AUTHORITY, PUBLIC DISSENT AND THE NATURE OF THEOLOGICAL THINKING

IN A RECENT analysis of the Catholic scene, Lutheran Richard John Neuhaus described the controversy over authority and dissent in the Catholic Church as " theologically debased and ecumenically sterile." My own reading of the literature on dissent inclines me to concur with the substance of this judgment. Broad historical, cultural, and theological contexts have inevitably been neglected as the issues raised by public dissent have come to be narrowly conceived in terms of academic policy and ecclesisastical law and discipline. The objective of this paper is to explore the larger theological context of the topic of public dissent and in particular to consider Neuhruus' judgment that the "present Roman Catholic preoccupation with church authority is ... theologically debased because it fixes attention not upon the truth claims derived from God's self-revelation but upon who is authorized to set the rules for addressing such truths, if indeed they are truths." [1]

A Perspective on the Current Debate

The attitude of " dissent " as such would normally be expected to occupy only a subordinate place in accounts of the nature of theological thinking. Intellectual inquiries are usually undertaken with a view to affirmation and oonstruction rather than critique and dissent.

Despite the volume of literature which it has spawned, the current debate in fact reflects this expectation. The theological substance of the issue of dissent qua dissent has been thorough-

[1] Richard John Neuhaus, *The OathoUc Moment: The Paradow of the Church in the Postmodern World* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), p. 89.

ly rehearsed.[2] The dissident case for the legitimacy of public dissent has been stated forcefully and exhaustively.[3] Important defenses of the classical Catholic position have been advanced by bishops and theologians alike.[4] Increasingly the literature on both sides has become repetitive-a sign that, in its present form, the debate has reached something of a theological impasse.

What clarity has been achieved in the theological discussion of the specifics of the Curran case continues to be threatened by confusions about the crucial differences between public and private dissent, between an ecclesiastically chartered university and other Catholic institutions of higher learning, and between the withdrawal of the canonical dicense to teach and the imposition of silence upon a theologian.[5] The issues have come

[2] Bp. Juan Arzubs, "Criteria for Dissent in the Church," *Origins* 7 (1978), 748-750; Archbp. Joseph L. Bernandin, "Magisterium and Theologians: Steps Towards Dialogue," *Ohicago Studies* (1978), 151-158; Yves Congar, O.P. The Magisterium and Theologians: A Short History, *Theology Digest* (1977), 15-20; John Connery, S.J., "The Non-Infallible Moral Teaching of the Church," *Thomist* 51 (1987); 1-16; Hans Kiing & Jiirgen Moltmann eds., *The Right to Dissent:* Concilium 158 (1982) ; Archbp. William J. Levada, "Dissent and the Catholic Religion Teacher," *Origins* 16 (1986), 195-200; Bp. James Malone, "How Bishops and Theologians Relate," *Origins* 16(1986), 169-174; Archbp. Daniel Pilarczyk, "The Church and Dissent," *Origins* 16 (1986), 175-178; Karl Rahner, "Theology and the Magisterium," *Theology Digest* 29 (1981)' 257-61.

[3] Charles E. Curran, *Faithful Dissent* (Sheed & Ward, 1986) ; "Authority and Dissent in the Roman Catholic Church," in William W. May, ed., *Vatican Authority and American Oatholie Dissent* (New York: Crossroad, 1987), pp. 27-34, and in the same volume essays by Richard McCormick and Anne Patrick. A markedly alarmist collection of essays pressing the dissident case is Hans Kiing and Leonard Swidler, eds., *The Ohuroh in Anguish* (Harper & Row, 1987).

[4] Patrick Granfield *The Limits of the Papacy* (New York: Crossroad, 1987), esp. pp. 153-168; Archbp. Roger M. Mahony, "The Magisterium and Theological Dissent," in May, pp. 16-26; William E. May, "Catholic Moral Teaching and the Limits of Dissent," *ibid.*, pp. 87-102; Germain Grisez, *The Way of the Lord Jesus* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983), Vol. I, pp. 849-856, 871-916; Francis -Sullivan, *Magisterium* (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist 1983) *passim.*

[5] Joseph A. O'Hare's "Faith and Freedom in Catholic Universities" points to the significance of the second distinction, while Margaret Farley's "Moral

to be framed in an idiom in which canonists and legal historians are more at home than theologians.[6] Canonical norms and historical precedents are matters of undeniable significance. But it is clear that more is at stake than securing sufficiently precise definitions of "infallible teaching," "ordinary magisterium," "norms for dissent," and *"obsequium* ".

Cardinal Ratzinger is right in contending that what is in dispute in the current controversy over authority and dissent in the church is the structure of faith itself and, with it, the nature of theology.[7] Neuhaus concurs. "At the more publicized level," he writes, " the disputes in Roman Catholicism are over ' authority in the church! At a deeper and more productive level, the question is ' What is authoritative for the Church? '[8]

The fact that the current debate about public dissent is almost exclusively concerned with authority understood as that exercised by church leadership is in part the outcome of historical factors. In recent centuries a variety of persistent trends in western theology have converged to give the official magisterium an increasingly prominent role in theology and church life.

The voluntarist and nominalist styles which late medieval thought bequeathed to much subsequent theology undermined confidence in the possibility of providing persuasively intelligible accounts of Christian doctrines. If the structures of the natural order understood in combination with patterns of divine action ,in salvation could not deliver relatively secure

Discourse in the Public Arena," blurs the third: in May, pp. 160-167 and 168-186 respectively. Failure to note significance of the first is widespread.

6 See the theologically perceptive historical essay by Glenn W. Olsen, "The Theologian and the Magisterium: Ancient and Medieval Background," *(Jommunio* 7 (1980), 292-319. For discussion of some of the canonical issues see Ladislas Orsy, S.J., "Magisterium: Assent and Dissent," *Theologiaa,l Studies* 48 (1987)), 473-497 and *The Ohuroh: Lea,rnilng a,nd Teaohing* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1987).

7 Card. Joseph Ratzinger, "The Church and the Theologian," *Origins* 15 (1986), 761-770. See also his *Prinoiples of Oa,tholio Theology* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987) *pa,ssim.*

s Neuhaus, p. 127.

knowledge of God and his purposes, then theology would need to search elsewhere for its final warrants. Authorization by the official magisterium increasingly came to play a larger role than the intelligibility of the Christian mystery itself as grasped in the fit between God's action in the observable universe and his action in salvation and revelation. As a result, the weight accorded to the magisterium among the *loci theologici* grew in tandem with the influence of broadly voluntarist and nominalist styles in theology. This factor remains operative to the extent that theological positions emphasize the ineffability of the transcendent realm and the inadequacy of any human attempts to give it expression.

A parallel factor is the rise of " positive theology " after the 16th century. Dependent as it is on historical method, positive theology an hut invites the decisive interventions of official, authoritative judgments a way unprecedented in earlier theology. Questions of the authenticity of doctrines and of in- •• of urgent once the historically conditioned character of dogmatic formulations becomes a central theological theme.

Another .factor forcing the official magisterium to assume a prominent role in the church was the experience of the division of Christianity after the Reformation and the recognition of the diversity of religions in more recent times. It is inevitable that communally defined norms will become increasingly important as the Catholic community seeks to define its own doctrinal positions with reference to other religious and Christian communities. A related factor is the broad attack upon the propriety of communal religious commitments which has been a chief item on the agenda of modernity. Defense of the identity of the Christian community by its chief spokespersons is a task of central and consuming importance.

In addition, there is the need to maintain the principal pastoral, institutional, and sacramental functions of the church in the midst of controversy generated by theological disputes, partioolarly as these disputes overflow the lecture hall, the seminar

:room and the professio]lal journal. In an age when :religious controversy receives a high media profile, occasions for magisterial intervention multiply.

Ironically, another set of factors converged in creating an intellectual climate increasingly unfavorable to authoritative claims in the religious realm. 'Vithout some understanding of these factors, the urgency with which the right to public dissent is pressed in the contemporary Catholic setting will be nearly unintelligible. [9]

The claim of personal autonomy over against moral, religious and to a lesser extent political authorities constitutes the central dogma of modernity. [10] The exercise of authority is frequently identified with authoritarianism. [11] This pervasive oultural mood gives rise in the religious realm to an antipathy to communal norms of any sort. [12]

The fragmentation of theology has inclined its various subdisciplines to become entirely assimilated to their oognate secular disciplines with a consequent erosion of the authoritative status of the sources of Christian faith; [13] In this connection, the professional allegiances of increasingly greater numbers of Catholic theologians wed them more closely to the academic guild than to the community of faith. [14] The collapse of

s Commentators who stand out in trying to locate the debate in the larger cultural and historical context of modernity are Joseph Komonchak in "Issues Behind the Curran Case," *Commonweal* (January 30, 1987), 43-47, and Roch A. Kereszty in" Theological Dissent in the North American Church" *Oommunio* 14 (1987), 94-114.

10 See Jeffrey Stout, *The Flight from Authority* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1981) and Alasdair Macintyre, *After Virtue* Notre Dame: University Press, 1981).

11 See E. D. Watt, *Authority* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982).

12George Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984)' pp. 19-25, 77.

13 Edward Farley, *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983).

14 Neuhaus comments (p. 84): "Quite apart from the responsiveness or unresponsiveness of particular theologians to church authority, the magisterium is challenged by a structure that divides the vocational loyalties, and perhaps the souls of many theologians." See the perceptive essay by David Burrell, C.S.C., " Beyond 'Dissent' and 'Academic Freedom'," *Current Issues in Catholic Higher JJJduaation,* 8 (1986) 51-53.

the neo-scholastic synthesis as a unifying cultural phenomenon has functioned to weaken contemporary American Catholic theology's links with its immediate past and thus the authority of classical theological syntheses. Finally, conflicting interpretations of the Second Vatican Council continually undermine efforts to achieve a new unified and authoritative vision of the church of the future and of the role within it.[15]

No doubt other factors could be adduced to account both for the prominence 0£ the authoritative claims 0£ the official magisterium today and for the emergence 0£ a cultural climate unfavorable to the acceptance of these claims. The cumulative impact of these factors has been to push the role of the magisterium to the forefront of debate to the neglect of a more broadly conceived inquiry about what is authoritative for the church.

For many contemporary theologians, the terms of any such inquiry are defined by the conversation between the Christian churches and religiously skeptical western thinkers. In this conversation, the possibility and appropriateness of traditional theological affirmations have been continually called into question-particularly as they hear on realities of a transcendent character. Insofar as theologians have accepted the force of the modern critique of Christianity, they have been inclined to reconstrue theological affirmations about God and his revealed ,self-descriptions as symbolic expressions of the religious modalities of human being. Once the domains of theology and anthropology are conflated, questions arise as to who bears the authority to determine how " the symbols of transcendence are to be harnessed to the immanent concerns which in fact produced them in the first place." [16]

In this perspective on the debate about authority and dis-,sent, the fundamental questions concern the nature 0£ doctrinal and theological affirmations, and, naturally, the nature of

15 Philip Gleason, *Keeping the Fali,th: American Oatholicism Past and Present* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), esp. chapters I, 7 and 8.

16 Neuhaus, p. 87.

theological thinking itself. At issue are the underlying conceptions of theology which are reflected in conflicting positions on the role of authority and the scope of legitimate dissent. On both sides of the debate on 81uthority and dissent in the church, these underlying conceptions to a large extent mirror (sometimes only implicitly) their authors' readings of the implications of modernity for faith and theology.[17]

The object of this paper is to offer an account of the nature of theological thinking which advances the view that its subject matter in God himself in his self-descriptions and in his dispensations in our regard. This proposal can be described as postmodern is striving to transcend prevailing styles in modern Protestant and Catholic theology which have tailored Christian theological affirmation to fit patterns of religious discourse legitimated by Enlightenment philosophers. I have argued elsewhere that, far from being innovative, contemporary Catholic strategies for appropriating the lessons of modernity to a large extent mimic 19th and early century Protestant efforts in this regard.[18] Catholic theologians have much to learn from growing Protestant dissatisfaction with the anthropological turn that underlay many of these strategies.[19] Indeed, there are signs that modern theology has run its course as a cultural and intellectual phenomenon as increasing numbers of theologians succeed in reaching and fording the " fiery brook of Feuerbach."

In any case, the present proposal seeks to appropriate some elements of Aquinas's account of the nature of faith and theology in order to advance the view that the true subject matter of theology is God and thus for the possibility of discourse about him which, in its reference to a transcendent " realm ", surpasses the normal limits of human knowledge and inquiry. This proposal invites a restatement of the issue of what is au-

11 See Ratzinger, "The Church and the Theologian." .Anne Patrick in "Character and Community: Curran and a Church Coming of Age," May, pp. 127-143 explicitly appeals to values of modernity in supporting public dissent.

18 J. A. DiNoia, "Philosophical Theology in the Perspective of Religious Diversity," forthcoming.

19 George A. Lindbeck's *The Nature of Doctrine* is instructive here.

thoritative for theology and thus affords a fresh perspective on the current debate about the legitimacy of public dissent.

I shall argue shortly that " believing in God " and " practicing theology " are linked though distinct activities in the Christian community, and that we need a means both of establishing this link and of specifying what these activities entail in themselves. Both activities are engaged hy identical ranges of sacred texts, doctrines, institutions, practices, and so on, but under different descriptions. And, more crucially, both activities have God himself as their focus. During most of the history of Christian theology the assertion of some necessary connection between faith and theology would have been taken to be an uncontroversial one. For all the disagreements about the correct way of specifying this connection, there was generally no question that these activities, and their underlying dispositions, were firmly intertwined.

Faith, Revelation and Systematic Theology

The case for public dissent draws some of its impetus from a climate of thought in which the previously unchallenged association of theology with an ecclesially exercised Christian faith is now open to question. Accordingly, disagreements about the legitimacy of public dissent often arise from conflicting conceptions of the nature of theology.

Two sources of the erosion of the earlier theological consensus on this point are current theological positions which either (l) draw a sharp distinction between positive (or historical) theology and strictly scientific theology, and/or insist upon the public character of properly systematic theology.

Wolfhart Pannenberg's program for scientific theology is typical of the first move. At the conclusion of a survey of the history of Christian theology, Pannenberg writes: "An examination of the various forms in which the self-understanding of theology has been embodied in the course of its history has led to the conclusion that theology ... can be adequately under-

stood only as a science of God." [20] Taken as it stands, this assertion is welcome and concurs with the argument being advanced in this paper. But Pannenberg goes on to contend that in order for theology to be a science of God, it must have a universal character. Hence scientific theology must be distinguished from positive theology which, with its dependence on a particular Christian revelation, can only be an ecclesiastical or confessional theology. Properly scientific theology will need to transcend the limitations imposed by these Christian sources in order to attain a true " science of God." [21]

On the surface, Pannenberg's position reads as a proposal for a;ddressing the problem of how to conceive the relationship of what used to be called the positive and speculative functions of systematic theology-or, more broadly, the relation of theology to its sources in Scripture and tradition. In effect, it is a proposal that sharply qualifies the normative status of these sources by attributing a certain priority or equivalence to non-revelational sources of knowledge about God. At a deeper level, then, Pannenberg's proposal suggests that the point of view of Christian faith-with its dependence on a particular revelation-represents a condition that in some sense must be transcended in the development of a truly scientific systematic theology. To restate this position in classical Catholic terms, infused, supernatural faith does not constitute the necessary precondition for practicing theology. In addition, the subject matter of the science of God is not defined primarily by the divine self-description enshrined in Christian revelation.

A second challenge to the classical view that systematic theology presupposes Christian faith comes from theological positions which insist on the essentially public character of this theological discipline. David Tracy on the Catholic side and Schubert Ogden on the Protestant side, for example, argue that the practice of systematic theology does not depend normative-

[20] Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Theology ana the Philosophy of Soienae* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976), p. 297.

[21] *Ibid.* pp. 298-299; 321-326.

ly on the context established by Christian faith. Such positions undertake to show the broad applicability of religious classics to all areas of human concern and inquiry. Systematic theology-the reflective study of this wisdom-presupposes not membership in a Christian community, or the infused theological virtue of faith, or assent to divine revelation (three important senses of "faith " in traditional views) , but the readiness to appreciate, explicate and apply religious wisdom in publicly accessible ways. :Faith is presupposed as a universal condition of human existence confronted with the mystery of transcendence.22

On this view, systematic theology addresses the widest possible publics, in the academy and beyond. It maintains its place among the academic disciplines in the university by eschewing in principle the confessionalism entailed when the religious commitments of particular Christian communities are accorded a normative role the development of theological positions. The """""""R""" is distinct of the ous sub-fields of the scientific study of religion (or religious studies). For theology on this model is self-involving that it advances a religious proposal of a broadly interdenominational and possibly interreligious sort. It draws from common human experience, the literature of religious classics, and philosophy and other sources to field a bl'oadly religious interpretation of human life and society.

As might be expected, proposals like those of Pannenberg and the revisionist theologians have provoked intense debate. It is acknowledged in their favor that such proposals reflect the classical Christian interest in pressing the universal relevance of the claims of the Gospel and, conversely, the bearing of common human experience and knowledge upon Christian understanding of the Gospel.

But, as some postliberaI theologians have countered, the uni-

22 See David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination* (New York: Crossroad, 1981) and his more recent *Plm·ality and Ambiguity* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987); Schubert Ogden, *On Theology* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986),

versalism a;dvocated by such views is at best a fragile one. For, clearly, the perdurance of religious wisdom in general depends on the strength of the particular religious traditions which transmit such wisdom. What insures the enduring effectiveness of a religious wisdom are its powerful embodiments in the faith and institutions of particular communities. Specifically, on this view, revisionist theological positions seem to diffuse rather than magnify the communicative force with which Christian theology addresses its various publics. [23]

Despite the persuasiveness of such counter-arguments, however, versions of the view that the practice of theology does not in principle presuppose dispositions of a communally exercised Christian faith have become widely influential within the theological professoriat. In this intellectual climate the case for the legitimacy of public dissent seems almost a self-evident one. Such views foster a conception of what might be called autonomous-as opposed to confessional-theology. On this model, the individual theologian ought to be free to pursue his or her critical inquiries unbounded by the constraints of communal commitments, not to mention the intervention of officials bearing communal authority. The demands of academic freedom and scientific integrity have priority, according to this view, over the requirements which arise when the practice of systematic theology is rooted in the dispositions of Christian faith and its assent to divine revelation.

A difficulty with such conceptions is that they fail to account for the way the domain or subject matter of Christian theology in all its branches and functions comes to be defined. I shall argue here that this subject matter arises not by virtue of human discovery hut in virtue of a divine promise. [24]

23 William Placher, "Revisionist and Postliberal Theologies and the Public Character of Theology," *The Thomist* 49 (1985), 392-316.

24 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* la. l and 12; la2ae. 1-5; *In Libruni De Trinitate Boethii.* My reading of Aquinas on these issues is indebted to Thomas C. O'Brien, "'Sacra Doctrina' Revisited," *The Thoniist* 41 (1977), 475-509 and Francisco P. Muniz, 0.P., *The Work of Theology* (Washington: The Thomist Press, 1953) .

Consider a striking passage from the First Letter of John. "Beloved, we are God's children; now it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like **him,** for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:fl). Construed straightforwardly, this passage proclaims a promise about human destiny and furnishes a description of human being viewed in the light of destiny. Within the argument of the letter as a whole, it is clear that this promise is a part of a larger "message " which was received from Christ and is now proclaimed to others (cf 1 John 1:1-5). Human beings who in faith accept this message and the feliowship it entails are now transformed into a new state of being (" children of God ") which both partly reveals and partly conceals a future and more perfect condition of complete union and vision. By faith now, they can be intimately united with God through Christ and the Spirit. In the future this union will be consummated and the human transformation will be complete. [25]

The logic of the argument of First indeed of the Scriptures as a whole, clearly supposes even when it does not explicitly affirm that knowledge of possibility and conditions of this destiny comes from God himself. It constitutes part of the content of a promise. [25] Only through a massive reconstrual of the canonical literature could the view be supported that such knowledge is the outcome of human discovery, observation and generalization. The whole point of the doctrine of revelation is to affirm this truth about the promise. However optimistic the Scriptures may be about the possibilities of natural knowledge of God as" cause of the world" (as Aquinas would say), it is only by "revelation" as opposed to "discovery" that we have knowledge of God's self-descriptions and of his promises in our regard. [21]

25 See Raymond E. Brown, *The Epistles of John* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1982) pp. 381-397; 422-427.

26 Ronald Thiemann, *Revelation and Theology: The Gospel as Narrated Promise* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1985).

27 Constitution *Dei Verbirm* of Vatican II.

The promise of revelation therefore establishes a domain of knowledge and a perspective on all other domains of knowledge and experience. This knowledge is not opposed or alien to human experience, hut neither is it virtually contained in it.

The appropriate human response to the revelation of the promise and all it entails is faith-and even this, as we shaU see, is divinely engendered. The domain of knowledge established by this promise and the perspective it affords on other other domains of knowledge, invite-along with faith-the response of intellectual inquiry. There is room here for the development of an inquiry.with formal parallels to other scientific and scholarly inquiries and like them shaped by the exigencies of its particular subject matter. Christian theology is this intellectual inquiry.

This account provides a perspective on the fundamental difficulties inherent in conceptions of theology such as those advocated by revisionist theologians and by Pannenberg. As an intellectual inquiry like other inquiries, theology is scientific and public when it attends to the sources of its distinctive subject matter and allows the logic of this subject matter to shape its development. It is misleading to suggest that theology can only be scientific and publicly accessible if it transcends these sources or accords primary or equivalent value to other sources. This suggestion in effect " founds " a new science-one in which knowledge of the promise yields primacy to other knowledge. Perhaps this new science will lay claim to the name of " theology." But it will have a very distinctive character in comparison with the inquiry that takes its start from faith in the promises of God proclaimed in fellowship with Christ and the apostles.

In addition, knowledge of the promise has universal relevance in that it both appropriates and corrects other knowledge-especially where the divine identity and purposes, and human nature and destiny, are concerned. But knowledge of the promise is nonetheless ineradicably particular insofar as it is transmitted in sources entrusted by God to the Christian

community. Paradoxically, true universalism requires fidelity to the particularities of Christian revelation and existence.

Theology and Christian Faith

An account of the nature of theological thinking requires some clear conception of the sources of its proper subject matter. This subject matter is constituted by knowledge of the divine promise which provides the overarching meaning and direction of human life. But just as believing in the God of the promise, so theological thinking has for its object God himself.

Thus, believing in God and. practicing theology are related though differentiated activities in the Christian community. Both are human activities carried out at a level which exceeds the range of human capacities their normal exercise. For both have God in himself as their object: faith in an unmediated way, theology by way of concepts and judgments. This feature gives believing in God and practicing theology their character as specific activities which can be differentiated from other activities. These considerations are crucial to grasping the :role of the authorita;tive in theology.

We need some account of human activities in order to explain how this can be the case.

Aquinas appropriated the Aristotelian account of human action in his analysis of faith and theology (as well as at other crucial points in his systematic theology.) [28] This account may be construed as taking its starting point from the observation of the variety of activities in which human beings (and other agents as well) can be engaged. An agent can be observed to be engaged in walking, speaking, playing a musical instrument, thinking, laughing, telling stories, and so on across a whole range of virtually numberless activities. The account under consideration observes these activities and poses a series of questions about them, facing in two directions-back to the agent and forward to the object of his action.

2s Thomas Aquinas, *Summa, theologiae* la2ae. 1·5.

In the first place, this account seeks to learn something about the agent: what do these activities tell us about the agent who engages in them? The agent who on a variety of occasions is observed to be engaged in these activities can be said at least to be *capable* of them. This move leads to the identification of "capacities." An agent who is playing the piano can be understood to be capable of doing so. As a kind of shorthand, we could say in general that such an agent has a musical capacity. And so on, across the whole range of observable adivities.

Observation of activities yields information about the nature of the agent. We learn something about the constitution of the agent by observing, and then classifying, the activities in which the agent is engaged. It becomes possible to identify a range of capacities human agents *(potentiae* or powers).

In addition, experience and observation reveal that there are differring levels of performance among agents engaged in even a simple type of activity-say, running. Some people are marathoners; others can barely make it once around the block What can account for these different performance levels, given that human agents-provided they are not disabled in some way-normally possess the capacity to run? The account at this point introduces the concept of *habituS'* or disposition to explain the observable differences between the performances of a single type of activity by several agents. A disposition, we may say simply, is the more or less stable development of a capacity in the direction of the performance of a certain activity. A virtuoso pianist has developed her musical capacity to a far greater degree than someone who hammers out an occasional tune playing " by ear." And, although the pianist maintains the possibility of this level of performance only by constant practice, it remains true that some state of being needs to be identified between " capacities " and " activities " to account for the skill which the pianist has acquired in executing this activity. This account proposes the concept of "disposition" to identify such states of being in an agent.

This account also explanation of stable developments

of capacities in direction of diverse (though related) activities. Athletics provides many examples of such activities. According to this account, skills in golfing, or weightlifting, or diving, or tennis, and so on, represent developments of physical capacities in the direction of distinctive (and possibly mutually exclusive) activities.

The key point to notice here is that this account permits the identification of two levels of states of being " behind," so to speak, activities: capacities and dispositions. This can tell us something about the nature of a particular class of agents (e.g. human beings) or about the endowments and abilities of individual agents (e.g., marathon mnners or concert pianists).

There is a further important phase of this account which concerns the objects of activities. Diverse activities can be differentiated with reference to the objects which engage them. There is a fit between the objects and the activities of which human beings are capable. Things and projects in the world can engage beings in exercise of a range activities (" activities are specified by their objects " as the scholastics said. This engagement is not viewed as a possibility which needs to have its conditions established, but a given w.hich is susceptible of explanation, elucidation and differentiation. Different objects "trigger" different ranges of activities in an agent. These are different aspects (formal objects) of material objects, or the objects under different descriptions.

My immediate concern is to indicate how Aquinas appropriates this account of activities, capacities, dispositions and their objects in his own account of the nature and grace of believing and of theological thinking.

The Christian pattern of life supposes that human beings can be and are successfully engaged in knowing, loving and hoping in God. What has classically come to be described as the theological virtues is in fact a complex state of being interpersonally engaged with God himself. " Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ" (I John 1: 3). We may take it Aquinas asks the question: must

case about human beings who are actually engaged in knowing and loving God? According to the pattern of explanation established by the analysis of activities just presented, we would have to say that beings engaged in the activities of knowing and loving God must be capable of these activities. They must be beings of a certain sort, Le., beings who can be engaged interpersonally with other beings.

But of course God is not just another being. He is the source of all beings. With respect to him beings are simply derivatively existent creatures. Although he is present to them at all times as the First Cause preserving them existence, he utterly surpasses their normal capacities of knowing and loving unless he chooses to become present not only "metaphysically," so to speak, but personally as well. In fact, however, such a shift is not something that occurs in him, but something that occurs in creatures, and only because God enables them to function at this new level.

Aquinas displays his account of the analysis of actions in two crucial moves to account for human beings' interpersonal engagement with God (the life grace, or supernatural life).

The first move is to apply the concept of disposition to the whole state of being of the agent-the entitative disposition. The analogy of health in a human being is apt: perfect health, let us say, is an entitative disposition of a whole nature, an actualization of an entire being across the whole range of its capacities. An entitative disposition or state of being entails not simply particular developments of individual capacities, but a disposition to act and exist in a certain way which is characteristic of the agent as a whole and may be considered as the source or level underlying all the particular dispositions of the agent and its successful engagement in the whole range of activities of which it ,is capable. In this sense, health affects everything the agent undertakes, and not just particular capacities.

According to this analogy, then, habitual or sanctifying grace is an entitative state a whole being, which empowers the

agent to engage in whole range 0£ activities for which it possesses the capacities but at a new level entirely: the level of being interpersonally engaged with God. The state of grace does not involve the acquis,ition of a whole new set 0£ capacities, somehow distinct from other capacities with which the agent is naturally endowed, but the empowerment or enablement of the whole agent to function at a new level 0£ activity-with God as its object. This new state of being is not acquired by personal effort on the part of the agent. It is infused by God.

The second move, then, is to argue that the disposition of naturally endowed capacities of intellect and will are infused theological virtues of faith, hope and love, by which human beings can be successfully engaged interpersonally with God.

Again, according to this scheme of explanation, it is not necessary to posit any capacities in addition to those with which the agent is naturaily endowed in order to account for the activities of believing in, hoping in and loving God. These activities-granted that they surpass any innate capacities of created agents in their normal exercise-are made possible by the infusion of dispositions which enable human agents to be engaged with God interpersonally. Hence they are similar to acquired dispositions, like virtuoso musicianship, in that they are developments or actualizations of existing capacities enabling activity at a highly "accomplished " level. To a large extent, this account :represents an interpretation of the doctrine that human beings are created in the image of God, as this doctrine has been traditionally understood to entail that human beings are intelligent and loving, i.e. interpersonally oriented beings-in some sense, *like* God.

This account affords a perspective on the nature of theological thinking in its relation to believing. Just as the *human manner* of understanding, hoping and loving survives the transposition of these intellectual and affective capacities to a new level of activity and to engagement with a transcendent object, so the extension of the activity of understanding in faith

into the activity of theological leaves human modes of reasoning and reflection intact, despite the exalted character of their object. The science and wisdom sought by theological thinking do not bypass or supplant ordinary modes of human inquiry and reasoning but press them into service to attain a deeper knowledge of God in himself and of all things in relation to him.

If it is true to assert that the divine promise estaib1ishes a domain of knowledge which is susceptible of intellectual inquiry, then in this perspective the contents of this domain are defined by the doctrines of the Christian faith in their complexity and integrity. These doctrines are not ends in themselves, but the imperfect though normative media which transmit God's self-descriptions in a manner consistent with human patterns of thought and thereby draw the human mind to knowledge of God himself.

Theology and Authority

I have not meant to offer a complete account of the nature of theological thinking but only to propose what seem to be a key elements of such an account. The thesis of this paper is that the controversy over the legitimacy of public dissent invites reconsideration of the nature of theology itself and thus a fresh statement of the role of authority within it.

We have seen that a narrow conception of the issues raised by dissent focuses on the legal, disciplinary and political terms of the controversy to the neglect of theological, historical and cultural contexts. The burden of the argument of this paper has been to set the controversy in a framework defined by the nature of theological thinking itself. Within this framework it is possible to sketch the lines of an account of what is authoritative for theology.

For a Catholic Christian theologian the primary authoritative roles in the practice of his craft are to be accorded, in faith, to God himself and then to the vehicles of Christian knowledge of God's self-descriptions and his promises. Thus,

according to this account, the activity of practicing theology is itself dependent on the activity and dispositions of believing in God himself and in his promises. The authority of the official magisterimn is itself subordinate to authority in this primary sense.

The account of the activities of believing and practicing theology can be extended to encompass a description of the nature of magisterial authority. I suggest that this authority could be understood as comprised within what might be called the activity of authentically proclaiming the message. This activity-entrusted to the official magisterium in the community -is linked to the social and historical character of human being, knowledge and action.

Just as human modes of understanding and reasoning remain intact through their transposition in grace to a higher level of exercise, so do their historical and social contexts. The structures and oonventions of human social organization and communication are pressed into service in the literary expression, transmission, preservation and application of the knowledge of the promise. The activity of authentically proclaiming the message about God's promises and our fellowship with him presupposes the transformation in grace of the ordinary modes of the exercise of authoritative social and institutional roles, In this sense, the nature and grace of proclaiming the message has a structure which parallels the nature and grace of believing and practicing theology. Nevertheless, given the differentiation of social roles, proclaiming the message is naturally a distinctive activity, exercised by specified members of the community who possess the socially constituted authority to do so.

Thus, in the Christian community the activities of believing and practicing theology are distinct from and in part dependent upon the proper ex:ercise of the activity of proclaiming the message. They are dependent upon this activity because knowledge of the promise comes through hearing it authentically proclaimed. "This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you" (l John 1:5). By extension, it couM be

said that the activity of believing has this communal proclamation as its object. But, more properly, the activity of believing which is fostered by the communal proclamation is understood to have God himself and his promises as the object which engages it. In the same way, although the subject matter of theology derives its formulations largely from this proclamation, theological thinking as such seeks knowledge of the God of the promises himself.

This account suggests a further specification of a response to the question of what is aiuthoritative for theology. Since the precise object of the activity of proclaiming the message is to insure its authentic transmission, it falls within the scope of its exercise to test the appropriateness of putative interpretations, restatements or developments of this message. Clearly, however, the exercise of the activity of proclaiming the message is itself subject to the authority of God and the authority of the sources of the message.

It seems clear, then, that whatever cultural and historical factors are operative, the practice of theology as a social activity is in part dependent on the exercise of the activity of authentically proclaiming the message in the community. This dependence entails the ascription of an authoritative role to the official magisterium. The theologian himself tests the consistency of his proposals with the sources of revelation. Indeed he may contribute, through critical and constructive inquiry, to the development of official formulations of the contents of these sources. Nothing in this account of the nature of theological thinking excludes this kind of " fidelity" which is " a more genuine and radical faithfulness " to the tradition. As Charles Wood notes: "Sometimes you can't say the same thing by saying the same thing; in order to say the same thing you must say something different." [29] The very exercise of the socially constituted activity of proclaiming the message presupposes interaction with the broader community of theologians

29Charles M. Wood, *Vision and Discernment* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985)' p. 40.

and believers. But the final judgment of authenticity of a theologian's proposals-should one he required-belongs to the exercise of the activity of proclaiming the message rather than to theological thinking itself. The case for the legitimacy of public dissent by and large fails to differentiate these activities adequately.

