the concept is derived, there is the conversion to the phantasm. The phase of abstraction corresponds to the person's solitude and incommunicability, and the phase of conversion to his communication, a reaffirmation of sensibility and ,a readiness for completion in judgment, following upon a withdrawal into self-presence and abstraction.

The phantasm is never experienced in utter cognitive detachment, apart from desires and appetitions. Emotional and affective overtones accompany every phantasm. Perception and the intellection embodied in it ramify immediately into conation and concupiscence. Perception is pervaded by motility and sensibility is penetrated by concupiscence. Incarnate in these is rational knowing and willing. Conflicts in appetition and resistances to rational appetition are not struggles between higher and lower, spirit and matter, but rather between diverse regions within sensibility, all of which are shot through with incarnate rationality.

In Karl Rahner, too, all of matter serves as an otherness for spirit in a relationship called emanation. Most generally, God is the spirit who freely communicates himself outside of him-

self without ceasing to be himself. God freely creates matter as an otherness, which he sculptures into his own image and likeness until he can in man communicate himself fully, become incarnate in a single individual, but with wide ramifications for all other persons and for all matter. The ultimate possibility for matter, in virtue of the incarnation of God in Jesus, is to become God.

This theologically incarnational structure and purpose of the world is mirrored in the make-up of all human beings. Man, finite and embodied spirit, is also related to matter by emanation. He, too, structurally and inevitably, pours himself out into a condition of otherness in order to communicate with the world, and then abstracts himself into a solitude of self-presence, showing that his immanent uniqueness is never relinquished, but only revealed as he enters into innerwordly relationships. He is designed for self-donation to the world and for self-possession in a reflective abstraction from it.

Being might be looked upon by the theologian as an anonymous designation of God as he creates, energizes and immanenizes himself within matter. To the theologian the world's fabric might not be fl.esh in a merely figurative sense, but in analogy to the way in which man is spirit-in-the-world, in an aboriginal way detectable by the ontologist who is not also a theologian, and by the philosopher who is not a believer.

If for Merleau-Ponty sensibility is extended from man's personalized matter to apply to all matter in the world, then for Rahner matter is the flesh of God as well as the flesh of the world. Matter is a visibility that serves as an otherness for the ultimate invisible, the necessary condition for the ultimate invisible, the necessary condition for the extension and communication of spirit outside itself, primordially so constituted by God in creation, and secondarily so experienced by man in derivative emanations.

For Rahner, the invisible which constitutes the visible from within must accommodate the self-communication of the transcendent as well. There is no reason to believe that Merleau-Ponty forbids such an extension of the invisible, except that

he considers such an extension beyond the limits of philosophical reflection. For a Merleau-Pontian, Rahner's interpretation of matter and sensibility would have to be on this level properly theological, and not a territory available to philosophy.

Both Rahner and Merleau-Ponty are interested in the unity of man's knowing as perception and sensation, rather than in the discrete operations of the several senses. Both are dedicated to the unity of the sentient knower, and the unity of the sentient body and the world which is a fleshy texture, known in much the same way as the body knows its own flesh. For Rahner, sensation is what Merleau-Ponty would call perception, the global presence of the body in the world.

Rahner has gone so far as to indicate in his book *On the Theology of Death* that the spirit of man retains its sensibility even beyond death [32] in a " pan-cosmic " relation to the world. John F. Bannan has shown how it is appropriate to refer to the "primacy of the sensible" [33] in Merleau-Ponty. Certainly, there is no way to comprehend the meaning of man or of the world without access to them through their own constitutive sensibility, visibility and tangibility. For Rahner and Merleau-Ponty, there is no possible escape from the flesh to a disembodied or disengaged mode of knowledge or existence.

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••*Op. cit.,* p. 29.

[33] Bannan, p. 260.

ECKHART'S CONDEMNATION RECONSIDERED

The basic documents of Eckhart's trial will be cited here according to the following editions:

A. Thery-Gabriel Thery, "Edition critique des pieces relatives au proces d'Eckhart contenues dans le manuscript 33b de la Bibliotheque de Soest," *Archivew d'hist<Yire lifJteraire et doctrinale du moyen age* 1, (1926) ' lfl9-268.

B. Pelster-Franz Pelster, "Ein Gutachten aus dem Eckehart-Prozess in Avignon," *Aus der Geisteswelt dew Mittelalters. Festgabe iVIartin Grabmann* (Beitriige Supplement III. Munster, 1935), 1099-1124.

C. Laurent-M.-H. Laurent, "Autour du proces de Maitre Eckhart. Les documents des Archives Vaticanes," *Divus Thomas* (Piacenza), Ser. III, 18 (1936), 331-48, 430-47.

ON MARCH 27, 1329, Pope John XXII issued the Bull *In agro dominfoo* condemning twenty-eight propositions drawn from the works of Meister Eckhart as either heretical or suspect of heresy. On April *15* he wrote to Henry of Virneburg, the Archbishop of Cologne who had begun the proceedings against Eckhart three years before, ordering him to publicize the document in his diocese and province so that " ... the hearts of the simple folk that are easily led astray, especially those to whom Eckhart preached these propositions while he was alive, may not be in any way infected by the errors contained therein." [1] Six and a half centuries have passed since Pope John's decisive move against the German Dominican, but debates about the significance of the condemnation have continued to the present day.

Over the centuries those who have seen Eckhart as a proto-Protestant, a prophet of German national religion, a Zen Master disguised as a Dominican, or anything other than what he really was-a devout medieval Christian cleric-have taken at least

[1] ---ut per publicationem huiusmodi simplieium corda, qui faciliter seducuntur, et maxime illi, quibus idem Ekardus, dum vixit, predictos articulos predicavit, erroribus contentis in eis minime imbuantur (Laurent, 445) .

delectatio moro8a in the condemnation's seeming support of their positions. Eckhart's friends and defenders, in his day as in ours, have been indignant, defensive, and frequently embarrassed over the condemnation. The variety of their interpretations is indication enough. Jeanne Ancelet-Hustache, for instance, is content with trying to show that Eckhart gave a rather good account of himself in the case of some of the controversial items.[2] Alois Dempf prized Eckhart's written Defense as a priceless "self-interpretation" of the Meister's thought,[3] while Josef Koch, whose account of the details of the trial is by far the best available,[4] thought that the inquisitors both at Cologne and Avignon proceeded with admirable care and the Meister did not understand what was going on and botched his Defense quite badly. Such disagreement invites a reconsideration, one that cannot pretend to have uncovered new data, but that will rather attempt to suggest some new perspectives from which to view the evidence. The case will be made in three stages: a review of the course of the two trials, an analysis of the theological principles of Eskhart's Defense, and an evaluation of the meaning of the final condemnation.

As in the case of so many other theological condemnations of the middle ages, we know something about the trial of Eckhart, but not enough. The relevant documents have not yet appeared in the critical edition of the Latin works; hence we must depend upon earlier editions that have not been above criticism.[5] Important documents have not survived, but

• J. Ancelet-Hustache, *Master Eckhart and the Rhineland Mystics* (N. Y., 1957), H!0-38. 0. Karrer, "Die Verurteilung Meister Eckharts," *Hochland,* 23, pt. I (1925-26), 660-77, attempts a more detailed defense of the orthodoxy of the twenty-eight articles found in the Bull.

•A. Dempf, *Meister Eckhart* (Freiburg, 1960), 18, as cited in I. Degenhardt, *StucLien zum Wandel des Eckhartbildes* (Leiden, 1967), 281.

• J. Koch, "Kritische Studien zum Leben Meister Eckharts," originally published in the *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum,* 29 (1959). *5-51;* and 30 (1960), *5-52;* later reprinted in Koch, *KleinB Schriften* (Rome, 1973), Vol. I, 247-347 (the section devoted to the trial may be found on 309-44, and will hereafter be referred to as Koch).

[5] Thery criticized the earlier edition of A. Daniels, " Eine lateinische Rechtfertigungsschrift des Meister Eckhart," *Beitriige zur Geschichte der Philosophie des*

even the recovery of new texts would probably do little to answer all the queries we have.

In the 1320's Meister Eckhart was one of the most famous Dominicans in Germany. A former Paris Master, Prior of Erfurt, Provincial of Saxony, Vicar-General of Thuringia and later of Bohemia, and presently *magister* in the Dominican *studiurn* at Cologne, during the trial he testified that: "If I were less well known among the people and less eager for justice, I am sure that these attempts would not have been made against me by the envious." [6] Such remarks, and others like them by Eckhart's supporters, raise the question of the motivation behind the proceedings. Who were the envious? Ingeborg Degenhardt has shown that the evidence upon which three traditional explanations rest is not strong. [7] Archbishop Henry may have been an enemy of the Dominicans (not a few bishops were), but there is little direct evidence for this and it is remarkable how courteously Eckhart and most of the others involved treated him. [8] Two renegade Dominicans, Hermann de Summo and William of Nideggen, did play an unsavory role in Eckhart's Cologne trial. The Dominican Procurator General, Gerard of Podahns, accused them of joining the attack on Eckhart in order to free themselves from order discipline. [9] The Meister also complained about their defam-

Mittdalters 23.5 (Munster, 1928). Koch, Sll-12, claims that Daniel's edition is "textlich besser" than that of Thery, though he admits the usefulness of the latter because of its identification of the sources of the articles. I have preferred to cite Thery here becaus·e of this advantage and because of his more rational division of the complex text.

[8] ... si minoris essem fame in populo et minoris zeli justitie certus sum quod contra me non essent talia ab emulis attemptata (Thery, 185). Eckhart was sharply critical of the motives and intelligence of his attackers during the Cologne phase of the trial. For a list of his criticisms, see M. St. Morard, "Die frliheste und die neueste Apologie Meister Eckharts," *Divus Thomas* (Freiburg) Ser. III, 15 (1937), 327-28 (hereafter referred to as Morard).

[7] *Studien zum Wandel des Eckhartbudes,* 8-15.

[8] E. g., Laurent, 342, where Eckhart excuses the Archbishop, and 432, where Gerard of Podahns does. Nicholas of Strassburg, however, was critical of Henry, as in Laurent, 334.

[0] Laurent, 432, 434.

ations; but the language used in both cases does not suggest that they initiated the proceedings.[10] The fact that Henry made use of these men, even sending Hermann to Avignon as his emissary in the Eckhart matter, does cast suspicion on the purity of his motives, but is not in itself proof of a cabal. Finally, even though two of the three inquisitors the Archbishop appointed were Franciscans, Peter of Estate and Albert of Milan, there is no evidence that rivalry between Franciscans and Dominicans was at the origin of the process and even less for 'the claim of W. Preger, O. Karrer, and others that the papal condemnation was meant to be some form of atonement to the Franciscans for the canonization of the controversial Thomas Aquinas in 1323.[11] Given Henry of Virneburg's reputation as a zealous hunter of heretics, it seems plausible to suppose with Joseph Koch that it was growing complaints from a variety of sources about the orthodoxy of Eckhart's preaching and teaching which moved the Archbishop to institute his investigation.[12] That these complaints proceeded as often from bad motives as from good should not surprise anyone who reflects on the medieval doctrine of original sin.

The supposition that there had been rumblings against Eckhart and possible hints of inquisitorial action is strengthened by the Meister's reference to the fact that one of the reasons for the illegality of the Archbishop's proceedings was that the same or a similar list of objectionable articles had been previously investigated and cleared of suspicion by Nicholas of Strassburg.[13] Nicholas, a lector in the Cologne *studium* where Eckhart served as *magister,* had been appointed papal visitor to the German Preachers on August 1, 13!Z5,[14] so his

[10] Laurent, !W:?. The contrary view of Ancelet-Hustache, 121-22, has little support.

[11] See the treatment of this question in Degenhardt, 13-15.

[12] Koch, 820-28.

[13] Laurent, 848.

[14] Some have seen this appointment as an aftermath of the 1325 decree of the Dominican General Chapter of Venice against dangerous preaching in Germany. Koch points out that the Venice decree seems to be directed against political preaching and that Nicholas's charge appears to have been more disciplinary than doctrinal (814-16).

investigation must have been conducted in late *1325* or early 1326.[15] It was apparently in the early part of 1326[16] that the episcopal process was formally begun under two inquisitors, Reiner Friso, a canon of the cathedral and *magister,* and the Franciscan Peter of Estate.[17] The method followed was one which had been used for centuries but had become increasingly standardized since 1270, the extraction of excerpts, or *articuli,* from the works of the accused and their organization into lists called *rotuli.*[18] On September 26, Eckhart presented a formal defense in writing of forty-nine articles drawn from various works and gathered into one *rotulus.*[19] He prefaced this document with a denial of the competency of the court to hear his case, appealing to the pope or the University of Paris as the only tribunals that could judge theological matters that did not touch the faith.[20]

There are severial innovative features to the *roturli* that were prepared for Eckhart's trial. Two lists survive: the *rotulus* of forty-nine articles that was the subject of the September hearing, and a *rotulits* of fifty-nine articles taken only from the vernacular sermons which Eckhart tells us he was given after he had responded to the first set.[21] These lists, along with the

[15] Koch, 316-19.

[16] On January 24, 1327 (Laurent, 342), Eckhart complained that the process should have been completed within half a year, thus indicating a duration of a good deal more than six months.

[17] Peter was soon replaced by another Franciscan, Albert of Milan. It should be pointed out that the growth of the papal inquisition in the thirteenth century had by no means cancelled the legislation of the Synod of Verona (1184) concerning the legal responsibility of bishops to pursue the investigation of heresy.

[18] On the development of the procedure, s·ee J. Koch, "Philosophische und Theologische Irrtumslisten von 1270-1329," *Kleine Schriften,* II, 423-50.

[19] These were divided into four groups: 15 articles from the vernacular treatise known as the *Benedictus Deus,* 6 from a lost apology for the same work, 12 from the Latin commentaries, and 16 from the vernacular sermons.

•• Thery, 185, 196.

[21] Since some of the individual articles are divided into parts which Eckhart qualified in different fashion, a more exact count would find *58* separate points in the first *rotulus* and 68 in the second, thus making 126 in all. For purposes of citation, however, we will use the following divisions: I. 2 (3), i. e., the third article of the second section of the first *TOtulus;* or II (13 B), i. e., the second part of the thirteenth article of the second *ratulus.*

Meister's defenses are found in a Soest ms.; together they form the *Rechtfertigungsschrift,* one of the three crucial documents for our investigation.[22] The evidence of later documents, among them the Papal Bull, leads to the conclusion that there were at least two and possibly three other *rotuli* compiled against Eckhart. They were all probably drawn up at Cologne, especially given the Dominican's protests about how long the trial was being dragged out.[23] One of these was a list of articles from the Meister's *Commentary on John,* his most mature theological work; and at least one other list is postulated because six of the final twenty-eight condemned articles are found in neither the first two *rotuli* nor the John *Commentary.*[24] In the manner of other late thirteenth-century and early fourteenth-century lists, the Eckhart *rotuli* show a concem for verbal precision rather than free paraphrase,[25] as well as a length that seems to indicate some passion for complete coverage.[26] They are unusual in two important respects: first, they are the earliest surviving *rotuli* to include articles translated from vemacular works; and second, the inquisitors submitted the lists to the accused and appear to have requested written responses from him.[27]

The course of the investigation changed in early The Dominican visitor, Nicholas of Strassburg, was cited by the tribunal, apparently for obstructing the process and supporting Eckhart. We possess three strong protests he gave before the Commission during January of in which he denies the competency of the court over the exempt Dominicans, blames the attack on the renegades of his own order, and appeals for dimissory letters (the *Apostoli)* to take his case to the pope.[28] On January Eckhart himself made a similar plea

[22] See note *5* on editions.

[23] Laurent, 342.

[24] Koch (325-27) points out that three of these articles (# 11, 13, 20) have not yet been satisfactorily identified in any of Eckhart's known works.

[25] Koch, " Irrtumslisten," 433.

••Koch, 327.

[21] Koch,

••One on Jan. 14 and two on Jan. 15 (Laurent, 333-40).

for dimissorial letters, citing the part played by the evil brethren in the trial and the irrational delays of the inquisitors as reasons for his appeal.[29] On February 22, both inquisitors denied Eckhart's appeal; but, as Koch maintains, this was a formality, since when such an .appeal had been made the accused had the right to pursue it, whatever the decision of his immediate judges.[30] On February 13, as a public proclamation of this new stage in the process, Eckhart preached a sermon in the Dominican church at Cologne and then had a Latin document read out which he himself translated into the vernacular. In it he protested his innocence, publicly renounced any errors that he had made in speaking or writing, and briefly commented on three that had come to his attention.[31] Even though the surviving text of this document is clearly faulty, it is coherent with the tenor of Eckhart's whole defense, and Koch's judgment that it is "... the most embarrassing " document of the trial seems peremptory and gratuitous.[32]

In the Spring of 1327, accompanied by other prominent Dominicans, Eckhart departed for Avignon to defend himself.[33] While at the papal court he probably stayed iat the Dominican priory, free to pursue his case but not to leave until judgment had been passed. While our documentation from the Avignon phase of the trial is not plentiful, it is sufficient to recover the major stages. Pope John XXII established a commission of theologians and cardinals to review the *rotuli* sent from Cologne and Eckhart's responses. It seems hard to imagine that the Meister would have made the trip to

[29] Laurent, 341-44.

[30] Koch, 331-32. See the document in Laurent, 346-48. The question of the dimissorials was incorrectly interpret:ed by X. de Hornstein in his *Les grands mystiques allemands du X!Ve siede* (Lucerne, 1922), 39-41.

[31] Laurent, 344-45.

[32] Koch, 332-33.

[33] Doubts that Eckhart went to Avignon must cede to the witness of a most unfriendly source, William of Ockham, who testified to the Meister's presence there. See *Tractatus contra Benedictum* IV, 4, in *Opera Politica* (edd. R. |<'. Benne!< and H. S. Offier. Manchester, 1956), III, *251-53;* and *Dialogus Magi1dri* III, tr. 11 (ed. Goldhast, 909).

Avignon without hope of making further defense of his case. Pope John eventually received two reports on the matter of Eckhart. The one that survives to us, the *Gutachten,* that is, the *votum theologicum* of the full commission, probably dates from 1327.[34] This interesting document not only shows that the unwieldly mass of articles from the original *rotuli* had been carefully pruned down to a manageable group of twenty-eight (the same articles that were to appear in the Papal Bull), but it also displays considerable theological skill in its rebuttal of the Meister's 'arguments. The form of the document follows a reverse model 0£ the scholastic *quaestio:* each suspect article is taken as the statement of an unorthodox position, reasons are then given for the error of this view, the Meister's defense of the position is summarized, and finally decisive rejoinders are given to his arguments.[35] For whatever reasons of dis- ,;;atisfaction or further confirmation, in 1328 Pope John also submitted the articles to Jacques Fournier whom he had created cardinal in December, 1327, and named to a special post at Avignon. We do not know whether the redoubtable inquisitor found this investigation quite as interesting as the ones he was accustomed to at Montaillou. His response is lost, though f,agments of it remain in the unedited *Sentence Commentary* and *Ten Responses* 0£ John of Basel.[36]

On April 30, 1328, Pope John wrote to Archbishop Henry assuring him that the process was still going forward despite the fact that Eckhart was dead.[37] The aged Meister probably saw his end at Avignon, and there is no reason to doubt that the retraction of his errors mentioned in the Bull was made during his final illness.[38] Such an action would fully conform to what we know of Eckhart's life and his constant loyalty to the church.

3· It was discovered in the Vatican by Cardinal Mercati and subsequently edited by Pelster.

[35] Not all the articles contain all four parts.

[36] Koch, 312-14, and 337-39, gives a good account and edits some of the important fragments.

87 This letter was edited by T. Kaepelli, "Kurze Mitteilungen iiber mittelalterliche Dominikanerschriftsteller," *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 10 (1940), 94,

••Koch, 343-44.

Eleven months elapsed before the signing of *In agro dorninico.* The Papal Bull, the third crucial surviving document, has been seen by Koch as a milestone in the evolution of papal censures.[39] The twenty-eight articles are divided according to the type of c2nsure they receive and are generally grouped into similar doctrinal categories. The first fifteen are adjudged "... to contain the error or stain of heresy as much from the tenor of their words as from the sequence of their thoughts; " while the following eleven are found "... evil-sounding, very dangerous and suspect of heresy, though with many explanations and additions they might take on or possess a catholic meaning."[40] The two final articles ·are also condemned as heretical, though since there was question whether Eckhart actually taught them, they are put in a separate category.[41]

The heretical articles begin with three extracts drawn from the Latin works that imply the eternity of creation, ·a doctrine smacking of the Averroism that had been anathema since the Paris condemnations of 1270 and 1277.[42] There follow three articles from the *Cornrnentary on John* which imply that God is equally praised and glorified through evil works as through good. Articles seven through nin; appear " quietistic " in advocating seeking nothing from God and even renouncing the reward of heaven. Articles ten through thirteen deal with the relationship between God and the believer, ten claiming that we are transformed into God in the way bread is converted into the Body of Christ, eleven and twelve saying that the good man receives all the gifts that the incarnate Christ does, and

89 Koch, " Irrtumslisten," 444.

•• ... tam ex suorum sono verborum quam ex suarum connexione sententiarum errorem seu labem heresis continere ..

... nimis male sonare et multum esse temerarios de heresique suspectos, licet cum multis expositionibus et suppletionibus sensum catholicum formare valeant vel habere ... (Laurent, 443).

"Koch, 342-43, points out that the final condemnation is milder than that of the *votum* where all twenty-eight articles were condemned as heretical, and supposes that Cardinal William Peter de Godino, a former student of Eckhart's at Paris, may have had a role in the modification.

••On these significant condemnations see the latest study by J. Wippel, "The Condemnations of 1270 and 1277 at Paris," *The Journal, af Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 7 (1977), 169-201.

thirteen stating the good man's equality with God, even m the work of creation a.nd in the generation of the Son. Articles fourteen and fifteen return to the second theme, that is, to positions that seem to make sin equal to virtue as long as it would be the will of God. The two appended •articles contain the famous statement about the uncreated something in the soul,[43] and one that denies the propriety of the language of goodness in the case of God.[44]

The suspect articles are also drawn both from the Latin treatises and the German works. Sirleen through nineteen oast doubt upon the efficacy and goodness of exterior acts; twenty through twenty-two a!'e expressions of the familiar Eckhartian theme of the Birth of the Word in the soul. Articles twenty-three and twenty-four deny any distinction in God in ways that seem to threaten the doctrine of the Trinity. Article twenty-five is an obscure text from the John *Commentary* on the necessity of loving God ·and man equally, and article twenty-six is the noted assertion from the Sermon " Omne datum optimum " that all creatures are pure nothing.[45]

A detailed analysis of Eckhart's response to the more than a hundred articles from *Rechtfertigungsschrift* and the twenty-eight from the Avignon *votum,* despite the considerable over-

•• Aliquid est in anima, quod est increatum et increabile; si tota anima ess·et talis, esset increata et increabilis; et hoc est intellectus (Laurent, 442). The statement is found in Pr. 13, "Vidi supra montem" (DW I, 220. 4-5), and there are equivalent statements in other sermons. This statement and its equivalents were key issues in both surviving *rotuli,* cf. I. 4 (6 and 7) (Thery, 179), and II (3, 8, 12, and 18C) (Thery, 209, 214, 218, 224). From the outset of his Defense, Eckhart said that such statements were "false and an error" and claimed that he had never made them (Thery, 188, 191, 201, 211, 214-15). He said the same in his public proclamation of Feb. 13, 1327 (Laurent, 345, which should be compared with Thiery 214-15), and before the Avignon commission (Pelster, 1111-12).