A factor which complicates ourrent discussion of these issues is the ecumenical context in which this discussion of the nature of theology is pursued. The 16th century saw the parting of the ways of Roman Catholic and Reformation theological traditions. It is crucial to the maintenance of clarity in contemporary discussions of the role of the authoritative in theology to :recognize the distinctive conceptions of the role of authority which have developed within these theological traditions under the pressure of different interests, circumstances, and doctrinal commitments.

A final point. Although the role of the authoritative is prominent in our account of the nature of theological thinking, it would be a mistake to exaggerate the singularity of theology at this point. Authoritative traditions, criteria and associations exist in almost all intellectual inquiries that have attained the status of academic disciplines. Authorities function to maintain the quality and standards in many of these disciplines. As Richard DeGeorge argues in his recent philosophical analysis of *The Natnre and Limits of Authority,* "the acceptance of a certain degree of authority-which those subject to it regard as more or less legitimate, which they accept more or less easily, and which they challenge only exceptionally-is the normal state of affairs." [30] In this fundamental sense, theology is a discipline with formal parallels to other academic and scholarly disciplines in which authorities serve to foster rather than undermine intellectual integrity. [31]

[30] Richard T. DeGeorge, *The Nature and Limits of Authority* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1985), p. L

[31] Joseph Komonchak's "Authority and Magisterium," in May, pp. 103-114 is rare in trying to bring philosophical accounts of the nature of authority to bear on the current debate.

The argument of this paper has been that the controversy pmvoked by certain highly publicized dissenting Catholic theologians invites a reconsideration of the nature of theology itself. I trust that, despite its length and technical character, this paper will justify Neuhaus' observation that: "More interesting than the question of how far one can stretch autonomy and still be recognized as a Roman Catholic theologian is the question of what the theologian, in order to be a theologian, recognizes as authoritative." [82]

J. A. D1NoIA, O.P.

Dominican House of Studies
Washington, D.O.

s2 Neuhaus, p. 117. An earlier version of this paper was presented at a meeting of the Catholic Theological Alliance at the University of Steubenville on November 6, 1987. I am grateful for the comments of the participants on that occasion, especially those of the respondent, Richard Roach, S.J.

WAS ST. THOMAS AQUINAS A PLATONIST?

FORTY YEARS AGO, few students would have called St. Thomas Aquinas a Platonist. At that time he was almost universally recognized as a brilliant exponent of medieval Aristotelianism. In fact, St. Thomas was considered by many to be a " pure " Aristotelian. This position was aptly expl'essed by Bertrand Russell, in his *History of Western Philosophy:*

> Aquinas, unlike his predecessors, had a really competent knowledge of Aristotle. His friend William of Moerheke provided him with translations from Greek, and he himself wrote commentaries. Until his time, men's notions of Aristotle had been obscured by Neoplatonic accretions. He, however, followed the genuine Aristotle, and disliked Platonism, even as it appears in Saint Augustine. He succeeded in persuading the Church that Aristotle's system was to be preferred to Plato's as the basis of Christian philosophy, and that Mohammedans and Christian Averroists had misinterpreted Aristotle. [1]

Russell, however, although correct in saying that St. Thomas "had a really competent knowledge of Aristotle," neither knew how his philosophy was different from that which had come before nor had any idea of the extent to which the overpowering influence of Neoplatonism had been elt by almost all medieval thinkers, including St. Thomas. Concerning St. Thomas's Aristotelianism, Wayne Hankey has observed the following:

> Indeed one might say that his Aristotelianism should be seen within the context of his Neoplatonism. Certainly he generally reads Aristotle through Neoplatonic spectacles, but more significant is that the movement toward a more positive view of Aristotle is a feature of the later Neoplatonism and especially of its Christian

[1] Bertrand Russell, *A. History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945), p. 453.

adherents. Nor is it exclusively a feature of the Iamblichan tradition; for Porphyry's view of the first principle is closer to Aristotle's than are the positions of either Plotinus or Iamblichus and his followers, and he is responsible for the assimilation of Aristotle's logic into Neoplatonism after Plotinus's critique. It is perhaps enough to mention that Porphyry, Boethius, and the Arabs provide the main western medieval sources for the knowledge of Aristotle until the time of St. Thomas. [2]

On the surface, it would seem that Russell, never an admirer of Thomistic philosophy, was neither accurate nor objective in his evalu::tion of St. Thomas's Platonism. This judgment of Russell's position, however, might perhaps be too severe.

It must be remembered that modern Neoplatonic studies were only in their infancy when Russell's text was first published in 1945. Actually, this scholarship dates, for the most part, from the time of Dodd's edition of Proclus's *Elements of Theology* in 1933.[3] In fact, only in recent years have these studies been cultivated by an impressive number of scholars. Even in the early years of Neoplatonic scholarship, however, there were a few works devoted to St. Thomas Aquinas and Platonism. In 1939, Cornelio Fab:m published his important study, *La nozione metafisica di partecipazione secondo S. Tommaso d'Aquino* in Milan. This work not only stressed the importance of the Platonic doctrine of participation in the works of St. Thomas, but also considered the Thomistic corpus in terms of medieval Neoplatonism. Along with Fabro's works, many others soon appeared focusing on the Platonic side of St. Thomas, including those of L. B. Geiger,[4] Joseph Santeler, [5] and Arthur Little. [6] Some concluding remarks f:mm Little's

[2] Wayne Hankey, ".Aquinas' First Principle: Being or Unity?" *Dionysius,* IV (1980), 147-148.

[3] Eric Robertson Dodds, *Proclus. The Elements of Theology* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1933).

[4] L. B. Geiger, *La Participation dans la Philosophie de S. Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris: Vrin, 1942).

[5] Joseph Santeler, *Der Platonismus in der l!Jrkenntnislehre des Heiligen Thomas von Aquin* (Innsbruck: F. Rauch, 1939).

[6] .Arthur Little, *The Platonic Heritage of Thomism* (Dublin: Golden Eagles Books, 1950) .

book, *The Platonic Heritage of Thomism,* are indicative of the scholarship from this period in Thomistic studies:

> Whether wittingly or unwittingly he [St. Thomas] taught a Platonic doctrine rejected by Aristotle when he taught participation. That doctrine is only one stone in his building but it is a stone of the arch without which Thomism would collapse. It is not merely fundamental in the sense that its denial would render important doctrines untenable. It is itself of the first importance, central to the system, for it is the doctrine of the relation of man to God. And God cannot be known and creatures cannot begin to be understood unless participation is presupposed; for the first thing true of them is that they *are* creatures, related to God, Being Itself, yet distinct from him by non-being. Therefore the doctrine of participation must be conclusion or premises to every truth in a true philosophy. [7]

By the early 1950s the new direction in Thomistic scholarship had clearly been established. [8]

In *1956,* with the publication of R. J. Henle's *Saint Thomas and Platonism,* [9] scholars working in this field were offered a work which not only directly addressed the question of St. Thomas's alleged Platonism but also afforded them an excellent research tool, since Henle's monograph provided the reader with a complete list of references to Plato and Platonic texts which appear in St. Thomas's works. In terms of pure research, no study of this question published before or after Henle's has been as thorough.

Perhaps the most important contribution made by Henle's study is its treatment of St. Thomas's use of his Platonic sources. Henle's thesis is that the Angelic Doctor consistently rejects certain Platonic principles and always interprets the

[1] *Ibid.,* p. 286.

[s] See Charles A. Hart, "Twenty-Five years of Thomism, *"New SohoZastioism* XXV (1951), 18-20. For a more detailed discussion of these and other earlier works on the Platonic elements in Thomistic Philosophy see Robert J. Henle, S.J., *Saint Thomas and Platonism: A Study of the Plato and Platonic Texts in the Writings of Saint Thomas* (The Hague: Marinus Nijhoff, 1956), pp. xvi-xx.

[9] See note 8.

works of the Christian Platonists from his own point of view. This is especially true in the cases of Pseudo-Dionysius and Saint Augustine:

The two most important *Sancti* whose *auctoritas* was universally recognized and with which he had to deal, were Saint Augustine and Dionysius. In both cases, Saint Thomas expressly recognizes, in terms of his own analysis of Platonism, the Platonic background. When critical issues are at point, he consistently uses the Platonic background as a reason for a clear determination within a framework of his own theories. The entire commentary on the *Divine Names* is a sort of general determination of *aitctoritates,* in which, text by text, Dionysius becomes an *aiictor* of Thomistic positions and in which he is, on critical issues, freed from the force of Platonic principles. The stategy of Saint Thomas thus aligns the *auctoritates* of Saint Augustine and Dionysius on his side of the argument. [10]

Another very important point made by Henle is that for St. Thomas Platonic influence can be both positive and negative. If certain Platonic principles are the issue, this influence is considered negative and rejected. However, when the authority of Plato himself is the question, he is seen, along with Aristotle, as a positive figure:

The reduction of positions to the rejected *via Platonica* allows Saint Thomas to turn the full force of his critique of Plato against others by assimilating, to a greater or lesser degree, their positions to Platonic ones. Thus positions of Avicenna, Avempace, and Avicebron are brought under the general condemnation. On the other hand, the *positio-auctoritas* treatment of Plato enables him to use the great names of both the outstanding Greeks-Plato and Aristotle -in constructing his own doctrines and defending his own views. The most extended example of this is in the second part of the *De Substantiis Sepa'rratis* where Aristotle and Plato are played off against the errors of subsequent and lesser philosophers. But perhaps the most striking case is the double use of Plato against the Averroistic doctrine of the separated agent intellect. For, in some points, Saint Thomas is able to assimilate Averroistic positions to objectionable Platonic ones while in others he can appeal to Plato

[10] Henle pp. 423-424.

in direct opposition to Averroes and thus assist him in his ·effort to deprive Averroes of the support of the Greek tradition.11

The conclusion we can draw fvom Fr. Henle's excellent study is that St. Thomas drew widely from Platonic materials. He was very conscious of the fact that two of his most important sources, St. Augustine and Pseudo-Dionysius, were heavily influenced by the " Platonists." St. Thomas, however, interprets his sources in a personal way, making the texts conform to a view which is less Platonic. When he does accept a Platonic principle, such as the notion of participation, he greatly modifies it so that he can incorporate other doctrines into the principle.12 The result, therefore, is quite different from the purely Platonic notion. St. Thomas makes use of Platonic doctrine, but he cannot really be called a " Platonist." He is a philosopher who avails himself of all the philosophical ideas at his disposal.

In recent years, a number of scholars have made an effort to examine the Thomistic *oorpus* in bhe context of medieval Neoplatonism.18 One such scholar is Wayne J. Hankey. In an im-

11 Henle, p. 425.

12 Thus, St. Thomas's use of participation is modified by the assimilation of the principle of causality. See Henle, pp. 374-381.

18 There are many studies of this type which could be listed. .Among the more important in recent years are: Klaus Kremer, *Die neuplatonische Seinsphilosophie und ihre Wirkung auf Thomas von Aquin* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971). Cornelio Fabro, "The Overcoming of the Neoplatonic Triad of Being, Life, and Intellect by Saint Thomas .Aquinas" *Neoplatonism and Ohristian Thought,* ed. Dominic J. O'Meara (.Albany: State University of New York Press, 1982, pp. 97-108. "The Intensive Hermeneutics of Thomistic Philosophy: The Notion of Participation" *Review of Metaphysics,* XXVII (1974) pp. 449-491. " Platonism, *N*eo-Pla tonism and Thomism: Convergencies and Divergencies" *The New Scholaticism,* XLIV (1970), pp. 69-100. Wayne J. Hankey, "Pope Leo's Purposes and St. Thomas' Platonism" *Atti dell'Vlll Oongresso Tomistico Internasionale sull'IJJnciclica 'Aeterni Patris' e nel centenario della fondasione dell'Accademia S. Tommaso, Rome 1980,* ed. .A. Piolanti, 1982, VIII, pp. 39-52. " The *De Trinitate* of St. Boethius and the Structure of the *Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas .Aquinas." *Atti del Oongresso lnternazionale di Studi boeziani,* Pavia, 5-8 ottobre, 1980, ed. L. Obertello. Rome, 1981, pp. 367-75. "Theology as System and Science: Proclus and Thomas .Aquinas " *Dionysius,* VI (1982), 83-93. "The Place of the Proof for God's Existence in the *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas .Aquinas " *The Thomist,* XLVI 1982), pp. 370-393. Pierre Faucon, *Aspects nfo-platoniciens de la doctrine de s. Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris: Champion, 1975). (See also note 2.)

pressive study, Hankey has shown that the *smnma* as a literary form is actually of Neopiatonic origin:

> It is Proclus' invention which the medieval *sttm1'na* recreates. Thomas follows Iamblichus' school in the doctrines belonging to this literary development and he is imbued with its formalizing and systematizing spirit. In his Aristotelian and other commentaries, he not only looks at the content through Neoplatonic spectacles but, indifferent to its own form, he divides and restructures it into a systematic chain of arguments. The greatest fruit of this spirit in him is his *Summa Theologiae.* It is, like the *Elements* of Produs, an explicit, consistently formalized system containing the complete circuit of reality. It begins by justifying itself because of the formal inadequacies of the available writings on the subject. It proceeds to show how its object-God, in himself and as principle and end --can be unified under one formal consideration--the *revelabilia*- in order to produce a science. The whole immense content is divided into components organized in a single form-the *quaestio*- itself a product of that same endeavor to both think and remain faithful to the conflicting authorities which characterizes our Neoplatonists after Plotinus. [14]

Hankey then goes on to show how still another literary form is derived from P:wclus:

> Proclus, mediated by Dionysius, also provides Thomas with a second genre-that for treating God in himself in the *Summa Theologiae.* For this treatise may be regarded as a *de divin.is nominibus.* This form was Christianized by Dionysius but the very :first tract *de divinis nom.:inibus* is contained in the *Platonic Theology* of Proclus which Dionysius was imitating and transforming. [15]

It remains to be seen, however, just how Neoplatonic St. Thomas's philosophy truly is. The fact that the medieval *snmma* is, at least in part, a Christian adaptation of a Neoplatonic genre, does not mean that the authors of the *summae* are therefore Neoplatonists themselves. It is not the form of a text which determines the philosophical content. The Angelic Doctor uses the literary forms and terminology available to him to create what is, in fact, a new philosophy. St. Thomas's

[14] Hankey, "Aquinas' First Principle ..." p. 154.
[15] *Ibid.*

new ontological .system must be understood on its own terms, and not simply as .a further development of earlier systems, different in both spirit and content.

A much more serious argument presented by Hankey in favor of a Neoplatonic reading of St. Thomas is his contention that the ontology of *esse* is, in fact, Porphyrian in origin:

> It is of revolutionary import that the Anti-Christian Neoplatonist Porphyry, uniting the One and the first intelligible triad, identified the One and *elvai.* It is also significant that he is the source of this doctrine in the Christians Victorinus, Augustine, and Boethius and that they held it well before Thomas. Indeed Thomas is only one in the long line of interpreters of the crucial early texts in Boethius which convey it to the Middle Ages. Finally, it is important that it is Porphyry, not a common scriptural revelation, that stands behind the similar teaching in Arab Neoplatonists like Avicenna. Avicenna and Thomas both maintained that God was the simple act of being and that, in contrast, existence and essence were distinct in creatures. Indeed Avicenna may be one of Thomas's sources of the Porphyrian tradition. If these considerations destroy the notions that Thomas's ontology-his philosophy of *esse-is* unique, or Christian, or a "metaphysic of Exodus", or reflects the Aristotelian rather than Platonist side of his thought, the historical investigations used to establish these views are not therefore useless. What served to distinguish Thomas from Aristotle in this regard-Thomas was thought to have been able to grasp the import of Exodus 3,14 because of the Aristotelian direction of his thought, though his "existential" philosophy of being was contrasted with Aristotle's "essentialism"-in fact ·rather serves to distinguish his position as Neoplatonic as opposed to Aristotelian.[15]. [16]

On this question, Hankey's ·argument is one of content rather than form; it is, therefore, truly a philosophical point which is disputed.

Hankey's position is, at least in part, based on the theory P. Hadot adopts in his study, *Dieu et l'etre.*[11] If this point is valid, then it is certainly true that the previous scholarship de-

15 *Ibid.,* p. 157.

16 *Ibid.,* 142-143.

17 P. Hadot, *Dieu et l'etre* (Paris: Centre d'etudes des religions du livre, 1978), pp. 57-63.

voted to the " metaphysics of Exodus " is in need of immediate revision. However, even if we conclude that St. Thomas's philosophy of *esse* finds its historical model in Porphyry's identification of the One and *eivai,* we still have not shown that his ontology is, in itself, less Aristotelian. Aristotle's own solutions to metaphysical problems are themselves often further developments of" Platonic" notions. St. Thomas's ontology must be understood in terms of the solutions it proposes to ancient metaphysical problems. In particular, St. Thomas's ontology must ·be seen in the context of Aristotelian aporetic ontology. In his recent monograph, Edward Booth has examined the place of St. Thomas's philosophy within this tradition. [18] Booth's study, which considers all of the major figures in the development of this metaphysical problem from Aristotle to St. Thomas Aquinas, discovers in the Angelic Doctor the synthesis of two lines of ontological thought, the " Cryptoproclean ", which refers to "Pseudo-Dionysius's Aristotelianisation of Proclus's ontology" [19] and a more pure form of Aristotelianism, which St. Thomas found in the translation of William of Moerbeke. It is precisely the confluence of these two philosophical traditions which gives St. Thomas's ontology its distinct character:

> The ontology of Thomas is neither pure radical Aristotelianism, nor pure Cryptoproclean,ism: it is a combination of both, taken together in a far closer union than Ibn Sina's union of peripatetic ontology with an ontology of the dependence of possible being on necessary being, with existence extrinsic to the essence of possible things. Albert's reflections on *esse* had Jed Thomas partially to transpose it into the Aristotelian category of act; and he extended its meaning to include its standing for the whole of the thing. He brought the ontology of the Aristotelian analysis together with an ontology of being, especially of the dependence in being on the Creator, into a single ontology; even though, because of the considerable complexities of each, he could not express these two ontologies simultaneously in their fullness. . . . However, he found

1s Edward Booth, *Aristotelian Aporetic Ontology in Islamic and Ohristian Thinkers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 205-267.

19 *Ibid.,* p. 218.

in Pseudodionysian ontology the facilities for including the data of both in a compendious though limited way, in which the Aristotelian data, treated quite unaporetically, were subordinated in an intellectually satisfying way to the philosophy of esse. . . . His doxographic reduction of the Aristotelian material to its characteristic points, which demanded the solution, or at least omission, of whatever was aporetic, and the fundamentality of his conception of *esse* as a locus of union with it, allowed the two ontologies to be brought together with the least disturbance to the concepts of each, their relationship facilitated by his own overall uniform stylistic treatment. The search for a total interpretation of Thomas's philosophy as Aristotelian is a vain one; as also the search for a partial Neoplatonist ontology within it, in the sense of integral wholes and parts: neither proposal discerns the way in which it was intended to bring the two elements together. [20]

Only when we consider all of the diverse elements that work together to form the Thomistic synthesis are we able to understand the true character of St. philosophy. All of the parts are in fact distinct; however, together they form a complete philosophical system which offers a unique interpretation of reality. The clarity and simplicity of the Angelic Doctor's thought is: evident in almost all the solutions it offers to questions of timeless debate. Thus, St. Thomas's treatment of the problem of how the one and many are distinguished in reality and in perception is both clear and simple:

[U]num opponitur privative multis inquantum multa sunt divisa. Unde oportet quod divisio sit prius unitate non simpliciter sed secundum rationem nostrae apprehensionis. Apprehendimus enim simplicia per composita, unde definimus puuctum cujus pars non ·est vel principium lineae. Sed multitudo etiam secundum rationem consequenter se hahet ad unum, quia divisa non intelligimus habere rationem multitudinis nisi per hoc quod utrique divisorum attribuimus unitatem. Unde unum ponitur in definitione multitudinis, non autem multitudo in definitione unius. Sed divisio cadit in intellectu ex ipsa negatione ·entis. Ita quod primo cadit in intellectu ens, secundo quod hoc ens non est illud ens et sic apprehendimus divisionem, tertio unum, quarto multitudinem. [21]

[20] *Ibid.,* pp. 215-216.

[21] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* v. 2 (I, q. 11 a.2) (New York: Blackfriars, 1963), p. 162.

The Angelic Doctor also knows that this same question can be understood differently from distinct perspectives:

> [N]ihil prohibet id quod est uno modo divisum esse alio modo indivisum (sicut quod est divisum numero est indivisum secundum speciem), et sic contingit aliquid esse uno modo unum et alio modo multa. Sed tamen si sit indivisum simpliciter (vel quia est indivisum secundum id quod pertinet ad essentiam rei, licet sit divisum quantum ad ea quae sunt ·extra essentiam rei, sicut quod est unum subjecto et multa secundum accidentia; vel quia est indivisum in actu et divisum in potentia, sicut quod est unum toto et multa secundum partes), hujusmodi erit unum simpliciter et multa secundum quid. Si vero aliquid e converso sit indivisum secundum quid et divisum simpliciter (utpote quia est divisum secundum essentiam et indivisum secundum rationem vel secundum principium sive causam), erit multa simpliciter et unum secundum quid, sicut quae sunt multa numero et unum specie vel unum principio. Sic igitur ens dividitur per unum et multa quasi per unum simpliciter et multa secundum quid. Nam et ipsa multa non continentur sub ente nisi secundum quod aliquo modo continentur sub uno. Dicit enim Dioinysius ult. cap. de Div. Norn. quod non est multitudo non participans uno: sed quae sunt multa partibus sunt unum toto, et quae sunt multa accidentibus sunt unum subjecto, et quae sunt multa numero sunt unum specie, et quae sunt multo specie sunt unum genere, et quac sunt multa processibus sunt unum principio.[22]

Clearly, St. Thomas's solution to this problem (and so many others) is both Platonic and Aristotelian. The precision and clarity of the philosophical explanation, which proceeds logically from one established point to another, is the result of many years of devoted study and commentary on Aristotle. Fmm the Stagirite, St. Thomas learned to solve problems in this logical manner. The "Platonic" St. Thomas is found in the constant references to the " cryptoproclean " Pseudo-Dionysius, who is never far away when the most profound philosophical questions are addressed. St. Thomas, however, was neither a "pure Platonist " nor a " pure Aristotelian;" he was (in the nonpejorative sense) an eclectic philosopher who

22 *Ibid.*, (I, q. 11 a.1) p. 158.

brought together all of the important philosophical currents of his day and created the only philosophy to resolve satisfactorily the metaphysical enigma created by Aristotelian aporetic ontology.

LUIS CORTEST

Department of Modern Languages
The University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

A THEORY OF BASIC GOODS: STRUCTURE AND HIERARCHY*

I.

FTEN, PERHAPS ALWAYS, moral theory emerges from particular problems. Just how is obscure. The logic of discovery is elusive; and it is harder to explain how we have come to see matters rightly than to recognize that we do, in fact, see them rightly. What counts as a theory, moreover, calls for explication as much as does a theory's emergence. When we have in mind a theory that shapes our social vision, there is a progression from a central set of propositions, keyed to a range of paradigm cases and seen as a logical structure, to a " way of thinking " widely enough embraced to have political significance, at least for a given oommunity.

In this essay I want to explore some fundamental questions raised by Germain Grisez's theory of natural law ethics.[1] These questions are chiefly conceptual. But neither they nor Grisez's theory should be seen in a vacuum. Rather, I would begin by suggesting that the importance of his work, its emergence in some Catholic circles, is linked with two specific moral and political problems. The first is abortion; the second is the superpowers' policy of nuclear deterrence.

*I thank David Blake, Robert Gordh, Carroll Kearley, Gary Mar. Martin Woods, and Linda Zagzebski for their comments on an earlier version of this essay.

1 For the theory's fullest presentation, see Germain Grisez, *The Way of the Lord Jesus,* vol. one, *Ohristian Moral Principles,* with the help of Joseph M. Boyle, Jr., Basil Cole, O.P., John Finnis, John A. Geinzer, Robert G. Kennedy, Patrick Lee, William E. May, and Russell Shaw (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983). Especially critical are chapters two through twelve.

As a point of chronology, Grisez's early study of rubortion was the context for one of the first formulations of his natural law ethics.[2] But why should this have been so? And why should abortion so engage Catholic thinkers, some of whom had felt a distance from explicitly Catholic positions, that Grisez's work should become pivotal?

Answers to such questions must be tentative, but they include the following considerations. In a brief period, no more than a decade, legal abortion in the West became entrenched social policy.[3] It was a policy, too, supported by dominant intellectual forces. But the new policy, defended in terms of individual freedom and a right to privacy, struck many Catholics-and non-Catholics-as vicious and tragic. It was vicious in that it made expendable the weakest and most vulnerable human beings. Human rights somehow became restricted to the strong and self-sufficient. The policy was tragic in its denial of human community. We are not, however much radical individualism supposes, merely a collection of separate egos. l/Ve are, rather, a community tied to a past and pledged to a future, so pledged, in part, by the children we bear and nurture.[4] For in hearing and nurturing children we carry on the love of parents who have done as much for us; and we carry ourselves into a future where we hope our own love will be thus extended. But abortion, and surely unrestricted abortion, betrays this community of trust.

Still, a policy so vicious and tragic can make us look for a fresh moral vision. And, of course, to the extent that we have contributed to ,a climate in which abortion could become entrenched-either by our failures to support women in need or

[2] Germain Grisez, *Abortion: The Myths, the Realities, and the Arguments* (New York and Cleveland: Corpus Books, 1970).

[3] A milepost, of course, was the United States Supreme Court decision, Roe *v.* Wade, in 1973. Recent U.S. Government figures indicate that there are now well over a million legal abortions annually in this country.

[4] For a provocative discussion of this theme, see Stanley Hauerwas's " The Moral Value of the Family " in his *A Commimity of Character* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981).

by an acquiescence in our culture's individualism-the call for theoretical reconstruction is all the more urgent.

But as central as abortion is to current Catholic interest in a reconstructed natural law ethics, nuclear deterrence is equally so. It is striking that Grisez's most recent work in applying natural law theory (together with John Finnis and Joseph M. Boyle, Jr.) is directed to nuclear deterrence.[5]

There are, of course, sharp differences between unrestricted abortion and standard "counter-value" policies of deterrence. One is that abortion kills the innocent while deterrence, in some forms, is at least partly directed at those who would themselves be aggressors. A second is that, as matters stand, those who reject abortion can largely, at least in some states, avoid cooperation with the abortion policy. With deterrence this is not so. Unless one practices tax resistance, it is impossible to avoid financial cooperation with the policy of nuclear deterrence.

Still, there are deep similarities between the social realities of abortion and deterrence. Both are politically entrenched; both are supported by dominant intellectual elites. Thus we are told, regularly, that both ,are inevitable. In the case of deterrence, this is said with great regret. But the axiom of the " realists" is that only some form of threatened mutual assured destruction can prevent nuclear war or nuclear subjugation. Hence we must maintain our deterrence policy at almost any cost.

But nuclear deterrence, too, is a policy both vicious and tragic. It is vicious in that it holds hostage millions of innocent people. Their lives, of oourse, are in hostage to prevent aggression; no one can quarrel with this goal. But to hold innocent populations hostage even to this end is vicious in that it shows a willingness to treat people as tools or, in the argot of *realpolitik,"* bargaining chips."

Deterrence is tragic in that its choice of means betrays the

[5] John Finnis, Joseph M. Boyle, Jr., and Germain Grisez, *Nuclear Deterrence: MoraUty and, ReaUsm* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press), 1987.

community which is its professed end. For supposedly we resort to deterrence in order to preserve our political community. But in order to do so we put at risk the larger coinm.unity, the community of the innocent throughout the world, who are no different than we take ourselves to be. For superpower deterrence is indiscriminate. It threatens revenge not just against aggressors but ·against all those within their policy, and even beyond.

And when we see how deterrence undergirds foreign policy and distorts political sovereignty, Catholic moral theorists have a further powerful incentive to think in a fresh way about what our moral vision, our moral theory, ought to be. This is surely *so* if we ourselves have contributed to a climate in which peace seems impossible and nuclear deterrence a requirement of political sanity.

A first rough step in reconstructing one's moral vision is the simple recognition that there are moral limits-and not just at the level of principles but at the level of specific actions.[6] Morality, if it is nothing else, is about the lives of human beings. And if our thinking aJbout morality emerges from experience, the experience of this century confronts us with powers and policies. which deny specific moral limits altogether. Yet we are not infinitely plastic; there are actions we cannot perform without an abandonment of self. Were we infinitely plastic, we would have no moral center. We would be without integrity.[7]

Ultimately, if we are to live our convictions, it is more important that we find and honor our sense of limits than that we understand just how it is that there are such limits. For surely living the moral life L"Omes before doing formal philosophy. But moral philosophy is directed to action. Thus, we can better

[6] Albert Camus's rejection of nihilism in *The Rebel* (New York: Vintage Books, 1956) is an eloquent statement of our need to recognize moral limits.

[7] For Bernard William's early perceptive analysis of how certain forms of utilitarianism jeopardize the agent's moral integrity, see J. J. C. Smart and Bernard Williams, *Utilitarianism: For and Against* (Cambridge: Cambridge Vniversity- Press, 1973), pp. 108-118.

recognize and honor human limits if we work out, in a larger vision, the foundation of our sense of limits.

The need to work out the foundation of our sense of specific moral limits offers, I think, an invitation to the main theme of this essay, which is the force and structure of the " basic goods " in Germain Grisez's natural law theory. At this stage the introduction to his theory will be incomplete in order to correspond to the root notion of moral limits. But the core of his position is clear enough. Basic goods are central components of the human person, especially the person as developing and flourishing. To be" basic," in this context, means at least this much: the moral teleology of human agency is about the promotion and respect of these goods. It means, too, one cannot intentionally attack or demean such goods without attacking the human person whose flourishing consists in their realization.

But to see that the hasric goods afford a link between the intuition that we must honor moral limits and Grisez's systematic natural law ethics is only a first step. Yet having taken this first step we can begin to explore a whole series of questions about the basic goods within his natural law system. For if we think of basic goods as dimensions of personhood that we cannot violate without violating the person, we have reached a major point of contact with Grisez's system. Nonetheless, we have not yet identified its foundation nor examined its specific, and often contested, applications. To appreciate at least the larger outline of Grisez's theory we should next consider, in turn, some central questions both about its foundation and about how we are to apply this theory.

First a foundational question: why bother about human persons and their flourishing? Because the first and self-evident principle of ethics is that the good is to be done and pursued and the bad is to be avoided. In the sphere of practical reasoning, this principle mirrors (and here Grisez only reminds us of Aquinas's doctrine) the first principle of theoretical reasoning, equally self-evident, that a thing cannot both be and not

be at the same time and in the same respect. But what is the good for human beings? What is this good that we are to pursue, this evil that we are to avoid? In Grisez's language the first principle of ethics becomes: "In voluntarily acting for human goods and avoiding what is opposed to them, one ought to choose and otherwise will those and only those possibilities whose willing is compatible with a will toward integral human fuHillment." [8]

But acting on this first principle demands that we can identify the basic human goods. It requires, too, that we determine what responses to the basic goods are compatible with integral human fulfillment. The second of these requirements may well be the more difficult, but we need to address both.

For Grisez, there is no *proof* that any basic good is such. But there are definite indicators that a good has that status. Thus, any basic good is trans-culturally attractive to human beings and plays a central role in human lives. No:r can we put a price on a basic good, unless we have misread its very nature. But in the end one recognizes a basic good through a fundamental moral insight. There is no proof that life is a basic good; but the conviction tihat it is so is built into our moral understanding. We cannot prove that friendship is a basic good; *yet* the reflective person sees that it is.

What, then, are the basic goods given in reflection on our experience? Grisez identifies several. Their diversity should be no surprise, since it matches the :richness of human flourishing. Among these basic goods are life, of course, as well as knowledge, the appreciation of beauty, ·and excellence in work or play. A second group of basic goods includes self-integration, authenticity, justice and friendship, and holiness.

Grisez's list has a heterogeneous character to which I will return. Here we can note one major step he takes to order it: he distinguishes between substantive and existential hasic goods. Substantive goods pl'ovide independent grounds for our choices,

[8] Germain Grisez, *The Way of the Lord Jesus,* p. 184.

but they ·are not themselves defined or made intelligible in terms of our choosing. Such goods are life, knowledge, the appreciation of beauty, and excellence in work or play. Thus, we have the good of life even if we make no specific choice to live; and there is much that we come to know, for example, simply through awareness of our surroundings, that does not require our making any distinctive choices. Of course, we can choose to end our lives or to close ourselves off from knowledge. But these negative choices do not undercut the conceptual point that we can understand and define the goods of life and knowledge without reference to specific choices.