••Taken from Pr. 9, "Quasi stella matutina" (DW I, 148. 5-7). Eckhart never denied saying this in his two surviving references. cf. II (54) (Thery, 263), and *votum,* art. V (Pelster, 1112). In the latter case, however, he does admit that it is erroneous as it sounds. The puzzle of why this article should be classed with the other remains.

•• DW I, 69.8-70.1.

lapping, is outside the scope of this study. It is possible, however, to summarize the principles upon which Eckhart constructed his Defense and to illustrate several key cases of how he made use of these principles to defend articles that eventually made their way into the Papal Bull.

The cornerstone of Eckhart's rests upon the distinction between heresy and error, that is, upon his unwavering intention to teach the Catholic faith. In dependence upon the tradition reaching back to Augustine and enshrined in the *Decretum,*[46] the Meister claims: "I am able to be in error, but I cannot be a heretic, for the first belongs to the intellect, the second to the will."[47] Because "only obstinate adherence to error makes a heretic,"[48] and because Eckhart proclaimed himself willing to renounce publicly anything found erroneous in his writing or preaching,[49] he continued to maintain that the proceedings against him *as a heretic* were unjustified. In one sense we may say that John XXII and Eckhart were in agreement, because the Bull *In agro dominico* does not condemn the Meister as: a heretic, but rather anathematizes certain propositions he had taught, explicitly mentioning his own revocation of these at the end of his life.[50]

Eckhart felt that he was defending himself only against the possibility of theological error. It is significant that during the defense he often admitted articles as "erronea vel falsa," but never used the term "heretica." In his responses to the accusations Eckhart had two initial options open to him-he could deny that a particular article had really come from him, or he could admit it as his own. He made no denials

"Augustine, Ep. 43.1 (CSEL 34: 85); cf. Celestine I, Ep. 25.3 (PL 50: 550-51). *Dem-etum* IIP, c.xxiv, q. 3, cap. xxix (PL 187: 1306-07). Eckhart cites these texts in Thery, 197-98.

41 Errare enim possum, hereticus esse non possum, nam primum ad intellectum pertinet, secundum ad voluntatem (Thery, 186; cf. similar statements on 191, 197-98, 206).

••Sola enim pertinax adhesio erronei hereticum facit (Thery, 191; cf. also 206).

••In the Feb. 13 proclamation (Laurent, 345).

50 Laurent, 444.

regarding extracts from his written works,[51] but there are several regarding articles from the vernacular sermons found in the two *rotuli.*[52] One of the articles he continued to deny made its way through the process into the Papal Bull-that concerning the uncreated part of the soul (the most puzzling since the evidence suggests that he did say it).[53] Koch was of the opinion that Eckhart should have invoked the principle of denial more frequently, given the inexactness of the *reportationes* of sermons.[54] He stresses the objective character of the inquisitorial process and Eckhart's failure to understand this-the investigators were after what was said, and Eckhart could have denied saying *exactly* this.[55] Gabriel Thery, on the other hand, seemed to feel that the reporters were more often right than not and Eckhart was at fault in the complaints he did make.[56] The Meister himself stands somewhere between his two critics in a position that squares perfectly with his general principle. His appeal is always to intention rather than to pettifogging questions of verbal detail, except where he felt himself to be gravely misrepresented.

After admitting that a particular article did indeed come from him, the next choice Eckhart faced was either to confess error or advance a defense. The Meister repeated that he would reject anything that had led anyone into error,[57] and in

[51] He even admits in the case of I.1-3, ... que omnia fateor me scripsisse et dixisse (Thery, 196).

[52] In his introductory statement to I.4, he refers to the problem of false He subsequently invokes erroneous reporting in the cases of I.4 (IA, 6 and 13), and II (51). Morard, 329-30, notes that these denials would also affect the parallel articles IT (3, 12, 15C, and 18C),

[53] See note 43 above. This denial has puzzled interpreters of Eckhart. G. Thery in his "Contribution a l'histoire du proces d'Eckhart. IV," *La vie irpiritudle. Supplement,* 13 (1926), 58-59, laid the blame for this contradiction not on any conscious lie on Eckhart's part, but on his "... sincerites successives qui s'annulent reciproquement." Morard, 330-34, also gives a discussion.

[54] Koch, 336.

[55] Koch, 328.

[56] " Contribution .. .III," *La vie spirituelle. Supplement* 12 180-87.

[57] In the Introduction to I. 4, citing St. Augustine (Thery, 196-97), and in the Feb. 13 proclamation (Laurent, 345), and in the general Introduction (Thery, 186).

twelve cases he does admit to error or falsity,[58] while six others are characterized as in some way evil-sounding.[59] It is significant to note that these eighteen all refer to extracts from the vernacular Sermons, where they form just under twenty percent of the material taken from these works (18 of 92). In his response to one third of the articles that he admits are in some way erroneous Eckhart adopts a puzzling and at first sight annoying tactic-after admitting error he immediately refers to some legitimate but seemingly irrelevant doctrinal or moral point.[60] A similar procedure is found in the defense of some articles asserted to be true.[61] Eckhart's explanations often seem not quite to the point, a fact that gave considerable annoyance to the Avignon commission who comment acidly "nihil ad propositum" or the like in a number of cases.[62] One might suppose that the Meister had begun to ramble in his dotage (the possibility cannot be excluded in all cases), but in its basic thrust it seems to me that this procedure also squares with Eckhart's stress on the importance of intention. He is trying to show that an erroneous or problematic statement had been intended to promote the same doctrinal and moral goals as a more familiar and unobjectionable one.

This stress on intention is absolutely central. Even in the cases where Eckhart defends the correctness of the article in question, he frequently notes that he had intended the statement in one way and his accusers had taken it in another. As he put it in his response to a series of points concerning his

[58] I. 4 (IA, IE, !lA, 4, *5,* 6, SB), and II (3, 7, *15C,* 36, and 50).

[59] I.4 (ID)-male sonat, primo aspectu (Thery, 199)
I.4 (8A)--obscurum est quod dicitur (TMry, !lO!l)
I.4 (10)-male intellectum (Thery, 203).
II (31)-tardioribus absurdum videtur (Thery, 237)
II (48B)-male sonat et sic falsum est (Thery, £51).
II (56)-non bene stat (Thery, £64).

[60] E. g., I. 4 (!lA, 4), and II (3, 7, 48B, and *50).*

[61] E. g., I. I (11), I. 3 (8), I. 4 (14), and II (14).

[62] "Nichil ad propositum" to articles IX and XIX (Pelster, 1113, 1118). Cf. also articles V, XVI, XVII, XVIII, XX, and the attack on Eckhart's misuse of patristic quotations in XIV and XVIII.

teaching about the Birth of the Word in the soul: " The whole of what was said is false and absurd according to the imagination of the opponents, but it is true according to the true understanding ... " [63] The dispute then, in Eckhart's mind, was over the *sense* of the articles in question, and he proposed a series of hermeneutical principles to be used in penetrating the true intention of the extracts. These may be conveniently divided into those dealing with the manner of presentation and those dealing with theological presuppositions.

Eckhart freely admits the unusual character of what he has to say: "omnia esse vera quamvis rara sint plurima et subtilia." [64] He also appeals to the manner of presentation, for in the case of four extracts taken from the Sermons he defends himself by noting that he was using the emphatic way of speaking frequently adopted by preachers. [65] More important in this regard, though, is his appeal to the moral effect of what he has to say. Over and over again, in the case of at least twenty of the articles in question, he asserts that what he said, no matter how unusual sounding, was intended to rouse his hearers to some good resolve or action. [66] Eckhart's consciousness of the special character of the theology of preaching (we might perhaps see it as analogous to the functional specialty of " communications " in Bernard Lonergan's map of the method of theology) [67] was another keystone of his Defense that was not to be accepted by his accusers or the pope. [68]

[63] Solutio: totum quod dictum est, falsum est et absurdum, secundum ymaginationem adversantium; verum est tamen secundum verum intellectum ... II (89) (in Thery, 248; cf. also Thery, 196-97, 208, 209, and 266).

[64] Thery, 186. Similar statements are found in both the Latin and German works.

[65] II (11, 14, 15B, and 88).

[66] E. g., I. 1 (4, 5, 7); I. 4 (2, 8, 6, 7, 18, 15); II (8, 4, S;, 26', 86, 47, 48B, 49, 51, 58, and 54). Morard, 887-88, also notes the importance of this appeal.

[67] B. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (N. Y., 1972), 855-68. We should note that all these appeals to the moral effect come in the vernacular works.

[68] The Avignon *votum* at times deliberately count1!rs Eckhart's moral defense by claiming that his articles will lead men into sin. See articles VII, IX, XIII, and XV.

The appeal to authority so frequently invoked by Eckhart in his Defense is the most immediately obvious of the tools that he used to defend the content of his statements. References to scripture abound, at least fifty-three of the responses in the *Rechtfertigungsschrift* explicitly citing biblical texts. But the Meister rarely has time for more than a citation or two-there is almost no real exegesis in the Defense. The references to the *auctoritates* or *doctores* are also very rarely worked out in any detail. They sometimes display misunderstandings or misuses of the texts in question. Although the weakest part of the Defense, they serve an important function and really differ little from the usual scholastic method of dealing with *auctoritates* where, as M.-D. Chenu reminds us, "... referring to authors came to mean no more than a conventional citing of them." [69] Eckhart uses Augustine more often than anyone else. Two Augustinian principles are of special interest in the course of his responses: the first, the notion that man is not so much properly the *imago Dei* as he who is made ad *imaginem Dei;* [10] the second, the teaching of the *D'e Trinitate* that "... from what is known and the knower comes an offspring common to both." [11] Outside the citation of these principles, there are at least twenty other occasions where the Meister makes direct appeal to the authority of the bishop of Hippo. [12]

Thomas Aquinas also forms a special case worth noting.

••*Toward Understanding St. Thomas* (Chicago, 1964), 129.

••Eckhart never mentions Augustine in using this principle, which was, of course, also available from other sources. The Meister uses it to distinguish between our sonship and that of Christ, the true *imago,* in line with the earlier usage of Augustine (e. g., *De div. quaest.* 83: 51), in I. 4 (IE, 6, and 8), and in II (39, 53, and 57). In II (1) he makes use of the later Augustinian teaching (e. g., *De Trin.* VII. 6. 12) where man is *ad imaginem totius Dei.*

[11] *De Trin.* IX. U. 18. Eckhart used the principle in I. 4 (2), and II (19, 34, and 53), and in defense of the passage from an unknown Sermon that formed the basis for article XXIII of the *vo.fum* (where he seems unjustly taken to task).

[12] E. g., I. 4 (7, 11, 14); II, Introduction (Thery, 208), and (10, 27 where five references occur, 29, 33, 38, 40, 41, 42, 47, 57, and 59B). The Meister makes use of Augustine more frequently in II. than in I. The Bishop of Hippo was also cited in the *votum* in response to articles IX, XIV, and XXVIII.

For Eckhart the attack on aspects of the teaching of Aquinas in the condemnation of 1277 was a precedent for the attacks that the envious were directing at him.[73] Thomas had been vindicated by the canonization of 1323, a fact that gave the Meister encouragement in his struggle. Eckhart appeals explicitly to Thomas eight times (once against the sense of the text),[74] and there are a number of other points where he defends positions which may be described as broadly or narrowly Thomistic.[75] It should be noted that two of the places where he cites Thomas directly enter into the final condemnation-one where his use was an illegitimate one,[76] the other where it was purely adventitious to the argument.[77] Eckhart invokes a wide range of patristic autl1orities, and not a few philosophers as well.[78] It is clear that he thought the appeal to authority was important for his case,[79] but in the last analysis we should say that this too may be reduced to the question of intention. The function of citing the *mwtoritates* is to show that he intended to teach the same doctrine that they had taught.

More difficult to summarize easily are the theological axioms he brings forward to guide the interpreter in vindicating the oi'thodoxy of his positions. In two places in the *Rechtf erti-*

[78] See I, Introduction (Thery, 185). On the influence of the condemnation on Eckhart, see Thery, "Contribution ... II," *La vie spirituelle. Supplement* 9 (1924), 165-68.

., I. 1 (4); I. 3 (3, 9, and 12); I. 4 (ID, and 3); II (27, and 44).

[75] E. g., I. 2 (2, 5); I. 3 (1, 3-7); I. 4 (7, and 21). Note that the use of Thomas is relatively more frequent in I.

[76] *In agro dominico* # 17, which is drawn from I. 3 (12) (Thery, 176). Eckhart's defense (Thery, 195) cites STh IaIIae 20, 4, in support of the proposition that an external act is not properly good or divine, something far from the Thomistic position.

[77] In the response to I. 4 (ID) (Thery, 199). This article wound up as *In agro dominico* # 22.

[78] Among the Fathers and ecclesiastical authorities: Boethius (3 times), Chrysostom (1), Gregory of Nyssa (1), Bernard (5), Origen (2), Dionysius (1), Bede (1), Jerome (1), and Albert the Great (1). Among the philosophers: Aristotle (7), Maimonides (1), Seneca (2), Cicero (2), Avicenna (3), Plotinus (1), Averroes (1), and the *Liber de causis* (1).

[79] He summarizes the weight of his appeal to authority at the end of I (Thery, 205-07).

gungsschnft Eckhart gave explicit lists of principles to be used to understand his *rara et subtilia.* The first such exposition comes at the beginning of the response to the articles in the first three sections of the first *rotulus* and is more important than its explicit citations in the following articles might suggest. The function of these rules is not unlike that of the " terminos regulasque " that Boethius lays down at the outset of his *Quomodo substantiae* [80]-three principles from which all that follows is developed, or in Eckhart's case, at least defended. The first states that the use of the term *inquantum* (" masmuch as," or " to the extent that," as m " bonus mquantum bonus") is meant to signify exclusion, that is, to indicate that one is speaking from a single, limited, abstract point of view.[81] Eckhart refers to the principle explicitly several times to explain how the good man can be said to possess the attributes of God,[82] but the implied use of the principle is far more pervasive and important. The second principle flows from it-" Good and goodness are one. Good to the extent that it is good signifies goodness alone, just as white signifies only the quality of whiteness." [83] Eckhart notes that this is true univocally of God, but analogically in relation to God and man. He invokes this principle directly in a number of places,[84] and in the broad sense it may also he said to be the basis for many of his statements predicating divine things of man. The final principle is yet another consequence of the principle *inquantum.* Every agent, to the extent that it is an agent, does not rest until it has bestowed its form upon and given reality to its object. Precisely as agent it is underived and at once relatively opposed to yet identical with its object

[80] Boethius, *The Theofogical Treatises* (Loeb Classical Library ed., 40-42).

[81] Thery, 186-87.

[82] E. g., I. 1 (18); I. 2 (3); and II (14, and 36). For an important use of this principle in the Latin works, see *In Johannem* n. 14 sqq. (LW III, 13 sqq,).

[88] Secundum est quod bonus et bonitas sunt unum. Bonus enim inquantum bonus solam bonitatem significat, sicut album solam qualitatem, albedinem scilicet, significat (Thery, 186) .

8'!. 1 (4, 8, 13); I. 2 (3); I. 3 (2). In 'the Second *rotulus* it is invoked in the case of 14, and implied in 86 and 59.

in the reality of the act. The principle is cited directly only in the case of the first four articles taken from the *Benedictus Deus,*[85] but the application to creation of the notion that "to move and to be moved begin and end at the same time according to the nature of the relations "[85a] was to be one of the major sources of Eckhart's difficulties.

The other list of principles that Eckhart explicitly highlights comes at the outset of the response to the second *rotulus* and is negative in character-a brief note of six heretical implications of pertinacious attacks upon his own teaching. These are: that man cannot be united with God; thait creatures are not of themselves nothing; that God did not create the world in the now of his eternity; that the external act adds some moral goodness to the internal act; that the Holy Spirit can be given to someone who is not a son of God; and that God is not being.[86] Here again, it seems that an appeal to intention is crucial to understand why these points are cited in the Defense. Eckhart is claiming that his teaching is designed to uphold the opposed truths of the faith. Even here, though, there was to be disagreement between the Meister and his judges: who condemned his formulations of the second, third and fourth of the implied opposites.[87]

There are, of course, many other principles that Eckhart used in his rebuttal. Some of these were the common possession of the scholastics, such as the familiar notion that whatever is received is received according to the manner of the recipient and its converse that a giver must give according to his mode of being,[88] but others are peculiar to the Meister's thought, such as the appeal to detachment in the specific sense of *Abgescheidenheit,*[89] or the claim that to love in the manner of God means to love without distinctions.[90] Two of the specifically

[85] I. 1 (1-4).

[85a] Movere enim et moveri simul oritur et moritur juxta naturam relationum (Thery, 187).

[86] Thery, 208-09.

[87] *In agro dominwo* # 26, 1-3, 17-18.

[88] E. g., I. 4 (7); II (10 and 26) .

[89] E. g., I. 1 (9); II (IO).

[90] E. g., II (27, 37, 42).

Eckhartian principles are of such special importance to the whole Defense that they deserve analysis here.

A quarter of the articles condemned in the Papal Bull deal with some form of claims for equality between Christ and the believer (# 10-13, During the course of the investigation, Eckhart proposed a fairly consistent set of responses in this area. In defense of such statements as " Whatever Holy Scripture says of Christ is also totally true of every good and divine man," [91] or," The noble man is that only-begotten Son of God whom the Father generates from eternity," [92] Eckhart on the one hand affirmed that the same Christ was both the Father's only-begotten and the source of our sonship, and on the other distinguished between the perfect natural sonship of Christ and our own participatory imperfect sonship. According to the Avignon *votum,* he defended the second of the articles cited above and another equivalent to it thus: "... he says they are erroneous as they sound, but supports them by saying that it is the same Son of God who is the only-begotten in the Trinity and by whom all the faithful are sons of God through adoption." [93] This appeal to unity of agent but distinction in forms of sonship is frequently coupled with references to the doctrine of the Mystical Body. [94] The explanation did not satisfy the Avignon commission, however, who complained, " That does nothing to prove the article, namely, that the good man insofar as he is man can be said to be the only-begotten Son of God eternally born of the Father, as the words of these articles sound ... " [95] We see a crucial disagree-

[91] Duodecimus articulus: Quicquid dicit sacra scriptura de Chrisito, hoc etiam totum verificatur de omni bono •et divino homine (Laurent, 439).

•• Vicesimusprimus articulus: Homo nobilis est ille unigenitus filius Dei, quern pater eternaliter genuit (Laurent, 440).

•• Istos duos articulos dictus magister, ut sonant, dicit erroneos, sed ea;; verificat dicens quod idem est Dei filius unigenitus in trinitate et quo omnes fideles filii Dei sunt per adopcionem (Pelster, 1117).

••The distinction of sonships forms the basis for the responses in I 4 (IC, IE, G,); II (8, 15A, 27, 39, 40, 57, 59B).

[95] Sed istud nichil facit ad verificationem articuli, ut bonus homo possit dici unigenitus Dei filius a patre eternaliter genitus secundum quod homo, sicut articulorum verba sonant ... (Pelster, 1117).

ment here. Eckhart and his accusers admit that there is both identity and distinction in the relation of our sonship to that of Christ. Eckhart's more radical formulation of this identity subintends the *inquanturn* principle-" The noble or good man *to the extent that* he is noble (i. e., speaking exclusively) is the only-begotten Son of God." The commission's response will have none of this, but uses a formula that reduplicates the concrete subject rather than the formal quality, that is, "the good man *to the extent that* he is man " cannot be called the only-begotten Son.[96]

Another crucial difference in theological language between Eckhart and his accusers becomes evident in studying the Meister's response to attacks upon his notion of indistinction. This key Eckhartian theme was challenged from two sides during the trial, and both attacks found their way into the Papal Bull. Articles twenty-three and twenty-four of *In agro dominico* attack the Meister's teaching on the indistinction within God. Article twenty-three is drawn from a passage that the first *rotulu,s* took from Eckhart's *Commentary on Exodus* where he cites Maimonides on divine unity and ends with a typical maxim of his own, " no distinction can exist or be apprehended in God himself." [97] To this and to the similar article from the *Benedictus Deus* that the Bull took from the first list Eckhart replied almost indignantly in the Cologne trial that to speak otherwise would be to deny the oneness of God.[98] The Meister was more detailed at Avignon, but to his response that " ... the distinction of Persons is not *in God,* for these three are one God; the distinction of Persons, is *from one another* and from what is opposed by way of re-

•• ... secundum quod homo *(ibid.).* For another example of the rejection of the abstract application of the *inquantum* principle, see the response of the commissioners to article XXIII *(In agro dominico* # 13) in Pelster, 1121.

[97] Nulla igitur in ipso distinctio esse potest aut intelligi (Thery, 176). Drawn from *In Exod.,* n. 58 (LW II, 65) , the citation appears in *The Guide to the Perplexed* I, 57. For other references to God as indistinct in the Defense, see I. 4 (11), and II (23, 43).

[98] The second article is I. 1 (15) which became # 24 of *In agro dominico.* For the responses, see Thery, 191, 195.

lL-tion," the commission answered that it is *in God* in the sense that the opposed relations are founded in the divine essence.[99] They also felt that the second article, in its denial of distinction in God either in nature or in Persons (note that Eckhart did not say " inter personas ") , was reducible to Sabellianism, though as Koch notes the Meister had guarded himself against this heresy quite carefully in the John *Commentary.* [100]

Even more mystifying for the inquisitors was the use that Eckhart made of the indistinction between God and the soul in defending his as•sertions about the Birth of the Word (*In agro dominico,* # and on the ability of the good man to perform divine works *(In agro dominioo,* # 10, # 13) . This indistinction is formulated in many ways in the Cologne Defense, for example that " ... God himself as one (because he is not other) is in every being in undivided fashion through power, presence, and essence, the unbegotten Father and the begotten Son." [101] The special presence of God in man's soul, according to Eckhart, is that he is found in the intellect as truth, the will as goodness, and in the essence of the soul as *esse.*[102] If God is in the essence of the soul as indistinct *esse,* then he is there as the Father begetting the Word without any distinction, that is, as " indistinct from me and undivided or not separated, as if he were not in me." [103] The same teaching on indistinction is invoked as warrant for speaking of man per-

[99] --- distinccio personarum non est in Deo: nam hii tres unus Deus sunt, distinccio autem personarum ab invicem est et ab opposito relative. The response of the commission was: Et negare distinctas et oppositas relaciones ac pluralitatem earum esse in Deo cum in divina essencia fundentur, est hereticum ... (Peilster, 1122).