We can, indeed, make the same claim about the appreciation of beauty and about excellence in work or play. We often simply find ourselves appreciating beautiful objects without choosing to-surprised, as it were, by beauty. To be sure, excellence in work or play is often won only after a series of consistent choices. But some of us enjoy natural aptitudes and privileged environments which give us excellence in work or play independently of any special discipline on our parL

Existential goods, by way of contrast, are themselves defined in terms of choice, as well as being grounds for choices. These existential goods are self-integration, authenticity, justice and friendship, and holiness. We shall see that each of these goods can be understood as a form of harmony and that each is intelligible only with reference to our choices. Thus, we must make disciplined choices to integrate our own personalities and, in turn, to fashion our actions after the persons we already are and want progressively to become. Choices, we also know, are essential to the harmony among persons which is justice and friendship and to the harmony between ourselves and God that is holiness. Neither justice nor holiness can he a matter simply of happenstance or good fortune.

Grisez's account of how we are to respond to the basic goods is as many-sided as the goods themselves. It is perhaps enough here to paraphrase his " modes of response," but it would surely be a mistake to do less. We cannot understand the basic

goods, after all, without considering how they are to shape our actions.

In summary form, then, the modes are these:

(l) We should promote the basic goods, even if we do not feel inclined to do so.
(£) We should promote the basic goods, when reasonable, in a cooperative way.
(3) We should promote the basic goods rather than merely satisfying our own desires.
(4) We should not be blocked by our emotions from promoting the basic goods.
(5) We should promote the basic goods fairly.
(6) We should not be blocked by emotions from pursuing a more perfect realization of the basic goods.
(7) We should not, out of hostility, attack a basic good.
(8) We should not, out of a greater desire for one good, attack another basic good.[9]

Together these modes of responding to the basic goods order our pursuit of integral human fulfillment.

We have before us now the general framework of Grisez's ethics, introduced by an account of why "the signs of the times," in particular the tragedies of abortion and nuclear deterrence, give us a powerful incentive to examine carefully his system. There remain, however, two more background concerns to address before we can tum to our series of hard questions about basic goods.

The first concern is whether Grisez's ethics is a system of philosophical ethics or of theological ethics. On his view philosophical ethics should be integrated with moral theology. Nonetheless, the two retain an independence. Ultimately our flourishing is ,a dimension of the flourishing of Creation, which in turn shows God's glory. But Grisez's philosophical ethics is still a coherent system without reference to religious belief.[10]

A second concern is to what extent Grisez articulates

[9] For complete statements-and analysis-of these eight modes see Grisez, *loo. cit.,* pp. 205-226. ·whether they are *irreducibly* eight remains unclear.

[10] *Ibid.,* pp. 459-473.

Aquinas's natural law ethics. The answer is that while he is within the Thomistic tradition, he is a constructive and original thinker. At important points he criticizes Aquinas. He rejects, for example, intellectualist and Platonist strands in Aquinas that suggest too sharp a divide between our :fulfillment in realizing the basic goods and the joy of the beatific vision.[11] He also argues, at the level of applied ethics, that Aquinas evidences a totalitarian strain, which relates the individual to the state as a part of the body is related to the whole body. This mistaken analogy plays a role in leading Aquinas wrongly to support capital punishment.[12] On the legitimacy of capital punishment, moreover, Grisez parts company not only with Aquinas but also with his sometime collaborator John Finnis, despite Finnis's endorsing the main lines of Grisez's ethics. Especially interesting, from our perspective, is that the disagreement between Grisez and Finnis hinges on whether capital punishment in fact violates our duty to the good of life. For doubtless a whole range of potential objections to Grisez's ethics, and not just this one disagreement, depends on how we are to understand and respond to the basic goods. Since Grisez's system stands or falls on such considerations, we must next turn to our detailed and too often delayed questions about the basic goods.

II.

It is, to be sure, no surprise that Grisez's ethics demands a coherent account of the basic goods. We might equally say that Mill's utilitarianism is only as sound as his account of utility and Kantian ethics succeeds only if we can elucidate the concept of respect for the person. A satisfactory account of basic goods in Grisez's ethics involves answering a whole series of questions. While some overlap is inescapable, we can group them under four headings.

11 *Ibid.,* pp. 807-823.

12 See, in particular Germain Grisez, "Toward a Consistent Natural Law Ethics of Killing," *The American Journal of Jurisprudenoe,* vol. 15, 1970, as well as *'l'he Way of the Lord Jesus,* p. 220.

A. Ontological Status

Do all basic goods have the same ontological status? Are they all, as Grisez claims, aspects of the person? If so, what sort of aspects are they?

B. Incommensumbility

Are basic goods incommensurable? If so, what is the ground of this incommensurability? And if they are incommensurable, what sort of hierarchy, if any, do they admit?

C. Degrees of Wrong

In ordinary moral thinking, even if we eschew standard forms of consequentialism based on a ranking of goods, some actions seem more gravely wrong than others. Murder, for example, is worse than lying. Yet both actions reject basic goods; murder attacks life and lying rejects the good of knowing the truth. But if both goods are equally basic, why should murder be more wrong than lying?

D. Moral Trade-Offs

Even if all ha.sic goods are equally basic, could it ever be permissible, though not obligatory, intentionally to attack one such good to realize another? Thus, while A's life and B's life are of equal worth, might it sometime be licit to kill A in order tosaveB?

These four sets of questions are not easily answered. Nor are they to be answered at all in a way that closes off debate. Y:et each, I think, can be satisfactorily met. And since such questions about basic goods are central to Grisez's ethics, the labor to do so is decidedly worth the candle.

HI.

What, then, is the ontological status of the basic goods? Given the range of goods at issue, the question is acute. Grisez's thesis is straightforward. Basic goods are basic because of how they directly fulfill human persons and, as such,

are aspects of the person. Extrinsic goods, like property, can be indirectly :fulfilling. But property is not an aspect of the person, whereas basic goods, Grisez holds, are.

A pair of examples illustrates this distinction. Food, an extrinsic good, is necessary for life. But food is not itself an aspect of the person, nor does it guarantee life. Again, a library is an extrinsic good, and it is useful for gaining knowledge. But a library, like food, is only an instrumental good. Nor does a library guarantee knowledge. By way of contrast, a person's life and the knowledge a person realizes are aspects of the person and directly fulfill the person. Indeed, because they are constitutive of our flourishing, they are among the deepest reasons for our choices.

To say, of course, that a basic good is an aspect of the person leaves it with a broad designation. Such aspects might, for example, be either essential or accidental. Thus, if a person is a complete substance, physical life is essential. Knowledge, however, in the sense of specific intellectual acts, is not an essential aspect of the person. One could be a person, and the very person one is, without having any such knowledge. (This claim, of course, does not conflict with the *capacity* for knowledge being essential to personhood.)

We should note, too, that while aspects of the person might be either essential or accidental they can also fall under other and, in some ways, mo:re determinate ontological headings. Thus, one's soul is an aspect of one's person, as is one's body. Both are incomplete substances. But one's ability (limited) to play shortstop and one's mood (sour) on Monday mornings are also aspects of one's person. Neither, clearly, are incomplete substances. Seeing something of the range of forms that aspects of the person can take makes it easier to defend the claim that all the basic goods are such. And while seeing this range also shows us that not every aspect of the person is significant, to insist that basic goods are aspects of the person helps to mark them off from merely instrumental goods and to ground morality in the person.

But even with this sense of the range and import of aspects of the person, we need to see if each of the basic goods indeed has this status. We might begin with the substantive goods, since here we have a head start. For surely life and knowledge, as we have seen, are aspects of the person. But what of the third kind of substantive good of which Grisez speaks, " activities of skillful work and play, which in their very performance enrich those who do them" ?[13]

Such activities, for example, the work of professionals or the enterprises of artisans or the achievements of athletes, take place in a public world. Thus, a nurse provides a treatment in a hospital, the woodcarver carves in a shop, and the cyclist competes on a course. But the activity itself is an aspect of the person, one that the person performs, something that helps realize the potential of the person. There may well be, in addition to the activity's external environment, an external reward for its exccellence. Yet the activity itself is a dynamic aspect and excellence of the person.

And what of the existential goods, goods the intelligibility of which demands reference to our choices? Here Grisez recognizes four categories, each of which involves a form of harmony.

The first category is self-integration. We experience tension in integrating the components of the persons we are. Reason struggles with will, our desires conflict one with another, and one commitment undercuts a second. Self-integration is the good of internal harmony, and it rests on a series of choices we make to establish this harmony. So understood, it is clear that self-integration is an aspect of the person.

The second category of existential good is authenticity. It is the bringing into harmony of the persons we are with the way we live" While the two are intimately bound, there is often a tension between them" We can fail to live up to the character of the persons we are. (And, typically, we hold a good person more responsible for a given wrong than a person of weak character") But authenticity, the harmony between who we are

13 Germain Grisez, *'l'he Way of the Lord Jesus,* p. 124.

and how we act, is a matter of sustained choices. As such it is an aspect of the person.

A third existential good Grisez denominates as" justice and friendship." If we find tensions, both within the self and between what we are and how we act, we also experience tension among ourselves. Justice and friendship resolve this conflict. (While it seems odd to unite the two, since we suppose that justice does not require friendship, our reaction suggests an anemic view of justice-and perhaps a romanticized view of friendship.) But such a good is unintelligible apart from the consistent choices one makes to build harmony with others. These choices, in turn, make justice and friendship aspects of persons.

The last existential good, again a form of harmony, is holiness. We experience a tension between ourselves and God. The healing of this conflict results in the good of holiness. Of course, holiness is not a human achievement. It is not simply the product of our choices. But our choices can block holiness; so it cannot be understood without reference to our choices. Hence, it is an existential good. As such it is clearly an aspect of the person.

In summary, then, we can say the following. Basic goods, whether substantive or existential, are aspects of the person. But they are sharply different aspects. And why is it morally significant that basic goods are aspects of the person? Because this status underscores that the good we seek consists in the integral fulfillment of the human person. Morality is not a static and external state of affairs to which we must conform; morality, rather, is a dynamic process in the service of the person.

IV.

If we see the basic goods as aspects of the person rather than external states of affairs, we can better explore Grisez's claim that the basic goods are incommensurable. To claim that they are such is to claim that there is no scale of value common to them by which they can be ranked in a hierarchy of worth.

This thesis is a very strong one and plainly conflicts with the standard forms of consequentialism. What might its basis be? And must it block *any* hierarchical ordering of basic goods?

Part of its basis is surely the doctrine that the basic goods are aspects of the person. What is external to the person is, in the last analysis, instrumental. We can, for example, rank our material possessions insofar ·as they serve our more or less pressing needs.

But, a skeptic might suggest, can't we say the same about aspects of the person? Consider a sampler of aspects of, say, one's friend Smith. There is his ability to read, his liking for detective shows, and his bowleggedness. Ordinarily we would say that the most important of these is his ability to read, though in some cases we might revise this ranking. But in almost any case some ranking is possible. Why should it be different with a.spects of the person that are basic goods?

The merit of the skeptic's point is that incommensurability is not entailed by the basic goods being aspects of the person. Nor can we show that basic goods are all essential to the person, supposing that such a status entailed incommensurability.14 How, then, can we answer the skeptic?

A first step is to recall that basic goods, if not essential, are nonetheless central aspects of the person. What makes them so? They are, we noted, of deep trans-cultural attraction-unlike the aspects of Smith that we have reviewed. We cannot find, nor imagine, a culture in which the basic goods were not deeply attractive, even if some individuals, in difficult circumstances, reject one or other of them. *A* second mark of the centrality of the basic goods is that they are starting points in our chains of practical reasoning, with other goods only instrumental to them. But this order would make no sense unless the basic goods were constitutive of our flourishing.

14 In the Christian vision, to be sure, the *capacity* for realizing each of the basic goods is essential to the person. But it is only in the resurrection that some defects will be healed, and in a way that completely fulfills what is potential to our nature.

So clear is the centrality of hasic goods that we do not allow certain "mistakes" to be made about it.[15] Some ways of confusing basic goods with instrumental goods tell us that the nature of the basic good hasn't been grasped at all. Consider someone who supposes that if we can buy books then we can buy knowledge or that if we can buy services then we can buy friendships. We can only respond that the" buying" of knowledge gives us, at most, plagiarism. And a " friendship" that is bought is no friendship at all.

What I have said so far about the basis of incommensurability is this. It rests in a basic good's being a central aspect of our flourishing, an aspect of intrinsic worth that is universally attractive and a starting point for practical rea;son. But to all this a theoretical skepticism might remain impervious. Such a skeptic could respond: "Yes, some might see (say) friendship that way-or any other supposed basic good. But I do not. And there is no proof otherwise."

Again, there is a point to the skeptic's comment. There is no demonstration that a given basic good is such nor even that there are basic goods. That is, there is no argument for such conclusions whose premises we must accept on the pain of self-contradiction. For if self-contradiction threatens, a skeptic could always impoverish his life so as to see as unattractive that which is attractive or to treat as instrumental that which is not. So here we can only recommend that the skeptic " look again." But it is no surprise that philosophical reflection is not a thumbscrew.[16]

15 There is a parallel here, though imperfect, with Wittgenstein's point that there are, for given forms of life, a range of propositions about which one cannot be mistaken. See his *On Certainty* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), especially p. 6 ff. Thus if someone were to say that the heads of living persons are filled with sawdust the rejoinder would be that such a confusion is too big for a mistake. Grisez, however, does not suppose that basic goods are limited to particular forms of life in anything like Wittengenstein's sense.

16 This image has been attributed to Elizabeth .Anscombe, in conversation. For an acknowledgment of how restricted proofs are in philosophy, see Alas· dair Macintyre's *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), p. 101.

Yet such a dismissal of the unmitigated skeptic is an epistemic one. It encourages the skeptic to see matters aright. Nonetheless it says nothing more-directly-about the basis of incommensumbility. But it suggests a further thing to say about this basis. The point to be made is an analogy. Epistemic first principles, if we admit them to exist at all, cannot rest on other principles but seem rather to depend on the structure of our intelligence; so also while propositions enunciating the basic goods can be shown intelligible by anthropological data, their touchstone is the structure of practical reason.

I have argued, then, that the thesis that the basic goods are incommensurable is a defensible one. I have 'also outlined the basis of that incornmensurability, ,beginning with the claim that basic goods are ,aispectsof the person, that they are indeed central aspects, and concluding with the suggestion that the primacy of basic goods seems rooted in practical reason.

The last question in assessing incommensurability, is whether it admits of any hierarchy. The answer is affirmative, and Grisez would surely ·agree. There is, first, the hierarchy that places the good of life in a special For without life we cannot pursue any other goods. Aquinas, as it happens, specifically suggests a second hierarchy. [11] This hierarchy moves from the good which corresponds to an inclination in all living creatures, the preservation of life, to goods that correspond only to inclinations found in the more developed animals, namely, the good of sexual union and the nurturing of one's offspring, to the goods that correspond to inclinations found only in humankind, the goods of knowledge and political community.

Neither hierarchy, however, entails that some basic goods may be turned into mere instruments for others. While life is a condition for, say, friendship, it does not follow that a friendship may be betrayed to preserve life. Nor from the fact that an animals strive to keep themselves in existence does it follow that, since only persons seek political community, a dis-

17 *Summa. Theologia.e,* Ia Hae. 94, 2.

tinct form of friendship, we can instrumentalize human life to safeguard political community. [18]

There is, moreover, a third hierarchy to acknowledge. Both persons and communities can follow distinctive vocations. In Grisez's ethics the concept of vocation takes on a sharper meaning. No individual nor even ·a limited community can equally all the basic goods. But a given person or community might well have the ability to pursue in an especially coherent way a particular basic good or range of basic goods. A physician builds a vocation around the good of life, a statesman around political community, and priest or nun around the good of holiness. (Here one thinks, too, of the charisms of religious communities that direct them to particular goods.)

But, again, such vocations do not instrumentalize one good for another. There is no hierarchy of worth in a vocation's hierarchy of commitment. Even the celibate vocation, which in the Catholic tradition enjoys a special dignity, does not have its primacy because holiness is greater than the transmission and nurturing of life. Its special dignity rests rather on its witness to the passing away of this world and the in-breaking of the Kingdom of God.

V.

Yet, if the basic goods are incommensurable, the defense of this thesis is by no means complete. For we must surely consider the following important objection to it. If we cannot rank the basic goods, how can we make sense of the ordinary notion that, even with respect to violating presumably basic goods, some actions are more gravely wrong than others? We ordinarily suppose, too, that such actions might either involve a graver wrong to a single kind of good (for example, two murders rather than one) or, alternatively, a violation of one basic good rather than another (for example, a lie rather than

[18] While Ralph Mc!nerny has opposed what he terms Grisez's "basic value egalitarianism," Mc!nerny is sympathetic to the thesis that one ought never to act directly against a basic good. See his *Ethio<t Thomistioa,* (Washington, D. C,: The Catholic University of America Press, 1982), pp. 53-54.

a murder) . If we quantify and rank the basic goods, these ordinary judgments are easy to explain. If we refuse to do so, do they become unintelligible?

There are, I think, a number of responses to this objection. At some points, no doubt, these responses share a common foundation. Both clarifying these responses and searching out this common foundation are crucial tasks.

A first response appeals to a pair of analogies, one with a game of chess and the other with a work of music. Suppose, for a start, that two people are playing a game of chess and doing so because they take chess to be a vehicle for intellectual beauty. Now it might happen that one player, on the verge of a stunning combination, is tempted to make an illegal move. (In practice, of course, the move would almost surely be detected.) The temptation might go like this. "The move is not so far from being legal. It only adds a square to the knight's range. It's not like moving a pawn backwards!" We can, indeed, see that some violations of the game are worse than others. So oughtn't we say that while all the rules are important, still they admit of rank ordering? Yes-and no. Breaking some rules is worse in that to do so means a sharper break from the structure of chess; in this sense we can rank the rules. But violating *any* rule means that one is no longer playing chess; so in this sense we cannot rank the :rules, for they are all basic.

And how are we to apply this analogy to ethics? If we see the moral life as a coherent and unified response to basic goods, then a disordered response to any basic good disorders the moral life. In this sense the basic goods do not admit of ranking that would make one merely an instrument for another. To do so denies the unity of the person for whom each of the basic goods is central. But to affirm such a principle of non-instrumentalization does not deny that some violations of basic goods are more wrong than others.

A second analogy, this time with a work of music, might help support the principle of non-instrurnentalization. Consider, say,

a Beethoven symphony, a work of majestic power and beauty. Suppose that for some reason a conductor (to show off an unappreciated virtuosity?) introduces, ·surreptitiously and to a non-expert audience, a series of changes in the composition. Now we can imagine a rough gradation of possible changes: some restricted, others fairly systematic, and still others that altered the whole spirit of the original. In a sense we could rank such changes; some are more egregious than others. But any series of deliberate changes breaks the unity of the original. From this perspective of integral unity, then, we cannot rank order such changes because any aspects of the symphony that are central to its being what it is cannot be so ranked.

Underlying ·both analogies is a single thesis about the human good. It is that the human good is not divisible into atomistic states of affairs that can be variously exchanged to gain greater aggregates of such atomistic states of affairs. Rather the good for the human person, while we can see its distinct aspects, is a unified and integrated reality. But this is what we should expect. We do not experience our flourishing, our integral fulfillment, as neatly divisible nor as measured in precise degrees.

This last point, the inapplicability of precise measures of degree to basic goods, holds not just for one person's flourishing but also for realizing, or losing, basic goods for a number of persons. Thus, while helping one person gain knowledge about important truths i's of great moral significance, it seems a mistake to say that helping five persons to do the same is precisely five times more significant. Nor is one who, say, saves three people from drowning e:x!actly three times the hero that a person is who saves a •single individual. Nor does this claim about the lack of degree of measure deny that oftentimes-because of non-consequential considerations of impartiality or contracted obligation, for example-it is a more coherent response to the basic goods to, say, teach five persons rather than one or to rescue three people rather than one.

Here, of course, the skeptic will suggest a symmetry principle. Even if, the skeptic might say, basic goods are not atom-

istic and do not admit of precise degree, surely it is sometimes, all things considered, more reasonable to promote multiple instances of a basic good than to promote a single instance of that same basic good. And if so, ought IJ.Ot it sometimes, all things considered, be more reasonruble to instrumentalize a single instance of a basic good to realize multiple instances of a basic good, especially that same good? And if it is sometimes more reasonable to do so, is it not sometimes obligatory?

For many this objection is the sharpest quarrel with any natural law system that recognizes moral absolutes. Yet *sober* skeptics, at least, realize that if the objection is not met we, in effect, are in .a position where we are somehow always as morally responsible for what we do not do as for what we do. But this is a dangerous position, for it eliminates " limits " on what one's moral integrity will allow. Thus, if a tyrant reasonably convinces us that he will murder .three persons unless we murder one, it seems that we have no moral choice but to comply with his demand.[19] This " tyrant objection," if nothing else, should make us wary of principles of symmetry. Yet the objection does not, by itself, bring us to the core of the problem with the proposed principle of symmetry.

The core seems to be roughly the following. Morality, Grisez contends, centers on integral fulfillment. Such flourishing comes through the realizing of our potentialities in the actions we perform. Now what essentially characterizes our actions, what gives them their nature and makes them ours, is that they are structured hy deliberate choices for the bringing about of intended ends. We are moral agents only insofar as we are deliberately purposive. To be sure, our actions do not take place in isolation. We perform them in a world of other agents and of causal regularities. And much happens as a result of our actions that is not itself part of, or integral to, our

[19] Phillipa Foot has recently underscored this point as a grave objection to consequentialism. See her" Utilitarianism and the Virtues," *Mind* 94, (1985), p. 198. Grisez has emphasized it in his "Against Consequentialism," *The American Journal of Jurisprudence* 23, (1978), pp. 71-72.

actions. To the extent to which we knew this to be so, in particular cases, we are responsible to some degree for these further effects. Indeed, in some cases this responsibility obligates us to act differently than we otherwise would. (If I own a sporting goods store, I would ordinarily sell 1a gun to a customer with the intention of making a legitimate profit. But if I know that my customer will use it to assassinate a public figure, I must not sell my customer the gun, even though my intention is innocent and does not causally depend on his crime.)

Yet such responsibility is not so great as to make me bring within the intentional structure of my action either an attack on a basic good or the refusal to promote a basic good. For it is only by excluding the one from, and including the other within, the intentional structure of my action that I can act well. Thus, even if I foresee that the tyrant will kill three innocents unless I kill one, for me to comply requires that I bring within the intentional structure of my action a direct attack on a basic good. to suppose a different tyrant, if the threat is to kill innocent people unless I go into a kind of moral exile and give up any participation in the struggle for the common good (which, say, political disenfranchisement might mean), then I need not heed such a threat.

To be sure, cases in which one could be completely prevented from prnmoting the basic goods for which one is particularly responsible are perhaps rare. But they are possible. Consider, for example, attempts to prevent a pastor from carrying out obligations to his people or a.ttempts to prevent parents from caring for their children. And in such cases, while one might foresee that an unintended effect of meeting one's obligation to promote the basic goods would be the 1oss of certain instances of other basic goods, one could act well only by bringing within the intentional structure of one's action the promoting of such basic goods. What falls outside that structure is something for which we can only be indirectly responsible.

There is a second and much briefer " core " point to make about the skeptic's claim that if we sometimes act for the best

results then we ought always to do so, even when such results would fall outside the original intentional structure of one's actions. It is that such further results are not just incommensurable in exact degree but ·are al,so, over the long range, ordinarily unknowable. For any action, even one that seems morally neutral, can set off a chain of events of moral import. If we take the long view, we for the most part simply do not know what the secondary effects of our actions will be. Consequentialism caU.s for an omniscience to which we ought not pretend.

We can summarize, now, the arguments against the charge that if we admit that some wrongs ·are graver than others then we must also order the basic goods in a hierarchy of worth which, in turn, can require us to instrumentalize basic goods.

A first reply, which the analogies with chess and music illustrate, is that the mora] life can he fundamentally flawed by any violation of a basic good even though some violations are graver than others. Any such violation dest:voys the integrity of the moral enterprise. Hence, it is irrational to allow for any such fundamental violation in the hope of somehow enhancing the moral enterprise.

A second reply is that while there are indeed more or lesis gravely w:vong acts, it does not follow from this that "degrees of worth " distinguish one basic good from another or even from a set of such goods. Basic goods are aspects of a unified human flourishing; we cannot assign them a scalar measure.

A third reply, one that is central to defending the moral absolutes of Grisez's na;tural law ethics, is that the moral enterprise centers on that which comes under the intentional structure of one's action. Only secondarily does it bear on the further and unintended effects of one's agency. To deny this would be in effect to eliminate the integrity of human agency, reducing it to the istatus of a causal lever.[20]

Finally, a healthy skepticism *is* in order about our ability to

[20] I owe this image to Bernard Williams. See *Utilitarianism: For and Against,* p. 94.

see the long range effects of our actions. Reason cannot require us to act as consequentialists if we cannot discern the long run consequences of what we do.

VI.

There is a laist objection, directed against the thesis that the basic goods are incommensurable aspects of our flourishing and so cannot be instrumentalized, that the critic might pose. The objection is that while rationality does not *require* us to instrumentalize basic goods it can *allow* us to do so. Moral trade-off.s are at least permitted.

Consider, for example, the classic case of the craniotomy. An unborn baby is so lodged in its mother's birth canal that unless we perform a craniotomy on the baby it is probable that both mother and baby will die. Could there be a harder case? It seems not. And in such a case is it not permitted to do the craniotomy? The basic good of the child's life will be forfeit. But it would soon be lost anyway.

Or consider the case of nuclear deterrence. Perhaps it is not obligatory, ·but is it not at lea;st permitted? Yet, the basic good of the lives of innocent people is held forfeit. But whait if we have every reason to think that only if we pose this threat can the basic good of our democratic polity, an instance of the good of civic friendship, be protected? Could there be a harder caise?

Perhaps there could not be harder cases. But the concession the critic now makes, that the direct violation of a basic good is permissible rather than an obligation of reason, is a hollow one. For if such a concession suffices, we are saying that we can bring within the intentional structure of our actions an attack on a ·basic good, life, and take on the character of wrong in order to do good. But the reply to this is straightforward, given the arguments of Section *V.* For so to act introduces a fundamental incoherence into the moral enterprise and proclaims that who we are is less significant than what happens to occur. Yet to take this step removes the person-as-agent from the heart of the moral enterprise and, in so doing, abandons the original significance of that enterprise.

VII.

Once we have sketched the structure of Grisez's natural law theory, shown its cultural significance for our own situation, and met some chief objections lodged against it, a last consideration seems in order. It is to try to show the theory's place in a more comprehensive framework. I hinted at one such possibility by drawing a parallel between the status of basic goods in natural law ethics and the place of first principles in a foundationalist epistemology. Developing this parallel is the work of another paper. But a bit more could be said here about a different and still larger framework for Grisez's natural law ethics: its place in a fully adequate Christian moral theology. Three points, then, are in order.

The first point Grisez himself underscores. Morality is about the integral flourishing of the person. Yet that we humans should :flourish, that this is good, is only rightly appreciated if we see it as pavt of the continuing fulfillment of Creation. Our flourishing gives testimony to the beauty of the Creator who fashioned us in his image.

But Creation itself is linked to the special character of law that grounds a Christian syisrtem of natural law. For law is not arbitrary power; rather it expresses God's reason, the Eternal Law [of God,] which is (inseparable from) God. This Eternal Law structures all that is created and uniquely structures human nature. Thus, ithe goods which fulfill us do so because God has willed our nature to be as it is. Morality, then, while its proximate subject is human :flourishing, has as its final norm Eternal Law. In this sense, natural law ethics-once we see its place in the drama of Creation-becomes an ethics of the Eternal Law. Historically, natural law ethics has rightly distanced itself from any arbitrary theological voluntarism. But since reason and will are one in God, and since both characterize Eternal or Divine Law, natural law ethics in its complete form locates human flourishing in our reasoned obedience to God's creative will.

A last reflection awaits us. Whatever the conceptual power of a human •system of ethics and however necessary it is that Christian philosophers explore the structure of morality, our experience again and again confronts us with the gap between what we know to he the good and our inability effectively to articulate, pursue, and safeguard the good. Put differently, we for the most part know God's will but repeatedly fall short in representing it and in doing it.[21]

And yet ethics is meant to direct our action. So at the heart of our ethics, we must find God's grace. In the end we must learn that the doing of the good depends on this grace.[22] The philosopher's system and instruction are prologomena. A chief merit of Grisez's Christian natural law ethics is that it so readily confesses that this is so.

JAMES G. HANINK

Loyola Marymount University
Los Angeles, California

21 For St. Paul's classic expression of this human failure, see *Romans* 7, 15-24.

22 As Janice L. Schultz has recently reminded us, Aquinas comments that the very orientation of our will toward pursuing the good is due "not to the direction of reason but to the nature of a higher cause, namely God." See her "Is-Ought: *The Thomist* 49, (1985), p. 13. A relevant citation from Aquinas is *Summa Theologiae,* Ia Hae, 17, 5 ad 3.

AQUINAS AND THE LIBERATIONIST CRITIQUE OF MARITAIN'S NEW CHRISTENDOM

I.

TRADITIONALLY CHRISTIANS have understood that God's Kingdom is not of this world. It is not surprising, then, that history evinces some Christian difficulty in relating to thi's world. One aittitude takes ·a merely indirect interest in the world. Temporal activity is directed to the Church and its mission of saving souls. In this attitude the world has only an instrumental value.[1] Another attitude consists in a naive and innocent forgetfulness of temporal exigencies.[2] A final one encompaisses a disdain for temporal involvement.[8] With its need for economic and political reform, the present century calls for a radical temporal engagement. For example, an indirect engagement by Catholics in the interest of the Church will not suffice. The Church shows an ability, even a resiliency, to exist in quite deficient temporal regimes. If the deficiencies of the present are to be remedied, it will be through the efforts of persons ·acknowledging more than an instrumental value to the temporal.

Jacques Maritain, a Catholic layman, labored to establish the intellectual underpinnings for a radical Catholic engagement in the temporal. The masterpiece of this work is his *In-*

[1] See Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation,* trans. by Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (New York: Orbis Books, 1973), pp. 53-54. Jacques Maritain understands this "Political Augustinianism" as an unfortunate false inference from a medieval non-interest in the material order; see *Integral Humanism,* trans. by Joseph W. Evans (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1973), p. 12. As will be seen, Maritain wishes to transcend a merely instrumental valuation of the world; for example, see, *ibid.,* pp. 176-7.

[2] Maritain, *op. oit.,* pp. 14-15, so characterizes the Middle Ages.

[8] *Ibid.,* pp. 102-3.

tegral HumaniMn. The text understands" humanism" in terms of a this-worldly perfection. Maritian says,

> Humanism tends essentially to render man more truly human, and to manifest his original greatness by having him participate in all that which can enrich him in nature and in history ...; it at once demands that man develop the virtualities contained within him, his creative forces and the life of reason, and work to make the forces of the physical world instruments of his freedom. [4]

That human nature contains such temporal capacities, Maritain later calls the "ontosophic truth." In his *Peasant of the Garonne,* Maritain speaks of the natural end of the world. By " world " Maritain especially understands " our *human* universe, the universe of man, of culture and history in their development here below." [5] The end of this world is three-fold. [6] First is the mastery of nature by man and also the securement of freedom from servitude to other men. Second is the development of the spiritual activities of man, especially knowledge in the forms of wisdom and natural Finally, of " the manifestation of all the potentialities of human nature."

How does a Christian come to make a radical commitment to the realization of these temporal capacities? It is not through any forsaking of his eternal destiny. Rather, for Maritain the temporal engagement follows in and through a deeper appreciation of that eternal destiny. The focus of this deeper appreciation is Christian sanctity. For Maritain only the saint is the true humanist. Why? Maritain concedes that sanctity is first and foremost a love of God. But because God has made

4 *Ibid.,* p. 2.

5 .Jacques Maritain, *The Peasamt of the Garonne,* trans. by Michael O'uddih(Y and Elizabeth Hughes (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968), p. 39.