[100] Pelster, *ibid.* Koch, 339, cites the evidence of *In lohannem* n. 358 sqq. (LW III, 303 sqq.).

[101] --- deus et ipse unus, quia non est alius, est in quolibet ente per potentiam, presentiam et essentiam indivisus, pater ingenitus et filius genitus. I. 4 (1 B) (Thery, 198). Another formulation found in II (55) is: Solutio: dicendum: omnis distinctus a deo, distinctus est ab esse, a quo immediate est omne esse (Thery, 263).

[102] I. 4 (13), II (5, 51).

[10•] Item indistinctus a me et indivisus sive non separatus, quasi non sit in me (Thery, 199).

forming divine works.[104] As I have tried to show elsewhere,[105] the dialectical coincidence of opposites of distinction/indistinction is central to Eckhart's thought, and Eckhart can only be understood if both poles of the dialectic are simultaneously kept in mind. This is just what the Avignon commissioners refused to do. One has only to read their response to the twentieth article in the *votum* (In *agro dominioo,* # 10), where Eckhart appeals to the pole of distinction and they refuse to allow the appeal to see that this is so.[106]

To go further with an analysis of individual issues would be the scope of a much longer study. I hope that my attempt to spell out some of the major principles upon which Eckhart based his Defense has suggested that the negative judgments of Thery and Koch are too harsh. Eckhart's responses were uneven, but they were not without coherence nor without significance as a challenge to the theological basis of the inquisitorial process. I should not, on the other hand, go so fa;r as to see the Defense as a unique key to the Meister's thought. The special circumstances of a legal process in which one has to respond to points singled out by opponents make it difficult to give a fully-balanced presentation of one's own system. At its best, however, as in the lengthy reply to articles twenty-four through twenty-seven of the second *rotulus,* a model scholastic *quaestio* on the metaphysics of the Incarnation, it is equal to anything that Eckhart has left us.[106].

Still, Eckhart's propositions were condemned, and we must finally face the question of the significance of the condemnation. Many have wondered if they were legitimately condemned. My answer would be that they were legitimately condemned ac-

[10·] E. g., II (11, and 31).

[105] See my paper, "Meister Eckhart on God as Absolute Unity," prepared for the" International Conference on Neoplatonism in the History of Christianity" (Washington, 1978), and to be published in the proceedings of that Conference.

[106] To Eckhart's response, "quod distinccio non actuat ex parte dantis; sed ex parte suscipiencium," they replied, " Et secundum verba articuli, sicut est indistinccio ex parte dantis, sic est indistinccio ex parte suscipiencium quia fiunt unum esse cum eo indistinctum" (Pelster, 1118).

[100]. Thery,

cording to a process that Eckhart and at least some others in his day thought was illegitimate, at least insofar *(inquantum* again) as it led to the censure of heresy. First, there is the question of the extract method itself. Many of Eckhart's procedures in his Defense are designed to try to put the extracts back in their context, and in this; connection Edmund Colledge has recently noted that we need to restore the scandalous articles of *In agro dominico* to their contexts and synthesize the Meister's statements rather than separate them in order toevaluatehis.thought. [101] Colledge also points out that Jacques Fournier at least also felt uncomfortable about the extract method when he pleaded to John XXII to be excused from passing judgment on eleven articles taken from Durandus of St. Pourcain "... because he did not have a copy of the bishop's writings from which these questions had been formulated." [108] We also know that a defense based upon intention, that is, one that not only questions the validity of the extract method but also suggests another manner of procedure in cases of theological suspicion, was used by Peter Olivi in his response to the articles drawn up against him in 1282.[109]

Eckhart' s articles were condemned, at least according to the intention of the Avignon *votum,* as they :sounded objectively. *Prout sonat, ut verba sonant* are repeated throughout the *votum.* In its constant appeal to intention Eckhart's Defense rejected the *prout sonat* principle. The Meister and the commission disagreed fundamentally on both the extract method and the way in which the extracts should be interpreted. It is not surprising that they talked past each other so frequently. [110]

There has been considerable speculation on the reasons why John XXII pursued the condemnation of the respected Dominican with such vigor. Gordon Leff has proposed a theory of guilt by association. In a climate where papal authority was

[107] E. Colledge, "Meister Eckhart: Studies in his Life and Works," *The Thomist* 42 (1978), 249, 251, 257.

[10]. CoUedge, 247, citing the discussion and text in Koch, 339, n. 247.

[10]. See the discussion in Koch, "Irrtumslisten," 437.

[110] As noted by Koch, 328.

becoming preoccupied with mystical heresy, especially the so-called "Free Spirit," many of Eckhart's propositions might have been thought to encourage such tendencies among the simple and unwary.[111] Abstracting from the question of the real existence of the Free Spirit, it was certainly a mental reality for the inquisitors and the pope, and there is, indeed, evidence of such fears in the Papal Bull, the subs·equent letter to Henry of Virnehurg, and also in the decrees of the Dominican General Chapter of Toulouse held in 1328.[112] But this theory would not explain the reason for the condemnation of the articles that do not deal with mystical issues, such as those on the doctrine of creation and those advancing traditional themes of negative theology.[113] This suggests that the condemnation gives evidence of a radical clash of styles of theological expression and a fear of theological pluralism that would have led to the rejection of Eckhart no matter what else had been in the air.

The commission *votum* and what we have of Fournier's dossier show the confrontation of theological languages in clear fashion. " Quidquid recipitur secundum modum recipientis recipitur "-the commission was almost bound to absorb the isolated excerpts from Eckhart's works into its own world of discourse and to judge them by rules that were not fully adequate to uncover their true meaning. Eckhart was almost bound to talk past them as he appealed to principles that the commissioners either did not recognize or did not understand. In a kind of bizarre reversal, one might say that Eckhart's articles were condemned precisely *inquantum articuli--the* one time the commission was willing to accept his principle.

The theological literalism of the *prout sonat* of the *votum*

[111] G. Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages* (N. Y., 1967), I, 308-10.

[112] For the Toulouse decrees which warn against preaching "subtilia" to the people, *see Monumenta Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum Historica IV. Acta Capituforum Generalium II* (Rome, 1899), 180. On the context, see Degenhardt, 30-32.

[113] Even Thery, "Contribution ... V," *La vie spirituelle. Supplement* 14 (1926), *55-65,* found it difficult to understand why <these had been condemned.

was modified, of course, by the Bull which allowed that through explanations and additions it was possible to provide the second group of articles with a Catholic sense. Joseph Koch hailed this as a great advance in theological precision, but it may not have been an advance in theological consistency. There seems to be very little that separates the propositions of the first group £1om those of the second. All of them are *rara et subtilia,* most are initially paradoxical, and many in both groups sound in explicit conflict with articles of Catholic teaching. If one is going to admit the possibility of explanations and additions modifying the *ut verba sonant* of the second set, it would seem to be equally possible for many articles in the heretical group as well. One has only to consider the two propositions relating to negative theology, the one adjudged capable of defense (# 26) the other (# 28) as heretical, but both quite traditional, to grasp this problem. Pope John, of course, judged differently; but that does not mean that a present-day theologian, even one within the Roman Catholic tradition, is not entitled to his own view. Certainly, the condemnation of March, 1329, made little difference to Eckhart personally. He had already gone to whatever reward awaited the creator of German as a theological language.

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WILLIAM OF OCKHAM AND THE SELF

Introduction

IN QUESTION 87 of the *Summa Theologiae* St. Thomas wrote the following:

> The intellect knows itself,. not by its essence but by its act. This happens in two ways: in the first place, singularly, as when Socrates or Plato perceives that he has an intellectual soul because he perceives that he understands.

He indicates that there is a second kind of knowledge of the intellectual soul which is universal in nature and which is derived foom a knowledge of the intellectual act. This requires a careful and subtle inquiry. For the first kind of knowledge, however, there is only required the presence of the mind to itself.

> The mere presence of the mind suffices for the first; since the mind itself is the principle of action whereby it perceives itself by its own presence.[1]

Less than a century later William of Ockham could write the following:

> If we understand by the intellectual soul an immaterial. and incorruptible form which is totally in the whole and totally in each part, we cannot know either through reason or experience that we possess such a form?

[1] *S. Th.,* I, 87, 1.

[2] *Quodlibid Primum,* Quaestio Decima, Strasbourg Edition, 1491. "Dico quod intelligendo per animam intellectivam formam immaterialem incorruptibilem quae tota est in toto et tota in qualibet parte, non potest sciri evidenter per rationem vel experientiam quod talis forma sit in nobis, neque intelligere talem substantiam proprium sit in nobis, nee quod talis anima sit forma corporis. Quidquid de hoc senserit Aristoteles non curo, quia ubique dubitative videtur loqui. Sed ista tria sola fide tenemus."

He adds that he cares not what Aristotle said about this because he seems to be doubtful about it himself. Ockham accepts the very existence of such an intellectual and incorruptible soul only on faith. The radical change in the position taken by Ockham is startling. It is the purpose of this article to trace the process which led Ockham to the position he took.

The Object of Knowledge

It seems that if anyone could be immediately aware of the presence in man of an intellectual soul, that person was 'William of Ockham. In order to safeguard the certainty of human knowing he had carefully distinguished between intuitive and abstract knowledge. He rejected the Thomistic contention that the universal is known intellectually prior to the singular in which it is grounded. If this were so, what possible certitude could be had for the objectivity of such a universal? But if the existing singular is known first, the ground for existential objectivity is there. Not only is this true of material singulars existing outside the mind, but it is also true of those acts of the intellect and will which we elicit. They, too, can become by a reflexive act immediate objects of our knowledge. Such knowledge depends on a previous act of intuition of the object of such acts of knowing, affection, joy, etc., but the intellect can turn directly to the interior act and apprehend it intuitively.

> The mind can know intuitively some things which are interior, for example, acts of intellection and willing and delight independently of the senses,.... although some other intuitive knowledge is presupposed.[3]

He is, however, careful to add that such intuitions are only of the acts, not of habits or other intelligibles in the soul.

Now one could leap to a facile conclusion based on Ockham's insistence that every reality is a unique singular and that from

[1] *Ibid.,* 14. "Utrum intellectus noster pro statu isto cognoscat actus suos intuitive ... dico quod sic. Et ratio est quia de cognitione intellectus et volitionis formatur propositio contingens quae evidenter cognoscitur ab intellectu nostro; puta, talis: Intellectio et volitio est."

one such singular another cannot be known. Hence, the argument could be made that, since each act of the soul is a singular act, one is not justified in asserting the existence of the soul as the subject of the act. After all, the act is not the soul, and, as is well known, God by His absolute power is able to sustain any act independent of its object or its source. But it is not that simple, as we shall see.

The World of Singulars

It is a well known fact that Ockham had little use for any sort of Platonic approach to reality. The world is a collection of unique singulars which are grasped intuitively by both sense and intellect. These singulars are unique to such an extent that there are no real relations connecting one with another. Peter is similar to John, for example, simply because he is Peter and John is John. He interprets Aristotle to mean that such relations exist only in the mind and in no way outside it. Even in the mind relations are simply connotative terms which are used to signify two actual existents which are uniquely themselves. The world, then, is a collection of absolutes none of which ever necessarily demands another. There is, therefore, no way in which one could proceed from the knowledge of one thing to the knowledge of the existence of another. Concepts are also just as independent of each other as are the things themselves. As a matter of fact, the knowledge of a thing itself could be had independently of the thing. One need only recall here his teaching on the knowledge of non-existents.[4]

Cause and Effect

It is not surprising that Ockham would have difficulty with a theory of causality. Cause and effect, after all, demand some sort of connection. But in a universe where each singular thing is totally unrelated to any other thing, a theory of cause and effect will have to undergo drastic revision. Now it must

[4] *Ibid.,* 18; *Quodlibet* 6, 6. cf. also *II Sent.,* 15, E.

be noted that Ockham never denied causality. He grants that it is evident that there are causes actually operating in the real order. The question seems to be, rather, how a cause is known and what, if any, validity the causal proposition has.

There are two principles which Ockham useSI in his discussions not only of cognition but also of causality. The first principle is that only intuitive knowledge brings the mind into contact with the real order of things. All other knowledge is necessarily abstract. The second principle is that this real order consists of concrete singular things and of them only. These things are distinct from one another and are known as such. If there are actually causes at work, and if causality is something real, these will be known only in the mind's intuitions of existing objects. In these intuitions of the real order-and this order includes the immediate intuitions of the mind's acts'- what the mind apprehends is either a conjunction of two things or a succession of one thing after another. We know fire. We see that when fire is brought into contact with wood, the wood gets hot. Because in our experience this is always so, we say that fire is the cause of heat. We are aware of one mental act, say an act of cognition. We find this always joined to an act of the will. Hence, we could say that the act of cognition is the cause of the will act.

Now for Ockham the real and proper efficient cause was an immediate cause. He had defined such a cause as one at the presence of which an effect was produced. He makes it quite clear that he is defining a cause in terms of being present. Properly speaking, any cause is called a real cause at whose presence the effect is produced. From this it follows that a remote cause is not really a cause because it may not be present in the production of the effect. Otherwise, Adam could be called the cause of me. But that is false because non-being cannot be called the cause of being.[5] What he means is that

[5] *II Se:nt., 5* K. " Proprie loquendo causa dicta ad cujus praesentiam potest poni effectus, et ipsa non posita non potest poni effectus, potest dici causw immediata. Ex hoc sequitur quod causa remota non est causa quia ad ejus praesentiam non sequitur effectus: aliter Adam potest dici causa mei, quod

not only must cause and effect exist simultaneously, but they must also be experienced simultaneously. But is even this simultaneous experience of what he calls cause and effect enough to guarantee that the one thing is really the cause of the other? The answer is no. When I say, for example, that God is an immediate and principal cause, I can mean one of three things: first, that God could produce all effects without the aid of any creature; second, that when God cooperates with a creature, He does so only because He does not wish to produce any effect except through secondary causes; thirdly, the creature could not produce the effect, unless it were helped by God.[6] Accordingly it cannot really be demonstrated that any effect is produced by a secondary cause. Although in my experience it always happens that, when fire is brought near to something :flammable, it burns, it could still be true that fire is not the cause of that combustion. God could so have arranged things that He Himself would cause the burning when fire was applied to something burnable. All that the cognitive intuition gives me is the same sequence of events when two things are brought into proximity with one another.[7] There is no intuition of a causal influence. Hence, I can never asseTt with certitude that the one thing is the cause of the other.

There seems to be no question that Ockham thought that causality was at work in the world, but that it was impossible to know concretely in what particular things causality was verified. Add to this the fact that the things which I experience are experienced as distinct from one another. The apprehension of one such object contains in itself no knowledge of another object. However perfectly I may know one thing, that

non est verum: quia non ens non potest dici causa et entis et similiter causa et effectus proprie loquendo simul sunt .... et si Deus concurrat cum causa secunda utraque est immediata."

•*Ibid.,* Q.

[7] *Ibid.,* R. " Ex hoc sequitur quod non potest demonstrari quod aliquis effectus producitur a causa secunda; quia licet semper ad approximationem ignis ad combustible sequatur combustio, cum hoc tamen potest stare quod ignis non sit ejus causa, quia Deus potuit ordinasse quod semper ad praesentiam ignis passo approximato ipse solus causaret combustionem."

knowledge will never lead me to the knowledge of another thing distinct from it.[8] Even if it were granted that one particular thing did cause another, it stiil is not necessary that the knowledge of the one must cause in me the knowledge of the other. As a matter of fact, it can never he known with certainty that one thing is the cause of another. As we have seen, the real and only cause may he God. Not only can God do whatever any existing object can, there is also the possibility that in created nature an effect can be produced hy another and unknown cause.[9]

To the objection that once an effect is known, we can know the cause from which such an effect naturally depends, Ockham answers that we can only know in general that there is a cause and that that cause must have some proper characteristics. What the cause is in particular, however, we can never know.[10] From the existence and beauty of a painting we can argue to the existence and ability of a painter. But we can never know directly the particular painter who did the work. The correspondence which is required between knowledge and its object to have objective validity is of an entirely different nature from that which exists between an effect and its cause. Ockham's analysis of causality is almost totally empirical. To identify any cause is to be able to find it immediately in experience together with its effect. Causality, as a result, is reduced to empirical association. There is just no way one can argue to the nature of a cause or even to the existence of a cause which is not given in experience.

[8] *Quaestio Prima Prologi,* 9. (Edited by P. Boehner, O.F.M., Paderborn, 1939). " Inter causam et .effectum est ordo et dependentia maxime essentialis, et tamen ibi notitia incomplexa unius rei non continet notitiam incomplexam alterius rei. Et hoc etiam quilibet in se experitur, quia quantumcumque perfecte cognoscat aliquam rem, numquam cogitabit cogitatione simplici et propria de alia re, quam numquam prius apprehendit nee p.er sensum nee per intellectum."

[9] *Ibid.* "Non obstante quod entitas unius rei sit causa entitatis alterius, non tamen oportet quod notitia ·esset causa notitiae."

[10] *I Sent.,* I, 4. " Quocumque causato cognito potest cognosci quaelibet causa in universali, puta quod habet finem et efficientem, et multae conditiones illarum causarum possunt ex ilia re cognosci. Sed illud quod est causa non potest ex quocumque causato in particulari cognosci vel cognitione propria sive equivalenti."

Moo and Soul

Ockham treats of man in a physical and material context, but he makes the distinctions which are necessary for a Christian theologian. Like all other material beings man is composed of matter and form. This material principle, unlike Aristotle's, has an existence in its own right. It is not pure potentiality, but even as matter is a reality.[11] Its potentiality is only toward the various forms which will inform it. The first of these forms is that of corporeality which makes it a body and which it retains until this body itself decomposes. For even when the sensible and intellectual forms have departed, man still remains a body recognizable as such. The second form in man is that of sensitivity. This form is really distinct from that of corporeality and provides the body with its animal characteristics and powers. It is an extended form, as is obvious from its different functions in different areas of matter. It functions differently, for example, in the eye than it does in the ear, etc. Hence, its extension throughout the body is obvious. That it is really distinct from both the form of corporeality and the intellectual form is equally clear. The first remains when the sensitive form has corrupted, and at times, at least, it plays a role contrary to that of the intellectual form. For the sensitive form can desire an object in direct contradiction to that of the intellectual form. Such opposite activities cannot possibly be in the same species.[12]

When we come to the intellectual form, we find an entirely different reality. Such a form is not quantitative, and it is,

[11] *Physics* I, 7. "Et primo de materia. Circa quam est sciendum quod materia est quaedam res actualiter exis;tens in rerum natura, quae est in potentia ad omnes formas substantiales, nullam habens necessario semper sibi inhaerentem et inexistentem. Et ideo non est imaginandum quod materia sit quid in potentia tantum de se ... Sed materia est vere actu ex seipsa ita quod per nullam virtutem potest esse in potentia ad esse in rerum natura ... licet semper sit in potentia ad formam qua privatur."

[12] *Quodlibet* II, 10. "Ad aliud dico quod in homine praeter animam intellectivam est ponere aliam formam, scilicet sensitivam. Utrum anima sensitiva et intellectiva in homine distinguantur realiter, dico ad istam quaestionam quod sic."

therefore, not extended but *tota in qualibet parte* totius.[13] It is, furthermore, spiritual, incorruptible, immortal, and the form of the body. But, as we shall see, there is no way to demonstrate this philosophically, but it must be held only on faith. These three forms, all informing matter, constitute the unique unity which is man. And although Ockham insisted on this numerical unity, he does seem to be in difficulty here. His criterion for a real distinction was always separability. He rejected the Thomistic doctrine of a real distinction between principles which were not separable. He ha.cl also rejected the Scotistic distinction of distinct formalities in the unity of the same being. But the three forms in man are obviously separable, as he had previously pointed out. Hence, he could do nothing else but admit their distinction as separate l'ealities and at the same time insist on the numerical unity of the individual man. It is here, perhaps, that his position becomes as weak as it ever does. It is difficult to conceive how man remains a numerical unity composed as he is of four different and separable realities.

Form and its Powers

If, however, there is a real distinction between the forms themselves, there is no such distinction between a form and its powers. It is true that we speak of a difference between seeing and hearing and between intellect and will, as well as between the acts of knowing and willing. But these are connotative terms which are useful in speaking of such operations. In reality they point to no such real distinctions. The soul sensing is identical with what we designate as sense operations. The soul knowing and willing is simply the soul in act which expresses itself in various ways. The distinctions are all on the side of the mind which distinguishes in order to clarify. One could just as easily say that the soul knows by its will and wills by its intellect.[14] At this point the problem which confronts Ockham is this. He had granted that there is an immediate

[18] *Quodlibet* I, 10.
" *II Sent.,* 24, L.

intuition of existing material things as well as an immediate intuition of the acts of the intellect and will. If one can directly intuit an act of knowing, for example, and if this act of knowing is identical with the intellectual soul, why cannot he also admit an intuition of the intellectual soul? Why cannot he agree with Aquinas that the soul knows itself in knowing its act?

The Act and its Source

In the first place, in accord with his principle of economy Ockham had refused to multiply powers and acts as really distinct from their source. All such distinctions were merely connotative. In the second place, each intuition regards its immediate object and nothing else. From the knowledge of one reality we can never argue to the existence of another. This would require an habitual knowledge of the other, and in the present case we are speaking of an original knowledge of the soul for which there has been no previous knowledge. On this ground any transition from one knowledge to another is ruled out. In addition he had already made it clear that God by His absolute power could sustain an act of knowing independently of the existence of its ordinary object. There is no reason why this cannot be applied ·equally to the source of the act. In the third place, his theory of causality presents a real difficulty. While, as we have seen, he was willing to admit that there was causality at work in the world, he could never argue from the existence of a particular to the existence of a particular cause. Again God could well be the cause, or at least some agent of whose existence we are totally unaware. Ockham grants only an intuition of the act itself. That intuition can go no further. Hence, even if one can present plausible reasons for the identity of the act and its source, that source simply does not show up in the act. And no case can be presented for the existence of something which cannot he directly intuited. The certain existence of such a source, then, must be held on faith. And if such a source cannot be demonstrated philosophically, then nothing about its function in the

human individual can be demonstrated. It might well function as a form. But it might also function simply as. a mover. How could anyone possibly know?