6 *Ibid.,* pp. 40-1. See also Maritain's, *On the Philosophy of History* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), pp. 125-7. Another apparent reference to the ontosophic truth is Maritain's discussion of "felicite en mouvement," or "l'imparfaite felicite," in *Neuf Legons sur les Notions Premieres de la Philosophie Morale* (Paris: Chez Pierre Tequi, 1949), pp. 99-102. For a diagrammatic rendering of the temporal and eternal planes, see Maritain, *On Philosophy of History,* p. 129.

all in his likeness, the saint's love of God cannot but blossom into a love of all else. Maritain says,

> The saint sees practically that creatures are nothing in comparison with Him whom he loves and with the End which he has chosen. This is a lover's contempt for that which is not his beloved. And the more he despises creatures as rivals of God, or as object of a possible option against God, the more he cherishes them as loved by God, and truly made by Rim good and worthy of being loved. For to love a being in God and for God is not to treat it as a mere means or a mere occasion for loving God; it is to love this being and to treat it as an end, because it merits to be loved, I mean according as this very merit and this dignity of end fl.ow from the sovereign Love and sovereign Lovableness of God. Thus is understandable the paradox that in the end the saint envelops with a universal love of friendship, and of piety-incomparably more free, but more tender also and more happy than the love of concupiscence of the voluptuary N the miser-everything that passes in time and all the weakness and all the beauty of things, everything he has given up.[7]

Meshed with Maritain's understanding of sanctity is the Thomistic idea of God as the source of all being. God is, then, the exemplar of all other things. With sanctity Maritain employs this Thomistic idea to formulate a Christian humanism that proba;bly is not explicit in Aquinas. In his *De Regno* Aquinas construes the vialue of the temporal in instrumentalist terms. The sitate exists simply to serve the interests of the Church.[8] Maritain's humanist position is an ingenious advance within Thomism.

[1] Maritain, *Integral,* pp. 72-3. Also, pp. 89; 90-1. Finally see especially *Peasant,* p. 45: "And by a marvelous reflux, the more [the saint] despises creatures as rivals of God, as objects of a possible option against God, the more he cherishes them in and for *Him* whom he loves, as loved by him and made truly good and worthy of being loved by the love which creates and infuses goodness in all things." Instead of sanctity going from God to man, Gutierrez would have it going from man to God: " A spirituality of liberation will center on a *conversion* to the neighbor, the oppressed person, the. exploited social class, the despised race, the dominated country." *Theology of Liberation,* pp. 204-5.

s" To [the Roman Pontiff, the Vicar of Christ] all the kings of the Christian People are to be subject as to our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. For those to whom pertains the care of intermediate ends should be subject to him to

The attitude of the 1saint made general will characterize a true and integral humanism. [9] Also, since the laity work in the temporal order, Maritain looks to the development of a lay sanctity. [10] The contemporary refraction of the lived dynamics of a lay sanctity, Maritain calls a "New Christendom." This ideal is given lengthy development in *Integral Humanism.*

Maritain's *Integral Humanism* is a powerful and attractive book. In fact the work was influential in Latin American intellectual circles both before and after the Second World War. [11] Nevertheless, recently within these same circles Maritain's New Christendom has been criticized as *passe.* In his *A Theology of Liberation,* Gustavo Gutierrez credits Maritain's New Christendom as having " the advantage of being clear and achieving a difficult balance between the unity of God's plan and the distinction between Church and World." [12] The model is also the approach of many Vatican II texts. Yet for a number of reasons, Gutierrez claims that the New Christendom has outlived its usefulness. These reasons center on the distinction of the temporal and eternal planes or orders implicit in Mari-

whom pertains the care of the ultimate end, and be directed by his rule." Thomas Aquinas, *On Kingship,* trans. by Gerald B. Phelan (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1967), II, 3, no. llO; p. 62. Speaking of the Scholastic distinction between an *infravalent end* and a *means,* Maritain says: Granting these notions, one must remark that in medieval civilization the things that are Caesar's, though clearly distinguished from the things that are God's, had in great measure a ministerial function in regard to them. To that extent they were instrumental causes in regard to the Sacred. Their own end had the rank of means, a simple means in regard to eternal life." *Integral,* p. 149.

9 *Jntegral,* p. 73.

:i.0 *Ibid.,* pp. 122-5. Maritain also points out that not all holy lay people should take on the task of directing the temporal to the eternal. Rather, only those who, " by reason of their gifts and natural inclinations, as well as due to circumstances, feel for it what we can term ... 'a calling'." *Peasant,* p. 43.

11 For personal accounts of the influence of Maritain on Latin American intellectuals, see Rafael Caldera, "Personal Testimony," *The New Echolasticism,* 46 (1972), pp. 10-17; and Alceu Amoroso Lima, "Testimony: On the Influence of Maritain in Latin America," *ibid.,* pp. 70-85.

12 Gutierrez, *op. cit.,* p. 58.

tain's position.[18] Chief among them is a contemporary theological development. The development is encapsulated in the formula: history is one.[14] Gutierrez explains that this theological advance comes from "... a fruitful return to the original thought of Thomas Aquinas."[15] In this return Henri de Luhac is identified as a prominent pioneer.

This new theological stance can be sketched as follows. Reacting to an influential exaggerated distinction between the natural and the supernatural made in Renaissance scholasticism, contemporary theology understands human beings to have presently only one end-beatitude with God. Only one call exists. Not two-as seems involved in a distinction between the temporal and eternal planes. Because the person has this simple finality here and now, then in everything done the person must be understood as working towards this end and no other.

From this theological development, Gutierrez gets liberationist mileage. Again, with the distinction of planes gone, then

[18] For the distinction in Maritain: "Thus, the distinction between the temporal and the spiritual appears as a distinction essentially Christian . . . . Yet, if this distinction of the two orders represents a major gain for the liberty of the spirit, it does not fail to pose by this very fact great and redoubtable problems in the theoretical order and in the historical and concrete order." Maritain, *Integral*, p. 98. Also, *ibid.*, pp. 291-2.

[14] Gutierrez finds four reasons for jettisoning Maritain's New Christendom; vd., *op. cit.*, pp. 63-72. For the primacy of the history-as-one idea, consider its use by Gutierrez: "But, inversely, all struggle against exploitation and alienation, in a history which is fundamentally one, is an attempt to vanquish selfishness, the negation of love. This is the reason why any effort to build a just society is liberating. And it has an indirect but effective impact on the fundamental alienation. It is a salvific work, although it is not all of salvation." *op. cit.*, pp. 176-7. "The very radicalness and totality of the salvific process requires this relationship. Nothing escapes this process, nothing is outside the pale of the action of Christ and the gift of the Spirit. This gives human history its profound unity." *Ibid.*, p. 177. Also, p. 153. For brief replies to Gutierrez's other reasons, see *infra*, n. 54. Finally, in his *The Liberation of Theology*, trans. by John Drury (New York: Orbis Books, 1979), pp. 140-1, Juan Luis Segundo echoes Gutierrez's theological rejection of the distinction of planes.

[15] Gutierrez, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

the end for which human beings are presently working is the Kingdom of God. There is no other finality for human work. The logical result is that economic and social development are invested with a salvific character. They bring about the Kingdom. While Gutierrez explicitly avoids any identification of the Kingdom with these developments, what he does say of the Kingdom does not appear to go beyond a reductionism. In other words, the Kingdom is not, for example, an economy. Rather, the Kingdom is a moral society; it exists in the hearts of men. Yet, basic to the realization of this moral community is the establishment of the said economy.[16]

The intention of my paper is to begin a critical assessment of these two understandings of effecting a radical Christian temporal involvement. Since the bone of contention is the reality or not of the distinction of planes, I will focus on this point. Also, since Gutierrez cites the work of de Luhac as his chief reason for the denial of the distinction, my focus will in-

16 "While liberation is implemented in liberating historical events, it also denounces their limitations and ambiguities, proclaims their fulfillment, and impels them effectively towards total communion. This is not an identification." *Ibid.,* p. 177. Nevertheless, salvation, or liberation, will occur in time: "We have recovered the idea that salvation is an intrahistorical reality." p. 152; "The complete encounter with the Lord will mark an end to history, but will take place in history." p. 168. Compare this to Maritain's understanding of the relation between the Kingdom and history: "[The Kingdom] does not refer to the time of this earth, but to what will come after this time." *Integral,* p. 102; "For the Christian, [the Kingdom of God] will be outside time." p. 101. On the reductionism in Gutierrez, see my text, first quotation *supra,* n. 14; also, *Theology of Liberation,* pp. 166-7. In the Vatican *Instruction on Certain Aspects of the "Theology of Liberation,"* Part IX, para. 3 seems to have at least Gutierrez in mind: "It will be added [by theologians of liberation] that there is only one history, one in which the distinction between the history of salvation and profane history is no longer necessary. To maintain the distinction would be to fall in 'dualism'. Affirmations such as these reflect historicist immanentism. Thus there is a tendency to identify the kingdom of God and its growth with the human liberation movement and to make history itself the subject of its own development as a process of the self-redemption of man by means of a class struggle. This identification is in opposition to the faith of the Church as it has been reaffirmed by the Second Vatican Council."

elude de Lubac. Finally, since both Maritain and de Lubac claim to be Thomistic, my analysis will proceed on the basis of a comparison of both positions with the thought of Aquinas.[11] I begin with de Lubac.

II.

De Lubac's seminal work is *Surnaturel.* Taking advantage of the wide discussion the worik provoked, de Lubac later wrote a more definitive statement of his position, *The Mystery of the Supernatural.* I will use this text for my presentation of de Lubac.

De Luhac takes his start from human nature as he understands it actually to be from his religious belief. Speaking of the human desire for God, de Lubac says,

> For this desire is not some ' accident ' in me. It does not result from some peculiarity, possibly alterable, of my individual being, or from some historical contingency whose effects are more or less transitory. *A fortiori* it does not in any sense depend upon my deliberate will. It is in me as a result of my belonging to humanity as it is, that humanity which is, as we say, 'called'. For God's call is constitutive. My finality, which is expressed by this desire, is inscribed upon my very being as it has been put into this universe by God. And by God's will, I now have no other genuine end, no end really assigned to my nature or presented for my free acceptance, under any guise, except that of ' seeing God '.[18]

As a result of God's call, existing human nature is radically orientated to God. 'lJhe orientation is called constitutive. Nevertheless, the gratuity of the supernatural is safeguarded. As constitutive as this orientation may be, the orientation is still regarded ·as the result of God's free call to beatitude.

17 It is interesting to note that both Maritain, *Peasant,* pp. 50-3, and Gutierrez, *op. cit.,* pp. 168-72, regard *Gaudium et Spes* as supportive of their positions.

1s Henri de Labac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural,* trans. by Rosemary Sheed (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), p. 70. De Lubac identifies this desire for God with Aquinas's notion of the intellect's natural desire to see God; vd., pp. 72-3.

Hence, God is operating in terms of his free designs. He is not paying some debt owed to us.[19]

De Lubac goes on to say that this desire is so radically set in human nature that it remained hidden from the Gentiles. Only Christian revelation with its datum of the divine call lays bare man's desire for God.[20] De Lubac admits a "sign" of the desire. The sign is the amplitude of the human intellect.21 But only Christian revelation assures that the sign is correctly interpreted. [22]

De Lubac concludes that man as he actually exists is directly subordinated to God.[23] Man harbors no other finality. He has no other end. For Gutierrez this thought makes human history with its social, political and economic development a process realizing the Kingdom of God. To understand human history otherwise intvoduces another finality. But de Lubac excludes a second finality. Hence, if there is only one finality in human nature, and man is now in history, then this finality must likewise be so located.

19 *Ibid* .. pp. 123-6; pp. 272-3. Subsequent to the appearance of *Surnaturel,* theological discussion focused on whether de Lubac allowed God the liberty of creating a rational creature without a call to beatitude. Vd., P. J. Donnelly, "Discussion of the Supernatural Order," *Theologioal Studies,* 9 (1948), especially pp. 241-9. In *Mystery,* p. 80 de Lubac seems to allow this possibility: "I do not say that [the hypothesis of pure nature] is false, but I do say that it is insufficient." What de Lubac seems to deny is the conceivability of *existing* rational beings minus their orientation to the supernatural; vd., *Mystery* p. 81•

20 *Ibid.,* pp. 176-7; p. 274. "Certain depths of our nature can be opened only by the shock of revelation. Then, with a new clarity, deep calls upon deep." *Ibid.,* p. 282. "But for us, unlike Cajetan, it is not the absence of any desire that is the reason for that ignorance: rather it is the depth of our desire." *Ibid.,* p. 285.

21 *Ibid.,* pp. 137-8.

22" Similarly, the movement of the intellect, never satisfied with the knowledge it has, constantly rising from cause to cause, can be interpreted as a sign of the spirit's desire-and as we know, this was a consideration particularly dear to the mind of St. Thomas. But in order to interpret that sign so well, to discern so clearly in it the desire to see the first cause in his very essence, it was surely necessary for St. Thomas to be at least 'orientated ' by his faith." *Ibid.,* p. 284.

23 *Ibid.,* pp. 136-7.

In fairness to de Lubac what he says in *A Brief Cateohesis on Nature and Grace* ought be noted. De Lubac distinguishes between the natural and the supematural orders. The natural is what man attains by his own efforts. The supernatural is what man attains by divine grace.[24] With this distinction made, de Lubac takes pains to say that any identifying of human history and salvation is unacceptable. They are" two different orders of reality."[25] De Lubac sounds Maritainian.

But can de Lubac have it both ways: a single end for man but two different orders of reality? *How* can there be an order without ·an end? De Lubac's refusal of another end for man either denies the historical order or saves it by submerging the supernatural into it.

De Lubac's inability coherently to distinguish the natural and supernatural orders is illustrated in another way. With the above sketch of de Lubac's position in mind, one can draw an analogy between the eye and de Lubac's understanding of the created intellect. Just as the eye is made for color, so too the intellect is made for God. But also, just as the eye attains color only with the assistance of light, so too the intellect attains God only with the assistance of grace. With these analogies in mind, de Lubac should conclude that just as the eye sees nothing without light, so too the intellect does nothing without grace. In this scheme .a natural order is impossible..

In my opinion, Gutierrez perceives a correct implication of de Lubac's position. In this respect, he understands the position better than de himself.

Ill.

What is to he thought of de Lubac's position? It appears to be theological. The given reason for his understanding of

[24] "If it is true that the last end of man, his destiny, his vocation, is 'supernatural', that it transcends anything that might be attained by human efforts, or might result from human history, ..." .d. *Brief Oateohesis on Nature and Grace,* trans. by Brother Richard Arnandez, F.S.C., (San Francisco; Ignatius Press, 1984), p. 65.

[25] *Ibid.,* p. 102.

human nature is the revealed knowledge that God has called us to himself. This call cannot be without effect. As mentioned, God's call is "constitutive." The effect is de Lubac's notion of human nature radically orientated to God.

My problem with de Luhac's position is not that God's call has an effect but that the effect is as de Lubac describes.[26] Must God's call effect a Lubacian human nature? Must God's call effect a human nature radically and constitutively orientated to God? These questions express the crucial issue in de Lubac's position. In my opinion the replies to them are negative. At least one alternative understanding exists. It belongs to Aquinas to whom de Lubac claims to be faithful. A sketch of this Thomistic but non-Lubacian human nature follows.

For Aquinas human nature is open to supernatural elevation in and through its intellective capacity.[27] Hence, Aquinas's remarks about the human intellect are of paramount importance. Do any of them indicate a Lubacian human nature?

26 I should mention that de Lubac has done an inestimable service for Catholic theology in laying to rest the "closed pure nature" position. In late Scholasticism the tendency was to conceive pure nature in a strictly parallel way to the supernatural. Hence, in the state of pure nature a *perfect* natural beatitude was held. This thinking had an effect into the 20th century. For de Lubac's critique of this pure nature position, see his *Mystery,* ch. 4. Nevertheless, the cogency of the implications of the Lubacian critique has been criticized: "I could agree with Father de Lubac that a state of pure nature is impossible for a spiritual creature if it were true that the natural end of such a creature, like the supernatural end, had to be a terminative end. This, however, in my opinion is an unproven assumption. Because faith and theology teach the genuinely terminative character of the supernatural end of man, it does not follow that a purely natural end must have the same character." William R. O'Connor, *The Natural Desire for God* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1948), pp. 50-1. At pp. 261-4 of *Mystery,* de Lubac balks at such a natural end. Yet Aquinas holds it; see O'Connor, *op. cit,* p. 87, n. 107. Finally, for an explanation of why Aristotle does not conceive human nature' as unable of itself to reach its perfect end, see Anton Pegis, "Nature and Spirit: Some Reflections on tbe Problem of the End of Man," *P1·oceedings of the Catholic Philosophical Association* 23 (1949)' pp. 69-70.

27 "Dicendum quod sensus visus, quia omnino materialis est, nullo modo elevari potest ad aliquid immateriale. Sed intellectus noster vel angelicus, quia secundum naturam a materia aliqualiter elevatus est, potest ultra suam naturam per gratiam ad aliquid altius elevari." *S.T.* I, 12, 4, ad 3m.

For Aquinas the human intellect is naturally geared to know immaterially the forms of material things.[28] In fact Aquinas repeatedly calls the quiddity of the sensible thing the " proper object" of the human intellect.[29] The explanation is along these lines.[30] Knowledge takes place through the presence of the known in the knower. As a result the mode of the knower will specify the range of the things known. For example, since the human intellect is an immaterial power of the human soul, then it is naturally geared to know sensible things immaterially, Things exceeding that way of being are beyond the natural capacity of the human intellect. These include immaterial substances like God himself and his angels.

The above is already at significant odds with de Lubac. Since the proper object of the intellect is the quiddity of sensible things, then such is the intellect's orientation. The proper object should be expressing the inclination of the power. Unlike de Luhac, Aquinas is not conceiving the intellect to be radically and constitutively oriented to God.

Despite this conclusion, the human intellect is neither closed to elevation to the Beatific Vision nor indifferent to it. On the

2s "Under per intellectum connaturale est nobis cognoscere naturas, quae quidem non habent esse nisi in materia individuali; non tamen secundum quod sunt in materia individuali, sed secundum quod abstrahuntur ab ea per considerationem intellectus." *Ibid, corpus.*

29 " Intellectus autem humani, qui est coniunctus corpori, proprium obiectum est quidditas sive natura in materia corporali existens." *S.T.* I, 84, 7c. "-- puta quidditatem ipsius rei, quae est primum et proprium obiectum intellectus." *S.T.* I, 85, 5c.

ao "Cognitio enim contingit secundum quod cognitum est in cognoscente. Cognitum autem est in cognoscente secundum modum cognoscentis. Unde cuiuslibet cognoscentis cognitio est secundum modum suae naturae." *S.T.* I, 12, 5c. For the Aristotelian background for Aquinas's explanation, see Joseph Owens, "Aristotle--Cognition a Way of Being," edited by John R. Catan, *Aristotle: The Oolleoted Papers of Joseph Owens* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981), pp. 74-81; "Aristotelian Soul as Cognitive of Sensibles, Intelligibles and Self," in Catan, pp. 81-95. Also important is an understanding of how the intellect can be equated with soul. On how Aquinas can maintain this equation for man, see Joseph Owens, *An Elementary Ohristian Metaphysics* (Houston: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1985), p. 320, n. 13.

first: unlike a sense power in regard to an immaterial substance, the human intellect can be supernaturally informed by the divine essence. The reason is that both the human intellect and God are subsisting forms, although God is a more excellent one.[31] As a subsistent form, the human intellect can undergo an increase of its formal amplitude. This increase would allow the divine essence itself to become the thing received. The increase is through a created reality called grace, more particularly the light of glory. A sense power cannot undergo a similar increase of its formal amplitude. The elevation would change the power itself and so destroy it. The elevation is not only beyond the nature of the sense power but against it. Not so for a created intellect. Aquinas summarizes his position this way:

> The divine substance is not beyond the capacity of the created intellect in such a way that it is altogether foreign to it, as sound is from the object of vision, or as immaterial substance is from sense power; in fact, the divine substance is the first intelligible object and the principle of all intellectual cognition. But it is beyond the capacity of the created intellect, in the sense that it exceeds its power; just as sensible objects of extreme character are beyond the capacity of sense power. Hence, the Philosopher says that "our intellect is to the most evident things, as the eye of the owl is to the light of the sun." [32]

Neither is supernatural elevation a matter of indifference. Aquinas speaks of the intellect's natural desire for God. Its place in the intellect's life is described in this way. It was noted that the proper object of the human intellect is the quiddity of sensible things. This quiddity is always a commonality grasped amid an appropriate multiplicity. The oommonality most basic, however, is *ens.* As Aquinas says at *De Ver.* I, le:

[31] For the reasoning, see *S.T.* I, 12, 5, ad 3m. On God as a subsisting form: "Unde cum Deus sit ipsa forma ..." *8.T.* I, 3, 7c. The rationale lies in God's being *esse subsistens,* and *esse* is formal. On the latter, "ipsum esse consideratur ut formale." *S.T.* I, 4, I, acl 3m. Also see Aquinas's reasoning at *S.T.* I, 7, le.

[32] *S.0.G.* III, 54, *Rationes;* as translated by Vernon Bourke, *On the Truth of the Oatholio Faith* (New York: Image Books, 1956), p. 184.

every nature is essentially a being. Because the most basic commonality is *ens,* it becomes understandable how Aquinas also describes the proper object of the human intellect as *ens materiale.*

> The object of the intellect is something universal, namely, *being* and *the true,* in which the act of understanding is itself comprised. Therefore the intellect can understand its own act; but not primarily, since the first object of our intellect, in this state of life, is not every being and everything true, but *being* and *true* as found in material things, as we have said above, from which it acquires knowledge of all other things. [33]

Behind this text is a sophisticated understanding of the two-fold operation of the intellect. A summary of the understanding is the following. [34]

The intellect is not satisfied with knowing simply the forms of sensible things. In its second operation of composition and division, the intellect seeks to reintegrate this knowledge with the things themselves. This second act is described as a kind of ref:lection.[35] By it the intellect attains a more perfect knowledge. The intellect grasps not only the essences of sensible

33 *S.T.* I, 87, 3, ad lm; as edited by Anton C. Pegis, *The Basia Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas* (New York: Random House, 1945), p. 841. The text's implied reference to another life should not be considered as indicative of a philosophical position. For the point that metaphysically speaking Aquinas does not demonstrate activity in the separate soul, see Joseph Owens, "Soul as Agent in Aquinas," *The New Boholastioism,* 48 (1974), pp. 64-72. Hence, reference to *ens intelligible* and *ens universale* as the proper object of the human intellect should be taken in a theological context. For these references, see "sicut et intellectus obiectum est ens universale" *S.T.* I, 105, 4c; " Est enim proprium obiectum intellectus *ens intelligible,"* S.C.G. II, 98, *Hoe autem sio.*

34 For more detailed presentations of how *ens* is grasped using the intellect's two-fold operation, see my articles: *"Esse* as the Target of Judgment in Rabner and Aquinas" in *The Thomist;* 51 (1987), pp. 230-41 and "Thomistic Existentialism and the Silence of the *Quinque Viae," The Modern Sohoolman,* G3 (1986), 157-171.

35 "Indirecte autem et quasi per quandam refiexionem, potest cognoscere singulare, ..." *S.T.* I, 86, le. For other texts on the reflexive nature of the intellect's second act, see Robert J. Henle, *Met hod in M etaphysios* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1980), pp. 69-72, n. 26.

things but the various accidents and dispositions of the sensible things themselves. [36] For Aquinas one of these accidents is the *esse* of the thing. [37]

The object of the intellect's second operation is complex. It includes not only the simple object of the first operation but all the accidents previously left behind in the grasp of that simple object. The second act of the intellect does not, then, merely return the knower to the original multiplicity that was present before conceptualization occurred. The multiplicity is now different because it is more detailed. The picture has gone from glossy to grainy. What had originally been perceived as a line of seamless wholes is now perceived as a line of composites-composite at least in the sense of a thing plus its *esse*.

This new multiplicity sets the stage for another act of conceptualization, another attempt to spy a simple, a commonality in a multiplicity. But since the instances are existential composites, the grasped commonality is the composite commonality called *ens, habens esse.*[38] In each instance, this meaning is seen to hold, although analogically. [39] This object defines the natural range of the human intellect.

[36] "et deinde intelligit proprietates et accidentia et habitudines circumstantes rei essentiam. Et secundum hoc necesse habet unum apprehensum alii componere et dividere." *S.T.* I, 85, 5c.

[37] For texts on *esse* as accidental, see Joseph Owens, "The Accidental and Essential Character of Being in the Doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas," edited by John R. Catan in *St. Thomas Aquinas on the Existence of God: Collected Papers of Joseph Owens* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1980), pp. 63-6. On the grasp of *esse* in the intellect's second operation, see *In I Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a.I, ad 7m; d. 38, q. 1, a. 3c; *In de Trin.* V, 3c.

[38] On the composite nature of *ens,* see Gerald B. Phelan, "A Note on the Formal Object of Metaphysics," edited by Arthur G. Kirn in *G. B. Phelan Selected Papers* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1967), pp. 64-66; "The Existentialism of St. Thomas," *ibid.,* pp. 74-5 and 80-1. Also Joseph Owens, "Accidental and Essential," pp. 78-81. On the conceptualizing of being subsequent to the mind's second act, or judgment, Maritain says, *"C'est a.pres cela* [the act of judgment] qu'un retour de Ia premiere operation de l'esprit sur ce qui a €te ainsi *vu* (mais pas par elle) en produira *une idee,* un concept ou verbe mental qui le designera et sera maniable au discours." *Approohes sans Entraves* (Paris: Fayard, 1973), p. 265.

[39] On the analogous character of *ens,* see: *In I Sent.,* prol., q. l, a. 2, ad 2m; d. Hl, q. 5, a. 2, ad Im; *De Ver.,* 2, Ilc; *S.C.G.* I, 34.

Yet this peak of intellectuality is not the simple end. Aquinas is clear that the philosophical .approach to God is through *ens.*[40] And his works do contain texts presenting an argument for God as *esse subsistens* from the *esse of* sensible things. Joseph Owens has provided Thomistic scholars with profound studies of these texts.[41] For my purposes a presentation of the reasoning of the texts is not required.

What Aquinas calls the natural desire to see God arises at this stage. The conclusion of the reasoning from the *esse* of sensible things is construed in terms of analogical *esse.* This is pruned from analogical *ens* by a judgment of separation.[42] Yet since an analogical concept is a commonality grasped *within* the .differences of its instances,[43] the knowledge of God here

40 Texts in which Aquinas says that the philosopher proceeds from *ens* to God are: *In de Trin.* V, 4c; *De Ver.* X, 12, ad lOm of the second set; *S.T.* I, 44, 2c; *In Meta.,* proem. It should be mentioned that at *S.T.* I, 44, 2c Aquinas considers reasoning based on matter/form principles to peak out at a less than divine being. One proceeds further only by taking up the viewpoint of *ens inquantum ens*.

41 For the texts and commentary, see especially Owens's "The Causal Proposition-Principle or Conclusion?" *The Schoolman,* 32 (1955), p. 329.

42 On the use of separation to think immaterial beings, Aquinas says, "... or by way of negation (as when we separate from such beings whatever the sense or imagination apprehends) ." *In de T1·in.* VI, 2c; Maurer trans., *The Division and Methods of the Sciences* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1963), p. 70. "Instead of knowing the genus of these substances, we know them by negations." *In de Trin.* VI, 4c; Maurer, p. 78. Also, "Quod quidem manifestum potest esse ex consideratione rerum materialium, ... Subtracta ergo materia, et posito quod ipsa forma subsistat non in materia, adlrnc remanet comparatio formae ad ipsum esse ut potentiae ad actum. Et talis compositio intelligendam est in angelis." *S.'l'.* I, 50, 2, ad 3m.

43 On the nature of the analogous concept, Phelan says, "[Analogy] is, indeed, a difference in the very likeness and a likeness in the very difference; not merely a mingling of likeness and difference wherein likeness is based upon a formal identity ancl difference is based upon a formal diversity," from "St. Thomas and Analogy" in *Elected Papers,* p. 114. See also James Anderson, *The Bond of Being* (New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1969), pp. 256-9; Joseph Owens, " Analogy as a Thomistic Approach to Being," *Mediaeval Studies,* 24 (1962) pp. 308-9, and *Elernentary,* p. 88, n. 14; finally Jacques Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge,* trans by Gerald R Phelan

is very imperfect. Any attempt to contemplate *esse* apart from the instance in which it is embodied is futile. As Gerald Phelan once classically expressed it,

> Those who, in spite of all, have tried to look upon being naked and unadorned have been struck with intellectual blindness. And those who have attempted to express it in clear and distinct ideas have sinned against the intelligence. [44]

Nevertheless, the intellect's first operation continues attempting clearly to grasp the nature of this metaphysically reached existent. This continued attempt what Aquinas calls the intellect's natural desire for God. The desire is a particular application of the intellect's first operation. The application comes about once God is metaphysically reached. [45] One author, not cited by de Lubac but who has written extensively on Aquinas's natural desire .for God, summarizes Aquinas's position this way:

> For St. Thomas the natural desire for God is the natural tendency of the intellect for a knowledge of God that cannot be satisfied short of a direct vision of Him once we know that He exists. This does not make the vision of God the natural end of the intellect, for to have an inexhaustible craving for truth is part and parcel of the nature of a spiritual creature. It is important, too, to keep in mind that the natural desire for the vision of God that St. Thomas teaches does not begin to function except on the hypothesis that the existence of God is already known. [46]

Such are the main points Aquinas makes concerning the human intellect *vis-a-vis* God. First, because the intellect is a

(New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), pp. 212-13. As a result of analogy, our metaphysical knowledge of the nature of God and other immaterial substances is "imperfect" and " confused," *In de Trin,* VI, 3c.

44" St. Thomas and Analogy" in *Selected Papers,* p. 100.

45 " Si igitur intellectus humanus, cognoscens essentiam alicuius effectus creati, non cognoscat de Deo nisi an est; nondum perfectio eius attingit simpliciter ad causam primam, sed remanet ei adhuc naturale desiderium inquirendi causam." *S.T. I-II,* 3, Sc. For other texts see O'Connor, *op. cit.,* p. 71, n. '78.

46 O'Connor, *op. cit.,* pp. 55-7. See also p. 27. O'Connor's *magnum opus* on the topic is *The Eternal Quest* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1947).

subsisting form, it is a cognitive power whose formal amplitude can be supernaturally increased to receive the divine essenceo Second, the intellect's proper object is not *esse subsistens* but *ens materiak* In virtue of the implications of its proper object, the intellect has an imperfect knowledge of God. Finally, this imperfect lmowledge excites an intellectual desire to see the divine essence. In these points it is difficult to find de Lubac's understanding of "called" human nature. None of these points, singly or together, amounts to a human nature :radically and constitutively oriented to God. For Aquinas it is not as simple as that. True, only God is man's perfect beatitude. Only God possessed in the Beatific Vision completely fulfills all human desires. Nevertheless, it does not follow that human nature consists in a radical orientation to God. The desire for God emerges in the intellect's life as it achieves its proper object and the implications of that. The desire does not constitute that life. Rather, the desire follows a kind of natural fulfillment and accomplishment in the intellect's life.

This Thomistic intellectual nature can be " called " human nature. It is sufficient for theological purposes. What is important for the theologian is to safeguard the gratuity of the supernatural while not rendering the supernatural superfluous. Aquinas's position does both easily. The supernatural is gratuitous because the human intellect is geared to know only *ens materiale* and the implications of that. Yet supernatural elevation is not superfluous because of the above desire to know God's essence once God is metaphysically reached.[47]

Besides being a logical alternative to de Lubac, Aquinas has two advantages. First, the Thomistic position is experiential; hence apologetically speaking it is more useful. Aquinas explains how the human nature right before our eyes is open to a supernatural calling. Aquinas's analysis is in the light of com-

[47] Gutierrez, *op. oit.*, p. 69, is aware of Aquinas's position as I have described it: "And so there were timid references to an 'eventual and contingent' natural desire mediated through the orientation of human intelligence to being in general (ens *in oommuni)* ." Gutierrez provides no reason for considering the viewpoint inadequate.

mon experience. In principle it is able to be followed by any person, believer or not. In other words, philosophy itself can discern that human nature is so constituted that it may have a supernatural v;ocation. For de Lubac this insight into human nature comes only from a theological vantage point. As mentioned, apart from Christian belief there is only ignorance of a possible supernatural vocation.

Second, de Lubac himself closely ties his position to Transcendental Thomism. [48] Transcendental Thomists are fond of making an orientation to God part of the very dynamism of the intellect. This orientation is regarded as an *apriori* that has a constitutive use for human experience. It enables us to experience things for the :finite things that they are. All of this raises p1,oblems transcending Kant's strictures on metaphysics. In sum, one never really knows whether the analysis brings out merely ways we must think or also ways reality must be.[49] Doing ample justice to the *praeambulae fidei* is a consequent problem. Aquinas's position on" called" nature avoids this difficulty. The intellect's amplitude does not determine *how* things are seen but *what* things are seen. In short, the intellect's formal amplitude does not have a constitutive function in human knowledge. The specifying principle in the act of knowing remains the form of the thing known. Such a principle is not the form of the knower. [50]

48 *JYfystery,* p. 242. See also p. 150, n. 83; de Lubac approvingly quotes, " There is in the teaching of St. Thomas a more considerable element of natural and innate knowledge and desire of God than is generally recognized." Any question about de Lubac's close affiliation with Transcendental Thomism is dispelled by his *The Discovery of God* (New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 1960). Chapters 2 and 3 are laced with Transcendental Thomist themes. On pp. 89-91 de Luhac approvingly quotes from Marechal's, *Le point de depart* ... These quotes are unabashed expressions of Marechal's transcendental philosophy. Concerning these quotes, de Lubac says (p. 89) that they "sum up and provide the foundation" for chapters 2 and 3.