In the tenth question of the first *Quodlibet* Ockham treats the problem directly. It seems possible to demonstrate, he says, that the intellectual soul is: the form of the body. We experience intellection in us. This intellection is an operation of man. Therefore, its efficient cause and source is also in us. Furthermore, this cannot be some separated intelligence because we could in no way experience the operations of such an intelligence. Hence, the subject of such an operation must be in man. Now it cannot be the matter; therefore, it must be the form.

Immediately, however, he sees two difficulties. The first is that the intellectual soul could be that through which we understand and still not be the form of the hotly. We could simply be attributing the term, form, to such a principle, as we attribute the term, rower, to one who rows. The soul could be a mover rather than the proper form of the body. In that case we could still say that man understands through his intellectual soul. In the second place, he states flatly that neither through experience nor reason can we know that a spiritual principle which we call the soul exists in us. We hold this solely on faith. And even if we directly experience acts of knowing and willing and believe through faith that the subject of such acts is spiritual and incorruptible, still we could just as well conclude from experience that the subject of such acts is an extended and corruptible form.[15]

[15] *Quodlibet* I, 10. "Sunt etiam aliqua dubia quia videtur quod anima intellectiva quam ponimus secundum fidem informare <'orpus non sit tota in toto, nee tota in qualibet parte ... Ad principale renderent sequentes rationes naturales, , quod experimur intellectionem in nobis qui est actus formae corruptibilis et corporeae. Et diceret consequenter quod talis intellectio recipietur in forma extensa. Non autem experimur istam intellectionem quae est operatio propria substantiae immaterialis. Et ideo per intellectionem non concludimus illam substantiam incorruptibilem esse in nobis tamquam formam."

Conclusion

It is interesting to note that some four hundred years later David Hume could write the following on the identity of the self.

> When I turn my reflection on myself, I can never perceive this self \vithout some one or more perceptions; nor can I ·ever perceive anything but the perceptions. It is the composition of these, therefore, which forms the self.
>
> We can conceive a thinking being to have either many or few perceptions, Suppose the mind to be reduced even below the life of an oyster. Suppose it to have only one perception, as of thirst or hunger. Consider it in that situation. Do you conceive anything but merely that perception? Have you any notion of self or substance? If not, the addition of other perceptions can never give you that notion.
>
> The annihilation,, which some people suppose to follow upon death, and which entirely destroys this self, is nothing but an extinction of all particular perceptions; love and hatred, pain and pleasure, thought and sensation. These, therefore, must be the same with the self; since the one cannot survive the other. [16]

It would be easy to say at this point that, when Ockham and Hume had finished their analyses of man, man had lost both his unity and his soul. But, of course, there is more to it than that. Ockham was not just a philosopher, but much more radically a theologian and a Christian. And like any Augustinian Christian theologian he was interested in pointing out the inadequacy of human reason when left to itself or when dealing with the empirical situation. The *ratio inferior* was just that. Unless it was subjected to the *ratio superior,* enlightened by faith and the Divine Light Itself, there was very little that human reason working by itself could achieve in the way of certain truth. Aristotle was there, and to a certain extent he accepted 'him. But to pretend that man in his present condition could find salvation and ultimate truth through the teachings of the Stagirite was simply nonsense. What after all were

[16] Hume, David, *A Treatise of Human Nature,* Part IV, Section 6.

faith and grace meant for, if not to sustain a darkened human intellect and a wayward will,. and raise them to the level where man could truly and really understand and consistently pursue the good? In Ockham's eyes Christianity was not just something superadded to an already noble reason. It was rather that without which man could never understand himself, his world, or his God with any degree of certitude whatever. The conclusion to so many questions is consistently the same: " This we hold only by faith."

Ockham, then, does not abdicate certitude. He is simply unable to find very much of it on the philosophical level. He is convinced of this, and this conviction is behind all his criticism of Aquinas, Scotus, Henry of Ghent, *et al.* In the end Ockham is much more an Augustinian than he is a sceptic. He has been called often enough a philosophical sceptic, and from that abstract viewpoint he wa;s. But it is also true that Ockham himself would not welcome such a designation as a total description of his work. He never stopped with a philosophical scepticism. He uses it to point to where man must go, if he is to achieve the certitude he seeks. If an empiricist is unwilling to go beyond his empiricism, then the result, in Ockham's mind, is quite clear. And it seems that historically he has been right. The quotation from Hume represents Hume's total position. It is not Ockharn's.

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BETWEEN BEING AND NOTHINGNESS: THE RELEVANCY OF THOMISTIC HABIT

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PAPER is to compare St. Thomas's Treatise on Habits with two contemporary philosophies: the analytical philosophy of Gilbert Ryle and the existential approach of Jean-Paul Sartre. In comparing Aquinas's notion of habits with these contemporary views, and in relating his theory to a general psychology of values, the paper, it is hoped, will establish the value of St. Thomas's Treatise for today's studies.

St. Thomas deals with the general notion of " habits " in Questions 49-54 of the first part of the second part of the *Summa.* Throughout his Treatise he expands on Aristotle's formulation of" habit "in the *Categories, Ethics,* and *Metaphysics.*

In general, " habit " is subsumed under the category of quality. The etymology of the word might suggest that other categories, especially quantity, are involved in the meaning of "habit" since the word is derived from " to have" or" possess." Actually, the Greek verbal noun etii;; drawn from *exeiv* has three main senses: (1) possession, literally "to have"; (2) a state of being; and (S) the wearing of some apparel. It is the second meaning that Aristotle intends when in Greek construction the verb *E.xeiv* is used with an adverb. In such cases, the literal phrase" I have well" means" I am in a good state." [1]

St. Thomas does not fail to observe this meaning of habit as a qualitative state of being. The" having" that is at stake here is not the having of friends, or money, or clothes, but rather the state or condition of a being disposed to act in one way or another. Habits in this sense dispose our powers of acting.

[1] Aristotle, *Metaphysics,* trans. by C. Kirwan (Oxford Edition, 1971), p. 170.

Habits thus are lasting and become ingrained as a " second nature." [2]

This quality of an habitual state arrived at through ordered action applies throughout nature in general. Thomas refers to a passage in Aristotle's *History of Animals* (X, I) in which a being is judged to be healthy when it is capable of performing the actions characteristic of a healthy being. The point is that if "nature" is act-oriented, then "habits" which are a "state of nature " are also act-oriented.

When this meaning of " habit" is applied to human nature, however, an interesting paradox is raised. Habits are necessary determinants of actions if human beings are to arrive at any kind of fulfillment. But to say that habits are necessary implies a double-edged sword of value. On one side, we see human nature laden with all sorts of possibilities whereby a human being can intellectualize on and choose from a wide range of objects that far surpasses the capabilities of any animal nature. On the other side, unlike Divine Nature, the human being *must* habitualize his actions if his nature is to develop continually and grow toward a state of fulfillment.

St. Thomas' *s* notion of habits as necessary fits the traditional Greek model of human nature, that in a sense is as existential as it is traditional. The necessity of habits places human existence in that Greek predicament that is paradoxically a blessing and a curse. Human nature is located somewhere between the animals and the gods.

On the cognitive level, human beings are intelligent enough to ask an infinite range of questions, but ignorant of absolute answers. On the volitional level, where habit plays an important role, human beings find themselves in a similar half-way house. Unlike the animals whose upper limits of development are established by their physical and instinctive natures, a human being *can* perfect himself in proportion to the habits that he develops. And yet-poor fellow that he is-he must employ habitual acts if he is to approximate some level of

•Aristotle, *Ethics,* X, 7.

perfection. Habits imply a nature that is good enough to have room for growth, but not perfect enough to dispense 1-vith a rigor of repeated actions.

This necessity of habits arises from the indeterminant character of human powers. Put in positive terms, certain human powers are related to many different objects. An habitual ordering is necessary, then, if powers are to operate consistently in a way that brings human nature in alignment with its goals.

Several significant points are implied in this human need for habitual acts. First, it reveals a theory of human nature that deals in complexity rather than simplicity.

A simplicity of nature is manifested by a single fixed way of acting. The determined nature of matter exemplifies this type of simplicity. Divine simplicity, on the other hand, is manifested by a being" whose substance is its own operations." [3] Human beings partake in neither type of simplicity. To be sure, as part of the living, physical world, human beings display nutritive powers. But such powers are" fixed" in their actions. No one speaks of the habit of growing, or the habit of cell 1'.'eproduction.

Thomas notes that Aristotle had ranged such nutritive acts on the non-rational side of human life, and adds that Aristotle also included sensitive powers in the non-rational class. Here, however, habits do dispose our sensitive power which in a sense share in reason inasmuch as we urge ourselves to be moderate in pleasures and courageous in the face of fear and danger. The critical sensitive powers that need habitual attention, as it were, are labeled by Thomas. "irascible" and " concupiscible " powers, and courage and moderation are the respective moral habits that guide them. [4]

The complexity of human powers and corresponding habits heightens as one moves to a consideration of intellectual powers of knowing and willful powers of choosing. But the question of relevancy is at issue here, and one wonders about the rele-

[8] Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* I, II; Q. 49, art. 4.

• Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* I, II; Q. *56,* art. 4.

vancy, psychological or otherwise, of such terms as "irascible" and " concupiscible " powers.

Throughout the passages on habits that I have been outlining, Thomas makes numerous references to Aristotelian texts. In the present context, he draws from these texts in establishing that some habits do relate to our non-rational sensitive powers, specifically, the moral habits of courage and moderation.

The natural seeking of physical pleasures, which Thomas calls the concupiscible power and which is governed by the habit of moderation *(temperantia),* admits of scores of examples of a practical kind. The hedonistic theme has been and still is a popular subject of literature, philosophy, and science.

The irascible power is called into play when danger, real or imagined, is present. In Greek, the root word is " evJLO<;" which meant " spirited " or " high spirited as manifested in anger" (ira) .[5] Aristotle, as quoted by Thomas, refers to these powers as being part of man's non-rational life since we have them in common with dumb animals. The difference is that in a sense these powers share in rational planning.

This spirited nature of man-and animals-might appear to be a manifestation of courage. Indeed the Homeric legends equated such high-spirited actions with bravery. For when faced with danger man rises up in his wrath and strikes out with " blood boiling," as Homer puts it. But spirit is impetuous and of itself ungoverned. The truly courageous person assays the danger and turns fear into positive value. Spirit can inspire courage, but it is not synonymom; with courage. Animals are not courageous, for " they rush in upon danger when spurred by pain and are blind to the actual dangers tha.t await them." [6] Some unscrupulous people may be highly-spirited but hardly courageous. Aristotle puts it well: " The real motive of courageous men is the *nobility* of courage." If impetuous wrath in response to danger, and if stubborn refusal to admit to danger were equaitable with courage, then, on that account, "even asses would be brave when they are hungry, for no blows will

• Aristotle, *Ethics,* III, 8.
• *Ibid.,* III, 8.

make them stop grazing." [7] Courage is the habit that can well-dispose our irascible powers.

The recognition of a human nature beset with a complexity of capabilities at all levels of acting, aiming at any number of goals, makes habitual action all the more imperative if one is to shape out some meaning in his life.

A second significant point is that this complexity of habits and powers need not imply a bifurcation of nature. Thomas, again following Aristotle, does distinguish rational habits of the understanding and will from the non-rational habits that dispose our emotive and attitudinal acts. But far from effecting any separation of mind and body, Thomas clearly rejects any such notion.

In discussing how habits influence our non-rational acts, he refers to Aristotle's distinction between the rational and non-rational aspects .of human life. Aristotle suggests that the distinction is much like viewing a curved line as being either convex or concave. It all depends on which side you focus on, but there is only one curved line.[8]

Habits, especially moral habits, are not, as Thomas puts it, a freedom from the pleasure-pain confrontation of our emotive states, but rather, habits involve the direct engagement of such acts concerning their right use i.n the right way at the right time.[9] The mark of a good person is not a stoic denial of pleasures and pains, but an habitual ordering of actions that gives us assurance against any fanatical seeking of pleasures or a frantic avoidance of pain that will rob us of our dignity.[10]

Furthermore, pleasures and pains that accompany our actions provide the very index of habits that lead to character development. Feelings of self-satisfaction that accompany acts that regulate physical pleasures are indicators of the development of moderation, while on the other hand irksome and annoying feelings that accompany attempts at control are warning signs

[7] *Ibid.,* III, 8.

[8] *Ibid.,* I, 13.

•Aquinas, *op. cit.,* Q. *59,* art. fl.

[10] Aristotle, *Ethics,* II, 8.

of impending excess. Anyone who has tried to "kick the habit" of smoking will readily recognize these pleasure-pain symptoms. Increasing ease and lessening of anxiety in facing crisis situations are sure signs of courage, while the opposite is indicative of a cravenly disposition.

This view of habits as disposing non-rational powers not only avoids charges of a mind-body dichotomy, but also is free from the worn out exclamation of " occult causes."

Gilbert Ryle, in submitting the terms " dispositions," " habits," and " tendencies " to the test of ordinary usage, typifies the vagueness in identifying perpetrators of " occult causes." In the relevant passage, Ryle is justifying the usage of such words as " capacities," " tendencies," " liabilities," and " pronenesses." He considers a general objection that such talk is never about anything actual. The argument goes " that the world does not contain over and above what exists and happens, some other things which are mere would-be things and could-be happenings." [11]

Ryle admits that the objection seems to have merit. After all, to say of -a sleeping man, that he *can* speak French, does appear at one and the same time to posit an attribute and put that attribute into " cold storage," as Ryle phrases it. The problem is slipped with linguistic ease, however, when Ryle tells us that affirmative, indicative sentences which attribute these potentialities are either true or false, so that nothing is "put into cold storage" beyond the reach of logical truth value.

Ryle notes that .the objection to the statement that " a sleeping man can speak French" becomes a valid objection when it is leveled against " Old Faculty Theories " which construed dispositional words as denoting occult agencies or causes. Such theories posit " existing things or processes taking place in a sort of limbo world." [12] Exponents of "Old Faculty Theories " are not named, but obviously being in limbo is worse than being in cold storage.

[11] G. Ryle, *Concept of Mind* (New York, 1949), p. 119.

[12] *Ibid.,* pp. 119-l!W.

Ryle goes on to say that sentences containing words like " might," " could," and " would " do not report limbo facts, but rather have different jobs to perform in reporting matters of fact.

Fine. No one is in disagreement. The statement," A sleeping man can speak French," is either true or false. The modal force of " can " does not free the sentence from the icy grip of the excluded middle principle.

More at issue here is whether Thomas and Aristotle, whom he followed in developing the Treatise on Habits, are guilty of speaking about anything more or less than matters of fact, and whether or not they deserve membership in the " Old Faculty Club."

It was mentioned above that, in developing the fact of human habits, Aristotle engaged in an analysis of language, employing verbal derivations in moving from the infinite €xeivto the noun From there he runs through a host of meanings that we can assume were employed in ordinary Greek usage. Thomas does likewise in Latin, developing *"habitus"* from *"habere."*

It seems no small matter that verbal nouns are used in talking about human tendencies and capabilities. It would seem that the difficulty with a faculty-psychology would involve the substantializing of powers, so that human beings would become harborers of hidden entities causing them to act this way or that way.

We have already seen the figurative example of the convex and concave curve that distinguishes rational and non-rational actions of human beings. The critical terms for " rational " and "non-rational" in the Greek from which Thomas draws are: *A.6yov* exeiv--literally " having a plan " and *aX.oyov* €xeiv--having no plan or principle.

Thomas notes that habits are called qualities because they relate more to the rational side than the non-rational. In thus sharing " in a plan," habits are not fixed and determined, but rather dispose for good or ill. In any case, it is always *actions,* whether nutritive, sentient, or rational, that are the touchstone of those distinctions of nature. Furthermore, these actions are

very real and expressed as matters of fact. To distinguish " habit " from " action " is not to lose sight of the very real habit-of-acting, i. e., the end product of establishing a permanent disposition through practice. The sleeping man that can speak French, *can* speak French only insofar as he actually practices speaking French. Otherwise, he may wake up one day unable to order dinner at his favorite French restaurant.

Habits are formed by repeated acts of a similar type. We learn by doing. We become builders by building. We become just by doing just acts; brave by doing brave acts. The actions through which any habit is gained are the same as those through which by non-use it is also lost, as is the case with any skill. If people were born good or bad builders, then no teachers of skill would be needed.[13]

So it is with moral habits. Since they are formed as a result of corresponding actions, it is necessary to control the quality of activities in order to establish the second-nature consistency of habit. This increased consistency of habitual action is a qualitative augmentation whereby our actions (and our character) grow *better,* not bigger.[14]

Such is the force of habit. William James remarked that habit is "an invisible law, as strong as gravitation." [15]

James says this with no fear of an occult quality charge, nor does anyone so charge him. Attributing a statement to the Duke of Wellington, James echoes that habit is more than second nature; it is " ten times nature! " [16]

Habits make actions easy to perform, freeing us for higher pursuits. James urges us to launch ourselves with as strong and decided an initiative as possible; never suffer an exception to occur until the new habit is securely rooted in our lives. Continuity of performance is paramount. Habit is not sentiment but will, and is developed for good or ill: " The hell to be en-

[13] Aquinas, *<Yp. cit.,* Q. *52,* art. 3; Aristotle, *Ethics,* II, 1, 2.

[14] Aquinas, *op. cit.,* Q. *52,* art. 1.

[15] William James, *Principles of Psychology,* Vol. 1 (Dover Edition, New York, 1950), p. H!2.

[1]. *Ibid.,* p. 120.

dured hereafter, of which theology tells, is no worse than the hell we make for ourselves in this world by habitually fashioning our character in the wrong way .... We are spinning our fates, good or evil, and never to be undone." [17]

I would suggest that Thomas makes the better distinctions in his Treatise on Habits than the apocalyptic James, who drifts indiscriminately from speaking of habits as" grooving out brain tissues " to becoming a qualitatively better person, only to return again to speak of habits as a material law.

However, the mechanistic implications of William James's treatment of habits need not be inconsistent with his other assertions of purpose, intention and design. One would simply wish that clearer distinctions be made. Thomas's distinctions between habits relating to sentient acts and those related to intellectual acts allow for a predictability of action without ruling out chance and design. Without such distinctions a simple mechanistic psychology might ensue with implicit denials of purpose and deliberation.

Ryle offers an admirable refutation of the" Bogey of Mechanism " which purports to rule out intelligence and purpose. The fear of this mechanistic bogey-man rests on the possibility that all biological, psychological, and sociological laws will be reduced to mechanical laws, and that somehow this " reduction " will cancel out intelligence and purpose.

Ryle retorts that it may well be the case that physicists will find the answers to all physical questions, but he quickly adds that not all questions are physical questions. Laws govern, they do not ordain. "Laws of nature are not fiats." [18]

Every move in a chess game is governed by the rules, but not one move is ordained by the rules. Knowing the rules, therefore, one can predict that the bishop will move in a diagonal direction along squares of the same color. But one cannot deduce from the rules whether or not I shall move the bishop, nor how far if I do choose to move it. " There is plenty of

[11] *Ibid.,* p. HI7.

[18] G. Ryle, *op. ait.,* p. 76.

room for us to display cleverness and stupidity and to exercise deliberation and choice." [19]

It should be kept in mind that Ryle's logical *tour de force* that established the compatability of mechanism and purpose is aimed at those " alarmist faculty-theorists " who believe that nothing less than a will-entity is sufficient to counter-act the blind action of a mechanistic type. Ryle fails to mention that his argument also applies to" alarmist mechanists" who would rule out plausible accounts of deliberation and purpose. Thomas's Treatise on Habits would seem to mediate the dispute that is given a one-sided treatment by Ryle. St. Thomas offers no mechanistic view of habits, and yet habits do afford a degree of predictability concerning our actions without cancelling out deliberation and choice. Habits are the hard-earned results of many deliberate acts which, paradoxically, cut down, so to speak, on deliberation time. Nevertheless, second nature always remains a free nature.

I suggest then that Thomas offers a theory of habits that avoids both meaningless occult entities of an I-know-not-what kind, and a mechanistic view that is indifferent to deliberation and purpose. He gives an account of human dispositions that are readily recognized in ourselves and in others. These dispositions are important and indeed necessary for the development of any skill and more importantly for the development of moral character.

But far from speaking of habits as second nature, how does Thomas's view of habits compare with an existential philosophy that eschews all talk of essence or human nature? In challenging traditional de£nitions of human nature, Sartre charges tradition with establishing an unrealistic universal archetype, whereby " each man is a particular example of a universal concept, man." [20] In this tradition, universality of essence blankets the " wild man, the natural man, the bourgeois man " all under the same definition of man, all having the same basic qualities.

[19] *Ibid.,* p. 77.

[20] J.-P. Sartr.e, *Essays in Existentialis.m* (Citadel Press, New York, 1965), p. 85.

This conclusion follows, Sartre continues, because in this tradition " the essence of man precedes the historical existence that we find in nature." [21]

Sartre's well-known counterview of existence preceding essence is based on the nihilating aspect of human consciousness. To say that existence precedes essence is to say that " first of all, man exists, turns up, appears on the scene, and only afterwards defines himself. If man, as the existentialist conceives him, is indefinable, it is because at first he is nothing." [22]

In his popular defense of existentialism as a humanism, Sartre proceeds from here to give an account of human responsibility that would engender little argument. " Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself. Such is the first principle of existentialism." [23]

It is a principle of " subjectivity " that affords the human being a " greater dignity than a stone or table .... Man is at the start a plan which is aware of itself, rather than a patch of moss, a piece of garbage, or a cauliflower .... I may want to belong to a political party, write a book, get married, but all that is only a manifestation of an earlier, more spontaneous choice that is called ' will.' But if existence really does precede essence, man is responsible for what he is." [24]

Now while Sartre claims that the first principle of existentialism is the axiological statement, " Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself," it would seem that by his own account there is a prior principle that he himself states: the phenomenological account that " at first man is nothing."

The statement, of course, is carried over from the technical *pour-soi* language of *Being and Nothingness* which expreS'sesthe for-itself character of human consciousness, a consciousness that is literally " out there " and metaphorically expressed as a " wind blowing toward things "or as " a being who hurls himself toward the future."

[21] *IbiiL.,* p. *35.*
•• *lbiiL.,* pp. 35-36.
2. *IbiiL.,* p. 36.
2. *Ibid.,* p. 36.