49 For a description of this problem in Ralmer's Transcendental Thomism, see my *"Esse* as the Target of Judgment in Rahner and Aquinas," in *The Thomist* p. 229.

50 See *supra* n. 30. Also, "[The object's] structure comes from the thing known, and not from any apriori in the intellect. In the cognitional order, consequently, the human intellect is something purely potential. In the real

IV.

Yet if a check with Aquinas does not bode well for de Lubac, it does bode well for J\faritain. For Aquinas there is no monism of ends. Aquinas's philosophical analysis of the actual human intellect discerns a finality peaking out in a metaphysical knowledge of God. Besides, Aquinas knows from religious belief that the creator calls us to the vision of him. This call is pursued in a life of grace made available through Jesus Christ. Yet Aquinas's mentioning of the second nowhere leads to a denial of the first.[51] Aquinas allows both descriptions to stand. Both are real. It is not the case that only one is real-the supernatural, and the other is merely a possibility, an abstraction.

Not surprisingly Aquinas formulates a twofold beatitude. Beatitude is perlect and imperfect. Aquinas says,

> Man's happiness is twofold. One is imperfect happiness found in this of which the Philosopher speaks; and this consists in contemplating separate substances through the habit of wisdom. But this contemplation is imperfect and such as is possible in our present life, not such that we can know their quiddity. The other is the perfect happiness of heaven, where we will see God Himself through His essence and the other separate substances. But this happiness will not come through a speculative science; it will come through the light of glory.[52]

The mentioned habit of wisdom is a speculative science. Earlier Aquinas identified metaphysics as the speculative science that attained knowledge of God.[53]

order it is a power of the soul, a faculty, and accordingly something actual. But from the viewpoint of providing anything in the constitution of its object, it is but a potency to be actuated by what comes from the existent." Joseph Owens, "Judgment and Truth in .Aquinas," edited by Catan in *St. Thornas Aquinas and the Existence of God,* p. 51.

51 In fact the first is regarded as a preparation for the second. Aquinas says, "We are endowed with principles by which we can prepare for that perfect knowledge of separate substances but not with principles by which to reach it." *In de Trin.* VI, 4, ad 5m; Maurer trans., p. 84.

52 *In de Trin.* VI, 4, ad 3m; Maurer trans., p. 84.

53 Accordingly, there are two kinds of theology. There is one that treats of divine things, not as the subject of the science but as the principles of the

Later in the *Summa Theologiae* imperfect happiness is described in more detail. Its essence is composite. It contains both a primary and secondary component. The primary is again contemplation of divine things. The second component is the operation of the practical intellect directing human actions and passions.[54] Attendant upon this composite essence of imperfect happiness are: the body and its perfection, external goods, and fellowship of friends.[55]

Is there any difficulty seeing in Aquinas's notion of imperfect happiness Maritain's ontosophic truth concerning the world and its natural structures? I do not think so. Maritain's distinction of planes seems operative in Aquinas himself. In the positions of both thinkers a twofold human finality exists. There is the call to perfect beatitude from God as Father, and there is a call to an imperfect but natural beatitude from God as Creator. Hence, Maritain's subsequent attempt to integrate these finalities in the way indicated above is perfectly appropriate. The challenge will be to show that pursuit of the Christian life does not allow man's natural capacities to lie fallow. As mentioned, correctly to accomplish the integration Maritain uses his insight into Christian sanctity.

In conclusion, the aim of my paper was to begin an assessment of two understandings of effecting a radical Christian temporal involvement, that of Maritain's New Christendom and that of Gutierrez's Liberationism. Since both positions claimed Thomistic inspiration, my assessment proceeded on the basis of a comparison with Aquinas. In sum, the Lubacian basis for Gutierrez's liberationist turn is no necessary thing.

subject. This is the kind of theology pursued by the philosophers and that is also called metaphysics." *In de Trin,,* V, 4c Maurer trans., p. 44. On metaphysics as a speculative science, see *In de Trin.* V, le.

54 "Et ideo ultima et perfecta beatitudo quae expectatur in futura vita, tota principaliter consistit in contemplatione. Beatitudo autem imperfecta, qualis hie haberi potest, primo quidem ut principaliter consistit in contemplatione: secundario vero in operatione practici intellectus ordinantis actiones et passiones humanas, ..." *S.T.* I-II, 3, 5c.

55 See respectively *S.T.* I-II, 4, 6-8.

The human nature able to be called to the supernatural need not be radically and constitutively oriented to the vision of God. In this perspective, Gutierrez's liberationism wears an apparent arbitrariness. This same look at Aquinas, however, supported the distinction of planes implicit in Maritain's New Christendom. The correlative Thomistic points are perfect and imperfect happiness. Gutierrez characterizes Maritain's New Christendom "... as a burnt-out model with nothing to say to the advances in theological thinking." [56] In reply, the distinction of planes is real. In that light Maritain's New Christendom still stands as a shining example of how a Christian integrates both.

JOHN F. X. KNASAS

University of St. Thomas
Houston Twas

[56] Gutierrez, *op. cit.*, p. 72. Gutierrez has three lesser criticisms of Maritain's New Christendom. All three focus on flaws in the distinction of planes in Maritain's notion. Two objections come from the practical sphere. On the one hand, the experience of Latin .American lay apostolic workers showed the planes repeatedly colliding. The very dynamism of evangelization leads to embarrassing political entanglements for the Church. *(Ibid.* pp. 63-4; 102-4) In reply, this experience forgets that for compelling reasons the Church may not wish to speak out. Yet in that regard the action of a layman *as Christian* (as distinct from *as a Christian as such;* Maritain, *Integral,* pp. 294-5) is still appropriate. For example, the Polish hierarchy will maintain the workers' right to unionize but will leave it to the Polish workers to demand that right here and now. In such situations, the lay apostolic worker should leave the plane of apostolic activity and enter the temporal plane *as a Christian.* On the other hand, Gutierrez points out that Maritain's distinction of planes has been used to keep the Church out of politics, especially when the Church's involvement with corrupt authorities becomes evident. In reply, again the Church may have reasons for silence. Nothing, however, prevents a lay person from assuming a position in the temporal plane and from that position acting as a Christian. None of these practical experiences overtaxes the distinction of planes model. Finally, third, a theological development has posed a theoretical challenge to Maritain's distinction of planes. Gutierrez explains that secularization has forced theologians to redefine religion in terms of the temporal *(Theology of Liberation,* pp. 66-8). In reply, the metaphysical inappropriateness of such a redefinition should be evident from my paper.

THE STRUCTURES OF PRACTICAL REASON: SOME COMMENTS AND CLARIFICATIONS

DR. BRIAN V. JOHNSTONE, C.Ss.R., pays particular attention to some of my early work in his recent article, "The Structures of Practical Reason: Traditional Theories and Contemporary Questions."[1] He plainly tries to present my views accurately. Still, Johnstone has overlooked some important things I said about the questions he considers. Moreover, in some cases he either misunderstands the positions I tried to explain and defend or, at least, puts matters in ways likely to cause others to misunderstand those positions. They still seem sound to me, although no doubt open to refinement and development. Therefore, since Johnstone is seriously trying to use my work to advance understanding of important questions, I offer these comments and clarifications to help keep open the way to a more adequate theory of practical reason.

I.

The first question Johnstone considers is: What is the specific truth of practical reason? To explore this question, he compares the theory of practical reason which I articulated with a "traditional" theory, exemplified by the work of Labourdette. Early in this comparison, in pointing out differences, Johnstone offers a summary and criticism:

> If I understand Grisez correctly, he seeks to develop a theory of practical reason such that practical reason, in itself, can be understood-must be understood-without reference to the will FP,[2]

[1] *Tkomist,* 50 (1986), pp. 417-46. Johnstone's article will be referred to henceforth as BVJ.

[2] FP refers to: Germain Grisez, "The First Principle of Practical Reason: A Commentary on the *Summa tkeologiae,* 1-2, Question 94, Article 2,"

p. 193) . Further, he places such stress on the distinct way of knowing proper to practical reason, that he implies that the two (practical and theoretical reason) are quite disparate. These distinctions, I would suggest, are too sharply drawn. (BVJ, p.

I agree with Johnstone in rejecting these positions, for, as formulated, neither is what I tried to explain and defend.

For practical reason precisely is reason directed to a work, which will not be done without an intervening act of an appetitive power corresponding to reason, and that power is the will. Hence, volition is included in the very concept of practical reason, and so it cannot be understood without reference to the will.

But in the place Johnstone cites (FP, p. 193), I did not say that practical reason can be understood without reference to the wilL Rather, having argued that, because practical principles are self-evident truths, they do not presuppose a divine command, I said: "Nor is any operation of our own will presupposed by the first principles of practical reason." The argument for this is: The first operations of will are natural volitions of ends; these volitions presuppose knowledge directing to these ends; the directive knowledge is the principles of practical reason; therefore, the principles of practical reason do not presuppose any operation of our will.[3]

Moreover, I pointed out: "Of course we do make judgments concerning means in accordance with the orientation of our in-

Natural Law Forum, 10 (1965), pp. 168-201. Although I personally agreed with all of the propositions asserted in this article at the time I wrote it, and still agree with almost all of them, I did not and do not consider the theory proposed in it to be my theory, but that of St. Thomas (and, even more importantly, a very good theory) which I tried to understand, explain, and defend. Moreover, had the article not been a commentary, I would have put many things somewhat differently, and would have provided arguments for certain positions which can be taken for granted within the Thomistic framework.

s In FP, p. 193, this argument is introduced by the sentence: "At any rate this is Aquinas's theory," and accompanied by references to his work, to signal the reader that assumptions are being made here which outside the Thomistic framework would require additional support. .Johnstone overlooks the signal.

tention toward the end " (FP, p. 193). One essential function of practical reason is to reach such judgments (concerning means), which presuppose an act of the will (intention of the end). Thus, I by no means sought to develop a theory of practical reason such that it had to be understood without reference to the will.

Johnstone's other statement-that I implied that practical and theoretical reason are " quite disparate "-also is a misleading formulation. For " disparate " means " completely distinct " or " utterly different." However, while I argued that there are great differences between theoretical and practical reason, I also took for granted that there are important similarities.

My article on the first principle of practical reason was a commentary on a text of St. Thomas. Since he compares and contrasts theoretical and practical reason, so did I. But the whole analysis assumes that reason is a single power, and that whatever is characteristic of reason as such is common to both its theoretical and practical £unctions. Theoretical and practical thinking are the same in presupposing the principle of noncontradiction, proceeding according to the valid forms of syllogism, and so forth.

Johnstone sums up the " traditional " position, which he thinks differs relevantly from the one I defended, in two statements: "Practical reason, thus, does not abandon the theoretical structure of reason. Rather, it subsumes it in its own specific finality of directing towards the realization of the good known" (BVJ, p. 424). If "theoretical structure of reason" refers to what characterizes reason as such, I agree with these statements, and the two positions do not differ as Johnstone suggests.

However, Johnstone seems to have a different point in mind. Having argued that no operation of will is presupposed by the first principles of practical reason, I said: " The theory of law is permanently in danger of falling into the illusion that practical knowledge is merely theoretical knowledge plus force of

will" (FP, p. 193). In a note, I added that even excellent recent interpreters of Aquinas "tend to compensate for the speculative character they attribute to the first principle of practical reason by introducing an act of will as a factor in our assent to it." Johnstone quotes this remark and responds:

> This line of criticism to suggest that a speculative or theoretical statement is somehow deficient or weak and needs to be supplemented by the extra force of willing. This debate is somewhat confusing .... Nevertheless, the basic differences are clear: according to one theory, in the basic role of practical reason, the will is necessarily involved; in the other theory it is not. (BVJ, pp. 423-24)

Johnstone then goes on to argue that the speculative understanding is not weak or deficient in force, since it is moved by intense interest in grasping the truth, and that the interpreters of Aquinas were not trying to compensate for a weak theoretical understanding (BVJ, p. 424).

In arguing thus, Johnstone misses the point. I did not suggest that speculative or theoretical statements are somehow weak or deficient, nor did I deny the natural appetite of intellect for truth. I did not say that interpreters of Aquinas were trying to compensate for any weakness in theoretical understanding. My claim, rather, was that some (and I referred to passages in works of Odon Lottin and Gregory Stevens [4] as examples) mistakenly attribute a speculative character to the *first principle of practioal reason,* and then try to compensate for this mistake by invoking an act of will as a factor in our assent to the principle, in order to make it operative.

Johnstone says that the interpreters of Aquinas are not trying to compensate:

> Rather, they are concerned with the interrelationship of theoretical and practical understanding. Thus, they posit an initial grasp of the good, as the object of appetite, i.e. a grasp of a reality, namely

[4] The references to Lottin and Stevens are in FP, p. 1!J3, note 70. It seems to me that these and other Thomistic commentators I cited do say what I said they say, which often is not exactly what Johnstone thinks they say.

the appetite seeking the good as fulfillment and the good calling to the appetite, as that which fulfills. A grasp of that which is real, as true, is proper to the theoretical understanding. In response to that which is grasped, understanding becomes practical. (BVJ, p.

He then adds the two statements, already quoted, summarizing the " traditional " position on theoretical and practical reason.

Toward the end of his article, Johnstone adopts a position similar to the one he attributes to the interpreters of Aquinas whom I had criticized. He realizes that, since on this position, the intellect's first recognition of the good is theoretical, he needs to explain how " ought " can be derived from " is," how a practical proposition can be derived from theoretical knowledge" expressed in such theoretical statements as: Xis a good, or X is a good for humankind, or even X is a good for me." Johnstone suggests:

... that the way in which this might be approached is to recall what these statements are about. While the first recognition of the good may be expressed in the form of a theoretical statement, it is a proposition expressing the subject's being drawn to the good. That consciousness of being drawn and the response of the subject is what is present in awareness and what is expressed (abstractly) in propositional form. For the "traditional" theory, it was not a question of deriving an " ought " from an "is " as if the whole matter were located in the field of abstract logic. The "ought" arose, not from a proposition, but from the exigencies of the real good, and the awareness of this grasped by a moral consciousness where reason and will intimately inter-act. (BVJ, p. 443)

Johnstone's mention here of" moral consciousness" is relevant to another criticism he offers, which I shall consider in section five. At present, I will comment on these two passages only insofar as they concern the principles of practical reasoning.

In both passages, Johnstone uses language ("appetite" and "response of the subject") broad enough to refer either to the will or to nonrational appetites. But it seems that Johnstone means to refer to the will, for the first passage is part of his criticism of my remarks about the role of the will in mistaken theories of practical principles, and the second passage ends with " where reason and will intimately inter-act."

If Johnstone is talking about consciousness of the dynamic relationship between intelligible goods and the will's response to them, I agree that there are theoretical propositions arising from iL But these cannot be the first principles of practical reasoning-" the first recognition of the good by the intellect," to use Johnstone's phrase (BVJ, p. 442) . For the will is a rational appetite, whose operations are specified by intellectual knowledge of a good. Thus, any theoretical proposition arising from consciousness of any act of the will necessarily presupposes a more basic intellectual knowledge of the good, without which the will could not be in act. Consequently, even if it were possible that there were no practical but only theoretical knowledge prior to the will's first operations, that knowledge could not possibJy be based on consciousness of the will's seeking or response, since these either are or presuppose the will's first operations.

But perhaps Johnstone is talking about theoretical propositions based on consciousness of the dynamic relationships between nonrational appetites and their appropriate objects? If so, I grant that people are conscious of such relationships prior to practical reasoning and that such consciousness plays a role in the genesis of the first principles of practical reasoning. (This point will be considered in the third section.)

However, theoretical propositions about these relationships cannot be the principles of practical reasoning. For no matter what these theoretical propositions are about, insofar as they are theoretical they bay only what *is*, not what *is to be*, while practical conclusions do say what is to be. Logically, sound conclusions cannot introduce something not in the premises. And the relationship between principles and conclusions is between propositions, and thus a matter of logic, even if the " whole matter " is not " located in the field of abstract logic." Therefore, the principles of practical reason must say what is to be, and so they cannot be theoretical propositions. [5]

oJohnstone (BVJ, p. 443, note 51) cites Ralph Mcinerny, "The Principles of Natural Law," *Arnerioan Journal of Jurisprudence,* 25 (1980), p. 8, and

II.

In the article (FP) , which Johnstone uses as a chief source, I answered the question, " What is the specific truth of practical reason?" (without asking it), when I said: "Practical reason has its truth by anticipating the point at which something that is possible through human action will come into conformity with reason, and by directing effort toward that point " (FP, p. 176) .

Johnstone overlooks this and apparently thinks I did not answer his question. It is, of course, legitimate to try to elicit from an author's work answers to questions which he or she did not ask. Johnstone tries to do this, articulating for me the following answer to his question:

> If we ask then what is the proper truth of practical reason, it would seem that we would have to say, the conformity of practical reason to its own inner requirements, i.e. to itself or its own directive structure. (BVJ, p. 432)

Johnstone prefers what he thinks is an alternative position: that there are good reasons for holding that " the criterion of truth of practical reason is right appetite, i.e. appetite ordered to the true good of the subject" (BVJ, p. 433) .

However, I agree that the criterion of truth of practical reason is right appetite-given that appetite is in act and is right. For, to repeat a point already mentioned, " we do make judgments about means in accordance with the orientation of our

also an article by William K. Frankena, as calling into question "the rigid distinction" between " ought " and " is " which "was once taken for granted" but "is often called into question in more recent writing." But in regard to the former, see John Finnis and Germain Grisez, "The Basic Principles of Natural Law: A Reply to Ralph Mcinerny," *American Journal of Jurisprudence,* 26 (1981), pp. 22-25. In regard to the latter, Johnstone himself admits in the same note: "Although I would not claim that this would correspond to what I have suggested here, there is sufficient similarity to provide a basis for discussion." Since logic is rigid, thinkers as different as St. Thomas arid Hume agree that it is impossible to derive "ought" from "is." But St. Thomas is harder-headed even than Hume and his followers (see FP, p. 195, note 74.)

intention toward the end" (FP, p. 193). Every practical judgment concerned with means needs a criterion of its truth. That criterion is the intention of the end-ultimately that intention (of the true ultimate end) because of which the will is called "right appetite." [6] Thus, bringing judgments about means into line with right appetite will bring what is possible through choosing and using those means into conformity with reason.

Still, the will cannot be right appetite until it is in act with respect to the goods one naturally wills. It cannot be in act with respect to these goods unless they are proposed by the intellect. Johnstone thinks they are proposed in theoretical judgments; above, I have tried once more to clarify the position that they are proposed by the principles of practical reason.

The account of practical truth which Johnstone tries to articulate on my behalf is not relevant to the truth of practical judgments directing means to ends, but only to the truth of the principles of practical reasoning. It should now be clear that their truth cannot be in conformity to right appetite. But it does not follow that the only alternatives are that these principles either are theoretical truths or that their truth is in their conformity to practical reason's own inner requirements (or to itself or to its own directive structure).

To clarify the alternative I defended, it will help to look at Johnstone's summary of the contrast between it and the "traditional" theories, which he here calls "inclusive":

> For the inclusive theories, at least as far as I have understood them, the underlying structure to which all is ultimately referred is the structure of reality; the rational world order which is pregiven to reason. For Grisez, on the other hand, the underlying

[6] See St. Thomas, *S.t.*, 1-2, qu. 57, art. 3, ad 3; *In Eth.*, vii, 2. Johnstone evidently is confused, since he realizes (BVJ, p. 431) that the criterion of right appetite applies only to practical judgments about means, and so could not possibly be an alternative to what I tried to clarify about the truth of the primary precepts of practical reason. For Johnstone, the real alternative is that these principles are both theoretical truths and imperatives (BVJ, pp. 442-43). He apparently sees no logical difficulty in this.

structures are the inner structure of practical reason itself, and the structure of intelligible actions. (BJV, p. 428)

This statement of the two positions makes the position I defended sound Kantian, while I criticized the other position on precisely that score.[7] However, I will not pursue this point.

The important point is that Johnstone omits the position I actually defended. For while I denied that practical knowledge refers to intelligible reality pre-given to reason, I by no means asserted that the principles of practical reason refer to the structures either of practical reason itself or of intelligible actions. Instead, I said:

... the practical mind is unlike the theoretical mind in this way, that the intelligibility and truth of practical knowledge do not attain a dimension of reality already lying beyond the data of experience ready to be grasped through them. No, practical knowledge refers to a quite different dimension of reality, one which is indeed a possibility through the given, but a possibility which must be realized, if it is to be actual at all, through the mind's own direction. The theoretical mind crosses the bridge of the given to raid the realm of being; there the mind can grasp everything, actual or possible, whose reality is not conditioned upon the thought and action of man. The practical mind also crosses the bridge of the given, but it bears gifts into the realm of being, for practical knowledge contributes that whose possibility, being opportunity, requires human action for its realization. (FP, p. 176)

In other words, *the truth of practical knowledge with reS'pect to its first principles is their adequation to possible human fulfillment considered precisely insofar as that fulfillment can be realized through human action* (which itself will embody and carry out practical intellection and volition).

This possible human fulfillment neither is an order of reality pre-given to reason nor the inner structure of practical reason itself. Rather, it is what human persons can be-the content of all the possible hopes of human individuals and communities.

[1] In this case, I anticipated the misunderstanding and tried to prevent it (see FP, pp. 197-98), because I detected hints of it in some Thomistic commentators (cited there in notes 76-78).

The given reality of human nature with its capacities and natural inclinations mediates this content's possibility, and its realization depends not only on the structures of both practical reason and possible actions but also on the exercise of practical reason, right choices of actions, and the carrying out of these choices.

Since the realization of possible human fulfillment depends on the truth of practical knowledge rather than vice versa, the adequation which is the truth of the first principles of practical reason is not conformity to a pre-given world order. But neither is it some sort of formal " conformity." In this case, the intellect's adequation is not its conformity *to what it knows,* but the conformity *in what it brings about by knowing to itself.*[8]

III.

Johnstone thinks that the "traditional " theory involves a "classicist" view of the world, and suggests that my "emphasis on the inner structures of reason itself " represents a " turn to subjectivity" which might enable me to move away from that view (BVJ, p. 4£8) . But it should be clear by now that the theory of pmctical truth which I defended involves no turn to subjectivity.

However, the theory I tried to explain is an alternative to a :now widely-rejected theory of natural law, which was accepted by many Catholics before *1965,* when I wrote the article on the first principle of practical reason. That rejected theory ignored historicity. According to the theory I defended, human nature changes in the sense that the possible human fulfillment

s If all adequation were in the conformity of the intellect to what it knows, there simply would be no practical knowledge, for in that case reason would never bring about order but only find it pre-given. As for " the conformity of practical rea·son to its own inner requirements, i.e. to itself or its own directive structure," which is Johnstone's attempt (BVJ, p. 432) to articulate the position I defended, I am at a loss as to what the phrase means, though it sounds rather like Kantian formalism.

which can be realized in and through human action develops in the course of history as humankind unfolds its potentialities. [9]

Having attributed to me a turn to subjectivity with respect to the proper truth of the principles of practical reasoning, Johnstone also thinks he sees an important problem:

> ... the theory seems to contain a difficulty in the way in which it construes "the good". Thus, practical reason has an interest in grasping the goods as providing the necessary objectives for intelligible actions. Similarly, it is concerned with "affinity" [of the person for the good based in natural inclinations] as the basis of possibility of intelligible actions. But does it account sufficiently for the good as appealing to, as moving or attracting? Does it account adequately for affinity as embodying response or love of the subject for the good (BVJ, pp.

Johnstone is talking about a passage in which I tried to explain the statement of St. Thomas that reason grasps as goods all the objects of human natural inclinations (FP, pp. 170-71, 180).

Once more, the difficulty Johnstone perceives arises not from the theory I defended, but from a confusion. The account of how reason grasps as goods the objects of the natural inclinations makes explicit only part of the way the theory as a whole construes" the good." Prior to reason's grasping the objects of the natural inclinations as ends to be pursued by action, those objects in various ways " move " and " attract " nonrational appetites, which ·sometimes are experienced. And because of reason's grasping the objects of the natural inclinations as possible reasons for acting, these reasons for acting " move " and " attract " the will, specifying the basic natural volitions which underlie every subsequent response of the subject's rational love for any good and every subsequent choice to act for any good.

As I said near the end of section one, we •are aware of our

[9] See Germain Grisez, *Oontraception and the Natural Law* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1964), pp. 115-21. This book will be referred to henceforth as CNL. For a more analytic treatment of the place of historicity and its distinction from historicism, see Germain Grisez, "Moral Absolutes: A Critique of the View of Josef Fuchs, S.J.," *AnthropoB,* 1:2 (October 1985), pp. 169-77.

nonrational appetites and their corresponding objects prior to the formation of the principles of practical reason, and this awareness plays a role in the formation of these principles. The principles of practical reason are self-evident truths, not conclusions derived from prior knowledge. However, like the principles of theoretical knowledge, these practical principles presuppose experience on which the intellect works.

For example, nonrational appetites which lead to the behavior required to preserve life are experienced by everyone from infancy. A baby gets hungry, cries, nurses, and is satisfied. This experience could be the basis for theoretical insights: " Crying gets food," " Eating satisfies hunger," and so on. But a normal child soon shows that it has grasped a practical truth: Eating food (when hungry) is a good to be pursued by action. There are many similar specific starting points of practical reasoning, based on the natural inclinations of human persons as organisms. Together, these specific principles can be summed up in a formula for a whole category of basic human goods: Life-including health, safety, and the handing on of life-is a good to be protected and promoted.

The meaning of " good " which is relevant in forming such practical principles is "possible reason for intelligent action." But such a reason for action carries with it all the dynamism both of the nonrational appetition underlying the principle and of the volition to which it leads. Hence, the theory does account for the good a,s appealing, moving, and attracting, and also for the subject's response to or love :for the good. The theory itself does not construe the good a way which lacks dynamism. Rather, the formalism Johnstone imports impoverishes the good which is a reason for intelligent action, so that the good thus understood seems to him inadequate to the phenomena.

Johnstone also notes that in my early works with which he is concerned (FP and CNL) he does not find the distinction between making and acting; he thinks that sometimes I seem to

be concerned with action and at other times with making (BVJ, pp. 433-34). The reason why I did not mention the distinction in the article is that St. Thomas does not mention it in the text I was commenting on, and it is irrelevant to the points I wished to make.

In the book (CNL) , not only the passage to which Johnstone refers but the whole exposition of the theory I defended is concerned exclusively with moral action, not with making. However, the distinction between ma.king and acting was used in that work, when I criticized a form of consequentialism which I there called " situationism." [10]

Johnstone next suggests that the lack of the distinction between making and acting is important:

> Does the lack of this clear distinction have any significant consequences? It could be argued that it does. In the first place, Labourdette's conception of the proper regulative function of practical reason, as applied to acting, requires him to point to the ultimate regulative principle of acting as conformity to the *ultimate end of human living.* Although Grisez occasionally refers to the ultimate end (FP, p. 183; CNL, p. 59) the concept has no real place in his theory; indeed, he seems to set it aside explicitly in some passages [footnote omitted]. Perhaps one of the reasons for this is his concern that, if we posit an ultimate end, this would imply a hierarchy of goods and thus the possibility that one or some basic goods could be subordinated to others. This Grisez clearly wants to reject. (BVJ, p. 434)

Here, Johnstone's attempt to understand the theory which I tried to explain seriously fails.

[10] See BVJ, p. 434, note 34, where he takes the metaphorical expression, "practical reason shapes action from within," as evidence, that I sometimes seem to refer to making rather than to acting. See CNL pp. 54-55, for the use of the making-doing distinction in the critique of " situationism." For a more adequate formulation of this line of criticism, see German Grisez et al., *The Way of the Lord Jesus,* vol. 1, *Christian Moral Prilncipfos* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983), chapter 6, questions B and G. (This book will be referred to henceforth as CMP.) The basic error of consequentialism or proportionalism is to try to reduce doing to making, but I usually do not say this in arguing against it, because its proponents can l'eject that argument as question begging.

First, to confirm the statement, " he seems to set it [the ultimate end] aside explicitly in some passages," he refers not to any passage in my work, but to a page in an article by Ralph Mclnerny, which does not support Johnstone's point. For on that page Mcinerny simply notes (and commends) the fact that I do not draw from " the concept of ultimate end as highest superordinating good the implication that there is some one goal or course of action that all men should pursue." [11]

Second, the references Johnstone provides when he says "Grisez occasionally refers to the ultimate end" are not to the most relevant passages even in the works cited. For toward the end of the article (FP) , I explicitly discussed the ultimate end:

> The will necessarily tends to a single ultimate end, but it does not necessarily tend to any definite good as an ultimate end. We may say that the will naturally desires happiness, but this is simply to say that man cannot but desire the attainment of that good, whatever it may be, for which he is acting as an ultimate end [note omitted]. The desire for happiness is simply the first principle of practical reason directing human action from within the will informed by reason.
> Because the specific last end is not determined for him by nature, man is able to make the basic commitment which orients his entire life. (FP, pp. 199-£00)

And the explanation goes on.

Johnstone also overlooks the hrief but complete sketch of the account of the ultimate end I provided in the book (CNL). The central paragraphs in that account concern the relationship between the basic human goods and the ultimate end:

> In fact, it is only possible for man to love all of the goods properly if he considers each of them a participant in perfect goodness. Only in this way can he keep all of them separate from perfect goodness

[11] Mclnerny, *op. cit.,* p. 7. Johnstone does not mention and may be unaware of a study written during the same academic year as FP and CNL: Germain Grisez, "Man, the Natural End of," *New Catholic Encyclopedia,* 9, pp. 132-38. Had Johnstone considered this study, he would have seen that the account of the true last end which I defend is not so different from that common to several other Catholic thinkers vvho have carefully considered the problem.

but irreducible to any other particular value, for only in this way will he see that each good uniquely represents the perfect good itself without ever encompassing its absolute goodness.

This complex orientation and delicate balance could provide man with a basis for establishing orderly direction in his life. Although the unity would not be monistic and although the actual achievement of goods could not be definitive, a man's love of all proportionate human goods as participations in pure goodness could guide him toward an existence both full and open.

The end of man, according to this theory, would be to achieve, insofar as possible, the goods accessible to man, and to maintain permanent openness for an even greater achievement. To this end moral action is naturally proportionate, simply because that action is morally good which is as proportioned to this end as human wits and freedom can manage.

Thus far philosophy. If the teaching of the Christian faith be considered .... (CNI,, pp.

Had Johnstone paid attention to this passage, he could hardly have thought that the theory I tried to articulate has no real place for the concept of ultimate

On this theory, the ultimate end does not by itself imply a hierarchy among the basic human goods, insofar as they are principles of practical reasoning. But it does involve a twofold hierarchy. :First, human goods are subordinated to the perfect good (God). Second, particular human goods (which could be considered as ultimate in themselves and pursued immorally) are subordinated to the whole set of human goods (which are considered as participations in perfect goodness and can be pursued in a morally upright way) .[12]

12 If the basic human goods are considered not simply as principles of practical reason, but in the light of the true ultimate end and first principle of morality (known either by reason or by faith) as constituents in any possible upright plan of life, there are further morally obligatory priorities among them. For moral goods such as practical reasonableness and justice are morally superior to the substantive goods such as truth and life. Moreover, among the moral goods, religion (harmony with the more-than-human source of meaning and value, i.e., with the good itself in which all human goods participate) is superior to the rest. See CMP, chapter 8, question I; chapter 20, question D; chapter 34, questions D-G.

A related point deserves clarification. In the early works which Johnstone uses, I confused two propositions: (1) that there are many *irredu0ible categories'* of basic human goods, none of which as principles of practical reason is univocally more or less good than the others; and (2) that the *instantiations* of goods in prnspective objects of choice are incommensurable, so that it is useless to try to guide free choices by saying: " Choose the greater good," or: " Choose the lesser evil!' Later, I realized that these two propositions are distinct. That distinction is clear, for the second proposition holds true even of instantiations of goods within the same category of basic goods-for example, when someone chooses between two possible marriage partners.

I still think that both of these propositions are true. But if the first proposition were false, that would not undercut the second. Therefore, even if the objections Johnstone makes to the theory of practical reason which I defended were sustained, the argument involving the second proposition against the oommensurability required by consequentialists or proportionaiists would be untouched. [13]

V.

Since the true ultimate end specifies the :first principle of morality, Johnstone, in ignoring the preceding account of the ultimate end, also overlooked the account which accompanied it of the first principle of morality. He points out that some think the first principle of practical reason is the first principle of moraiity, and then says:

13 The argument against consequentialism or proportionalism was freed from the early confusion by 1977. See Germain Grisez, "Choice and Consequentialism," *Proceedings of the Catholic Philosophical Association,* 51 (1977), pp. 144-52; "Against Consequentialism," *Arnerican Journal of Juris11rudence,* 23 (1978), 21-72. The latter is the fullest statement of the case, but it was updated by CMP, chapter 6, and further refined and updated in John Finn.is, Joseph M. Boyle, Jr., and Germain Grisez, *Nuclear Deterrence, 1llorality and Recilisrn* (Oxfonl and New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), chapter 9.

In Grisez's account, however, the first principle [of practical reason] is not the first principle of *moral* consciousness, but the first principle of *directive* consciousness. (It includes all directives and prescriptions, whether to true goods or apparent goods, whether to moral acts or immoral acts.) It is thus, not the basis for the unity of ethics, but the basis for the unity of prescriptions. What then is the basis for the unity of ethics and moral consciousness in Grisez's theory? I find it difficult to discover what this might he. (BVJ, p. 449l)

Johnstone goes on to suggest that a theory in which the first recognition of the good by the intellect takes the form of theoretical knowledge and in which the "ought" of pmctical reason arises in moral consciousness does better justice to the unity of the moral subject. I dealt with some aspects of this argument in the first section. Why Johnstone thinks the theory he prefers does better justice to the unity of the moral subject is puzzling. But I can answer the question concerning the basis for the unity of ethics and moral consciousness in the theory I defended.

Johnstone oversimplifies the account I gave of the first principle of practical reason when he says that it includes all directives and prescriptions. It does, but I also pointed out that "first principles do not sanction error" (FP, p. 188) and that " bad action fulfills the requirement of the first principle less perfectly than good action does" (FP, p. 189).

Moreover, Johnstone overlooks the main reason why the first principle of practical reason cannot be the first principle of morality: Immoml acts are inconsistent with the first principle of morality; but they are nevertheless human acts directed toward some human good (or some part or aspect of such a good) ; and so immoral acts are not inconsistent with the first principle of practical reason. To deny this entails that the thinking which leads to immoral choices is irrational-e.g ., confused or insane-but if that were so, they would not really be immoral choices.

Since there is an ultimate end, there is a first principle of morality. In my early work, with which Johnstone is con-

cerned, I formulated it: " Whenever it happens that an attitude of nonarbitrariness toward the basic human goods requires us to have a certain intention, and that intention requires a certain action or omission, then we have a definite obligation " (CNL, p. 69). I no longer consider that formulation adequate. The current formulation of the first principle of morality is:

> In voluntarily acting for human goods and avoiding what is opposed to them, one ought to choose and otherwise will those and only those possibilities whose willing is compatible with a will toward integral human fulfillment.[14]

"Integral human fulfillment " does not mean individualistic self-fulfillment; rather it is the ideal of the whole human community flourishing in all the human goods. This current formulation corresponds very closely to the early account of the ultimate end, quoted above, which Johnstone overlooked.

Of course, since the first principle of morality is not identical with the first principle of practical reason, a moral consciousness which is disintegrated by immorality will lack perfect unity as moral consciousness. For example, a Christian who simultaneously commits a mortal sin (which cannot be directed to the true last end) and maintains a commitment of true although not living faith (which is directed to the true last end) does not have a perfectly unified moral consciousness. Still, by virtue of the principles of practical reason which even sinners cannot ignore, such a person has the unity of practical consciousness necessary to reflect and become fully aware of his or her disintegrated moral consciousness.

VI.

Johnstone's second major question is: What is the nature of the requirement of practical reason? (I would rather formulate this question: What is the source of the " is to be" in the first

[14] CMP, chapter 7, question F. It should be noted that in the light of faith, "integral human fulfillment" turns out to refer to the fulfillment of everything in Christ-i.e., the heavenly kingdom: see chapter 19, questions A-C; chapter 24, question D; chapter 34; questions D-F.

principles of practical reason?) To this question he devotes only a brief section. He summarizes the position I defended: "Thus, in Grisez's theory, the requirement of practical reason does not arise from any external factor at all, but solely from the nature of practical reason itself" (BVJ, p. 488). Depending on how one understands "any external factor," this summary might be accepted as helpful or rejected as misleading.

According to positions Johnstone considers as alternatives to the theory which I defended, the "is to be" is grounded either in theoretical knowledge, a reference to God, a divine command, a human volition, or the unconditional demand of moral goodness (BVJ, pp. 486-38). Now, all of these are factors external to the first principles of practical reasoning, in the sense that they are neither included in the meaning nor necessarily included in the reference of every such principle. (Some first principles do refer to some of these realities; for example, the principle which proposes religion as a basic good makes reference to God.) Hence, if one understands "any external factor at all" to refer to these factors, I do deny that the "is to be" of practical principles is grounded in an external factor.

However, the principles of practical reason are truths. Although they are self-evident, they do refer to a reality which transcends practical reason itself. That reality, as explained above, is possible human fulfillment, considered precisely insofar as that fulfillment can he realized through human action. Since the truth of the principles of practical reason is in their adequation to that reality, the "is to be" of these principles arises in part from it. That reality transcends "the nature of practical reason itself"; indeed, it transcends the conformity of practical reason "to its own structures as practical." It presupposes these, of course, but also includes what could really fulfill people as individuals and in communities-life and truth, integrity and friendship, justice and holiness, and so forth.

The "is to be" of the principles of practical reason plainly depends in a special way on the nature and act of practical intellect itself, just as the "is" of a theoretical truth depends in

a special way on the nature and act of the theoretical intellect. For neither theoretical nor practical truth could exist without appropriate acts of the intellect. But neither sort of truth is merely formal.

In sum, according to the theory I defended, the requirement of practical reason does not arise solely from the nature of practical reason itself. Rather, this requirement-the "is to be" of the principles of practical reason-arises in part from an external factor, namely that reality transcendent to practical reason which is signified by the word "good" in the first principle: Good is to be done and pursued.

VII.

Johnstone's third question is: Does the requirement of practical rea,son have an imperative quality? Introducing his treatment of this question, he asks another: " Why is this question important in Grisez's analysis? " To answer the latter question he says: " Grisez wants to move away a theory which has its basic foundation in an imposed imperative (the will of God) ,"and: "He also wants to move away from a theory which takes its foundation in merely theoretical statements." To avoid the second, Johnstone says, Grisez "must give the principle the status of a precept" but to avoid the former he "may not give that precept the status of an imperative " (BVJ, p. 439) .

It seems to me that to introduce in this way the position which I tried to explain-Grisez *wants* this and *wants* that-is to suggest that it is posited arbitrarily. Johnstone does try to give the reasons for the position, but the manner in which he presents the case makes it appear that the arguments merely rationalize a prejudice, rather than cogently ground a rationally affirmed position.

To clarify the question, one must bear in mind that Johnstone and I agree that, among the various acts of practical reason, imperatives have an important place. Thus, the question is not exactly whether the requirement of practical reason has an imperative quality. To that, the answer is: Sometimes.

The question here Are the first principles of practical reason imperatives? The position I defended is that they are not; Johnstone thinks they are.

One argument Johnstone offers is that the position I defended

> ... seems to presume that if we accept that the first principles are imperatives, we must also accept that they are ultimately imposed by an external authority. This does not appear to be necessarily the case; could there not be an imperative arising from the moral consciousness of the autonomous person (BVJ, pp. 439-40) ?

In this argument, Johnstone ignores half of the reasons I offered to show that the principles of natural cannot be imperatives. For I tried to show not only that their prescriptive force does not express an act of an external authority (God), but that it cannot presuppose any operation of our will (FP, pp. 193-96) . In making this point, I criticized in particular the position that a person's decision makes discourse practical (FP, p.195).

Johnstone next suggests that it is very difficult to account for a precept of practical reason without reference to the will (he means: without presupposing an act of the will). He explains:

> The "traditional" theory, at least in one of its forms, explained the matter as follows. Reason can intimate a direction in two ways: in one way it does so absolutely, i.e. when the intimation is expressed in the indicative mode, as when someone says to another, "This is to be done by you." In the second way, reason intimates something to someone, *moving* him to do it. This kind of intimation is expressed in the imperative mode: "Do this!" [note omitted]. In this case the imperium of reason participates in the preceding act of the will and in this way has the power to move. Grisez takes this into account in forming his own argument. (BVJ, p. 440)

The footnote refers to the place where St. Thomas states this distinction, just as Johnstone presents it.[15]

[15] *S.t.,* 1-2, qu. 17, art. I. Johnstone, while noting (BVJ, p. 440) that I mad.e use of the distinction, again fails to notice the signal pointed out in footnote 3, above.

Johnstone next endorses the " traiditional " view that practical reason presupposes an act of will (BVJ, pp. 440-42). This has been dealt with above. The point to be noticed here is that even if the first principles of practical reason presupposed some act of the will, it would not follow that they are imperatives.

For the volition which precedes an imperative is not any and every sort of will act, but a choice. Before one says, whether to oneself or to another," Do this!" one has to have been aware that it might or might not be done, considered the possibility of doing it (or getting the other to do it), and chosen to do it (or to try to get the other to do it) .[16] So, if the principles of practical reason were imperatives, they would presuppose choices. And so, Johnstone would have to say that antecedent to direction by practical reason, one could not only will goods ,as ends but even choose among open options. Plainly, however, choices are specified by judgments directing toward goods-that is, by practical judgments. Therefore, even if the first principles of practical reason presuppose some acts of the they surely are not imperatives.

16See, St. Thomas, *8.t.*, 1-2, qu. 17, art. l; art. 3, ad l. Janice L. Schultz, "Is-Ought: Prescribing and a Present Controversy," *ThomiBt*, 49 (1985), 12, similarly tries to show (what she thinks is the position of St. Thomas) : "The first principle of practical reason is an imperative (=prescription) expressed by a gerundive." She overlooks the fact that for Aquinas imperatives pre· suppose choices. She also thinks it supports her vie'lv-that some volition is prior to human cognition of the first and self-evident principles of practical reason-to point out: "W11ile it is true that Aquinas contends that no willing is possible without prior apprehension, he also speaks of the first act of the will, i.e., its necessary orientation towards the universal good, as due not to the direction of reason but to the nature of a higher cause, namely God." She cites texts to support this point, but with creditable honesty also cites texts which show that "every act of the will is preceded by an act of the mind" (her note 52). I think the solution to the seeming inconsistency is: God (not :practical reason) is the first mover of the will in the order of *efficient* causality, but even the very first act of will is *specified* by an act of practical reason. Peter Simpson, "St. Thomas and the Naturalistic Fallacy," *Thomist*, 51 (1987), 51 65-69 accepts Schultz's conclusions as established; thus, his attempt to critize "the Grisez/Finnis position" also fails. Both Schultz and Simpson however, raise some interesting questions about the relationship between *is* and *ought*, and so their efforts are worthy of careful study.

Johnstone also invokes the authority of authors who refer to the first principle of practical reason as an " imperative," although he notes that they do not raise the problems I addressed **(BVJ,** p. 442). This argument from authority is weak. Some authors, influenced by legalism, probably confused the concepts of imperative and precept; noticing that St. Thomas calls practical reason's principles " precepts," and not seeing how there can be prescriptive truths, they considered them imperatives.

Such confusion is the more likely on the part of those who think that the fir:st principle of morality and the first principle of practical reason are identical. For such authors often propose as the first principle: "Do good and avoid evil!" which they consider to be a divine command. The use of " categorical imperative " in Kantian ethics to refer to the supposed first moral principle no doubt also contributes to the confusion.

* * *

Although other points in Johnstone's article could be challenged, the preceding .should be sufficient to clarify the principal matters concerning which he and I differ.

GERMAIN GRISEZ

Mount Saint Mary's College
Emmitsburg, Maryland

QUASI-FORMAL CAUSALITY AND ' CHANGE IN THE OTHER': A NOTE ON KARL RAHNER'S CHRISTOLOGY

characteristic and prominent of the claims made by Karl Rahner about the incarnation are the following three.

(1) Only the Logos, the second Person of the Trinity, and not the Father or the Holy Spirit, can be incarnated. [1] Granted there is to be a mission *ad extra* of the Logos, what comes to be is the hypostatic union of the Logos with some created nature, and indeed, with a human nature and a human nature alone. [2]

(8) The Logos, immutable in himself because identical with the divine nature, is mutable in the " other" of the human nature which he assmnes hypostatically. [3]

I am concerned in this article with how these three claims are related to a fourth, more generally theological, claim of Fr. Rah...ner's, namely:

(4) The supernatural self-communication of God to what is not God must be understood as a kind of quasi-formal causality exercised by God on the creature. [4]

1" Current Problems in Christology," *Theological Investigations* I, trans. Cornelius Ernst (Baltimore: Helicon, 1961), p. 183; "On the Theology of the Incarnation," TI IV, trans. Kevin Smyth (Baltimore: Helicon, 1966), pp. 106, 115; "Nature and Grace," TI IV, p. 176 "The Theology of the Symbol," TI IV, p. 236; *The Trilnity*, trans. Joseph Donceel (New York: Seabury Press, 1974), pp. 29, 84, 86.

2" Current Problems," p. 197; "Theology of the Incarnation," p. 116; "Theology of the Symbol," pp. 237-238; *'Prinity*, pp. 27, 32-33, 89-90.

3" Current Problems," pp. 175-182, esp. p. 181, note 3; "Theology of the Incarnation," pp. 112-115.

4 "Some Implications of the Scholastic Concept of Uncreated Grace," TI I, pp. 329-333, 334ff.; "Nature and Grace," p. 175; *Trinity*, p. 36.

In Christology, this fourth claim means that the Logos is quasi-formally related to the humanity of Jesus. More particularly, just as uncreated grace is related to the just so that created sanctifying grace is its dispositive formal effect, really distinct from it [5], and just as the divine essence is quasi-formally :related to the created and beatified intellect so that the *lumen gloriae* is its dispositive formal effect, :really distinct from it [6], so the divine *esse* of the Logos is quasi-formally related to the humanity of Jesus so that the *esse secondarium* of Christ spoken of by St. Thomas is its dispositive formal effect, really distinct from it.[7] In all three cases, and in Maurice de la Taille's words, some created reality, though not informed by Uncreated Act, is actuated by it. In each case, some created actuation-sanctifying grace, the light of glory, the *esse secon*-dariumr-disposes created reality to quasi-formal union with Uncreated Act.[8]

Indeed, I am assuming the substantial identity of the positions of Fr. Rahner and Fr. de la Taille on the supernatural. This assumption is justified on two grounds, beyond Fr. Rahner's own recognition of the identity of his position with Fr. de la Taille's.[9] First, like Fr. de la Taille, Fr. Rahner expressly distinguishes between a form and its actuation.[10] Sec-

5 "Uncreated Grace," p. 341.

s *fbid.,* pp. 332-333.

1 Cf. Fr. Rahner's remarks as reported in the "Rapport Patfoort," in *Problemes aotuels de ohristologie,* edited by H. Bouesse and J.-J. Latour (Paris: Desclee de Brouwer, 1965), pp. 414-415. For St. Thomas, cf. his disputed question *De unione Ve1·bi inoai·nati,* a. 4.

s Cf. Maurice de la, Taille, S.J., *The llypostatio Un·imi and Created Aotuation by Uncreated Aot* ('West Baden, Indiana: West Baden College, 1952), esp. pp. 30, 32-35. This booklet contains a translation of de la Taille's "Actuation cree par acte incree_," which first appeared in 1928 in *Recherches de science religieuse.*

9 Rahner, "Uncreated Grace," p. 340.

io *Ibid.,* p. 331, note 1: "It is usual today to distinguish two senses of ' forma' by speaking of 'actus *informans'* and ' actus *terminans* ': thus, 'forma' (the determination) in the first sense is that which in itself arrives at reality and perfection in virtue of the act of determination; in the second sense it is that which in itself is and remains a perfect reality in spite of and prior to the act of determination."

ond, just as Fr. de la Taine's analogy for the union of the Word and the human nature of Christ is the union of soul and body, so is it Fr. Rahner's. [11]

Apropos of this second ground, it is important to remember for what follows that, despite the distinction between act and actuation, and despite the prefix " quasi," the basic category with which to understand God's supernatural relation to what is not God is, for Fr. Ralmer, formal causality. God is related to what is not he somewhat as the soul is related to the body, form to matter, or act to potency.

Now, if one thinks for a moment of what it might be said that it is immutable in itself but that it changes in the other, one sees at once why Fr. Rahner might want to make, and why he might feel confident in making, the third claim listed above, namely that the Logos, while immutable in himself, changes in the other. For it is precisely of a *form* that we might say that, although it is immutable in itself, it nonetheless changes in the " other " (of matter) .

Thus, consider the form of humanity. Like forms, it is immutable in itself. For it to change is for it not to be itself. It is not itself a subject of change, but rather a principle of what is a subject of change, namely some man. But once it is considered as being " in " the other, once it is considered as composed with matter, which is the principle of mutability and the ultimate subject of substantial change, then indeed we might want to say that it changes *in* this other. Thus, humanity is sometimes grammatical or musical, and sometimes not, according as these accidents do or do not determine some man. Even so, " in itself," humanity does not change: for it is precisely a *man* that becomes musical from being unmusical, and if it is a man that perdures as a man throughout this change, then the form of man-which is just what it is in itself and no other nor capable in itself of being other (what would that mean?) -abides "in itself " unchanged throughout the change

n Rahner, "Theology of the Symbol," pp. 23'7·239, 246; for de la 'faille, cf. *ibid.,* pp. 21, 34.

whose subject is the man. If humanity be said to change, we must hasten to add that it does so, not in itself, but only " in the other" of matter.

And indeed, Fr. Rahner says as much about forms as we have just indicated: unchangeable in itself, a form changes in the other of matter. This seems ve:ry clear from *Spirit the World.*

> With regard to its form, an existent cannot in principle suffer *(erleiden),* in the sense of receiving an inner-worldly influence. Consequently, if a being is to receive in this sense, then that is conceivable only under a two-fold presupposition: I) The external influence strictly as such cannot already be a determination of the patient itself. . . . !ii) Nevertheless this external influence must already be in the patient, otherwise it would have no :relation to the patient at all. But these two presuppositions are conceivable only if a real principle of absolute indeterminateness belongs to the constitution of the patient. . . . the patient cannot be merely form. Fo:r otherwise the form as such would have to be the medium of the emanating influence [of some agent] as such. [12]

That is, a form " as such " cannot suffer or change, but only as composed with a principle of indeterminateness, matter. Again:

> The material cause does not "produce" an effect "in" the form, that is, it does not bestow on it a determination which would be different from itself or the form. Such a notion would destroy the concept of material-formal causality. The matter does not give the form a determination, but bestows itself upon it. Or, vice versa and better expressed: the form enters into the otherness of its material cause, gives itself away to it. In this act of information, which the form itself is, the form does not produce something different from itself, but the form itself taken as itself is the actuality of matter, and as such an actuality producing itself as the actuality of matter, the form is determined by the matter, and not by an efficient process from the side of matter .
> . . . Thus the form " suffers " in the strictest sense only by the fact tl1at it actively informs, since it is nothing more than the act of matter.13

[12] *Spirit in the World,* trans. William Dych, S.J. (New York: Herder, 1968), p. 341.

[rn] *Ibid.,* pp. 354-355.

And because the form " suffers " in this strictest and most fundmental sense, it can actively "suffer" different, contrary accidental detenninations. [14] In fact, the form can be said to realize itself in the active "suffering" of these accidental determinations.15

Thus, for Fr. Rahner, a form, immutable as such and in itself, changes in the other of matter. And the Logos, immutable in himself, changes in the other of the human nature of Christ, for he is related (quasi) formally to this nature.

Once it is granted that the Logos is quasi-formally related to human nature in the hypostatic union, then the second claim of Fr. Rahner's listed above seems to follow as well. For it is not just any proximate matter that a form can inform, and when a human soul informs primary matter, it is the human body which appears.

Indeed, as we have said, the relation of the soul to the body is Fr. Rahner's analogy for the relation of the Logos to the human nature of Christ. Just as the body is the " real symbol" of the soul in the "other" of *materia prima,*[16] so Christ's humanity is the real symbol of the Logos.[17] Just as the body is intrinsically and essentially related to the soul, human nature is "intrinsically and essentially" related to the Logos.[18] Just as one can say that when one sees the body one sees the spirit of a man,[19] so one can say that when one sees the humanity of

14 *Ibid.,* p. 350: "... within the limits of its own substantial content of meaning, the form can be the ontological, productive ground for many different, contrarily opposed, determinations of itself .... where there is question of a ' passible quality' as opposed to ,a ' passion ' in the narrowest sense, this quality, in its being which remains even after the influence from without, must be produced by the substantial ground of what is determined by it...." But the ultimate ground for this capacity to "suffer" accidental determinations is the "suffering" of the form in its information of matter.

15 *Ibid.,* pp. 351, 353-354, 357.

16 "Theology of the Symbol," pp. 246-24'7.

11 *Ibid.,* pp. 237-238.

1s *Ibid.*

19 "The Bocly in the Order of Salvation," TI XVII, trans. Margaret Kohl (New York: Crossroad, 1981), p. 84.

Christ, one sees the Logos.[20] When the soul expresses itself in what is not itself, matter, there we have the human body;[21] and when the Logos expresses himself in what is not himself, there is the humanity of Jesus.[22]

The underlying reason, however, why it is unthinkable that the Logos assume any other created nature than human nature should be clear. As it is unthinkable that the human soul expresses itself by any body other than a human body, since it is formally related to the body, so it is impossible that the Logos express himself in any other than a human nature, since he is quasi-formally related to this nature.

Again, it seems that some light is shed on the first of Fr. Rahner's claims listed above. It is true that the remarks Fr. Rahner usually offers in support of the claim that only the Logos can be incarnated bear on the nature of the Logos as Word and Image and Expression of the Father: if the Father is to express himself outside of himself, it cannot be otherwise, Fr. Rahner urges, than through his interior expression of himself, namely his Son, the Word; thus, only the Logos can be incarnated.[23] However, I think it important to see that, if one knows that the Logos is incarnate, and if one knew that the relation of the Logos to the assumed humanity were quasi-formal, then one would also know that, if it be a question of a hypo.statically assumed *human* nature, only the Logos could assume that nature. For just as it is inconceivable that a human body be informed by anything other than a human soul, so it would be impossible that human nature be quasi-informed, if such were to happen, by any other divine Person than is in fact incarnate, namely the Logos.[24]

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[20] *Trinity*, p. 32.

[21] "Theology of the Symbol," pp. 246-247; "The Body in the Order of Salvation," p. 86.

[22] "Theology of the Symbol," p. 239; *Trinity*, p. 31 note 27; p. 89.

[23] Cf. e.g. "Theology of the Symbol," pp. 235-236.

[24] One can note, *Trinity*, pp. 31-33, the strictness of the relation between the claim that only the Logos can be incarnated and the claim that only human nature can be assumed.

It should be clear from the foregoing that if it is wrong to conceive of the Logos as quasi-formally related to the human nature of Christ, then it will be difficult to make sense of the claim that the Logos changes in the other of human nature, and it will be difficult to defend the truth of the claims that only the Logos can be hypostatically united to a created human nature, and that only human nature is able to be assumed by the Logos.

It will be difficult to make sense of the claim that the Logos changes in another, for there will be no analogy for it bearing precisely on the understanding of change: if the Logos is not quasi-formally related to the humanity of Jesus, then he does not change in this humanity in the way that a :form can be said to change in matter. It would be hard to avoid Dom Illtyd Trethowan's conclusion that Fr. Rahner's dictum lands us in a straightforward contradiction in which God is affirmed to be both mutable and immuta.ble.[25]

But second, it will be difficult to maintain the truth of the " uniqueness " claims examined above (" *only* the Logos;" " *only* human nature ") . For apart from an argument for them that depends on the quasi-formal relation of the Logos to the humanity of Jesus (an argument, I should add, that I do not find Fr. Rahner makes very explicit-I am imputing it to him) , I do not see that he has any very good argument for these claims.

For the seoond of these claims, that only human nature can be assumed by the Logos, Fr. Rahner suggests that somehow this would follow from the unity of spirit and matter, which includes a relation of the angels to the world of matter, and from the fact that the grace of the angels is also in fact the grace of Christ.[26] But he declines to argue this in detail, and I do not see that his suggestion gets us very far. Of course, we may agree that if the Logos " decides to step outside of himself " into *our* world, the human world, then doubtless what ap-

[25] Cf. Dom Illtyd Trethowan, " A Changing God," *The Downside Review* 84 (1966)' 247-261.

[:.is] Rahner, *Trinity,* p. 90.

pears is the humanity of Christ. But Fr. Rahner seems also to say that if the Logos decides to "step outside of himself" at all, then what appears is the humanity of Jesus. This is a much stronger claim; it is the claim we are concerned with. It seems to me that if it were to be established along the lines Fr. Rahner suggests, one would have to establish, as a necessary if not sufficient condition of knowing its truth, that any possible world must be a world that includes prime matter, and that a world of separated substances just by itself is impossible. I do not know of any way to establish this.[27]

For the first of these claims, that only the Logos can be incarnate, Fr. Rahner often urges, as has been mentioned, that this follows from the fact that the Logos is the expression of the Father within the divinity, and that therefore, if there is any expressing to be done *ad extra*, then it is the Logos that is going perforce to do it. In this way, Fr. Rahner thinks expressly to take up the pre-Augustinian, pre-Nicene view of "invisibility" as a property of the Father (cf. I Tim 6: 16).[28] But Fr. Rahner nowhere to my knowledge shows how this squares with Nicea, And indeed, it does not seem that visibility and invisibility, or accessibility and inaccessibility, indicate relations of opposition. But if they do not indicate mutually opposed relations, they do not indicate personal properties.[29]

Fr. Rahner says that we ought not to conclude from the fact that the Logos can be incarnated to the possibility that any Person can be incarnated, and indeed, without further ado, we should not so conclude.[30] But if the fact of the incarnation of

27 Doubtless, there is the argument that the great distinction and inequality of creatures, from angels to minerals, represent the divine goodness better than a simpler universe would (cf. ST I, q. 47 aa. l & 2). But this is an argument *ex convenientia*, showing what intelligibility there is in the actual universe, with its great distinction and inequality of creatures. It does not show the necessity of creatures composed of matter for any creation whatsoever.

28 Cf. Rahner, *Trinity*, p. 41, p. 60, note 10; "Theology of the Symbol," p. 236.

29 DS 1330 (Council of Florence, Decree for Jacobites).

30 *Trinity*, p. 29.

the Logos does not provide all by itself sufficient grounds for concluding to the possibility of the incarnation of other Persons, neither does it by itself require us to deny that possibility. And this seems to be all that Fr. Rahner's sole attempt (to my lmowledge) to argue at any length for his position amounts to. We turn now to this argument.

In his *The Trinity*, Fr. Rahner says that the claim that any Person could be incarnated is not only not demonstrated, but false.[31] For, he says, if this claim were true, we should have to know two things: (1) that hypostasis is univocally said of the three divine Persons; and (2) that no difference in a divine hypostasis (no personal property) could prevent it from being incarnated. Of these two presuppositions, he remarks, " the former is false and the latter is by no ways demonstrated ".[32] Now I think it should be said that, though the latter presupposition may not be demonstrated, for Fr. Rahner to know that only the Logos can be incarnated, he must show that the second presupposition as well is false (not merely undemonstrated) . I do not see that he shows this, and so I do not see that there is much of an argument here for the claim that only the Logos can be incarnated. [33]

It may be thought that I am ignoring the main argument which it is the burden of Part III of Fr. Rahner's *The Trinity* to provide, and which for the purposes of this essay I cast as follows.

1. Suppose man is called to a strictly supernatural end; suppose God decides to communicate himself to man.

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] *[bid.*

[33] Fr. Rahner says *(Trinity,* p. 30) that" should it be true [that any Person can be incarnate] ... it would create havoc with theology. There would no longer be any connection between ' mission' and the intra-trinitarian life." I think we need to distinguish here. There would not be a *necessary* connection between the missions as we know them and the intra-trinitarian life, true. But that is not to say there would be no connection whatsoever between the missions as they are and the immanent Trinity. "Necessary connection" is not the only kind of intelligibility there is.

2. Man is such, however, that his historicity and his transcendentality are both (a) irreducible one to another or to some common term and (b) inseparable from one another in that they mutually condition one another in a kind of "perichoresis."

3. Thus, if *man is* to receive God's self-communication, both his historicity and his transcendentality must be addressed by God as God is in himself.

4. Behold (factual premise), we see that the mission of the Son, in which God communicates himself as Truth, addresses man's historicity, and that the mission of the Spirit, in which God communicates himself as Love, addresses man's transcendentality.

5. But if God can address man and call him to a strictly supernatural end only by addressing his historicity and his transcendentality, which are distinct but inseparable, then the missions that constitute God's self-communication to man must likewise bespeak distinct yet consubstantial modalities within God, granted that he communicates *himself* to man, and that the missions are not some sort of charade played out in the economy, but not really expressive of God himself as he is in himself communicating himself to man.

6. Thus, God is immanently just as he is economically trinitarian.

7. Hence, it appears that man is created in the first place with just that nature (historicity and transcendentality) that is required of a recipient of God's self-communication. In other words, if God decides to communicate himself to something outside of himself, man appears as the appropriate recipient, and creation is merely the first moment of this self-communication of God.

8. Thus, *only* human nature can be assumed by the Logos.

9. And since it is God's Truth that must address man's historicity *only* the Logos can be incarnated.

This line of reasoning, however, does not get off the ground *unless* it is tacitly supposed that the relation between God and a supernaturally elevated creature must be *quasi-formal.* This supposition is made in (3) , above. For what that premise really means is that, since there are two formalities in man (historicity and transcendentality) , they must be addressed distinctly by God if man is to be supernaturalized, so that we can conclude from that distinction to a distinction within God himself. But why must both be addressed, and addressed distinct-

ly? Because they are to be addressed quasi-formally. And in this way, they argue to two distinct " formalities" in God. Indeed, Fr. Rahner is quite forthright about the importance of this supposition for the argument of his *The Trinity.*[84] Thus, the above argument does nothing to get Fr. Rahner out of the fix I claim he is in.

* * *

To resume. It seems to me that Fr. Rahner would have an argument for the claim that only the Logos can be incarnated, as he would for the claim that only human nature can be assumed, if the Logos were quasi-formally related to the humanity of Christ.[35] However, I think Bernard Lonergan convincingly argues that this is not the case. And although Fr. Lonergan does not expressly address Fr. Rahner, he certainly does address Fr. de la Taille.

In his *De Verbo Incarnato,* Fr. Lonergan presents three very cogent arguments against Fr. de la Taille's position on the quasi-formal relation of the Logos to the humanity of Christ. First, the position seems to locate the hypostatic union, not in the Person of the Logos, but in a created intermediary, namely the created actuation it is held to effect, the *esse secondarium.*[86] This means that the union is not, in fact, hypostatic.

Second, the distinction between an act and its actuation is illusory.[37] If what can be known by experience, understanding,

34 *Trinity,* p. 36.

35 Strictly, he would have an argument *either* for the first, *or* for the second of the three claims we listed at the beginning of this essay. That is, if one knew that the Logos alone can be incarnate, and if one knew his relationship to the assumed nature were quasi-formal, then one would know that only human nature (the actually assumed nature) can be assumed by the Logos. Or: If one knew that only the human nature could be assumed by a divine Person, and if one knew the relationship were to be quasi-formal, then one would know that only the Logos (the Person actually assuming) can assume human nature. But if dl one knew were that the relationship between a divine Person and an assumed nature were to be quasi-formal, one could conclude neither to the first nor to the second uniqueness claim.

ll6De Verbo Incarnato (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1960), p. 344.

37 *Ibid.,* p. 344; cf. *De constitutione Christi ontologica et psychologica,* 3rd edition (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1961), pp. 32-33.

and rational affirmation is the real and the real is what is known by experience, understanding, and rational affirmation, then the ultimate composing causes of finite material being are material potency, form, and act.[38] If actuation is real, it is therefore to be asked whether it is potency, form, or act. The actuation of potency by form and of form by act are nothing in addition to these three, but are the three as composed and constituting a finite material being.

If the distinction between act and actuation is illusory, however, then there is nothing to the "quasi" of "quasi-formal causality " but the name. But then, we luwe formal causality simply speaking. God, however, cannot be formally related to finite reality really distinct from and in potency with respect to him, for potency limits act, and the Infinite Act is not limitedo[39]

Third, and generally, Fr. Lonergan denies that there is any created analogy to the hypostatic union the composition of finite beings, and precisely because form is limited potency, and act by form.[40] But the Logos, who as God is infinite act, though united with a human nature in the incarnation, cannot be said to be limited.

For Fr. Lonergan, if the divine *esse* of the Logos cannot be quasi-formally united to the humanity of Christ, it is nonetheless the *principium quo* of the uniono[41] *What* is united to the humanity of Christ is indeed the Person of the Logos, and for this contingent truth to be t:rue, there is required a contingent, finite, created reality, really distinct from God, as a consequent condition ensuring that the contingent truth of the statement, " the Word became flesh," *is* true.[42] This is the *esse second-*

as *De constitutione Christi,* pp. 27-33, 35; cf. *Insight,* 3rd edition (New York: Philosophical Library, 1970), pp. 431-434.

as *De Verba Incarnato,* p. 340; *De oonstitutione Christi,* p. 64.

40 *De Verbo Incarnato,* pp. 339-342, 344; *De constitutione Christi,* p. 64; *Divinarum personarum conceptionem analogicam,* 2nd edition (Rome: Gregorian University Press, HJ59), p. 208.