Metaphors as,ide, the for-itself consciousness that is the human being is literally nothing, and *this* is the first principle from which Sartre derives his notion of responsibility.

The temptation to *compare--mutatis* mutandi-Sartre's prime distinction between being-in-itself and being-for-itself with a Parmenidean being-non-being distinction is overwhelming. In Aristotelian language, this latter distinction is seen as an oversimplification, since "non-being" need not literally mean "nothing," but rather "potentially something."

In Sartre's case, once committed to the negativity of consciousness as an absolute "nothing," a pure spontaneity of of freedom arises that disallows any continuity of action. Man must invent himself anew at every moment. Being conscious, man projects himself beyond himself. He is the center of his own transcendence. He leaves the being of yesterday behind the being of today, and the being of today is left behind the being of tomorrow. He surpasses himself constantly through a self-transcendence.

Sartre's notion of spontaneous freedom seems to be immediately prescriptive in its obligatory tone. "Value haunts freedom," [25] Sartre claims, and this haunting of freedom by value takes on the verdict of a condemnation. The thrust of these immediately prescriptive acts heightens when Sartre tells us that not only must we decide for ourselves the values of each act, but at one and the same time we choose for all men. " In fact, in creating the man that we want to be, there is not a single act which does not at the same time create an image of man as we think he ought to be." [26]

And yet, while these acts are immediately prescriptive, ironically, no norms can be prescribed without being guilty of bad faith. Having no nature, man has no moral nature.

Against this view, we offer an alternative Aristotelian-Thomistic view of human nature, a nature that is not defined *de facto* and *ab initio,* nor a nature entailing consciousness, that

[25] *Being and Nothingness,* trans. Hazel Barnes (Philosophical Library, New York, 1956), p. 94.

2-·· Existentialism Is a Humanism," *op. vit.,* p. 37.

is *literally* "nothing." Rather it is a nature laden with potentialities, dispositions, habits. Habits as potential dispositions-to-act avoid both a defined being of an *en-soi* type and a view of man as negativity that disallows any continuity of action. Habits are between Being and Nothingness.

The habitually-formed acts that form the quality of a man are no less free than the spontaneous thrusts of the Sartrean type. Deliberation is a prerequisite for habitually-formed acts. Thomas could not be more clear in denying the power of habitual action in *en-soi* types such as stones and tables, patches of moss and cauliflower. Even animals, strictly speaking, do not have habitual powers. All beings of this kind *do* have defined natures and totally predictable acts.

We said above that St. Thomas's notion of habits affords a degree of predictability without ruling out deliberation and choice; therefore, it is not a predictability in the sense of Sartrean "bad faith" in which one denies his own anguish-laden freedom, but a predictability that implies more of a reliability on self and others.

Spontaneity in action that is habit-formed is not necessarily a brand new moment of responsibility never before faced, but rather a facility and ease in facing similar responsibilities. Such spontaneity is the product of past deliberative acts, but in no sense diminishes the present freedom. In this case "spontaneity" as "reliability" means we can count on ourselves and others when crisis-situations arise. One would imagine that it was this kind of reliability that Sartre looked for in his colleagues of the resistance movement when it was imperative to distinguish friend from foe, hero from coward. A vacuous human nature whose isolated uniqueness that renders all love-relations as either sadistic seduction or masochistic surrender may well be a "hell that is other people." But a human nature that is potentially disposed to good or evil at least gives us a fighting chance of establishing good habits in consonance with the increasing facility of good-faith deliberative acts.

The distinction between habit as a potential thrust and the right or wrong termination of those disposed acts raises another

interesting comparison. It was mentioned that Sartre's version of consciousness as nothingness immediately places the human being in a prescriptive setting of deciding what the individual ought to be and what others ought to be.

Thomas's view of habits, on the other hand, allows for a meaningful distinction of a descriptive and prescriptive type. Initially, his analysis of human habits is descriptive. Nature is *described* (not *defined)* as having certain capacities to act in this way or that way. Repeated acts of similar types form a constancy of action that engenders a constancy of character. Habits, as influencing powers-of-acting, do not define human nature but are simple descriptions of one's possibilities.

Habits are given a prescriptive force when Thomas considers moral habits as virtues.[21] Here, the discussion moves from what man is capable of doing through habitual acts, to what he *ought* to do if a good life is to be attained.

But I will rest my case here, claiming that Thomas's theory of habits fares well when compared with some current philosophies which try to express certain aspects of human life.

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21. *Op. cit.,* Q. *55-58.*

THE SIN OF ANGELICISM REVISITED

ANGELS HAVE FALLEN, theologically as well as philosophically, on hard times.

Thus, for Paul Tillich they are structures rather than beings, "... concrete-poetic symbols of the structures and powers of being." [1] For him they are not personal beings at all, but "... supra-idividual structures of goodness and supra-individual structures of evil. Angels and demons a;re mythological names for constructive and destructive powers of being... " [2]

There are various reasons why angels have fallen, theologically, on hard times. For example, one of the reasons for the theory of angels in St. Thomas Aquinas is to provide an analogue for the sort of existence and knowledge enjoyed by the disembodied soul. Indicative of this fact is that about a third of the fifteen questions in the appropriate section of the *Summa Theologiae* are devoted to angelic knowledge: what knowing would be like without sensation. [3] However, contemporary theologians tend to speak less of the immortality of the soul and more of the resurrection of the body. They tend to dispense with the notion of the soul as a vehicle of personal identity between the death of the individual person and the general resurrection. [4]

The last major philosopher to consider angels within the

[1] *Systematic Theology* (University of Chicago Press, 1967) I, 260.

[2] *Ibid.,* II, 40.

[8] Like the angels, the human soul will know through divinely imparted species. ST I, 89, 8.

•Cf. Oscar Cullmann, *lmmortaUty* of *the Soul or* *of the Dead?,* (London: Epworth, 1958). Cf. my "The Problem of the Soul in Contemporary Thought," *American Benedictime* 19 (1968) 24-81. Similarly, although the Vatican II document "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modem World" does speak of man's soul and of its immortality, the general orientation of the philosophical anthropology in this document is hardly in this direction. *Documents of Vatican II* (New York: Guild, 1966), p. 212.

context of his thought in a thematic way would seem to have been Kant. In his *Lectures on Metaphysics* he insists that " The spirit world constitutes a special, real world; it is an intelligible world, which must be distinguished from the sensible one." [5] Even in the philosophy of his critical period Kant allows for the existence of angels as noumena, as things-in-themselves, problematic but in no way self-contradictory. [6] He even describes the sort of knowledge they would have, namely intellectual intuition. [7]

There are reasons why Kant takes angels into serious philosophical account, and not simply his pietist Lutheran upbringing. He felt obliged to reject the spirit-world view *(Pneumatologie)* of Emanuel Swedenborg, namely that man-having-reason should be able to see in his reason beings-having-reason, that is, angels. This rejection surely plays a role in Kant's denial of intellectual intuition for man. [8] Nevertheless,

•Ed. Politz, *257.*

[6] *Kritik der reinen Vernunft,* B 310.

[7] " For we cannot judge in regard to the intuitions of other thinking beings, whether they are bound by the same conditions as those which limit our intuition and which for us are universally valid." K.d.r.V., A 27, B 43. It is interesting to note in an earlier work, " *Triiume eines Geistersehers* (1766), directed against Emanuel Swedenborg, that although Kant has no difficulty rejecting the notion that angels could somehow be present to our outer senses *(Werke in seeks Biinden,* I, 950), at least in this work he does not have a solid reason for rejecting a possible " inner conjunction with the spirit world " in inner sense *(imdJ.,* p. 975). By this time Kant had not yet developed time as the form of inner sense, and with it rejected any form of intellectual intuition for the human understanding. (It is instructive to note that !the majority of the references to intellectual irltuition are in the second edition of the first Critique. Cf. K.d.r.v., B XXVII, B XL, B 72, B 159).

[8] Kant's animadversions to Swedenborg's clairvoyance are clearly stated: *in mundo non datur non datur hiatus.* There is a principle of continuity in appearance which forbids any leap in a series (from present to future) or a hiatus in spatial representation. In other words, given the chain of appearance, an actual insight into the future before the present has linked up with it is not possible. Neither will the chain of appearances permit insight into what is happening in a causally unconnected sector of space. Finally, an intellectual intuition into things-in-themselves, into mysterious agencies which would make things happen or which might indicate an unconnected happening elsewhere or in the futur.e, cannot be an object of possible experience. As Kant indicates, " A concept to which no assignable intuition corresponds is nothing." K.d.r.V., A 290, B 847.

Kant agrees with Swedenborg that an angel is a being *(Wesen)* having reason. An angel would be a person, if a supra-natural person.

Now in comparing Kant's angelology with a much earlier one, namely that of Thomas Aquinas, one immediately notes a fundamental difference. For Aquinas an angel is a natural thing; it has a nature. Indeed, each one has a separate nature, or better, constitutes a separate species. This is the basis for St. Thomas's explanation for the fall of the bad angels. The bad angel possessed a natural perfection in potency to a supernatural good, which supernatural good it refused, preferring, selfishly, to enjoy its own natural perfection, which natural perfection it had right from the start of its existence.[9] Since for Kant nature means Newtonian nature, an angel could not but be a supra-natural person.

We come here to one of the reasons why angels have fallen, philosophically, on hard times. According to the Angelic Doctor it is necessary to posit such incorporeal creatures for the perfection of the universe *(ad perfectionem universi)* existing between God and man.[10] We recognize here one of the presuppositions to Aquinas's thought which he took over from the neo-Platonic tradition, namely that of the Great Chain of Being. The chain is pretty well broken by the time of Kant, split

[9] *De Malo* XVI, 3. Cf. James Collins, *The Thomistic Philo;iophy of Angels* (Washington D.C.: Catholic Universi!ty of America, 1947), pp. *25Hl56.* It is extremely interesting to note that Hegel views the fall of Lucifer in a similar fashion. Sin, according to Hegel, is self-centered being for self, withdrawal into self *(Phenomenology of Spirit,* Miller, tr., p. 474). The angel, as " the thought of Spirit immediately existent" *(ibid.,* p. 469), is posited immediately as an individual self, not *for its.elf,* not existing as spirit (that is, it is innocent). There is an othering of self as withdrawal into self. It becomes knowing as such. With this there is a self-centeredness of the existent consciousness (that is, sin). In the good angel, which immediately replaces the Son of Light (Lucifer), the divine being counts as essence, while *natural exietence* (italics mine) and the self as unessential; in the bad angel, on the other hand, it is the opposite *(ibid.,* p. 470). In other words, in Hegel, as in Aquinas, the bad angel chooses to enjoy its natural cr.eated self rather than God.

[10] Cf. ST I, *50,* l, c. That there might be beings knowing the divine goodness, as well as simply existing. CG II, 46.

into two distinct realms, that of phenomenon and that of noumenon. The chain was still holding in the philosophy of John Locke, who felt that there should be a continuity of species ascending from man up to God.[11]

One of the difficulties which contemporary philosophers have with angels is simply with the terms whereby they are defined. For example, a.n angel is called an immaterial substance. Tracing the history of substance from Locke's "I know not what" to Kant's concept of substance, which is little more than that, namely a mere concept of the understanding, indicates the difficulty of establishing the ontological status of the angel in those terms. Further, in the light of contemporary physics and the mass-energy convertibility the view of angels as non-material exposes our no longer clear notion as to what, precisely, matter might mean.

Even the notion of matter as employed by St. Thomas is not without difficulties. For him, following Aristotle, matter is the principle of individuation. Indeed, it is because Aquinas holds that angels are pure spirits, and immaterial, that the road is open to argue that each angel constitutes a separate species unto itself; which accords well, of course, with the notion of the Great Chain of Being. However, in a post-Marxian, post-Hegelian world one would expect to hear that the principle of human individuation is society rather than matter. And if the principle of individuation is, indeed, "matter," then in a post-Mendelian age I suppose what we would really mean is that it is genetics.

These are some of the reason.s:why angels have fallen, philosophically as well as theologically, on hard times. The difficulty is evident, for example, in a statement made by Heidegger in his *What is Metaphysics?* : " An angel is; it does not exist." [12] Indeed, no one would wish to argue that an angel is a Being-in-the-W orld, whose existence is characterized by care, as a Being-unto-Death, or whatever set of *existentialia* one might

[11] *An Essay Concerning Human Underli'tanding,* III, 6, 11-12; IV, 16,12.

[12] *Was ist Metaphysik?* (7ed.; Frankfurt a/M.: Klostermann, 1955), pp. 15-16.

wish to advance. Neither would one care to argue that the being of the angel and its horizon of understanding is characterized by temporality; or that it is marked by the " transcendence" of *Dasein's"* standing-out-from-its-standing-in-the-openness-of-being." [13] Nonetheless, if one were to take the bottom line of the meaning of existence in Heidegger, especially as it is rooted in the thought of Kierkegaard, namely " to choose," what could he a more thoroughgoing example of the truth of existence (which is freedom), of disclosedness *(Erschlossenheit)* than the angel looking upon the face of God, or of the resoluteness *(Entschlossenheit)* of the bad angel declaring" Non serviam!"? Angelic choice would appear to be the ultimate in authenticity or inauthenticity, the quintessential example of becoming, or refusing to become, what one is.[14]

So much for the *status quaestionis* regarding angels. So far as theologians demythologizing angels and demons back to their roots in Persian or Iranian myths are concerned, these intellectual exercises I leave to the theologians. Perhaps, theologians do not need angels. I am convinced, however, that philosophers do, if only as a speculative test case for the meaning of the human person.[14"]

This is certainly one of the functions that angels perform in St. Thomas's scheme of things. Angelic knowing provides a point of comparison with human knowing (a) in the state of innocence, as unaffected by concupiscible and irascible appetites, [15] (b) in the present state of life-the angelic intellect knows intelligible substance separated from the corporeal, whereas the human intellect knows the quiddity or nature of things

[18] *Sein und Zeit,* p. 364.

"SZ, pp. 297, 307. Compare St. Thoma.s's usage of the term *obstinatio* in describing the entitative "fixing" of the angel's condition in a single choice. ST I, 64, Q. In good angels after one meritorious act. ST I, 6Q, *5.*

[14]• Or as James Collins puts it, "A knowledge of angelic powers and operations provides a stable standard for evaluating their human counterparts and for indicating the proper direction in which these capacities should be orientated." *The Thomistic Philosophy of Ange/,s* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1947), p. 371.

[1"] ST I, 94, 2, c.

existing in corporeal matter [16]. (c) the knowing of the disembodied soul,[1] as also (d) the equality of angelic and human knowing in heaven (in *patria)* · through the Word, that is, through the divine essence, in one simultaneous vision.[18] In all this, angelic knowledge provides Aquinas with a means of underscoring the fundamental importance of the imagination and its phantasms. (Note the constantly recurring phrase: *semper se convertere ad phantasmata)* .

Angels, if not angelic knowledge, play a similarly important role in the philosophy of John Locke, demonstrating equally the fundamentally finite character of human understanding: " The Candle that is set up in us shines bright enough for all our purposes." [19] For Locke argues that our knowledge of corporeal substance (as an "I know not what") is better than our knowledge of immaterial substance. [20]

Ever since Feuerbach we are more than ever aware of the difficulty of defining something as odd as human being. In his *Essence of Christianity* (1841), for example, Feuerbach attempted to define human being in terms of that which was wholly other than man, namely God; he discovered, however, that God was defined in terms of the human person (" Theology is anthropology"). Later in the *Essence of Religion* (1851) he tried defining human reality in terms of that upon which it is most dependent, namely nature, with attendant difficulties I have gone into elsewhere.[21]

Perhaps, the most influential philosophical anthropology in this century, if not intended as such, is that of Heidegger, who attempts to define *Dasein* in relation to being, while admitting, at the start, that being is fundamentally indefinable.[22] It is, however, questionable to define the meaning of *Dasein* in terms of being as temporality, when the meaning of being as tempor-

[1·] ST I, 84, 7, c.

[11] ST I, 89, 3.

[1·] ST I, 58, 2, c.

[1·] Cf. *Essay,* Intro., *5.*

[20] *Essay,* II, 23, *5,* 36-37.

[21] Cf. my "Feuerbach's Anti-Humanism," *American Benedictine Review,* 26 (1975) 454-463.

[22] SZ, p. 3.

ality is derived from the meaning of *Dasein.* This is more than merely a hermeneutical circle; it is a vicious one.

Experimental psychology has generally attempted to throw light upon human behavior by means of objective observational and experimental data from animal behavior. The difficulty is contained, as we have been made more aware by phenomenology, in that word " data." Such so-called objective data has first to be given subjectively to a free personal consciousness. The perils of personification are built in. Further, we are becoming more and more aware of the influence which the human experimenter and humanly constructed scientific instruments have upon the "personality" of the experimental animal. Even upon plants!

But if there is a danger of personification in dealing with animal behavior, of ascribing human personal modes of behavior to animals, there is no less of a danger of an " angelification " of human knowing and human freedom on the part of philosophers who do not thematically develop a theory of the angelic person.

Maritain has already pointed out the " sin of angelicism," somewhat intemperately, in relation to Descartes,[23] a charge, incidentally, which Descartes had to defend himself against in his own lifetime.[24] Maritain accuses Descartes of ascribing angelic modes of knowing to human ones: immediate intuition into clear and distinct ideas-note St. Thomas's remark that the angel's apprehension involves no movem:ent *(immobiliter),* like that of a human being's apprehension of first principles[25]- innate ideas, similar to the innate possession of intelligible species in angels,[26] and knowledge independent of things. However, it strikes me that Maritain is guilty of the same "sin" with his notion of the "intuition of being,"[27] a co-natural knowledge not dissimilar to the connaturality between heavenly intel-

••Cf. *Three Reformers* (London: Sheed and Ward; 1947), pp. *53* ff.

••Cf. Letter to Beeckman, 17. X. 1680 in *Descartes: Phlilosoprhical,utters* (A. Kenny, tr., Oxford: Clarendon, 1970), p. 17.

••ST I, 64.

••CG II, 96.

[27] Cf. his *Preface to Metaphysics,* Third Lecture (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1937), pp. 48 ff.

ligence and intelligible species in Aquinas.[28] It would appear that even in a philosopher *witli* ·a theory of angels, if a borrowed one, there is a danger of falling into the sin of angelicism.

Perhaps, the most influential philosophical anthropology of the nineteenth century is that o.f Fichte, who attempted to define human reality essentially in terms of human freedom.[29] The attempt was admittedly self-defeating, since to define freedom is to systematize it, that is, reduce it to necessity, in which case, of course, it is no longer freedom. But no matter. Fichte's is such a total theory of freedom, or better, a theory of total freedom, that even the so-called passivity of sensation is a case of the free activity of freely allowing myself to be passive relative to sensation (a non-positing positing) : the fly cannot annoy me; I freely allow myself to be annoyed by the fly.[30] In other words, if independence of reality is characteristic of angelic knowledge, as Maritain maintains, then surely the totally free consciousness of Fichte is a case in point.

It surely seems to be the case with the absolute freedom of J.-P. Sartre. "Freedom," says Sartre, "is total and infinite ... " And the only limits that freedom encounters are those that it has imposed upon itself.[31] Indeed, according to Sartre, ".. .in a certain sense I *choose* being born ... assuming this birth in full responsibility and making it *mine."* [32] There is, I think, a parallel between Sartre's choice of" facticity" and Aquinas's or Hegel's Lucifer choosing its "natural existence."

One hesitates to enter the tortuous paths of Schelling's thought in search of the angeliffcation of human knowing; but it is easily observable in his early philosophy of identity in which he revives the notion of intellectual intuition as an immediate knowing of the Absolute, the identity of subject and object, and in and through it, borrowing from Spinoza's notion of the *MS intuitiva,* a knowledge of the particular individual

2· ST I, 58, 1, c.

[29] Cf. my *A()tivity and Ground: Ffohte, S()helling, and Hegel,* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1976)' p. 12.

ao *Ibid.,* pp. 52-56.

[81] *Being and Nothingness* (H. Barnes, tr.), p. 5lH.

•• *Ibid.,* p. *556.*

thing in its intricate detail.[33] The implications of this position for Schelling's philosophy of nature and his philosophy of art prove significant. The similarity between it and St. Thomas's position regarding the knowledge of the particular individual thing through species imparted to it by God also proves significant.[34]

As for a parallel with angelic knowledge in Hegel, one may suppose that it might best be discovered in the viewpoint of the *fur unB,* the " for us ", that is " us the philosophers " observing the process whereby spirit comes to a self-conscious knowledge of itself as spirit. However, as we the philosophers also know, spirit must eventually "... penetrate and digest this entire wealth of its substance," not simply in terms of its forms. but also in terms of its content.[35] Compare this with Aquinas's view that "... of necessity every separated substance knows all natural things and the total order thereof."[36]

In his work on the young Hegel Wilhelm Dilthey says of the tradition that we have been considering, albeit in a cursory manner:

> Every philosophy that would take seriously the insight of idealism has basically two choices: either a world without God or a God without a world; we must either get rid of *(aufheben)* ourselves or God.[37]

What I have been suggesting in the latter part of this paper is that if this philosophical tradition had developed a theory of angels, perhaps the options would not have been so extreme; man is not even an angel, let alone God. For this reason, I would argue that if angelic persons did not exist, philosophers would be obliged to invent them.

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••*Activity and Ground,* esp., pp. 94-99.
••ST I, 57, 2, c. As also *De Veritate* VIII, 11.
••*Phenomenology of Spirit* (Miller, tr.), pp. 492-493, as also pp. 479-480.
••CG II, 99.
•• *Gesammelte Schriften,* IV, 268.

BOOK REVIEWS

Life and Death With Liberty and Justice. By GERMAIN G. GmsEz and JosEPH M. BOYLE, JR. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979. Pp. 519.

Many state legislatures in the past dcade have either passed or are presently considering the passage of bills permitting " death with dignity " and voluntary or nonvoluntary euthanasia. In general, these bills would either permit a person to choose his own death when his quality of life had become unacceptable or would allow one to bring death upon another whose life was deemed to be unacceptable or of poor quality. Classical prohibitions of death with dignity, voluntary or involuntary euthanasia, and suicide have been based on the sanctity of life principle. This principle sees the life of the human being as sacred, and prohibits any direct lethal attack on the human life of the person. It no longer enjoys the wide acceptance it once had, and the void created by its collapse has caused acute problems in ethics and jurisprudence. Grisez and Boyle attempt to fill this void and argue that the widely accep'ted jurisprudential principles of justice and liberty prohibit the legalization of voluntary and nonvoluntary euthanasia. First and foremost, this is a work of jurisprudence, for its primary concern is with showing that laws prohibiting voluntary and nonvoluntary euthanasia do not violate justice and liberty. But this is also an ethical work, for the authors elaborate a theory of ethics and discuss the ethical aspects of many problems related to the euthanasia debate. It is a thorough, subtle, detailed and wide ranging discussion of legal aspects of death, suicide, mercy killing, euthanasia, abortion and of justified killing, ethical theory and the relation of law and morality.