,41 *De Verbo Incarnato,* pp. 336-339, 352; *De oonstitu-tione Christi,* pp. 69, 71-72; *Divinarum personarum.* p. 213,

<12 *De Verba Incarnato,* pp. 345-363; *De constitutione Christi,* pp, 73-800

arium, a substantial act, strictly supernatural, a created resemblance of the divine paternity, and thus relating the human nature of Christ to the Son,[43] ensuring, as well, that *a* human nature is assumed, and not all human nature.[44]

Still, the *esse secondarium* is a created reality, as is the humanity of Christ. As created, it is the production of the three Persons in common. Further, just as God understands contingent realities by understanding himself, and just as he wills contingent realities by willing his own infinite goodness, so if Father, Son, and Spirit understand and will that the Son be a man, then the Son is this man, a contingent reality, by the infinite divine *esse* itself, which is not distinct from the divine understanding and will.[45] And this is to say nothing except that the divine *esse* is the *principium quo* of the hypostatic union. But if the divine *esse* is common to the three Persons, and it is, then it follows necessarily that any of the divine Persons can become incarnate.[46]

* * *

What is the point of the foregoing criticism of Fr. Rahner? Is it to maintain that the possibility of the incarnation of the Father or the Spirit, or the possibility of the hypostatic assumption of an angelic nature are important theological propositions? By no means. With regard to the first and second claims of Fr. Rahner which we listed at the beginning of this essay, the point is to argue for more modesty in theology. Often enough, Fr. Rahner proceeds as did St. Anselm, seeking necessary reasons for the facts of the economy of salvation

43 *De Verba Incarnato,* pp. 353-363; *De constitutione Ohristi,* pp. 75-80; for the *esse secondarium* as a created similitude of paternity, cf. *Divinarum personarum,* p. 214.

44 *De Verbo Incarnato,* p. 358.

45 *Ibid.,* pp. 345-346; *De constitutione Ohristi,* pp. 70, 72; *Divinarum personarum,* pp. 208, 215.

46 *De constitutione Christi,* pp. 59, 72. If the divine *esse* of the Logos is the constitutive cause of the union, then it is the capacity for union. But if the *esse* of the Logos is common to the three Persons, the capacity to be incarnated in common to the three.

where St. Thomas sought merely the intelligibility of the facts. Fr. Rahner, like SL Anselm, is, I feel, immodest. But it is more than a question of modesty. To set for theology the standard of *rationes necessariae,* and then to suggest that they have been found when they have not, is to float an inflated theological currency. Such an inflation is dangerous, for it invites a crash wherein people despair of attaining any understanding of the mysteries at all.

With regard to the third and fourth claims of Fr. Rahner the point of this essay is easier to state. There is nothing more dangerous in theology than compromising, or suggesting a compromise or enabling a compromise with regard to, the divine transcendence. But this is just what talk of God's mutability in the other, and talk of his quasi-formal relation to finite reality does.

GuY MANSINI, O.S.B.

St. Meinrad Seminary
St. Meinrad, India,na

MINDING OUR OWN BUSINESS

A religious community has to go about its business in its own way. Still, we can ask our own questions about what it says.[1]

WHAT MAY a Catholic theologian say about a philosophical study of the doctrines of religious communities? If William Christian is right (and I think he is), this is not a simple question to answer. For some theologians, the question is a very personal matter, having to do with our vocations in the world. For others, it is also a professional question, having to do with whether and how we need to teach philosophy to our students (clergy, religious, and lay). For still others, it is also a question that we must address if we are to do and speak the truth in and to a physical, social, and historical world of diverse goods and evils. It is a refrain of this book that theologians (and their functional equivalents in non-theistic religious communities) take seriously such questions as *their own questions* in their own way. Philosophers and other students of religions will surely have their opinions of Christian's book. But what might we theologians say as theologians, i.e., as members of a community from and for which we speak?

And yet *this* particular philosophical study of the doctrines of religious communities also insists that philosophical inquiries have their own questions; religious (like scientific, legal, and political) communities "do not wear on their sleeves what philosophers would like to know about them" Philosophical questions may seem (to use Christian's intriguing adjective "alien" to some kinds of theology. Hence the initial question: what might a Catholic theologian (with his own questions) say about such a philosophical study of the doctrines of religious communities (with its own questions)?

[1] William A. Christian, Sr. *Doctrines of Religi-Ous Communities. A Philosophioai Study* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987), p. 157. Numbers in the body of this essay are to this text.

My goal here is to sketch some of the ways *Doctrines of Religious Communities* helps us answer this question. I emphasize that this is not a question this book wears on its sleeve. *Doctrines of Religious Communities* is a carefully constructed set of examples and arguments, written with extraordinary clarity, nuance, and learning and cumulatively yielding an array of different sorts of doctrines of religious communities. It includes dozens of examples from diverse religions-readers of *The Thomist* will be particularly interested in the examples front Aquinas and Bellarmine, Vatican I and *Divina Afflante Spiritu,* and several documents from Vatican II. Following Christian's arguments requires a sort of conceptual ascericism to see how his conclusions are "like a pattern on a transparent overlap which could be on maps of various territories," i.e., the territories of the doctrines of particular religious communities (230). Rather than summarize, I will suggest how one movement of the book will simultaneously challenge, chastise, and delight one kind of theologian.

I. What this Study is Not.

One way to highlight the unusual character of this study is to note how it is only "a" study; i.e., there are other ways of studying religious doctrines which are not undertaken here. For example, *Doctrines of Religious Com.JW'iLnities* is not an exercise in proposing religious doctrines or making religious proposals. Christian has made such proposals,[2] but his goal here is to *study* the doctrines of religious communities and make proposals *about* them. Further, this is not a study of or engagement in speculative philosophy. Christian has written a classic study of Whitehead's metaphysics.[3] And he mentions Whitehead in connection with the proposal he makes about the possible "occasion-comprehensive" character of

[2] See (among others) "God and the VVorlcl," *.Tournal of Religion* 28 (1948) 255-62; "Belief, Inquiry, and the 'Dilemma' of the Liberal," *Journal of Religion* 31 (1951) 79-90; "Augustine on the Creation of the vVord," *Harvard Theological Review* 46 (1953) 1-25; "The New Metaphysics and Theology," *The Christian Scholar* 50 (19137) 304-15.

[3] *An Interpre-tation of Whitehead'8]J eta,physics* (New Hayen: Yale Uni-Yersity Press, 1959, 1967). *Doctrines of Reiigioiis Communities,* p. 58 (Note 8) mentions one of Christian's own efforts to locate speculative interpretation amidst other philosophical projects in "Domains of Truth," *A.merican Philosophical Quarterly* 12 (1975) : 61-68.

the doctrines of some religious communities (188); he is obviously interested in doctrines of religious communities which permit and require (as well as forbid) such speculative philosophical enterprises. But all this is at the margins of the book. Further, this is not a work which develops a theory of religion by specifying general conditions of truth and proposing principles for fulfilling such conditions. Once again, he has made such proposals.[4] He sometimes uses the lexicon of his efforts (e.g., when he discusses " dialectical arguments," " suppositions "), and he once hints at how his previous discussion of priority rankings might help deal with doctrines of religious communities (Ul8). But he succeeds in his effort "to do without" a general theory of religion (5). Finally, neither is this primarily a study of the oppositions of religious doctrines. Christian has also written on this topic.[5] Oppositions are discussed (125-144), but here he is interested in the internal relations of religious doctrines as well as the multiple patterns of relations (besides opposition) that occur between religions. *Doctrines of Religious Communities,* thus, does not engage in these enterprises (or presume familiarity with Christian's own efforts in these regards). But what, then, is a philosophical study of the doctrines of religious communities which proposes no religious doctrines, no speculative philosophical scheme, no theory of religion?

II. Internal and External Questions.

One key to the book is Christian's distinction between "internal " and " external " questions, for *Doctrines of Religious Communities* is partly an ·exploration of the possibilities and limits of asking each of these kinds of questions. External questions " often arise outside a community, when individuals who are not members of the community want to know for some reason or other what it teaches on some particular point" (14); internal questions "often originate within a religious community " when members of a community " want to know what their membership in the community commits them to on some point at issue " (15). Again, external

[4] *Meaning and Truth in Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964, 1966).

[5] *Oppositions of Religious Doctrines. A Study in the Logic of Dialogue Among Religions* (London: Macmillan, and New York: Herder and Herder, 1972).

questions often *aim* "to describe or analyze [a community's] teaching activities, as secular studies might do," while internal questions aim "to develop [the community's] norms for its teaching activities" (219). Further, the *audience* for external questions is anyone who is interested, while the audience for internal questions is members and sometimes non-members (2, 219, 220). Still further, those who ask external questions speak primarily for themselves, whereas those asking internal questions speak not only for themselves but for the community of which they are members (2, 8, 119). Still further, the *consequences* of the two questions are distinct. If someone asking an external question concludes that a community teaches x, he or she has no obligation to accept x or even consider whether x is acceptable; if someone asking an internal question concludes that the community teaches x, he or she is under an obligation not only to consider x but to accept it (15). Internal questions have "a normative flavor." A community asks whether it *ought* to teach (not primarily whether it *has* or *does* teach) a doctrine to be true to itself (16-17). Finally, the *subject matter* of external questions (apparently) focuses on "religion as a kind of human activity" (1), where internal questions might include this as well as other subject matters (e.g., divine activity). Thus, external and internal questions are defined not only by the subject who asks or the subject matter about which the question is asked but by a nexus of origin and consequence, audience and aim and subject matter.

Christian is asking "external" questions about the doctrines of religious communities. One way we can tell this is that, although he presents a gold mine of passages from diverse religious past and present, his use of these texts is "hypothetical," i.e., he does not argue that these *are* doctrines of these particular communities but only that they are *prima facie,* plausible, or respectable candidates for being doctrines of such communities (3-4, and *passim).* In short, they *may be* doctrines of religious communities. It is up to the teachers of particular communities to say whether they *are* doctrines of their community. The reason for this strategy will gradually emerge. However, it would be wrong to suggest that Christian neatly divides external and internal questions. External questions "often" (not always) originate outside a community; they sometimes might aim not to describe but to be a "self appointed sur-

rogate for" members of a religious community (18). External and internal questions are ultimately distinguished not by the form of words use{! but by the full context in which they are asked: their multifarious causes and consequences, their aims and audiences, and their subject matters. How, then, can we distinguish, identify and relate such questions? Common sense might suggest that we answer this question by focusing on more specific questions.

III. Governing Doctrines and Primary Doctrines.

Christian does this through the book's key distinction between " governing doctrines " (i.e., doctrines about doctrines proposed by a community to itself and "primary doctrines" (i.e., beliefs and action-guides and valuations proposed on behalf of a community to the world) (2). Chapter 1 describes the contexts of such doctrines (e.g., the pattern of life nurtured by a religion) and the diverse kinds of primary doctrines (i.e., beliefs, action-guides, and valuations). The distinction contributes to relating internal and external questions in a number of ways. For example, external and internal questions about governing doctrines are different from such questions about primary doctrines. Most importantly, if someone who is not a member of a community asks whether a teaching is a doctrine of a particular ·religious community, this student of religion " must shape his judgment in accord with that community's own framework for such judgments " (18)-i.e., must learn the governing doctrines of that community. The book is mainly but not exclusively about such governing doctrines.

Two possible objections might clarify what is at stake here. One obj·ection might come from those who insist that asking external *questions* is primarily a matter of offering external *criticisms* of the teachings of religious communities (e.g., showing that the teachings of religious communities are thoroughly explained by various physical, psychological, social, and/or historical causes). Does a strategy which requires students of religions to shape their judgments in accord with a community's framework rule out such external criticisms? Christian does not rule out" external criticisms of what the community does teach" (21, 47, 75, 146). However, such criticisms presume we have a way of determining "what the community does teach", i.e., we must learn that community's governing doctrines. How we might go about offering external criti-

cisms of religions will depend on the doctrines of the particular religious community we wish to criticize.

Second, can a theologian permit or require a study of religion as a human activity that proposes doctrines about the setting and conduct of our lives as well as doctrines to govern these doctrines? If the theologian asks internal questions, what ought be her or his stance toward such external questions? As Christian does not rule out ·external criticisms, so he does not rule out internal questions.[6] But, as external criticisms depend on the community under discussion, so the relations between internal and external questions will depend on the governing doctrines of the theologian's community.

In sum, theological and a-(or anti-) religious objections will have to consider the various types of doctrines Christian considers one by one. What one says further about the relationship between internal and external questions will depend, then, on the particular community under consideration. In other words, attending to clifferent sorts of governing doctrines in different communities will show different sorts of questions permitted and required by different communities.

IV. Some Kinds of Governing Doctrines.

A. Identifying and Relating Authentic Doctrines.

Catholic theologians will be familiar with the subject matter of chapters and 3, where Christian considers doctrines for identifying, relating, and ordering doctrines. Here Christian discusses why appeals to consensus frequently yield arguments over which teachers have the intellectual and moral characteristics to qualify as *the* faithful teachers of the consensus-and why arguments over what Catholics call the magisterium yield arguments over the reasons we have for respecting the judgment of some teachers over others (19f). Current debates in Catholic theologies over the magisterium or the hierarchy of doctrines or the internal consist-

[6] However, I am puzzled by the claim that "what is said in the sentence 'God is merciful' has the force of an assertion, and this assertion would function as a primary doctrine of a community. .Something is being said about *[inter alia?]* the world. The subject matter of what is said in the sentence is *[inter aUa?]* a certain feature of the setting of human life . . . . " *(Doctrines of Religious Oommunities* pp. 120-121).

ency of our teachings, it turns out, are not idiosyncratic. Indeed, those who take pleasure in the emphasis in chapters 1-3 on the particularity and specificity of the doctrines of religious communities will be surprised at the way Christian shows how "frameworks for criteria of authenticity," although they include "some distinctive criteria for identifying " doctrines, also frequently use and include some principles and rules that are " general, not peculiar to some particular body of doctrines" (28-fW). For example, if we teach that our authentic doctrines may be proven from Scriptures, the appeal to Scripture will be *distinctive* but the claim that we are *prroving* will be general (unless "prove" is used "in an idiosyncratic way " [29]). How, then, can we do justice to both the distinctive and the general features of governing doctrines?

B. From Governing to Primary Doctrines.

Chapter 4 is probably the central chapter of the book in relation to this question. Here Christian analyzes different ways of connecting claims that a doctrine is an authentic doctrine of a community and claims that what is said in a doctrine is " true, or for practical sentences, right" (68). Indeed, here the distinction between internal and external questions becomes crucial, for Christian notes that religious communities have not reflected on this issue as much as they have on the issues of the previous chapters (68-69). Can the issue even be broached without imposing an alien framework on Christian teaching? Christian's strategy is 1) to distinguish two principles for approaching the issue (T/R-A and A-T/R) ,7 2) suggest several reasons why there are fewer problems with A-T/R than T/R-A, and 3) to show how his account permits communiities to maintain one, both, or neither of these principles.

The majority of Catholic theologians probably maintain either A-T/R or a 'correlationist' combination of A-T/R and T/R-A-

7' Schema T/R-.A.

For any sentence (s), if s is true or right, then s is an authentic doctrine of the community. So, if s is not an authentic doctrine of the community, then s is not true or not right.

Schema .A.-T/R

For any sentence, if s is an authentic doctrine of the community, then s is true or right. So if s is not true or not right, then s is not an authentic doctrine of the community." *(Doctrines of Religio1ts Communities,* p. 69)

although advocates of A-T/R are frequently treated as though they refuse to permit questions of truth/right and representatives of the correlation of the two principles are frequently treated as though they represented T/R-A alone. If *Docfjrines of Religious Communities* is correct, our disagreement here is a disagreement over something essential to the faith. Christian's framework will help us sort out such issues in the future. In any case, communities which do not have either A-T/R or T/R-A principles will have a sharp separation between internal and external questions. Communities proposing T/R-A seem to imply that al_l good questions are internal questions. Communities advocating A-T/R imply that some questions are internal and some external. They bear the heaviest burden of describing how this can be so.

c. *5* contributes to this issue by discussing principles for deriving doctrines and arguing for them. For example, Christian proposes three " types of arguments," the last two of which are compatible with A-T/R. [8] Vatican I's *Dei Filius* (i.e., the teaching that God can be *[posse]* known by the natural light of reason) suggests why Catholic theologians have been sympathetic to these two types of arguments (103f). Once again, if *Doctrines of Religious Communities* is correct, our disagreement here is a disagreement over something ·essential to the faith .. The issue is whether any sound argument for the existence of God is *only* a secular claim (Argument Type II) or *also* authentic Catholic doctrine (Argument Type III). Vatican I's *posse* seems to permit either reading. What then?

We can get a sense of the bearing of these two arguments on internal and external questions by substituting " internal questions " for " authentic doctrines of the community" and " external questions " for " arguments for truth and rightness." For arguments of Type II, asking external as well as internal questions can be directly relevant to the doctrines of a community. For Type III, external questions must themselves (somehow) also be internal questions. Arguments of Type II have a confidence "that

s "II. Doctrines of the community are supportable by direct arguments for their truth or rightness, as well as by arguments for their authenticity.

III. Substantive reasons advanced in direct arguments for the truth or rightness of doctrines of the community must themselves be authentic doctrines of the community." *(Doctrines of Religious Oommunities* p. 100)

any truths and ·right courses of action which can be learned from the study of doctrine of other religious communities or from secular disciplines will turn out to be consistent with its authentic doctrines,' while Arguments of Type III are confident in the resources of the community's homeland (ll3) . What can be said further about this possible dispute?

C. Doctrines about Doctrines of Different Communities.

Chapters 6-8 discuss different patterns of relationships between the doctrines of different religious and secular communities. Thus, Chapter 6 considers logical (in contrast to causal) connections between doctrines of religious communities. Here Christian discusses four possible kinds of connections: identity, consequence, dependence, and opposition. He finds the first more promising than the second and third-and oppositions "in some ways the most interesting connections between doctrines of different communities" (rn5) . It is unusual to count " identities " and " oppositions " as *sorts of* connections; they seem instead to be paradigms of cases where "connections" are either not needed or impossible. However, Christian shows respects in which they can be considered " connections " in ways crucial for the remainder of the book. For example, we might claim that a doctrine of one community is identical with a doctrine of another community without denying a variety of differences in the reasons for and setting of the doctrine. As Christian puts it, " it seems wrong to assume as a general principle that no part of one complex whole can be a part of another complex whole" (HW).

Further, he does show that if two doctrines are opposed, they must also share some suppositions and intentions. Such a strategy enables him to suggest that different bodies of doctrines may be connected" at some points, but not at others" (144)-for example, he ultimately leaves open the possibility that "the supposition that attainment of nirvana is possible " and "the supposition that God is a present existing reality" may be compatible (143). In any case, external and internal questions can have this same range of connections. Sometimes the questions theologians ask may be identical to those asked by philosophers and other students of religions (as well as members of other .religious and a-religious) groups-and sometimes opposed. Christian shows us how we might

make neither too much nor too little out of such identities or oppositions.

A sidenote. Christian has a number of interesting things to say about natural theology (including samples from those like Barth who require dialogue with the world without requiring natural theology) (78-9, 103-5, *145,* Ql4-15). For example, on one reading, natural theology claims an identity between " some propositions and precepts which are authentic doctrines of the community " and " arguments which do not depend on the distinctive norms of any .religious community" (144). But it is not clear to me that standard natural theologies in the Catholic community make any systematic distinction between theism (theology) and religion (or religious communities). Perhaps here is an occasion when theories of religion-admittedly *us'ually* developed by and for individuals rather than communities (5)-might be helpful to a community.

What about truths which are neither identical to nor opposed to the doctrines of a religious community? c. 7 and 8 are the climax of the book. Here Christian discusses " alien claims " i.e., claims which are not authentic doctrines of a community. C. 7, after considering examples of the doctrines of religious communities on alien claims (e.g., Vatican H's *Nostra Aetate),* argues that a community needs " extended principles of consistency " if it allows that there may be alien claims that are true or right.[9] Does this mean that, at least here, we must say that the distinctive teachings of a community "depend on" (see the third kind of connection in c. 6) more general principles-or that internal question about consistency "depend on" external questions? Certainly

9" For any pair of sentences (sl, s2), if
(I) sl is an authentic doctrine of the community (hence true, or right), and
(2) s2 is not an authentic doctrine of the community, then if s2 is true, or right, sl and s2 are consistent.
Hence, if sl and s2 are inconsistent, then
(1) sl is not an authentic doctrine of the community, or
(2) s2 is not true, or right, or
(3) both (1) and (2) hold." *(Doctrines of Religioits Oom'munities,* p. 162). vVe can easily imagine a community modulating the extension on its extended principle of consistency to include "some pairs" as well as "any pair" of sentences.

Argument Type II (above) might maintain this. But Argument Type III might maintain that there is such dependence-but that extended principles of consistency are one kind of " identity " of doctrines. This may be one of those cases where " what is proposed in some secular claim may also happen to be an authentic doctrine of the community." (167)

Chatper 8 suggests ways a community might teach that its primary doctrines are "limited" as well as "comprehensive "-or (to use the rubric with which we began) ways its internal questions are limited as well as comprehensive. The T/R-A principle would require that doctrines of their community be "topic-comprehensive" in the sense that their primary doctrines would be of unlimited scope. Catholic theologians and other teachers, almost naturally inclined to emphasize the comprehensiveness of our teachings, will want to pay careful attention to limitations "deriving from the definiteness of its aims, or the warrants for its teaching authority, or the quality of its competence, or from its existence as a social body under historical conditions " (185). But if our internal questions are thus limited, how might they be comprehensive? One possibility is that our primary doctrines might be "occasion comprehensive." We could propose that some elements of the pattern of lif.e we propose are relevant to some elements of any occasion of human activity (e.g., its setting, its motives, its consequences)-(188)-including the questions required and permitted by that occasion of human activity. Christian gives a number of examples of such occasion comprehensiveness not only in chapter 8 but in previous chapters. What is crucial is that a valuation of *knowing* that certain things are true (or knowing how to do certain things) is not a claim that something *is* true or that an action *is* right. We could hold A-T/R, require arguments of Type III, and limit our " valuational doctrines " to the hypothetical: *if* x is true or right in this domain, then we must value it. In other words, a certain kind of theologian might be as hypothetical with regard to certain secular claims as a certain kind of philosopher is with regard to religious claims. Christian is here leaving religious communities the option of a governing doctrine he requires one kind of philosophical study to have.

Tracking where this leads us would involve studying the individual examples of occasion-comprehensiveness in *Doc1Jrines of*

Religious Communities: from " all the occasions of life, whether attended by misery or joy " (131) through the value of grammar for studying our Scriptures, to the questons raised by science, religions, and logic. (The importance of such occasions, I take it, is one reason why religious communities may have devoted less time to what Christian calls A-T/R and T/R-A doctrines. Their concerns, the argument might go, have been with patterns of relationships between the teachings ingredient in particular practices [reading Scripture, celebrating rituals, discerning worldly vocations, etc.] ·rather than truth-claims in general. *H* we can [with Christian] take the truth-claims and rights-claims of these various occasions one by one, we can have an appropriately complex map of the multiple ways authenticity and truth/right are related. [Thus, I take it that the dash "–" in "A-T/R" stands for such multiple relations, from identity through valuation.] Only then will we be in a position to say something in more general terms about truth/right. At any rate, the theological problem at this point is how the *new* heaven and earth will have to do with *this* heaven and earth. What is it that God is doing with our lives, our Scriptures and liturgies, non-Christian religions and the joys and griefs of modernity more generally that merits our full attention? What aspects of these occasions of human activity will be transfigured into God's eternal kingdom? Which of our questions are internal to the working out of God's purposes-and which external?

Christian does not raise or answer these sorts of questions. What he does is provide a way for theologians to address them for their communities and in dialogue with other religious and secular individuals and groups. In the context of discussing the difficulty of holding apart and together our theological and philosophical interests, Christian once suggested to me that it was possible to do two things at once, but more profitable to do one thing at a time (perchance, a lifetime). Few of us have the discipline to make our passions so precise. But certainly some such skill is a part of what will he required-I think of the final canto of Dante's *Divine Comedy-to* see God clearly. Theologians, then, will learn from *Doctrines of Religious Communities* much about their own and other (religious and secular) communities. They may find identities and oppositions on some issues; on other issues, they may wish to wait on the judgments of members of other religious and

secular communities before making up their minds. But, in this case at least, minding theological business requires minding philosophical business. I wish all teachers of the Catholic community would study this book.

JAMES J. BUCKLEY

Loyola Oollege,
Baltimore, Maryland

RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

WILLIAM CHRISTIAN'S important new book appears at an opportune moment. It breaks new theoretical ground in the cross-cultural study of religious communities and religious doctrines at a time when this is badly needed. Its contributions could be especially valuable for the burgeoning industry that produces books by Christian theologians on non-Christian religions, since there are signs that this industry is beginning to feed upon itself. Such books (and every year more are published) refer more and more to one another, to previous ' achievements ' in the field, and less and less to the purported object of their study: non-Christian religions themselves. So, in every new addition to the field we find the more-or-less obligatory discussions of Karl Barth's and Hendrik Kraemer's word-centered exclusivism; of Karl Rahner's hierarchical inclusivism; of Wilfred Cantwell Smith's faith-based ·experiential expressivism; and of John Hick's radical theocentric pluralism. There is usually comparatively little discussion of what any non-Christian tradition actually asserts, values, and practices. That is to say, Christian theologians, whose major specialty is theologizing about non-Christian religions, have entered the ·realms of secondary, or even tertiary, processing; they have made the enterprise of theologizing about these religions a purely abstract *a priori* intra-Christian enterprise, constrained not by the religions themselves, as they impinge upon and make claims upon members of the Christian community, but rather by presuppositions drawn only from some particular reading of the Christian tradition. So Rahner could deduce his theory of " anonymous

Christians" from a few simple propositions (most importantly, the absoluteness of Christianity and the possibility of the presence of supernatural grace in non-Christian religions), without reference to the actual teachings, practices and values of any non-Christian tradition. The same is largely true for Hick's advocacy of a Copernican revolution in theological thought, and for Barth's rejection of all religion as unbelief. All are *a priori* positions.

William Christian (both in his earlier *Oppositions of Religious Doctrines* [New York, 1972] and in the new *Doctrines of Religious Communities)* is one of the few philosophers of religion whose work on the nature of religious doctrines has a direct relevance for Christian thinking about non-Christian religions. It is, moreover, a relevance which, if taken seriously, could provide an agenda for that enterprise which would lift it out of the self-reflexive and largely unproductive agonizing in which it is currently mired. Given that Christian theologizing about non-Christian ;religions is something that neither can nor should be avoided, any work that opens up new avenues is to be welcomed. Christian's *Doctrines* is thus a potentially important book, and it is the object of this short piece to suggest in what its importance lies and how it is relevant to the Christian enterprise of theologizing about non-Christian religions.

First, though, a caveat is in order: Christian's earlier work, with which his new book is directly continuous, has not, to this writer's perception, received the attention it deserves from theologians concerned with these matters. In that earlier work Christian was concerned to lay bare and analyze the logical conditions that must be met before it can properly be said that that two doctrine-expressing sentences contradict or oppose one another, and also to discuss the varieties of opposition that might occur. *Oppositions of Religious Doctrines,* the work in which he did this, is a book written by a philosopher in a philosophical idiom: it exhibits to a high degree the virtues of conceptual rigor and careful, precise analysis of terms and concepts. Largely for this reason, the work was not attractive to theologians. They are not trained to think in this idiom, and are not easily drawn to works written in it. The work also received comparatively little attention from analytically-trained philosophers of religion, those who should, by training and taste, find its idiom comfortable. The reason in this case has not to do with style but with substance anaglophone philosophers of

religion have, of late, been much more concerned with the analysis of belief and epistemic justification than with the conceptual problems raised by religious pluralism. So *Oppositions* did not receive the attention it deserved from either group. It would be very unfortunate if *Doctrines* were to suffer the same fate. Philosophers should note that the matters dealt with by Christian here are of great importance, and should he of central concern to philosophers of religion. Theologians concerned with religious pluralism should note that Christian's method and agenda suggest ways out of the bind they find themselves in, and should not be put off by the book's painstaking style.

With that caveat in mind, it remains to explore what the implications of *Doctrines* are for the the philosophico-theological questions raised by the facts of religious pluralism. Christian's first agenda is to explore, abstractly, what religious doctrines are and how they function for religious communities. He suggests that religious communities characteristically have both doctrines-claims " about the setting of human life and the conduct of life in this setting " (p. l)-and governing doctrines, doctrines about doctrines, "rules to govern the formulation and development of its [the community's] body of [primary] doctrines" (p. fl). These latter, the governing doctrines of a community, are used by that community principally as heuristic tools to determine whether a specific doctrine-candidate can properly be judged a doctrine of the community; they are also used to sort and order the doctrines of the community, to show their relative importance and range of applicability. In this connection Christian discusses, *inter alia*, Barth's concept of a "serviceable heuristic canon" (pp. 39-41) as an instance of a doctrine about the proper ordering and relative weight of doctrines (in this case the distinction is between *articuli fundamentales* and *articuli non fundamentales* and how the former relate to the latter).

Christian then explores (in chapter 4) the different connections that might be thought by a community to obtain between truth and authenticity. That is, if a particular doctrine-expressing sentence is judged by a particular community, through an application of the proper governing doctrine (s), to be an authentic doctrine of the community, what might this say in the eyes of the community about that doctrine's truth (if it's a doctrine making claims about

the nature of things) or rightness if it's a doctrine recommending a particular course of action)? Christian distinguishes, and gives detailed discussion to, two schemas: the first takes the possession on the part of any given doctrine-expressing sentence of the property 'being true or right' as a sufficient condition for that sentence's possession of the property 'being an authentic doctrine of the community' (the "T/R-A schema"); the second takes the possession on the part of any given doctrine-expressing sentence of the property 'being an authentic doctrine of the community' to be a sufficient condition for its possession of the property 'being true or right' (the "A-T/R schema"). A religious community adopting either of these schemata would, of course, be adopting it as a governing doctrine of the community, in Christian's sense; in discussing these schemata, and variants upon them, he is chiefly concerned to explore what the effects of adopting either schema would he upon the primary doctrines of the communities that adopted them.

Most obviously, the T/R-A schema would include, as primary doctrines of the community, any and all sentences that express something judged by the community to be true or right. This seems to extend the range of the community's doctrines rather too far. Presumably, most religious communities in the USA would assent to the truth of some sentence such as *Magic Johnson was one of the ten best players in the NBA in 1987;* but rather few would want to include it as an authentic doctrine of the community. There may, nevertheless, be communities that approach rather closely to accepting the T/R-A schema as a governing doctrine; such communities would necessarily, as Christian points out (p. 73), tend towards the abolition of any distinction between the 'religious' and the 'secular', since all true (or right) sentences would, *per definiens,* be' religious' (authentic doctrines of the community), and there could thus be no true (or right) sentences beyond the bounds of the community's doctrine. I think of the theory of "Islamization" developed by the contemporary Islamic theologian Seyd Muhammad Naquib al-Attas as a possible instance of the adoption of this schema. But it is almost certainly the case that the adoption of such a schema has been rare in the history of the thought of religious communities. As so often, Christian's abstract formulation cries out for application to cases: can we actual-

ly find an instance of a community which appears to adopt this schema? If we can, all sorts of interesting consequences follow, both for how that community's members must think about non-members and their claims (it would have to follow, for example, that a community holding the T/R-A schema as governing doctrine could not recognize the existence of true doctrine-expressing sentence that belongs to some religious community other than itself), and for how non-members should think about the claims of such an unusual community. To observe that Christian does not himself undertake the empirical investigations suggested by his work is not a criticism of it or him; he explicitly disavows his intention to do this, and the strength of his work is that it makes one eager to apply his schemata to cases and to see what can be learned from so doing.

The second schema outlined, the A-T/R schema, is much more widely held as a governing doctrine, just because few religious communities are happy to assert that any authentic doctrine of the community is neither true nor right. The most important point in Christian's exploration of the implications of the A-T/R schema lies in his comments about the schema's implications for the attitudes of its holders towards what he calls "alien claims". As Christian defines it, a claim is alien with respect to some community if and only if it makes a claim to the rightness of what is proposed in some proposition or the truth of what is asserted in some assertion, and that claim is not an authentic doctrine of the community in question (p. 144). So, presumably, the claim that *all Buddhas possess omniscience* is an alien claim with respect to (at least most) Christian communities. A community which holds the A-T/R schema as a governing doctrine can, in theory, recognize the truth of alien claims just so long as their being true (or right) does not conflict with or contradict the truth (or rightness) of any doctrine-expressing sentence of the community. This too has suggestive implications for various lines of empirical research.