The chapter discussing the definition of death provides a clear and accurate definition of death and the moment at which death occurs. While the critique of some of the newer definitions of death are informative, the discussion as a whole appears to lack rigor and clear foundation. Death is defined as the "turning point" at which respiration, heartbeat, and the functions continuously present throughout life give way to decomposition. A fuller discussion of the nature of the human person and the relation of the human person to this " turning point " would have aided the contemporary debates. Operationally, death is defined as the complete and irreversible loss of function of the whole brain, a definition which appears to be gaining wider acceptance.

Discussing the right of competent patients to refuse medical treatment,

Grisez and Boyle hold that it is always lawful for competent patients to decline treatment. The lawfulness of this is protected by the jurisprudential principle of liberty, and not that of privacy. The authors argue that decisions to refuse treatment should not be based on quality of life arguments or on the premise that some lives are not worth living. Rather, they argue that treatments may be refused when a person is dying and when further treatments would be useless. This account is not fully adequate, for it does not pay sufficient attention to the treatments themselves. A more proper account would hold that competent patients would be able to refuse those treatments that cause grave burdens themselves for the patient, cause these burdens for those responsible for the patient, or which have grave burdens associated with the treatments themselves. This account would make it lawful for the competent nondying patient to refuse treatments that required heroic or conspicuously virtuous acts on the part of the patient, which the account offered by the authors would not necessarily permit.

In the chapter dealing with suicide and liberty, the authors argue that attempts at suicide should not be subjected to criminal punishment. This should be the case for the reason that suicide, considered in and of itself, does not constitute an offense against liberty or justice. Attempts at suicide do not bring unwarranted harm to others, and such attempts do not impinge upon other persons' rightful claims to liberty.

In the discussion of voluntary euthanasia, Grisez and Boyle object that the practice of assisting others in their suicide is a violation of liberty, and should not be made lawful. This is a violation of liberty for the reason that each and every citizen has the right to remain aloof from acts considered to be immoral which serve no notable state interest. The legalization of assisted suicide would require governmental regulation and control so that euthanasia would never be inflicted on anyone who did not choose it voluntarily. The tax support that this regulation would require would involve objecting citizens against their will, and this would be a violation of their liberty. Self-inflicted lethal harm not requiring the assistance of another would not require this form of regulation, and would not be an infringement on the liberty of those who choose to remain aloof. From the moral standpoint, the authors argue that voluntary euthanasia is never to be considered as a morally good choice because it is a direct turning against the good of human life, and that there is never a sufficient proportionate reason for directly terminating one's life. This and other chapters provide a comprehensive overview of existing bills permitting voluntary or nonvoluntary euthanasia and death with dignity. And in very well formulated arguments they present alternative model bills. These bills would not only fully protect liberty and justice, but would also reject the legalization of voluntary and nonvoluntary euthanasia.

And in defending these model bills, the authors rightly point out that many proponents of voluntary euthanasia cite examples of nonvoluntary euthanasia in defense of their principles, and this leads one to believe that their ultimate goal is not just the legalization of voluntary euthanasia, but the legalization of nonvoluntary euthanasia as well.

Nonvoluntary euthanasia is regarded by the authors as a species of murder that should not be granted legal permissibility. Nonvoluntary euthanasia violates justice in two ways, for it deprives victims of the good of human life to which the victim has an absolute claim. It is also a violation of justice because the standards employed to determine who should be the victim of nonvoluntary euthanasia are arbitrary, subjective, impressionistic, and hence, unjust. Criteria such as lack of personhood, lack of sufficient intelligence, poor quality of life, extraordinary pain and others are subjectively determined, ambiguous, and unjust. Their ambiguity means that some will suffer nonvoluntary euthanasia who should not. Nonvoluntary euthanasia, like voluntary euthanasia, violates liberty in that it requires regulation which would impinge upon the liberty of those who would wish to remain aloof from a practice that serves no evident state interest. Nonvoluntary euthanasia is regarded by the authors as being more dangerous than voluntary euthanasia because of the arbitrariness of the criteria employed to determine who should be subjected to it. These criteria also have a natural tendency to expand. Fletcher's criteria of personhood, for example, as a Stanford-Binet I.Q. of 40, would permit all with I.Q.s below that to be subjected to mercy killing. There is little observable difference between an individual with an I.Q. of 40 and one with 45, and hence there is a natural pressure also to subject those with I.Q.s of 45 to nonvoluntary euthanasia.

The authors also object that Marvin Kohl's contention that nonvoluntary euthanisia imposed on the retarded, defective, insane, gravely ill, and comatose is a species of kindness or an act of beneficence. Acts of this type cannot be considered beneficent for the reason that they are a direct turning against human goods and because they deprive the victims of human goods that are properly due to them as persons. Only an invalid casuistry could hold that visiting death upon another is a form of kindness or beneficence. Because death is not a good that perfects the rational nature of man, Grisez and Boyle discount Daniel Maguire's notion that any form of euthanasia could be an object worthy of human choice. And Richard McCormick's proposal for excluding from the protection of the law of murder those who lack relational potential is criticized others have used this principle to justify nonvoluntary euthanasia. Because this criterion is so elastic, subjective, and arbitrary, it is necessary to reject it as unjust.

The difficult problem of determining when to withhold treatments from

noncompetent persons is given separate treatment by the authors. They argue that treatment should only be withheld from noncompetent persons who are in the dying process, and not from those who are not dying and noncompetent. That they would be better off dead and that their lives are of poor quality are unacceptable reasons for refusing treatment to the incompetent. The only valid grounds for this action is that the treatment is useless for the dying person and that the rational competent would probably refuse the treatments if he were to suffer a similar fate. This standard adequately protects the liberty of the non-competent person to refuse treatment while also protecting the nondying person's right to life-saving and life-prolonging treatments. The case of Karen Quinlan was judged according to the proper principles, in the opinion of the authors, even though the court was not as thorough as it might have been in determining whether Miss Quinlan actually was dying. And the case of Joseph Saikewicz, who was a severely retarded, institution-alized sixty-seven year old man in the terminal stages of myeloblastic monocetic leukemia, was also judged according to the proper principles. The court accepted the opinion of the appointed guardian that continued treatment would not be in the patient's best interests because of its uselessness and because a rational competent patient would also probably refuse the treatments. Quality of life arguments were clearly rejected in both of these cases, with the authors' approval.

As was said previously, this book is not only a work of jurisprudence but also one of ethics. And in keeping with this, Grisez and Boyle develop a coherent and powerful theory of ethics and human action. Utilitarianism, subjectivism, relativism, and consequentialism are all rejected, and in their place a natural law theory of ethics and foundation of jurisprudence is set forth. Acts are morally good when they are done in behalf of naturally known human goods which are the objects of natural human inclinations. These goods are such things as life, knowledge, integrity, genuineness, activities and experiences for their own sake, and truth. Acts are morally evil when they turn against these goods and when they prohibit the realization of these goods. Moral agents have the positive duty always to refrain from turning against these goods. But they are not obliged always and everywhere to act in behalf of all human goods. Of special interest is the distinction made between death-dealing performances and acts of killing. In death-dealing performances such as justified killing, the death of a person is an effect of an act, even though the death was not part of the proposal of the agent. A death-dealing performance is not morally culpable, even though these performances may appear to be homicidal.

A very clear, thorough and orderly presentation of the duties and responsibilities to human life of citizens, health care professionals, service personnel, and institutions is provided in this work. Participation in

suicide, nonvoluntary euthanasia, and abortion in any direct manner are rejected by the authors. It is the chapter on these matters which gives the work its appeal to a wide audience. The authors strongly suggest that special care and attention be given to the psychological, familial, emotional, and medical needs of the dying patient. If this were to be done on a broader scale, it is quite possible that the outcry for the legalization of voluntary and nonvoluntary euthanasia would be diminished. This might come about because much of the criticism stems from the apparent lack of compassionate care and attention given the dying in many health care institutions.

While supporting the cause of the human life amendment, Grisez and Boyle argue that it ought to be formulated so as to gain wider support. This means that it should not only protect the life of the unborn, but also that of the insane, dying, deformed, senile, incompetent, and comatose, while also guaranteeing the exercise of liberty and justice.

The concluding chapter establishes the proper relation between ethics and jurisprudence, and rejects subjectivist, utilitarian, and consequentialist foundations for jurisprudence. Law is not to be merely a mechanical extension of ethics, but is to be an articulation of the principles of justice and liberty accepted by the American proposition. It is the duty of ethics to explicate the content of these principles, but not to determine what is lawful.

Life and Death With Liberty and Justice is a long and difficult book to read. A cursory reading may lead the reader to believe that the work suffers from repetition. But a closer reading would reveal it to be a work which approaches many complex issues from a variety of vantage points. An expensive book, it is also well organized and attractively bound. The table of contents and the index permit easy location of significant topics. The style is forceful and nontechnical. Unfortunately, the notes are at the end of the text rather than on the bottom of the page or at the end of chapters. The notes are quite informative and worthy of close attention. Given the cost of the book, the significance it will have in the euthanasia debate, and its widespread appeal, it is to be hoped that a paperback edition will appear.

It is unfortunate the authors do not analyze the principle of the sanctity of human life more closely, for this concept is becoming increasingly important in ethical and jurisprudential debates. If there is any weakness in the work, it is in the discussion of assisted voluntary euthanasia. To assist the suicide of another, as in the case of Lester Zygmaniak, is not to inflict injustice on the victim but is to assist the person in the lawful exercise of the person's liberty. While regulation of this practice may infringe upon the liberty of others, proponents of voluntary assisted euthanasia would argue that the service this provides to the exercise of the liberty

of others warrants overriding the claims of those who wish to remain aloof. Critics may also charge that the authors are somewhat optimistic in their account of how human goods and natural inclinations are known.

This work is extremely valuable because of the intelligent, coherent, and convincing arguments it contains. The euthanasia debate will intensify in coming years, and its resolution will only come about through intelligent and sober debate. *Life and Death With Liberty and Justice* must be viewed as not just another contribution to the euthanasia debate but as a very important study.

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St. Thomas Aquinas. By RALPH McINERNY. Boston: Twayne Publishers (A Division of G. K. Hall & Co.), 1977. Pp. 197. $8.95.

Profesor McInerny begins his preface with the following words: "In this book, I have aspired to write an introduction to the thought of a man who for some seven hundred years has been a major influence in philosophy and theology" (p. 9). It is indeed an introduction, a remarkably written and eminently readable one, one which can be readily understood by the intelligent reader who has never read a single word of St. Thomas Aquinas. But it is far more than an introduction; it presents the thought of Aquinas with precision and care, and adorns it with insights which will doubtless delight, and enlighten, even the seasoned reader of Aquinas.

The organization of the book is in a way natural, and yet uncommon. Having presented a short, but very effective--at points even moving-account of the life and work of St. Thomas with an account of his ancestry as background (pp. 11-29), McInerny writes a chapter on what Aquinas made of Aristotle (pp. 30-74), another on what he made of Boethius (pp. 75-104), a third on what he made of Platonism (pp. 105-126), and a fourth on what Aquinas takes theology and its tasks to be (pp. 127-169). The idea behind this organization was to "enable the reader to appreciate both Thomas's continuity with earlier thought and his creative independence of it" (p. 9). In the last chapter (pp. 170-172), entitled *Envoi,* McInerny gives his book and Aquinas a royal *bon voyage,* ending, as he began, with the thought that this book "tried to present Thomas in such a way that my reader would quickly leave me and go to the works of Aquinas himself" (p. 9) "*Ite ad Thomam.* Go to Thomas. That is the message of this book" (p. 170). The *Notes and References,* pp. 173-180, are extremely helpful. The *Selected Bibliography,* pp. 183-189, gathers together primary sources in *Latin,* primary sources in *English translation,*

and a fine collection of secondary sources, each accompanied by short but clear and informative account of its contents. The careful and exhaustive entries of the *Index,* pp. 191-197, bring the book to a close, and re-impress on the reader's mind another message of this book: *sapientis est ordinare.*

Aristotle. In reflecting on what Aquinas made of Aristotle, Mcinerny concentrates on Aquinas's treatment of Aristotle's apparent claims, contrary to Christian belief, that 1) the world is eternal, there is no personal immortality, and 3) God, as *thought thinking itself,* is not concerned with the world, that there is no such thing as divine providence.

Boethius. In his thoughts on what Aquinas made of Boethius, Mclnerny's primary concerns are with 1) how the notion of *separatio* is introduced into the discussion of the relation of metaphysics to the other speculative sciences, 2) the distinction between essence and existence, as an interpretation of Boethius's axiom that *diversum est esse et id quad est,* and 3) the compatibility between divine foreknowledge and human freedom.

Platonism,. In discussing what Aquinas made of Platonism, Mcinerny concentrates on 1) the cognitive (theory of knowledge: illumination and abstraction) and the ontological (problem of universals) role of the Ideas, and 2) on the distinction between essential and participated perfection, with special reference to the names of God.

The taslcs of theology. In considering Aquinas's views on theology and its tasks, Mcinerny 1) begins by asking whether *ontology* (the science of *all* things, of whatever is) or *theology* (the science of what exists apart from matter and motion) is the correct way of characterizing metaphysics; then 2) explains that analogous terms, i. e., terms with a controlled variety of meanings, *both* make it possible that there be a determinate philosophical science of being as being, *and* account for the meaningfulness of terms as they are extended from creatures to God; 3) reflects on the distinction between *philosophical* theology and *revealed* theology, i. e., theology based on Holy Scripture; 4) makes clear the nature of *religious* faith, as opposed to knowing, opining, doubting, and simply believing; 5) discusses the notion of *preambles* of faith, and shows how these differ from the *mysteries* of faith; 6) shows the relevance of *philosophical* proofs for God's existence to the case for the reasonableness of believing *all* that God has revealed; 7) examines, by way of instructive examples, the *third* of the Five Ways; 8) concludes by noting that the tasks of *revealed* theology, basically three in number, coincide with its uses of philosophy: a) to use philosophy to *prove* the preambles of faith, b) to use philosophy to *cast light upon* the mysteries of faith, and c) to use philosophy for the *refutation of objections* brought against the mysteries of faith.

An example of Mclnerny's delightful and enlightening insights. This brief review would be incomplete, perhaps even remiss, without some words, however few, on Mclnerny's interpretation of the *first stage* of the Third

Way recorded by Aquinas, i. e., the stage in which the argument moves from the *observed* existence of *possibles* to the *concluded* existence of something *necessary,* a stage which has puzzled so many so often, troubled, bewildered, frustrated, drawn charges of logical muddle, even put unsaid words and unthought thoughts into the mouth and mind of Aquinas. How is it possible to move from a) the *assum,ption* that everything which exists came into existence and so did not exist some prior time, to b) the claim that therefore there was *some prior time when nothing a,t all* existed? As Mcinery puts it, "there seems no need to have one particular time at which no such thing exists simply because, for each of them, there is a prior time when it did not exist " (p. 165). Mclnerny feels there must be some way of interpreting this move of Aquinas which will bring out its *legitirnate* and *compelling* point, some way to unpuzzle, untrouble, unbewilder. The question to be asked, Mclnerny suggests, is this one: *Why should there be anything like that at all* (i. e., like *things which came into being)* ? One must pass from a consideration *of this* or *that individual* thing which has come into being to a consideration of that *sort* or *kind* of thing.

> ...what Thomas is saying is that not everything which is could be that sort of thing .... Granted the existence of such things, each of which is such that before it was it was not, there is of course no need that each member of the class not be simultaneously. But. .., if we ask why there should be things like that at all, the answer that would explain one of them by appeal to an-0ther simply begs the question .... What the first stage of his pro-0f seeks to establish is that in order for there to be things *of 'this kind* [my italics], things that *can* be, there must be things *of another kind* [my italics], things that *must* be. (p·. 166).

This kind cannot be without *that kind-a* simple, royal, elegant, compelling move.

Delightful and enlightening, but humble. Among Mclnerny's thoughts, as he brings his book to an end, is the comment that, looking back over what he has written in it, he is dismayed at how little he has managed to say, at how much he has left unsaid; which leads him to remark that he is "Thomist enough to think that it is straw" (p. 170). The truth is, I am led to remark, that, if little has been said, it is an inexhaustible httle; and that, if it is straw, it is high quality straw indeed.

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The Reflection of Theology in Literature: A Case Study in Theology. Trinity University Monograph Series in Religion IV. By WILLIAM MALLARD. San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1977. Pp. xi +

In a recent review essay surveying thirteen books dealing with theology and literature in *Religious Studies Review* (April, 1978) Profesor Robert Detweiler concluded that the diverse works under consideration (on topics as diverse as structural exegesis and the novels of Flannery O'Connor) had certain things in common: the distinction between theologians and literary critics seems to be blurring a bit; there is in all of the books a sustained interest in questions of method and theory; " a new emphasis on metaphor and parable is present, especially an emphasis that sees parable as an unique kind of metaphor particularly apt for religion and literature dis-course " (p. 116); and there is a sustained interest in the function of the imagination. These general characteristics, *mutatis mutandis,* would make a perfectly adequate, if somewhat superficial, description of the main contours of the arguments in this dense and closely argued work.

More specifically, Professor Mallard has set himself the rather formidable task of showing how theology in the West has been reflected in Western literature. This reflection is not always an easy thing to spot, and Mallard recognizes that theology was much more clearly refracted in the literature of Dante or Milton's time. The test case comes, of course in an age such as ours when the culture professes to be in rebellion against or indifferent to, any theological or faith suppositions. Mallard is also confident that any apologetical approach, even such a sophisticated one as Tillich's justly celebrated method of correlation, is only of limited value. Apologetical approaches to literature (especially in hands less sophisticated than Tillich's) tend "to serve certain prescribed theological ends and its (i. e. literature's) variety is held captive to a single meaning" (p. 19). Likewise, Mallard thinks that studies in metaphor and parable (cf. the work of Perrin, Via, Funk, TeSelle, Crossan, *et* al.) have not yet set the outer limits on the relationship of theology and literature.

Mallard, then, while appreciative of the work of others in the field of theology and literature, sets out on a slightly different tack. The central thesis of his study is that the surest approach to theology in literature lies with certain formal, generalized traits of the literary work which recall the theological roots of Western culture generally" (p. 110). More specifically, and this is the burden of the central argument of the book, much of Western literature and art reflects or " images " certain basic ideas rooted in the accounts of the major events in the life of Jesus. These

ideas are " proper " in theology and " reflected " in literature. Thus, to cite one example, the recurring image of crisis and recovery in literature may reflect the theological idea of death/resurrection in the proper theology that springs from the Jesus story. It should be obvious that this approach is indebted to, and openly dependent upon, the pioneering literary work of Erich Auerbach.

In order to sustain this thesis in a rigorous fashion, Mallard found it necessary to deal in depth with language, metaphor, and criticism in an introductory section. This opening part of the book covers a lot of ground, with a heavy emphasis on the Heideggerian notion of the revelatory nature of language itself. Those readers unfamiliar with current literary theory and criticism will receive, in this first part of the book, a short course on first and second level discourse, metaphor, symbol, narrative theory, and criticism. The second part of the work deals with the reflected theology in literature by emphasizing the positive role that knowledge of the world and the things of the world has played in Western theology together with the principles that can be deduced therefrom. In this section Mallard uses Kafka's *The Trial* and William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* as test cases for this reflected theology in literature. Since Western theology begins, not with propositions, but stories, it is only proper that part three of the work should pay particular attention to the Gospel narratives of Jesus as an example of "proper" theology.

In the final reflection of part three (" The Theological Reading of Literature", pp. 252-62) Mallard admits that the theology that is reflected in literature is " finally an ambiguous theology " but despite such a lack of clarity, "we must draw the surprising, if not disturbing, conclusion that all Western literature of aesthetic merit belongs finally within the sphere of Christ " (p. 252). Within the parameters of this sphere there are those writers whose relation to the Christian worldview is without ambiguity (Eliot, Auden, Bernanos, O'Connor, *et al.),* and those "opponents" of such a worldview whose concerns are still deeply dependent on the pre-occupations of Western theology (Sartre, Comus, O'Neill, Stevens, *et. al.).* Exceptions to this schema-those who represent, in Mallard's terms, an aesthetic failure because the author in question " has deserted the task of imaginatively penetrating the stubborn materials of experience in favor of certain fancies (p. 254)-are (Mallard cites Vonnegut as an example) positive or confessional gnostics.

The exceptions to this " sphe1·e of Christ " are given short shrift in Mallard's book, but one must agree with Sallie TeSelle's comment *(Journal of the American Academy of Religion,* June, 1978, p. 251) that he has ignored the " really tough customers " whose relationship to the Christian sphere is problematic at the very least. TeSelle mentions the works of writers like Thomas Pynchon, Doris Lessing, Vladamir Nabokov, and others

of their quality. Her point is well taken, and the customers get even tougher when one begins to read some of the high quality fiction that appears in such places as the *TriQuarterly.* In fact, in the same issue of the *JAAR* in which TeSelle reviews the Mallard volume, David Hesla (" Religion and Literature: The Second Stage," pp. argues that the area of theology and literature (" the first stage ") is increasingly shifting to a " second stage ", that of religion and literature. One characteristic of that shift, Hesla writes, will be a move " from the language of theology to the language of religion " and, in that shift, " We shall increasingly find ourselves using the language of the behavioral and social sciences, of the sociologies of religion and knowledge, of anthropology and psychology, of history and political theory" (p. 190).

Hesla's prophecy may or may not be true, but it does reflect a serious concern to chart the course that the field of interdisciplinary studies must take as it confronts the phenomenon of the " post-modern " in literary art. In that sense, I suspect, Hesla would not be about to admit that tbe literature of the future must stay exclusively within the sphere of Christ in order to avoid being aesthetically deficient. The " Postmodern " does present one way in which the art of our culture may be moving, and it is a direction that Mallard does not take seriously enough.

The criticism above is not intended to make light of the considerable merit of this work. It is, in fact, a very sophisticated and tightly argued work that reflects the highest standards of care and seriousness. To borrow again a term from Hesla (Mallard's colleague at Emory}, Mallard sets out a full agenda for a " first phase " reflection on theology and literature and completes the agenda with distinction. It just occurs to me that we may now be entering a period in our culture when new approaches are needed.

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Anamnesis. By Emc VOEGELIN. Translated and edited by Gerhart Niemeyer. Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, Press, 1978. Pp. xxii + $11.95.

I

Eric Voegelin, born in Germany and raised in Austria, came to the United States in 1938 as a political emigre. For American readers this event proved fortuitous indeed, since most of Voegelin's major works,

including the seminal *New Science of Politics* and the multi-volume *Order in History,* were thus written in English. One principal exception to this collection of English writings was *Anamnesis,* a book published in 1966 while Voegelin was Director of the Institute for Political Science at the University of Munich. However, with Gerhart Niemeyer's recent translation, *Anamnesis,* too, joins the corpus of Voegelin books available to the English reading public.

It should be noted, however, that the English version of *Anamnesis* differs substantially from the German original. Several chapters have been deleted, either because they have since been published elsewhere or because they deal mainly with the analysis of historical material, and two chapters have been added, one written by Voegelin especially for the English edition. Niemeyer explains that the principle of selection was the theme of Voegelin's philosophy of consciousness. *Anamnesis* is a book about philosophy. To be sure it is a difficult book, perhaps Voegelin's most difficult; nevertheless, it offers a suitable starting-place since it contains all the essentials of Voegelin's provocative conception of philosophy.

II

For Voegelin the central philosophical question is order: order as it is experienced in personal life; order in society, or political philosophy proper; and order in history. To say that order is a question is somewhat misleading, however, because Voegelin as a philosopher does not entertain the possibility that the world is disordered, that it is at bottom a chaos rather than a cosmos. The dilemma which faced Nietzsche and which Nietzsche predicted would overwhelm Western philosophy, namely that the consoling illusion of an intelligible world order would be shattered by the truth of nihilism-this dilemma does not arise, cannot arise. Philosophy, Voegelin emphatically and repeatedly insists, is not a proof for the existence of God, for a Prime Mover, for Spirit, or for Natural Right. Such a proof is not necessary, and when offered merely occasions counter-claims. It is not necessary because philosophy is, or originates in, the experience of order. Voegelin gives stress to the existential beginnings of philosophy. The experience of order confirms the existence of order, or of what Voegelin frequently calls the divine ground of being. He cites the " joyful " tone of classic philosophy: "the tonality of being scaned or frightened by a question to which no answer can be found is characteristically absent from the classic experience" (101). Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle disengaged from the moorings of traditional belief and sailed an unknown sea of philosophical inquiry without any discernible anxiety lest what awaited them was an abyss of nothingness. Voegelin attributes this hopefulness to the originating experience of order which both caused and directed their journey-an argument which may help to explain why courage is so lightly

regarded by the classic philosophers, whereas for Nietzsche it is a virtue of singular importance.

In a chapter entitled " Reason: The Classic Experience," Voegelin elaborates on the experiential character of philosophy. Typical of Voegelin here is the employment of a difficult and unfamiliar vocabulary, the terms of which are very often transliterations of the Greek, sometimes even neologisms. Of central importance are the words *nous* and *noesis.* The simple dictionary meaning of *nous* is " mind," and of *noesis* " thought " or " intellection," the activity of mind. But in the language of Greek philosophers, those as early as Parmenides and Anaxagoras, *nous* represented either man's faculty to apperceive being (Parmenides) or the intelligible structure of being itself (Anaxagoras). With Aristotle especially the two conceptions merged, and *nous* came to designate the driving cause *(aition}* as well as the soul's correspondence to the divine. Consulting Aristotle's *Metaphysics,* Voegelin produces a definition of the noetic soul as the "sensorium of the divine *aition."*

Reality, says Voegelin, lies in the soul's experience of order. But the experience requires that the soul be open to the divine. This opening is accomplished in several stages, and its analysis calls forth a whole new set of terms drawn equally from the vocabularies of Plato and Aristotle. The soul exists in a state of unrest. It knows not its origin or its destiny, and it wonders *(thaumazein).* It feels itself moved to ask questions, drawn *(helkein)* into a search for the cause of its being. Sometimes it is forcefully turned around *(periagage)* from ignorance *(agnoia)* and complacency and inspired to pursue knowledge *(episteme).* In all, the steps seem fourffold: 1) movement from above; 2) desire to know; 3) questioning in confusion; and '1) consciousness of ignorance.

In order to distinguish philosophy from religion, Voegelin requires of the former that its response to the divine be articulated in language symbols (often philosophical myths) which make plain the noetic structure of the soul. Hence the content of philosophy is the soul's tension toward the divine, a relationship which by its nature of flux and uncertainty can only be symbolized and never made fixed in propositions.

What Voegelin more precisely means by philosophy is clarified by his discussion of the *metaxy,* a Platonic term meaning "in-between". It is learned from the *Symposium* that man the philosopher abides in a spiritual domain between godly wisdom and beast-like obtuseness. This spiritual man *(daimonios aner)* excels all others by virtue of knowing of his ignorance, but is deficient in wisdom and thus inferior to the gods. He is erotic, for he desires wisdom and seeks immortality therein (to quote Aristotle, he immortalizes himself by nourishing his immortal part, his *noits);* but like other men he is simultaneously distracted by the mortalizing pull of the passions. Human life generally is caught betwixt what Plato in the

Philebus calls the noetic height and the apeirontic depth. These are the two poles of existence characterized respectively by intelligible oneness, limitation, and immortality on the one hand, and limitlessness, generation, and mortality on the other. These two poles reach into the human psyche, structure it, and set its boundaries. The psyche in turn participates in the reality of the poles, which reality, participatory or metaleptic in nature, constitutes the only true domain of human thought. Says Voegelin: "To move within the *m.etaxy,* exploring it in all directions and orienting himself in the perspective granted to man by his position in reality, is the proper task of the philosopher" (107). Philosophy, therefore, is confined to the analysis of metaleptic relationships and falls short necessarily of full knowledge of the poles of existence. In other words, the Socratic quest for wisdom culminates not in wisdom *per se,* but in consciousness of the divine ground as its inspiration and desideratum. And even to speak of a culmination of the philosophical quest is likely misleading, for noetic consciousness advances by degrees, both in the individual and from one individual to the next-a process which raises the question of the relationship between philosophy and history.

Voegelin is persist®t in his opposition to the customary understanding of philosophy as a body of true propositions about being. Philosophy as metaphysics, he argues, arises from a narrow anwer given to the question, What is nature? The common response is that nature is form imposed on matter, that form is responsible for the unique separateness or essence of a thing. But the more comprehensive answer, and the truly philosophical one, is that nature is a composite of form and process, the latter of these two reflecting the mythical perception of the world. Voegelin remarks that " the philosophic conception," best exemplified by the philosophy of Plato, " still preserves the nature of being as a coming-to-be that was already given in the primary [mythical] experience of the cosmos; while the metaphysical concept accentuates the nature of things as a being ordered by form" (80). That the two notions of nature fell into mutual tension Voegelin explains by observing that the experience of being was originally an experience of God and that God was experienced as a demiurge who *farmed* the world out of shapeless matter. Voegelin cites Aristotle as the party responsible for this "derailment." But other arguments of Aristotle's earn him partial exoneration. In *Metaphysics* Alpha Aristotle maintains that the concepts of infinite regress and infinite progress are untenable when applied to human action. "Rationality," says Aristotle, "... is incompatible with such an infinite series; for the reasonable man always acts for the sake of something, and this end serves as a limit" (994bl4-16). Purposeful endeavor, limited by an end which Voegelin, following Aristotle, identifies as the divine *nous,* occasions an understanding of nature quite distinct from that of form. Nature is less the form of being than it is the source and

end of being, both located in the divine *nous.* Voegelin contends, "The knowledge that being is not grounded in itself implies the question of the origin, and in this question being is revealed as coming-to-be, albeit not as a coming-to-be in the world of existing things but coming-to-be from the ground of being" (86). This noetic experience, he concludes, transcends the formal definition and the demiurgic images of nature.

Voegelin is thus confident that Aristotle, in spite of conflicting definitions of nature, was not unfamiliar with nor unsympathetic to the problem of *noesis.* But Voegelin is far less exculpatory when treating of Thomas Aquinas, the man who introduced "metaphysics" into the vocabulary of Western philosophy. Thomas defined "metaphysics" as the science of first causes, universal principles, and immaterial substances-all immanent things to be studied, known, and transmitted in the form of fixed and dogmatic propositions. The predictable result was rebellion, undertaken with fiery vehemence by the Enlightenment *philosophes,* who, as Voegelin says, "had no trouble in throwing overboard the doubtful science of doubtful principles and substances" (194). The further result was an "anti-metaphysical taboo" which even today extends to all philosophy, including predogmatic, noetic philosophy, about which little or nothing is known. In sum, Voegelin charges Thomas with having neglected the noetic foundation of philosophy and with having constructed in its stead propositional metaphysics; this dogmatic approach to philosophy first occasioned rival dogmas and warfare among them (dogmatomachy) and finally provoked ideological rebellion against the whole philosophical enterprise.

Voegelin is hardly disconsolate over the present state of philosophy. Quite the contrary, he finds hopeful signs everywhere that after two hundred years of ideological experimentation a new and revivified search for order is under way. But this search will come to naught, he cautions, unless it builds upon the noetic knowledge of the open soul in its tension to the divine. Because the noetic state of the soul has been largely forgotten, buried beneath centuries of dogmatism, Voegelin advises recollection, or what in Greek is called *anamnesis*-hence the title of his book.

III

A word of deserving praise. Eric Voegelin is a major thinker of the twentieth century, and *Anamnesis* is telling evidence of his stature. Even in its attenuated form, the book displays the scope of Voegelin's erudition and the brilliance of his analysis, both of which are extraordinary and at times overwhelming. Indeed, it is hardly an exaggeration to characterize Voegelin as an overwhelming author. To be read critically and with profit, his sources must be studied-a forbidding task to be sure, but one which cannot be avoided. It is with one such source in mind, namely Plato, that I pose a question or offer an observation.

Voegelin contends that philosophy is a search for order; that the source of order is the divine ground; that man possesses the faculty for communicating with or participating in the divine; and that the divine initiates, as if by the gift of grace, the commerce between itself and man. The Christian underpinnings of this thesis seem obvious enough, but in making the argument Voegelin relies just as heavily on the Platonic dialogues, among which he singles out for special consideration the *Symposium.* The *Symposium* would seem to lend clear support to an existentialist understanding of philosophy, for it locates philosophy in the experience of love. Voegelin recounts the *Symposium's* myth of the birth of Eros in which this demi-god is said to have been generated of Penia (Poverty) and Poros (Resource) ; and he describes the mythic event as " the sad-loving quest of penury for fullness, and the inebriated penetration of richness into poverty " (Hl8). The human condition at its best, i. e., the life of the philosopher, is one in which man, aware of his deficiency, seeks completion in God; and in which God, ripe with love, draws man up into himself. This experienced tension between the human and the divine-in the *Symposium* called love-is apparently understood by Plato to be an indispensable component of philosophy.

But a second look at the *Symposium* raises questions. First there is the myth itself. The myth teaches that love is the appropriate response to recognized deficiency; but in no way can love explain the behavior of Penia towards Poros, for their son Eros is as yet unborn. When Penia is made aware of her deficiency, this "resourceless" one does not swoon with love; rather she devises *(epiboule1wusa)* a scheme for begetting Ero8--'-sober calculation is her reaction. A tentative conclusion is that the non-erotic but deficient Penia points the way to a non-erotic philosophy, and that this philosophy is dialectics (the parched sobriety of separating and combining, i. e., dialectics, is not unlike Penia's sober frame of mind) . Further, the difference between the erotic and the dialectical response lies in the preoccupation of the former with possessing the good in perpetuity (i. e., personal immortality) and in the concern of the latter with defining what the good is (this connection between dialectics and definition-giving, manifest in Plato but neglected by Voegelin, invites, it would seem, some rehabilitation of metaphysics).

A second point confirms the implication of the first that there is something besides the erotic response to deficiency. When listing the followers of wisdom or the philosophers, Socrates identifies Eros, but he makes plain that Eros is only one among several types who abide within the In-Between. If then there are others of this intermediate sort, they must be negatively defined as non-erotic philosophers.

Thirdly, the daimonic In-Between, a state of being central to Voegelin's conception of philosophy, suffers depreciation in the course of Socrates's

speech. The first occupant of the In-Between is Eros, a demi-god; but soon the boundaries of the In-Between are extended to include philosophers, then human beings generally, who desire the vicarious immortality of offspring, and finally all procreative animal life. Rather than something rarified and special, the daimonic state comes to designate ordinary activity and the entire panoply of living things. (I do acknowledge, however, that comprehensiveness, from a different perspective, may reflect favorably upon the daimonic and not constitute a depreciation) .

As the speech of Socrates progTesses, the daimonic In-Between regains some of its original markings of spiritual excellence; and Eros is singled out as man's guide in the ascent to the Beatific Vision. But it is also stated that the initiation into love-matters is incomplete-other things need to be said which are not being said. And Socrates admits in conclusion that Eros is the best guide that human nature can *easily (radios)* find. The same point is made in the *Phaedrus,* where love of beauty is credited with being- the easiest form of recollection and where true rhetoric, itself an expression of love, is thought impossible without the governing assistance of non-erotic, dialectical knowledge.

With this example from Plato in mind, I state my reservation concerning Voegelin as follows: Plato seems to regard the erotic experience as one means of ascent, likely the most common means, but not as simply identifiable with philosophy; Voegelin seems to count them as one and the same-which perhaps explains why in reading Voegelin it is difficult to keep fixed the boundary between religious belief and philosophical inquiry.

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Existence and Existents. By EMMANUEL J.,F,VINAS. Translated by Alphonso Lingis. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1978. Pp. 101.

Existence and Existents, begun before the war and published in 1947 in France, is a difficult book to evaluate in 1978. Evaluating and understanding it are all the more difficult for English-speaking readers who are hearing of the book for the first time and who may not realize precisely how it fits into the development of Levinas's thought and that of contemporary European philosophy. It is very important to note-and one could have hoped to see this noted in the translator's introduction- that *Existence and Existents* in no way occupies a decisive nor a definitive position in the larger development of European thought, and that it made

no pretention to occupy such a position. Indeed, in the original preface Levinas had called it a preparatory work, and admitted that due to historical circumstances his study did not and could not take into account the work of Sartre. But not only is this book not a major or influential text in post-war French philosophy, it cannot even be seen as a definitive book in the context of Levinas's own thought, for every analysis presented in it has been integrally rethought by the author in his subsequent publications.

For those who regard the history of philosophy atomistically, and for whom a book is a book and a text is a text regardless of the place it occupies in relation to an author's entire work, *Existence and Existents* can possibly appear to be a work of exceptional perceptiveness and descriptive skill, but for others of us who are concerned with the comprehension and comprehensibility of Levinas's *phuosophy,* a presentation of this book must not omit some comments about its relation to *Totality and Infinity* and *Autrement qu'etre ou au-dela de ['essence.* To present *Existence and Existents* as Levinas's mature thoug·ht is to impoverish Levinas's thought; this book *is not* on an equal footing with the works that succeed it. We should realize the value of the book and the significance of its being translated in relation to Levinas's philosophy taken as a whole, and thus in terms of the *development* of this philosophy. In the space that we can permit ourselves at present we will try to throw some light on the relationship between certain themes in *Existence and Existents* and Levinas's more recent work.

Inasmuch as it is a preparatory study which finds a fuller development in *Totality and Infinity,* one could expect *Existence and Existents* to offer easier access to Levinas's later work, and *to* a certain degree it does. However, one can also notice its nearly total irrelevance to Levinas's *latest* work, which qualifies this preparatory character somewhat. But this is understandable when we consider how it is preparatory to Levinas's own philosophical position as much as to any particular works. *Existence and Existents* is Levinas taking a critical stand at once in relation to Husserlian Phenomenology and to its own greatest critic, Heidegger.

In 1930, after studies with Husserl in Fribourg, Levinas had already expressed certain differences with transcendental Phenomenology; these, developed in *The Theory of Intuition in Husserl's Phenomenology,* were, in the end, based on the role that representation plays and the primacy of the theoretical in constitutive consciousness and, as he says in *Existence and Existents,* the doctrine of a neutralized and disincarnate intentionality. Levinas's position vis-a-vis Husserl remains, in *Existence and Existent11,* consistent with that of his earlier critique, and until recently his position has thus remained unambiguous. To be sure, the return to Husserlian texts which characterizes Levinas's most recent work is in no way a sign that

this original criticism is now invalid, but it does modify and perhaps smooth over to a certain degree the opposition between himself and Husserl.

But this book also represents the possibility of an alternative non.:. Husserlian Phenomenology to that of Heidegger. The philosophy of Heidegger has long been a source of inspiration as well as of sorrow for Levinas, and his expressed " profound need to leave the climate of that philosophy " (p. 19) must be appreciated in terms of the historico-political situation in Europe in the 1940's and of the relation between Heideggerian thought and German nationalism (for Levinas's understanding of Heidegger cf., among numerous other texts, " Le regard du poete " in *Sur Mattrice Blanchot,* Fata Morgana, Montpellier, 1975). A critical dialogue with Heidegger concerning some of the most fundamental questions of contemporary Philosophy is inaugurated with the publication of *Existence and Existents,* and is pursued throughout Levinas's career.

Thus this little preparatory study represents a sort of inception of Levinas's own philosophical position, offering basic lines along which ulterior analyses will run and sketching out some of the fundamental projects of this position. We have here elementary, if not downright vague, references to what Levinas will later call "events", whose details cannot in fact be discerned from this book alone, but which are recognizable for the reader who knows the Levinas of thirty-one years later. The difficulty of the text consists precisely in this state of affairs whereby a preparatory study, by which one would be tempted to characterize the Levinas project, contains just as much the beginnings of that which later becomes more and more developed, nuanced and important, as the beginnings of that which later is discarded, surmounted or totally transformed and which, today at any rate, appears naive and immature.

* * * * * * * *

That point in Levinas's thought which has remained of constant central importance since *Existence and Existents* and which constitutes the particular characteristic of his philosophy is the role of the *other.* By reading *Existence and Existents* we have the opportunity to observe the origins of this importance in his thought; at the same time we can appreciate a certain modification in its meaning since 1947. Levinas's essay concerns itself with such topics as the present, fatigue, effort, the light and time, but these analyses are aimed at an appreciation (which, as we have said, is neither Husserlian nor Heideggerian) of the status of the subject, its relation to its own existence, to the world and to the other. In fact, the other is introduced to account for the very possibility and reality of time. Levinas shows how the effort by which a subject poses itself on a base confines it-by this effort and the fatigue that accompanies it-to itself, i. e., confines it to the present, to reference to itself.

In Levinas's view the act of taking position is the origin of subjectivity. The body is the advent of consciousness, he tells us on page 71, for intentionality and consciousness are not, as Husserl would have it, disincarnate, but localized. This localization of consciousness is the fact, already understood by Descartes, that thought is a substance inasmuch as it has a point of departure. For Levinas this point of departure is a " here " defined by corporality, which means that the localization of consciousness cannot be reabsorbed into consciousness, or into knowing, and that consciousness rests upon something that it cannot account for. This non-contemporaneity of consciousness with its conditions remains a concern of Levinas's throughout his career, and receives different kinds of treatment at different periods. In *Totality and Infinity* it is the relation of the Same to the element, its autochthonous existence and the intentionality of enjoyment; in *Autrement qu'etre,* on the other hand, it is the diachronic relation with the Other in *proximity,* which, constitutive of identity itself, prevents consciousness from ever absorbing its conditions into a single homogeneous and synchronic time.

In *Existence and Existents* this localization of consciousness is anti-Heideggerian; the subjectivity of the subject who " is in a certain sense a substance" (page 81) is considered to be originally non-transcendent, i.e., non-ecstatic. The relation with the other in this essay is that by which the subject-who poses itself as localized, who finds itself chained to itself in the present, and who has no time to the degree that it is solitary-has access to the transcendent, to time, and eventually, for Levinas, to the possibility of hope and of salvation.

One will notice that this idea of time departs as much from that of Heidegger as from that of the tradition. Here Levinas sees the other as that which consciousness, the subject, is not, and which alone is capable of forcing it out of its egoism, its self-reference, its present. The relation between the subject and the other is time; time is no longer seen as the relation of a solitary subject to a world that changes before it, nor as the internal relation of a subject to its existence. It is instead seen as the very fact of sociality, the very fact of intersubjective and interpersonal reality. (In this early work Levinas describes the relation with the other in terms of Eros, and calls the feminine "the other par excellence". Let us say that in his later work Levinas treats of Eros further but ceases to characterize alterity strictly as femininity, although his treatment of the feminine deserves a certain amount of prudent attention) .

The role of the other in time is representative of another of Levinas's critiques of traditional and Husserlian Philosophy concerning the status of the subject. In *Existence and Existents* he only hints at the central issue to be developed in *Totality and Infinity* concerning the Same and the Other, and only refers obliquely to the totalizing and totalitarian

aspect of the traditional view of the subject. But when he analyzes the *light* (pp. 46-51, 84i-85), his analysis brings out the fact that Husserlian consciousness is essentially *Sinngebung,* sense-bestowing, and con(lequently solitary: "Illuminated by light, they [objects, the world] have meaning, and thus are as though they came from me", says Levinas (p. 85).

But this solitude of consciousness is seen as inevitable, as a result of its localized existence, its having a world and its having a place in it. Only the *other-as* another person--breaks with this rule and opens solipsistic consciousness to a true exteriority. This then is the egoistic subject, the Same, of *Totality and Infinity,* and the relationship described in *Totality and Infinity* between the Same and the Other is a development of the earlier position. But the situation changes with subsequent publications, so that today we cannot even call *Totality and Infinity* Levinas's definitive position. In *Autrement qit'etre,* the Other does not come later, after a kind of egoistic self-identification in solitude realized in the phenomena of dwelling and possession; in *Autrement qu'etre* the Same is seen as the late-comer, as already infiltrated with the presence of the Other, already undone in its projects to be one, unique and solitary, already shot through with otherness. The ethical tone of *Existence and Existents* and of *Totality and Infinity* is based on the relation between an originally egoistic subject who is necessarily put into question by the arrival and presence of the exteriority of the Other in discourse. But in *Autrement qu'etre* the Same never "has the time" to constitute itself as unique, as one; to be a subject is already to be " the other in me." The ethical orientation of *Autrement qu'etre* is in no wise a "you should ... ", but a " you cannot possibly not ... "; ultimately responsibility is seen as the base upon which thematizing and solitary consciousness becomes a possibility, and indeed, a necessity.

Levinas himself sees the notion of the " there is " as the " *morceau* <le *resistance* " of *Existence and Existents,* according to the preface to the newly-released second edition of the French text. But also he wishes to qualify the conclusions of the analyses of the " there is " as having probably decided prematurely about the possible meanings to be associated with this notion. The neutrality of Being without beings, which he calls the " there is " and which is suspended and inverted by the taking position of the hypostasis, has remained a relevant theme throughout the development of his thought, and especially in relation to Heidegger. However, he points out today that the re-neutralization represented by the hypostasis does not have its properly human meaning in a world of allergic egoisms and indifference, but in a world animated by the non-indifference of the proximity of the other. This is as much as to say that his thought has undergone a very definite development which it is dangerous to ignore when one reads *Existence and Existents;* in finding discrepancies and con-

tradictions between *Existence and Existents* and *Totality wnd Infinity* or even between the two and *Autrement qu'etre,* one must not imagine that these are incoherencies in a single and unique thought. They are rather the movement between one philosophical investigation and another. As Levinas himself says, the project that *Existence and Existents* gives as its own, to examine the Good, time, and the relation with the other remains the project of his thought even if the terminology has been largely modified, the earlier positions on the question left behind, and the basic concepts and formula totally transformed. The change of approach between the investigation where the hypostasis is seen as the de-neutralization of the "there is " which constitutes the subject, and that where the de-neutralization of the egoistic hypostasis is the non-indifference of proximity (when to be a subject is to be the other in me), is the chang·e that has slowly occurred in Levinas's thought from the time of *Existence and Existents* to the present.

Perhaps the analysis in *Existence and Existents* which finds the clearest echo in the later writings of Levinas is that of fatigue and effort. The relation between fatigue and effort, which he sees as constituting the present in which the subject has an identity, is an early development of Levinas's idea that the subject is constituted in passivity and is not originally an active and acting subject. The analysis is elementary in comparison to the description in *Autrement qu'etre,* begun in *Totality and Infinity,* of enjoyment and suffering because of the explicit absence in *Existence and Existents* of the other in this affecting as compared to the absolute importance of the other in *Autrement qu'etre* at this stage. But it remains for the most part instructive, even if the very meaning of " passivity " has changed and even if the position of *Existence and Existents* is unquestionably no longer one Levinas would identify with his own.

So we must be grateful for the appearance of this text in English, but we must also express the hope that it will in no way be taken to represent Levinas's own philosophical position. We must hope that it will serve as a stepping-stone to the study of a different phenomenological thought, the thought of the "other than being." We must hope also that Levinas will not be considered simply another *writer* in the postwar French Phenomenological movement, because he is a serious and innovative *thinker* whose critical position vis-a-vis Phenomenology represents a very far-reaching re-vitalization of this philosophy. The differences between Levinas and Phenomenology are only beginning to appear in *Existence and Existents*- one must enter seriously into his later and latest works to see how he merits the title of" anti-phenomenologist." For Phenomenologists in America, the translation of Levinas's works can be of great value because of his ability to remain in a certain and undeniable sense a phenomenologist while carv-

ing out a new dimension and a new meaning for philosophy as a whole, neither dwelling in the shadows of Husserl and Heidegger, nor " simply " taking a nihilistic stand vis-a-vis Philosophy.

If we turn our attention now to the translation itself, there are several comments that must be made. In this book of 101 pages, I have counted twenty-eight errors, mostly typographical, of varying degrees -of seriousness, although there are some that truly obscure the meaning of the text and render it unintelligible. More specifically I would point out the very unfortunate use of the English verb " to rive " in its past participle form " riven " to translate the French verb " river " on page 58. In all other instances " river " has been correctly rendered by " to rivet", but "riven" instead of "riveted" in this case means "rended" or " torn apart " when it should mean the direct opposite. I would also draw attention to page 29 which, apart from three typographical errors, reveals a very vague use of " it " to refer to two different words: " indolence" (" elle ", la paresse) and "beginning" ("le", object pronoun for le commencement). By convention "it" refers to "indolence", but suddenly refers to " beginning " because of sentence structure, and the sentence comes out confused: "Beginning does not solicit it as an occasion for rebirth ... : it (indolence) has already brought it (beginning) about beforehand ... " This use of "it" for both "elle " and "le " is of course not a mistake, but renders a difficult text extremely vague.

I have also observed, on pages 53, 57 and 80, traces of American habits of speech which are somewhat more colloquial than such a translation should be, not that the American reader would misunderstand, though a non-American reader might well be surprised if not confused: "...this way [in which] a quality can divest itself... " (page 53); "...in the very fact [that] there is something ... " (page 57); ". ..thought would risk falling into nothingness if God, ... , would withdraw *[withdrew,* or *were to withdraw]* from it" (page 80).

One must also wonder why the formula "moi-toi " has been rendered by "I-you" (page 95) and not by "I-thou". Certainly our word "you " now means both "tu" and "vous ", but the distinction between the "tu" and the "vous" is fundamental in *Totality and Infinity,* for which *Existence and Existents* is preparatory in this respect; furthermore, the translation of *Totality and Infinity* correctly gives I-thou for je-tu. I see no reason why this approach should have been abandoned for the translation of *Existence and Existents.*

Perhaps this attention paid to grammar and other errors will appear excessive to the reader of the review; still, the reviewer found himself taxed by the abundance of errors in reading the translation and feels that he should alert a public which will not have the French text available to check ambiguities.

In conclusion let us thank the translator, Alphonso Lingis, for his work in making Levinas available in English-Totality *and Infinity* in 1969 and *Autrement qu'etre* and several articles in the near future. I can only be pleased to see Levinas acquiring a potentially larger audience, with the reservation already so often expressed regarding this particular work, that I hope this younger Levinas will not be misconstrued as being the philosophical equal of the Levinas of today.

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The Coherence of Theism. By RICHARD SWINBURNE. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977. Pp. 302.

Swinburne's *The Coherence of Theism* is a valuable and very welcome contribution to the philosophy of religion. In the course of this century, philosophers of religion have made or received attacks not only on the truth but also on the coherence of theism, charging that there is a logical incompatibility, for example, between two or more of the attributes traditionally assigned to God or between a state of affairs in the world (the existence of evil) and the existence of God. The object of Swinburne's book is to demonstrate that, whether theism is true or false, it is *not* incoherent. The book is remarkable for the lucidity, patience, and philosophical ability of its author. He does not eschew broad, controversial issues outside the specific range of philosophy of religion, such as the objectivity of morality or the nature of necessity, when they are relevant to his argument; and though he cannot deal exhaustively with these issues within the scope of this book, he discusses them with such philosophical sophistication and clarity that philosophers concerned more with one of these issues than with the philosophy of religion may very well be interested in the book.

The rigor and the subject of the book may in fact repel or annoy readers whose devotion to theism or to a less formal style of philosophical theology makes them feel that the investigations of the book are needless or worse. Swinburne's introductory remarks to such readers are moving and cogent:

" Religion [such a reader may think] is not a matter of affirming creeds, but of a personal relationship to God iu Christ .... [But] even if affirming creeds were no part of religion, you can only have a personal relationship to God in Christ, if it is true that God exists. And it is true that God exists only if it is coherent to suppose that he exists. ... [Furthermore,] even if the religious man has no need to question the truth, let alone the coherence, of his beliefs and of the claim that he has a personal relationship to God, he has, at any rate on the Christian view,

a duty to convert others. If they are to believe, those others need to have explained to them what the theist's claims mean. They often doubt the coherence of these claims. If the religious man could show the claims to be cohe1·ent, he would remove a stumbling block in the way of the conversion of the unbelievers.

. . . Some religious men may [also] feel that a book such as this gets too subtle and difficult. . .. [But] it is one of the intellectual tragedies of our age that when philosophy in English-speaking countries has developed high standards of argument and clear th:Uking, the style of theological writing has been largely influenced by the continental philosophy of Existentialism, which, despite its considerable other merits, has been distinguished by a very loose and sloppy style of argument. If argument has a place in theology, large-scale theology needs clear and rigorous argument. That point was very well grasped by Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus, by Berkeley, Butler, and Paley. It is high time for theology to return to their standards " (pp. 6-7).

The book begins with an investigation of the conditions necessary for a sentence's expressing a coherent statement. The discussion then turns to the analogical use of terms in theological language, as understood by some medieval and post-medieval theologians, and Part I concludes with an examination of the claim that the sentences that make up creeds do no more than express attitudes or commend ways of life. Part II investigates in detail the coherence of the various claims which constitute basic theistic belief: that there exists a non-embodied omnipresent person who is free, creator of the universe, omnipotent, omniscient, and perfectly good. It includes sections on the compatibility of omniscience and free will and on the objectivity of morality. Part III discusses the nature of necessity and the coherence of the claim that God is a necessary being, who of necessity has the attributes he has. Swinburne's conclusion is that theistic belief is demonstrably coherent if God is taken to be a *contingent* being, some of whose attributes (such as omniscience) are weaker than they are traditionally taken to be among theists but that belief in a *necessary* God can be shown to be coherent only to the extent to which it can be shown to be true, an issue which falls outside the scope of his book.

As one would expect in a work of this scope, not all the chapters are of equal quality. Swinburne explains that, since he cannot cover all the issues in as much detail as he would like, he will refer the reader in the footnotes to work containing more thorough discussions of the issues he treats (p. 5). But in many places, there is not enough in the footnotes to fill in the gaps in Swinburne's treatment of a subject, especially in his section on the objectivity of morals. Both his case against subjectivity in morality and his case for objectivity are weak, and the references in the footnotes are remarkably few. The reader will, for example, find a much better argument against what Swinburne calls subjectivity in morality in David Lyons's article, "Ethical Relativism and the Problem of Incoherence "

(Ethics 86 (1975), 107-rnl), which Swinburne does not cite in his footnotes. It seems to me also surprising that in this section Swinburne says nothing about the problem of evil, since a number of philosophers have claimed that the existence of evil in the world makes belief in God incoherent (see, for example, H. J. McCloskey, "God and Evil," *Philosophical, Quarterly* 10 (1960).

In general, I am not convinced by Swinburne's attack on what might be called the non-human attributes traditionally ascribed to God, such as necessity, immutability, or omniscience (understood in a strong sense so that God knows future free human actions). The section on God's timeless'-ness is particularly weak. He takes the doctrine that God is eternal to mean basically just that God is timeless, though in the standard medieval discussions of this attribute (by Boethius and Thomas Aquinas, for example) there is a great deal more to God's eternality than timelessness. He gives a brief and, I think, inadequate account of the concept of God's eternality in the Old and New Testaments and among theologians, suggesting against most medieval Christian philosophers that the concept is not an integral or fundamental part of Christianity. In fact, belief in God's eternality is to be rejected, according to him, on two different sorts of grounds. First of all, he finds the concept incoherent. He gives two arguments for this view, neither one of which I think will hold up under scrutiny. For the sake of brevity, I will consider just the first argument here:

> " God's timelessness is said to consist in his existing at all moments of human time-simultaneously. Thus he is said to be simultaneously present at ... what I did yesterday, what I am doing today, and what I will do tomorrow. But if t_1 is simultaneous with t_2 and t_2 with t_3, then t_1 is simultaneous with t_3. So if the instant at which God knows these things were simultaneous with both yesterday, today, and tomorrow, then these days would be simultaneous with each other ... which is clearly nonsense." (pp.

The initial premiss of this argument is difficult to assess since Swinburne does not ascribe the view in question to any particular authors, but it is a definition of God's eternality (or even just of his timelessness) which, for instance, Boethius or Thomas Aquinas would surely reject. Even if it were acceptable, however, the rest of the argument is not. In the first place, God cannot be said to know anything *at an instant,* if he is timeless. And secondly, if the general principle about simultaneity on which this argument depends holds, it seems to do so because ' simultaneous ' is being understood to mean ' at the same time as.' In that sense of ' simultaneous ', it is plain that God considered as timeless is not simultaneous with anything, and some event's being present to God does not entail its being simultaneous with God (so that the argument's initial

premiss and the antecedent in the conclusion of the argument are both false). If there is some sense of 'simultaneous' in which God and a temporal thing can be said to be simultaneous, then ' simultaneous ' is being used in a sense different from ' at the same time as ', and that sense needs to be spelled out. But even with such a new sense of ' simultaneous ', it is doubtful whether Swinburne can formulate a true general principle of simultaneity which would give him the conclusion he wants. From the view that *a* is *timelessly* simultaneous with *b* and with *c*, it seems plainly invalid to infer that *b* and *c* are *temporally* simultaneous with one another; but this is the sort of principle Swinburne needs to validate his conclusion that if God is simultaneous with yesterday and tomorrow, then those days are simultaneous with each other.

Swinburne rejects the concept of God's eternity also because he views it as an altogether unnecessary and therefore dispensable part of Christian doctrine. He thinks that the concept plays no useful role except perhaps to reconcile human free will with divine omniscience taken in the strong sense (to include foreknowledge of free future actions), another divine attribute which he considers dispensable. But here he is just mistaken. The notion of God's eternity plays an influential role in a wide number of issues in the philosophy of religion. For example, it enables theologians to reconcile God's perfect goodness with the Scriptural notion of predestin--ation, God's immutability with the practice and efficiency of petitionary prayer, and God's omniscience with his immutability. One of the reasons Swinburne may not notice or accept the usefulness of the concept of eternity for reconciling God's omniscience and immutability is that he rejects Kretzmann's argument (in" Omniscience and Immutability", *Journal of Philosophy* 63 (1966), that these attributes are incompatible if God is temporal. But here too I think Swinburne's position is not acceptable.

Kretzmann claims that there are some propositions which are knowable only at certain times and not at others; therefore an omniscient being must change with respect to his knowledge and hence cannot be immutable. Swinburne rejects Kretzmann's argument because he thinks the initial claim is false. To attack that claim, Swinburne relies on this principle formulated by Castaneda ("Omniscience and Indexical Reference", *Journal of Philosophy* 64 (1967)):

[P] " If a sentence of the form ' [a person] x knows that a person y knows that ... ' formulates a true statement, the person x knows the statement for-mulated by the clause filling the blank' .. .'," (p. 165).

To use one of the examples Swinburne gives, if John knows that Mary knows that George is ill, then John knows that George is ill. Swinburne applies this principle to Kretzmann's argument in the following way. Kretzmann bases his claim on propositions involving' now'. For example, on 9t October, 1978, *A* knows ' It is now 9t October, 1978 '; on previous and

subsequent days he cannot know this proposition because it is false. But, Swinburne counters, "*B* on 3 October can know that *A* knew what he did on 2 October. How can *B* report his knowledge? By words such as 'I know that *A* knew yesterday that it was then 2 October.' How can we report *B's* knowledge? As follows: *B* knew on 3 October that on the previous day *A* knew that it was then 2 October." (p. *165)* It is important to see that the two formulations of *B's* knowledge, as Swinburne presents them, are different in a respect significant for the issue under discussion. *B's* formulation of his knowledge still contains an implicit reference to what time it is now: [1] 'I know that [a] *A* knew *yesterday* ... '. This formulation in no way detracts from Kretzmann's argument but rather supports it. What *B* claims to know in [1] is something that he can know only at a certain time, namely, on 3 October, 1978. Consequently. if God's knowledge of what *A* knows is explained according to the formulation in [1], then his knowledge must change because on 4 October, he will not know [a] (since [a] will no longer be true) but rather [a1 '*A* knew *the day before yeste1·day. ..* ' . On the other hand, consider what Swinburne says about our knowledge of *B's* knowledge: we know that [2] *B* knew on 3 October that (b] on the previous day *A* knew that it was then 2 October. If we understand God's omniscient knowledge as represented by *B's* knowledge again, then this second formulation, like the first, is no evidence against Kretzmann's claim but confirmation of it. If however, God's knowledge of what *A* knows is meant to be assimilated not to *B's* knowledge but to *our* knowledge (of *B's* knowledge) in this formulation, then I think Kretzmann would be right to claim that though God's immutability is preserved by this formulation, his omniscience is impugned because on this understanding of God's knowledge there is no longer any reference to what time it is *now.* When A knows that it is now 2 October, 1978, he knows not only (i) the appropriate dating label for a certain day but also (ii) where in the unfolding of history th'Lt day is (namely, at the present). If God's knowledge amounts only to this, that on 3 October, 1978, *B* knew that on the previous day *A* knew that it was then 2 October, 1978, then God's knowledge includes (i) but not (ii).

And so it is not true that on (2] God knows what *A* knows. Swinburne's attack on Kretzmann's argument, then, fails. (I have argued against Swinburne's use of Castaneda's attack rather than against CaSitafieda's attack itself, but I think that Castaneda's work is vulnerable to analogous criticisms). Successfully to reject Kretzmann's argument that God is either omniscient or immutable (with respect to knowledge) but not both, one must make use of the concept of eternity, which implies that God's knowledge is not temporally locatable.

Though there are, then, some weak sections in Swinburne's book, they are not sufficient to detract seriously from its overall excellence. The

carefulness and comprehensiveness of this book, brought to bear on so fundamental an issue, make it an outstanding contribution to the field.

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The Religious Thought of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. By DAVID PYM. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1979. Pp. 105. $14.50.

As John Coulson states in his brief foreword, one always welcomes another book on Coleridge's thought or influence, even one as slim as this (84 pages of text plus notes!) . And indeed, Pym is to be commended on his work of synthesis in what every Coleridge scholar knows to be a morass of manuscripts and teeming fragments of a seemingly undefined whole. He has offered a short introductory chapter on Coleridge's basic interest in theology and successive chapters on Coleridge's notion of God, Christ, the historical Jesus, and the Scriptures and Interpretation. In a small space, he provides an overview of Coleridge's entire project as a religious thinker. During the course of this outline, there are helpful glances and capsule comments on the 19th century theologians and thinkers who followed Coleridge's path in the Broad Church.

Yet the book is sadly lacking. Its general view of Coleridge the theologian remains bound by the customary canards of pre-contemporary criticism. While aware that Coleridge intended a systematic whole and that he occasionally believed he had accomplished it, Pym denies its authenticity as project. He argues that Coleridge's thought is of one weave (if not of the same materials), and yet ignores the influences his aesthetics of symbol had on his interpretation of religious language. These two major strictures make Pym's general interpretation less than useful since their neglect forces him into dichotomies which Coleridge preferred to resolve. Pym must leave Coleridge between the 18th and 20th centuries without even a symbolic lifeboat to save his own appearances.

So Pym stresses a division between inner spiritual development (Coleridge's religion) and outer socio-political events (Coleridge's lack of interest); between reason (Coleridge's universal and somewhat wrongheaded metaphysics) and history (particular illustrations). This reviewer would maintain that Coleridge was more than aware of these contraries, and that he did attempt to resolve them in his notions of perception, epistemology, and interpretation and metaphysics of symbol. Yet without these mediations Coleridge must appear as either a flawed Platonist, curiously tempted by the historical fact of Christianity, or a foggy Aristotelian hoping that evidence will not disprove principles.

Pym's solution to this issue has become a common one in Coleridge studies: to make him an existentialist *avant la lettre.* Coleridge's personal suffering forced him to place his person as the reference-point for the reality of things. The importance of miracles, Bible, external history, etc., is their existential import to the believer. That is what the word ' true ' means to Coleridge. If one dismisses Coleridge's claims to a system and prefers to ignore his arguments for a metaphysics of subjectivity which would include empirical history, then 'existential import' may be one's only recourse to justify continued interest in Coleridge's thought.

Without the mediation of affection as an apprehension of value, it will be impossible to discern how Coleridge has struggled to overcome the conflict of Duty and Interest; without the arguments of Coleridge in his *Essays on Method,* MSS. *Logic,* or the notions of imagination available from the Bristol *Lectures* (1795) on, it will be impossible to explain 'how' for Coleridge the spirit works upon the letter in biblical inspiration. And Coleridge's Christology will seem ' idealized ' if one does not include his notations to Scriptural commentaries and their emphasis on the humanity of the Logos. The problem is not so much that Pym does not provide an overview as that without recognizing the difficulty of the questions Coleridge asked or the methodological complexity of his answers, overview becomes oversight. A comprehensive and systematic book on Coleridge's religious thought remains a requirement.

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BOOKS RECEIVED

University of California Press: *Truth, Love and Immortality: An Introduction to McTaggart's Philosophy* by Peter T. Geach. Pp. 176; $14.95.

University College Cardiff Press: *God and the Secular: A Philosophical Assessment of Secular Reasoning from Bacon to Kant* by Robert Attfield. Pp. !!15; *lb. 9.50.*

Columbia University Press: *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in tlu: Middle Ages* by Bernard McGinn. Pp. *363;* $!M.OO.

William B. Eerdmans: *Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Study of the Faith* by Hendrikus Berkhof. Pp. 541; $20.95.

Fides/Claretian: *Western Spirituality: Historical Roots, Ecumenical Routes* edited by Matthew Fox, 0. P. Pp. *435; $9.95.*

Greenwood Press: *The New Image of the Person: Theory and Practice of Clinical Philosophy* by Peter Koestenbaum, Pp. *536; $19.95.*

Harvester Press: *Renaissance Man and Creative Thinking: A History of Concepts of Harmony, 1400-1700* by D. Koenigsberger. Pp. 282; *lb.* 13.50.

Walter de Gruyter: *Science of Religion: Studies in Methodology,* edited by Lauro Honko. Pp. 576; D. M. 96.00.

Paulist Press: *The Dialogue of St. Catherine of Siena,* translated with an Introduction by Suzanne Neffke, 0. P. Pp. 366; $7.95 paper.

Ridgeview Publishing Company: *Falsification and Belief* by A. McKinnon. Pp. 106; $18.00.

Seabury Press: *Karl Rahner: An Introduction to His Theology* by Karl-Heinz Weger. Pp. 200: $10.95. *Creativity and* God: *A Challenge to Process Theology* by Robert C. Neville. Pp. 163; $12.95. *Cliffs of Fall: Paradox and Polyvalence in the Parables of Jesus* by John D. Crossan. Pp. 118; *$9.95.*

Surhkamp Verlag: *Die Erklaren: Vestehen-Kontroverse in Transzendental-Pragmatischer Sicht* by Karl-Otto Apel. Pp. *355;* D. M. 30.00.

Templegate: *The Way of the Preacher* by Simon Tugwell, 0. P. Pp. 194; $7.95.

University of Tennessee Press: *Humanism and the Physician* by Edmund D. Pellegrino. Pp. 242; no price given.

University Press of America: *Ideas of Religion: A Prolegomenon to the Philosophy of Religion* by John E. Sullivan, 0. P. Pp. 234; *$9.25. Linguistic Ramifications of the Essence-Existence Debate* by Germain Kopaczynski. Pp. *195;* $8.50.

Vintage Press: *The Habit of Being: Letters of Flannery O'Connor,* edited with an Introduction by Sally Fitzgerald. Pp. *596;* $8.50.

Yale University Press: *Aristotle's Theory of the Will* by Anthony Kenny. Pp. 171; $17.50.