In chapters seven and eight, Christian explores in detail positions that religious communities (holding the A-T/R schema) might take on alien claims. Such communities, he stresses, would have to consider, in the case of any specific alien claim, first whether that claim is inconsistent with any authentic doctrine of the community, and second (assuming a negative answer to the first question) whether that claim is in fact true (or right). The case-

studies that Christian introduces at this point are especially fascinating. For example, he gives the entire text of the conciliar document *Nostra Aetate* (pp. 154-159), and analyzes it closely with the intention of seeing whether it has anything specific to say about the truth or rightness, possible or actual, of alien claims. He concludes-quite rightly-that *Nostra Aetate* offers no help on the matter; it rules neither that alien claims, in the sense distinguished, may be true (or right), nor that they may not. All the doctrine-expressing sentences of non-Christian religions mentioned in the document with approval (as true) turn out also to be doctrines of the church, and thus not alien claims with respect to it. Christian comments at this point: "Perhaps the fathers of the council meant to leave the question on the theological agenda of the community." (p. 161) It's worth noting that, even if the question is on the agenda of the community, it has, conspicuously, received no clear answer. And it begs for one.

Christian's extended discussion of the intellectual options possible for a community that holds an A-T/R schema in its dealings with alien claims is a model of clarity and precision. It provides a template by which theologians thinking about these questions might observe the trajectories of their own thought, and assess its coherence, and it also provides an excellent heuristic for coming to an understanding of the way in which members of religious communities other than one's own arrive at conclusions about the status of alien claims. It also (especially in chapter eight) contains implications for the development of a (Christian) theology of alien (religious) claims-that is, authentic doctrines of non-Christian religious communities which are neither doctrines of the Christian community, nor inconsistent with (any of) the doctrines of that community. It is surely possible, Christian suggests, to develop a theology in such a context which preserves the possibility of the truth (or rightness) of alien religious claims without threatening that of the community's own authentic doctrines simply by limiting the scope and applicability of the doctrinal claims of the community. The community might acknowledge, say, that the alien claims made by the community of physiologists about the efficacy of certain forms of physical exercise for the maintenance of physical health may be true (or right), and aeknowledge also that its members may structure their lives in accord with the prescriptions offered by physi-

ologists. And it might do this simply (and self-consciously) limiting the scope of its competence and authority: the community, it might say, makes no rulings on such questions; they do not pertain to its central goals or its raison d'etre; its members may thus do as they please about them. And (though Christian does not suggest this), the same line could presumably be taken by, say, a Buddhist community about the attendance of its members at Mass; or by a Christian community about the engagement of its members in certain meditational practices.

It is precisely here that the importance of Christian's work for Christian theologians theologizing about non-Christian religious traditions becomes especially evident. If he is correct that religious communities need to have some governing doctrine about the connection between the sentence-attributable properties 'being an authentic doctrine of the community' and 'possessing truth or rightness', and as I have suggested, the A-T/R schema, or some variant on it, is likely to be the most widely held governing doctrine of this then a number of interesting things follow. First, the only *a* decisions which it is proper for theoreticians of a community an schema as a doctrine to make about religious alien claims are abstract ones: principally that it is possible for such alien claims to be true (or right). If any more is to he said (and, dearly, much more needs to be said) specific cases must be entered into: attention must be paid to specific instances of alien religious claims (especially to the primary doctrines of other religious communities), and to their possible consistency or inconsistency with the doctrine-expressing sentences of the the investigating.

This is a tremendously difficult task. It raises all kinds of pressing hermeneutical issues, especially the issue (not touched on by Christian at all) of what conditions must be met for a member of one religious community to properly say that she understands a doctrine-expressing sentence of another. At this point George Lindbeck's work (especially *The Nature of Doctrine* [Philadelphia, 1984]) might be of use, and certainly a good deal needs to be said about the nature of such understanding. If I have a significant of Christian's work it is just that he does not show sufficient a;wareness of the theoretical problems involved in abstracting what amount to *disjecta memb1'a* from a l'eligious

other than one's own, and assuming that one understands what is said in the fragments.

There is also the problem of ethical and epistemic duty: suppose one religious community, holding an A-T/R schema and a principle of consistency such that if what is claimed by any two doctrine-expressing sentences is incompatible (leaving aside for the moment the question of the range and varieties of incompatibility), comes to the conclusion that what is claimed by one of the authentic doctrine-expressing sentences of its community is incompatible with what is claimed by what (it has every reason to believe) is an authentic doctrine-expressing sentence of an alien religious community. What then? Christian canvasses several such possibilities, here and in his earlier work; here is an example of my own: suppose a Christian theologian concludes that what is expressed by the sentence *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever* (an authentic doctrine-expressing sentence of most Christian communities) is not compatible with what is expressed by the sentence *all existents are transient* (an authentic doctrine-expressing sentence of most Buddhist communities). What are the epistemic and ethical duties of the Christian theologian in such a case? Must he engage in apologetics? Try to develop community-neutral arguments for the truth of the former over against the latter? Ignore the whole situation? Assume that one (or both) of the sentences has been misunderstood And if some form of apologetics turns out to be both epistemically and ethically necessary (given certain propositions about the positive soteriological effect of believing the truth of what is expressed by *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever* and the negative effect of not believing it), how is it to be engaged in? Christian nowhere ·explores such issues: his work must be understood as a prolegomenon to themo

These (minor) criticisms notwithstanding, the main point stands: Christian's sensitive and precise delineation of the ways in which religious doctrines may and do function for religious communities provides a detailed intellectual agenda, both for those theoreticians who wish to explore the structural and substantive significance of religious doctrines in communities other than their own, and for those who wish to explore what the inner logic of their own tradition requires them to say about alien religious

claims. And both these tasks, perhaps more especially the former, are of urgent importance for the Christian theological community today.

PAUL J. GRIFFITHS

University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, Indiana

WII,LIAM CHRISTIAN AND COMMUNITY DOCTRINES

WILLIAM CHRISTIAN'S book *Doctrines of Religious Communities* * is a vital contribution to the philosophy of religion, for a number of reasons. First, it goes beyond the individualism that secretly underlies much writing in the field, where in effect the reader is invited to make judgments in isolation. Here he consciously addresses the problems raised by supposing realistically that we are dealing for the most part with more or less recognizable traditions and subtraditions embodied in various communities. Second, the logic of doctrinal claims has not been explored systematically before in relation to both their truth (or rightness, where they incorporate practical tenets) and their authenticity, as genuine do.ctrines of a given community. Third, the book raises some vital questions about the present shape of the world. For instance, the way in which the analysis fits non-religious but analogous cases (e.g. Romanian Marxism) is important; as also the question of how modern eclecticism fits into the picture. Moreover, it leads us to reflect on what happens when a community cannot decide whether certain doctrines or claims are authentic.

One of the models Christian contemplates is represented as T/R-A, namely "}'or any sentence (s), ifs is true or right, then *s* is an authentic doctrine of the community": he offers this as a logical possibility though it is quite doubtful if any community holds it. He uses it to illuminate the alternative A-T/R. It is possible of course to make T/R-A more plausible by placing a restriction on the kind of truth or rightness involved, namely if it

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were in the same class as community doctrines, as defining a world-view and mode of conduct. Most truths of science would not be included, but some generalizations might he, e.g. statements about the srale of the universe or the evolution of *homo sapiens* which might be held to possess existential impact and a cosmological significance relevant to humanity's "place" in the universe. Christian deals with such problems in treating what he describes as alien secular claims, that is, claims which arise out of secular knowledge, and which may attract a positive evaJuation from the religious community. The evaluation itself would belong to the community's doctrines and it would (let us suppose) commend the findings of science, for example as aiding a more discriminating worship of the Creator.

But I think there is a discomfort in spiritual and intellectual life which arises because we typically belong to more than one community. Let us look upon the most typical primary communities as being four in number-the religious (or ideological) community, the nation, the world of science and practical knowledge, and humanity as a whole. the last is less developed in much human consciousness, but it is at least flickeringly there in most human beings. In modem times loyalties have been sectionalized by the nation State, which is manifested in a mosaic across the planet's surface embracing all human beings. Now it is often the case, and was more so in the past, that nation and religion were made artificially to coincide: to be an English citizen was to be an Anglican: as now you are supposed to be a Marxist if you are a Romanian. At the same time in most countries, through the agency of the State, there is universal education in which to some degree or other a person is inducted into the community of science and practical knowledge. The different communities tend to be in conflict, and so the individual is easily tom.

Let me first, before tackling these issues, say a word about the notions of religion and ideology. It appears to me obvious that in many respects ideologies such as Marxism fulfil a function, or set of functions, very similar to those fulfilled by religions. Moreover, Marxisms are often in severe conflict with, and opposition to, religions, and those that contend play in the same league, as one might say. Doctrines, myths, feelings, :rituals, institutions, art-wo:rks and ethics are found in secular (i.e. non-religious) ideologies as in reli-

gions. So there are good reasons to extend our thinking to the secular, and to have a generic word (and" worldviews" is the least bad in English, which is badly off for good terminology in discussing existential belief-systems) which will cover both non-religious and religious systems. So we could rewrite Christian's title and call his book *Doctrines of World,view-Affirming Communities.* Incidentally, it would help if constitutionally citizens were protected against discrimination on the basis of worldview and not just religion. It would have made McCarthyism impossible, perhaps.

To return to our problem of belonging to overlapping communities: one major modem tension concerns the affirmations of the world of science and practical knowledge, which I shall call " the world of knowledge" fo:r short. Such affirmations are often in conflict with received interpretations of religious texts and other authoritative sources. Christian discusses such possible conflicts under the head of doctrines and alien claims, and notes that a community typically would need an extended principle of consistency in which what is true or right should be consistent with authentic doctrines of the community-a principle which could lean in either direction, for instance towards abandoning geocentric interpretations of the Bible as well as towards heliocentric theory. One way to preserve community authority would be to restrict the scope of Christian teachings to what concerns salvation, so that the whole world of knowledge would have an independent existence. This could be done effectively from a denotative point of view. The division vras delineated for instance by Bultmann and other existentialists, and in the East could be done through the two-level theory of truth of the and Advaita (the higher truth is ultimate, the lower level concerns the cosmos, etc.). But it is at the level of method that the problems arise as between community doctrines and truths of the world of knowledge. For the procedures of the world of knowledge imply freedom to question prior theories and values. To such liberalism into religious communities is possible, but it may greatly erode the authority of sources and of the organizations. For instance, though I count myself an Episcoplian I do not believe many of the reasonings which I hear in sermons: e.g. where appeal is made to St. Paul's writings-it is natural, as a member of the larger community of the world of knowledge, simply to question whether Paul is :right about this and

that. It is hardly worth my while trying to strain at a new *interpretation* of scripture, as my forefathers might have done who accepted the results both of the world of knowledge and of the scriptures. I might simply say that Paul was wrong on such and such a point. In short I have been turned from a solid member of the community into a questioning one. The methods of the world of knowledge as understood in modern times have been turned loose upon the source of community doctrines, and the result is almost inevitably to foster a new eclecticism.

This can lead to a new stance, which itself represents a profound revolution. This stance is one of loyalty towards the religious community, but one in which the ultimate authority lies in my own decision, and in my judgments, listening to the community, but not accepting any teachings uncriticially. If I sacrifice my own freedom, e.g. suppose that I became a monk and lived in a monastery under authority, this would be by my free decision. All this extends the scope of individualism which already had been important in parts of the Protestant community. Such eclectic individualism in worldview shows itself more and more widely as the world of knowledge pervades more deeply the human population.

But that world of knowledge does not come unmediated, because it is delivered by ·educational institutions which are paid for and controlled in some degree by the nation-State. And so there is allied to knowledge a set of national values which stress good citizenship, national history, feelings of patriotism, the rituals of the nation and so forth. Often there is woven into nationalism, itself a powerful religion, a traditional Christian or Buddhist or other, flavor-a" civil religion". And so there may turn out to be values woven into the world of knowledge which though superficially compatible with traditional communitarian religion may in fact turn out to be at deep variance with it. Thus the identification of Christian and American patriotic values achieved in the right wing groups (such as the Moral Majority in the U.S.A.) may turn out to be a mirage. Would Christ have approved? Does loving our neighbor combine with nuclear warfare?

All this begins to raise the converse question to that analysed so admirably in Christian's book. He looked at the relation of doctrines to communities, taking the communities hypothetically for given. But sometimes we may have to define communities by doc-

trines (indeed this is one mechanism for the proliferation of sub-traditions within Protestantism). But one could ask, for instance and using Tillichian language, what is the community of ultimate concern? What is *my* community of ultimate concern? This would be a way of ordering communities, as distinguished from the ordering of doctrines.

We may begin by noting, in relation to this question, that though the community of the world of knowledge is elitist, since the frontiers of knowledge are pushed back by a relative minority of highly skilled and thoughtful people, it nevertheless is a universal community, in the sense that Japanese, American, South African, Russian and Icelandic (for instance) scientists join in its enterprises equally and it is not a respecter of race or nationality or religion or gender. At least in principle it is not, save in sofar as certain groups may be denied access to the universal elite for political and social reasons here and there. So in an important sense the world of knowledge generates a community in principle identical with humanity as a whole.

It so happens that most major worldview-affinning communities also see the demands of humanity at large, and though there may be some sense of a chosen people (namely a community whose calling is especially to witness to a given worldview), there is recognition of the obligations of that community to humanity as a whole. Moreover, religious communities are typically transnational in character: they are, so to speak, transnational spiritual corporations-a fact which may attract persecution in a nationalistic age, as examples such as that of the Roman Catholic Church in post-liberation China testify. So although often the tradition of a National Church or Sangha may be very powerful, and in any case the pressures on nationalist loyalty are so strong upon individuals, there is perhaps at the present time a growing sense of humanity at large as being the community of ultimate concern.

For the religious or ideological faithful it would seem that there are two main candidates for the community of ultimate concern: one's own community, either narrowly or widely defined, e.g. as the Baptist Church or the Christian Church, etc., and humanity at large.

It is for this reason not surprising that there have been recent attempts at delineating a world theology or worldview (as in the

writings of John Hick and Wilfred Cantwell Smith, and Fritz Buri, for example). The weakness of religious attempts at this is double: first of all the doctrines of the traditional religious communities are in opposition about the ultimate, and second there are important non-religious worldviews to accommodate. Nevertheless, it might be possible to frame a perspective for the world community which would take seriously the pluralism of human responses and the richness of differing civilizations now envisaged as contributing to a single world educational system. Within that perspective different religious and other communities would have a merely provisional ultimacy.

Loyalty to the human community at large is of course highly compatible with individualism, since the latter prizes each person for her or his own sake, simply because she or he is a member of the human race. This reinforcement of other factors which corrode communities (such as consumerism, modern problem-solving education, etc.) makes more relevant too the significance of religious reflection, searching, eclecticism and individual predilections as sources of personal commitments. It suggests too that a greater role may emerge for individual religious reflection as non-communitarian "theology". There are tendencies in this direction in the American Academy of Religion, seeing the study of religion as a kind of spiritual counterpart to philosophy: thinking through religious issues being a prime focus of the subject. In the light of Christian's analysis of doctrines in relation to religious communities, what are we to make of such privatized "theology" ? What becomes of authenticity?

Perhaps the question is already secretly posed when we conplate such a figure as Hans Kung. Since he is a Catholic, you can call him a Catholic theologian-but his theologizing is not in the main officially approved by the Catholic Church viewed as an organization, even if many Catholic lay people like reading his works and entering into his critical spirit. His status is already ambiguous: teaching in another community, the University, but retaining an audience among members of his Church. Moving further along that path such an individual ends up as a free-ranging spirit who reflects upon Christian or more generally religious claims, retains a certain very personalized piety, and spend his time greatly in writing and thinking about religious truth. At a less formal level,

there is the individual in ordinary life searching for and thinking about a true religion which is authentic for his own feeling and being,

How should we analyze the logic of such a person's situation? Should we pick up the notion of authenticity but now in an existential sense?

In the case of communities which Christian is primarily thinking of there is a tradition of organization-a Sangha or Church-, and scriptures or other authoritative, typically written, sources, and a mode of interpreting the basis of the faith, It is hard to know whether we should look on the searcher we are considering as being so to speak a community of one, or whether he is embedded in the wider community of the world of knowledge, He may be appealing to canons which emanate from that wider world. Still, so in some degree do the traditional religious communities, I suppose it is to what "rings true" in his own experience and life that the searcher may appeal, when it comes to deciding what are the doctrines and practices in which he has faith, But it may be that essentially the individual searchers are not to be seen in the same category at all as the cases Christian is thinking of: he indeed remarks (pp, 84-85) that " There are , , , occasional tendencies in philosophical treatments of religious communities to deal with their bodies of doctrines as though they are detachable from their sources, as though a community's body of doctrines amounts to a philosophy of life, But a philosophy of life is for individuals, There are indeed different schools of thought in religious philosophy, but doctrines of religious communities have to be understood in a different way!' In talking of individuals we reach the limiting case. Nevertheless there may be analogues of sources even for individuals,

In opening up the analysis of doctrines of communities Christian poses vital questions and creates new ways of looking at the world: not merely by delineating the various principles at work, including what he calls the " guarding principle " linking doctrines tightly to their sources, but also driving us to ask about the communities to which doctrines are relevant, The analysis has strong relevance to religious education and the exploration of worldviews, In a public school environment there is a community but it is not identical, except in rarer and rarer cases, with a religious Yet

there is a sense perhaps of values, including pluralism, which may arise from the agreement and historical experience of such a community.

In dealing with the" secular" world, a community, as envisaged in Christian's analysis, may aim for comprehensiveness. I have been arguing in the opposite direction-the effects of the communities of the world of knowledge and of humanity at large upon the teachings of religious communities. But the opposite movement is important too: where the community evolves a pattern of life which touches on all occasions of life. Christian distinguishes between topic comprehensiveness and occasion comprehensiveness. Typically there are limits on the former and not on the latter. That is, while there may be no Christian physics, there is a Christian attitude to doing physics. There is a Christian way of sweeping a floor, but no Christian technique of sweeping.

But communities may waver on limiting their topic comprehensiveness, as if there is a separate, let us say, Islamic basis of epistemology or physics. There are those who argue for an indissoluble link between values and methods which might tend to dissolve a sharp distinction between topic- and occasion- comprehensiveness. Thus a major issue throughout the colonial period and into the postcolonial era was how to combine traditional values and modern science and education. It was often considered that the latter implied a liberalism which was hard to blend with ancient authority. In other words modern science brings in some values and attitudes which seriously modify traditional ones. If this be so there is no Islamic physics not because the very idea of Islamic or Christian or Buddhist physics is absurd, but because all physics is in principle Popperite and linked to democratic values which are recognizably Western.

In this discussion I have explored some areas which lie at the edge of or beyond Professor Christian's discussion-pushing forward the frontiers of his analysis. But though the question of the overlap of communities is important, and though too the role of the eclectic individual will increase, there is no doubt that the major traditions and subtraditions will continue indefnitely into the future. Thus, the relevance of this analytic approach will remain. Though there is not in this treatment anything beyond a mention or two of hermeneutics, it is obvious that the approach is

profoundly important for the study of hermeneutics in religion. Consequently, Christian's work will he needed reading for theologians in the various communities. At first sight, this philosophical probing of the rules regarding authenticity and truth or rightness of doctrines is technical and a little austere: yet it pushes the frontiers of the philosophy of religion (and of worldviews) in exciting directions. Some of the outlying issues I have touched on in this contribution. There are some other applications of Christian's ideas which I might have looked at: notably ways in which his analysis illuminates the process of dialogue (here the questions of authenticity and the problems of oppositions of doctrines are especially vital).

N!NIAN SMART

University of OaUfornia at Santa Barbara, California
University of Lancaster, England,

BOOK REVIEWS

Theology .After Wittgenstein. By FERGUS KERR. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986. Pp. xii + 202.

Fergus Kerr's *Theology .After Wittgenste,in* is written in the spirit of Wittgenstein's remark: "I should not like my writing to spare other people the trouble of thinking. But, if possible, to stimulate someone to thoughts of his own!' If Kerr's book stimulates theologians to read Wittgenstein with sympathy and to reassess their practices in light of his philosophical enterprise, his impact will not end with the waning of the fruitless wrangling over "Wittgensteinian fideism." Kerr offers a three-fold argument: (1) that Wittgenstein's life and philosophical practice evinced a religious sensibility deeply opposed to the Platonic and Cartesian substructures of modern theology; (2) that these substructures involve an " indifference to community and ... antipathy to the body" (vii) which Wittgenstein strives to overcome; and (3) that with our liberation from the grip of the myth of the ·self as a private mental ego, we can set ·a new agenda for rearticulating the doctrines and problems of Christian theology.

Kerr's approach is distinguished by two factors. First, he is entirely free of the disciple-like awe which has led many commentators to wrestle something profound and true out of every Wittgensteinian pronouncement. He writes: "Wittgenstein had thoughts that were deep, together with others that seem tentative, and even, to my mind, quite idiotic" (35). The fact that a writer sympathetic with -Wittgenstein can now feel free to acknowledge this opinion shows that with Kerr we are well beyond hagiography. Second, Kerr plunges into Wittgenstein from a review of the Cartesianism of modern theology. He reviews a wide spectrum of 20th century theologians and finds them infested with views about the self that stem from Plato and Descartes. Hence he comes at Wittgenstein with an interest in developing "a non-metaphysical understanding of the place of the self in nature and history," in overcoming antipathies toward the body and toward communities, and in " renouncing a certain nostalgia for spiritual purity " in the interest of tiaking a new look at theological issues (52).

In remarks reminiscent of Keynes's unmasking of the origins of common sense, Kerr assures the reader that unless theologians explore the metaphysical substructures of their practiee and discourse, they will "remain prisoners of whatever philosophical school was in the ascendant 30 years earlier, ... or 350 years earlier" (3). To make good on this claim he sketches " the modern view of the self in Descartes, Kant, Jam es, and

Moore, and then traces this view in Rahner, and more briefly, Kiing, Cupitt, Ogden, and several other theologians. The main lineaments of this view are that the self is a privately, introspectively mental entity only related to the human body, that the self's epistemic. function consists in knowing an external reality, and that its moral role consists in an intensely private individualism. Correlated with each of these functions are, respectively, what Kerr calls "the absolute conception of reality" (the view that objectivity is the condition of valid knowl.edge and that objectivity requires the transcendence of every contingent, bodily, or community-based aspect of one's viewpoint), and the implication that the individual consciousness approximates *"the actus purus* of apophatic theology, i.e., God " (20).

To clear the ground for a portrayal of "Wittgenstein's religious sensibility, Kerr offers a brief, accurate account of the mistake committed by apologists who have wished to deploy the concepts "language-game " and " form of life" to show that " religious talk supposedly constitutes a distinctive and autonomous 'language-game' which outsiders could not understand, let alone expose as incoherent or erroneous " (28). Kerr rig·htly argues that it is impossible to apply these central analytic tools to a large-scale phenomenon like religion. He finds Wittgenstein's own attitude towards religions far richer and subtler than "Wittgensteinian fideism." Was Wittgenstein Kerr concludes that he was: "While one cannot dispute Georg von Wright's judgment that he did not have a Christian faith, many passages in *Culture and Value* disclose a sympathetic and penetrating understanding of the matter that few Christians ... could match" (36). That this understanding was at work throughout Wittgenstein's philosophical career Kerr illustrates with a splendid discussion of the issues at stake in Wittgenstein's choice of the famous opening section of *Philosophical Investigations-St.* Augustine's account of the child's acquisition of language. Wittgenstein chose Augustine because " To open the *Confessions* is at once to be under the spell of the theological story of the soul that has decisively affected Christian spirituality and hence the Cartesian and modern philosophy of the soul " (40). One of the !'ecurrent themes in Kerr's book is the insistence that Wittgenstein does not simply *ai·gue against* positions. He struggles to display the power of myths which captivate us and control our ways of thinking. The religious significance of this project lies in the fact that the idea of meaning or of thinking as a *mental* activity "is explicitly related to the ancient religious myth of the soul " (43). By giving prominence to this linkage in the structure of his book, Kerr has shown one of the great principles of coherence that ties together Wittgenstein's work.

Kerr contends that Wittgenstein's relevance to theology lies in his alteration of its subject matter throug·h his revisioning of the human self. In

his commentary on the famous "five red apples " vignette from *Philosophiccil Investigation* l, Kerr shows his command of the interrelations among the various issues of different sorts that animate Wittgenstein's writing. In this instance, the critique of the naming paradigm, the Augus-·tinian account of language's origin, the notion of the mentality of meaning, the idea that language has its home in human practices, that skills and the learning of them are essential to the function of language, the sociality of language, and so on-are all linked up as Kerr explicates the passage. One gets the clear sense that Kerr understands why Wittgenstein was unable to c-0mpose in a more conventional *style-everything* comes crowding in as relevant when you try to unpack *anything,* and the best that one can do is to supply sets of notes that others-beset by the same problems-may find useful in unravelling them. Kerr in these chapters offers masterful insights-e.g., "the stability that there is, such as it is, is already given in the customs and practices -0f everyday human intercourse " (69).

His text expresses a sure feel for the impmt of Wittgenstein's work. Kerr is much influenced by Stanley Gavell, whom he acknowledges, and by at least one of the splendid articles of J.ohn Cook. He takes the reader through "the problem of other minds," the "predicament of private worlds," and the "private language fantasy," in clear, expository fashion, leading the reader finally to "the self at home." He discussses the naming paradigm, the notion of thought as a gase-0us medium, the intellectualization of behavior which is, in fact, rooted in our primitive reactions and training, the ubiquitous intrusiveness of the model of describing physical objects as a way of conceiving the character of "mental entities," and finally, the Wittgenstein insistence on " the natural expressiveness of my body" (88). " Wittgenstein keeps reminding us of what is obvious: our language-bearing bodiliness opens the space where we meet each other in the first place" (94). Kerr rightly conveys Wittgenstein's insistence, against all our philosophical heritage, on a self that is at home in the world, in society, and in the body, a self whose recognition in Christian theology will require a thorough revisioning of the tradition's philosophical commitments.

Kerr finds commentators-even sympathetic ones-falling into the trap of construing Wittgenstein as an idealist by seeking in his work an *intellectual justification* of what we say. He argues that the bodiliness of language supplies a response .to the problem of translation between alternative conceptual frameworks : " As long as our inherently physical reactions of welcoming and shunning, threatening and comforting, and so on, in a host of situations, are mutually intelligible . . . we could not be divided by *insuperable* differences of conceptual framework" (108). But there is no guarantee that such customs and "inherently physical reac-

tions" always are or will remain mutually intelligible, and his founding of our mutual intelligibility upon the shifting and uncertain sands of human behavior makes \Vittgenstein's vision so radically different from both traditional idealist and realistic camps. Kerr, who usually sees sharply the implications of what \Vittgenstein does, here downplays a distinctive trait in his thought. Still, Kerr is right on target on the four major ,aspects of the ease he argues here: (1) that Wittgenstein shifts the foundation of our knowing away from webs of beliefs, assumptions, views and hypotheses-a cognitive foundation-to an "emphasis on action and life, practice and primitive reactions" (120), (2) that Wittgenstein's recursive, repetitive, multiperspectival style is suited to the subject matter partly because we need what *Zettel* refers to as "the slow cure," (3) that we need such a slow cure because the springs of the views under attack lie in attitudes of embarrassment or even sh3cme about the body, and (4) that these attitudes are confluent with powerful strands of our religious. understanding. Kerr moves with grace from a quotation of Desc,artes's Second Mediation to an allusion *to* the first aprons of fig leaves in Eden. *A* writer the scope of whose thought and the grace of whose style can make such moves plausible is a rare creature on the philosophical scene; Kerr does it well.

How can theology take shape without the metaphysical apparatus which comes under such attack in In his early chapters Kerr compares the modern conception of the self to the God of classical theism. In the middle chapters the modem conception of the self is subjected to a Wittgensteinian critique. The final section of the book fulfills the expectation implied by this analogy. Just as we are incapable of apprehending the self of solipsism because there is no such thing, we are unable to offer a picture of God: "It is an illusion to think that we either could or could not get a picture of the object: there is no such object" (147). This remark exemplifies the further impact of Kerr's book. Beyond its value as a rescue of Wittgenstein from the interpTetative grip of the fl.deists, it is also signal advance in theology-a gesture beyond the fixations of metaphysical ontology without the obscurity and pretension of the French deconsfructionists. But his argument does not consist in a diTect confrontation with metaphysieal claims; rather, it consists in an insistence on the bodiliness of the language of faith. Kerr writes that "Faith, like thought, is often *visible"* (149). But he commits a serious overstatement, saying of the behavior of emotion: " Such gestures *are* one's meaning or feeling· this or that" (149). Here Kerr falls into the trap of offering some thing or process as the objective correlate of the grammatieal substantative. If meaning or feeling this or that is not a *mental* process, neither it is vVittgenstein's position that they are *physical* processes. Such slips as this only feed the misunderstanding that Wittgenstein

is a behaviorist-an impression Kerr's book usually (and rightly) avoids. But an occasional shortcoming of this kind is more than counterbalanced by the overall soundness of Kerr's construals of Wittgenstein, and by his marvelous asides, such as this pithy one-liner: " We find ourselves overcome by a myth of mental processes (Z211): faith becomes something so inward and spiritual that ... the believer soon finds that he ... does not know whether he has it" (150). Encapsulated in this remark is a fine unwritten book on the modern ooncept of mind, the social and bodily bases of psychological concepts, and the artificially constructed, insoluble problems about faith and sincerity that fuel so much of modern Christianity. It is not only the agenda-setting final chapter that bristles with promising theological hints.

These hints, and the central revisioning of theological they adumbrate, concern what Kerr calls " theology *naturalized*/' embodying core Wittgensteiniian ideas: (1) that the role and function of religious language hold the key to its sense, not its correlation with or reference to objects identifiable in (or beyond) the world (152-3) and (2) that human nature is such that ritual and ceremonial behavior are natural to us and are rooted in something " deep and sinister " in us that empowers certain primitive reactions (160-3). Emphasizing that religion is primarily an expression of human nature (162), he writes of the importance of understanding the savageness of Christianity (its focus on the execution of an innocent man) and of developing " a theology for ceremonious animals . . . rather than for cerebrating solipsists" (163). If Kerr is right about the effects of i·eading Wittgenstein (and he is), then theologians should be so distracted by the depth, the strangeness, and the sinister nature of simply *being human* that classical ontological questions about theology will have been drained of interest by the time we turn to examine them. In the meantime we may come to a livelier sense of God-talk in "blessing and cursing, celebrating and lamenting, repenting and forgiving, the cultivation of certain virtues, and so on." Still, [t]here will be little place for the inferring of some invisible entity's presence" (155).

In order to refer to the project of investigating philosophically the deep grammar of theological discourse, Kerr uses the term "philosophy of theology." What are its Kerr's list includes the following:

> (I) the historic emphasis on the importance of the events in our " secret, private selves," contrasted with the Wittgensteinian em· phasis on the publicity and bodiliness of our selves;
>
> (2) the Cartesian psychology of intentions as private mental processes and its deployment in moral reasoning;
>
> (3) the revisioning of the status of human embryos, not as beings lacking self-consciousness and ,rationality, but as animals rather like ourselves;
>
> (4) the dominant role of the self-conscious, willing mental ego in Christian doctrines about the survival of death, and the "repug-

nance," after Wittgenstein, of conceiving "of a world peopled with mental egos" (178);

(5) the eagerness of modern doctrines of the atonement to prescind from the expiatory aspect of the crucifixion, as contrasted with the importance of construing its theological significance in light of Frazer's discussion of the King of the 'Vood and the anthropological significance of the sea pegoa t motiff;

(6) the attempts, like Frazer's to explain religion in terms of rational and explanatory foundations and the Wittgensteinian recognition that "Religion is not the sort of thing that people might have though up ... ; [and that] it is rooted in social processes" (183) ; and

(7) the image of our embodiment and finitude as a flaw, in contrast with the importance of recognizing that mortal harmony and creatureliness are essential elements of the human condition.

The items in this list are not in any ordinary sense theological problems; they are examples of *philosophical* issues whose resolutions will determine the sense of theological discourse and the shape of the theological problems we confront. Vve have " a concept of the self that needs to go to the cleaners" (187). The results of the cleaning, Kerr believes, will be a recognition of our bodiliness and mortality, our publicness and communality, and an understanding that (Ken· puts it, echoing Oscar Wilde) "[t]he depth of the world is on the surface " (188). The result of the cleaning should also allow us to understand and resist the seductive power of the myths that pull us toward notions of the hidden, private) solipsistic, mentalistic notions of self and God that have constituted the Platonic and Cartesian traditions.

Kerr's aims in this book are complex, and they are complexly interrelated. As an introduction .to Wittgenstein for theology students, the book should serve well, though, as with all such works, its depth and power will be ·appreciated by such students only when they return to the book after following its admonition to read vVittgenstein. As an adumbration of Wittgenstein's attack on the modern myth of the self, it is admirably clear and accurate. As an explication of the argumentative substructure of the text of the *Investigatfons,* the book is less successful, though in view of its chief intent, this is not a grave shortcoming. As •an account of Wittgenstein's penetrating insights into the religious life of humanity, the bo·ok is excellent. As an agenda-setting text for the future of theology, Kerr's work is exciting and provocativ.e; it deserves serious consideration. Finally, in term's of John Milton's characterization of a good book as the " life blood of a master spirit," the book is an inspiration. Anyone interested either in theology *or* in Wittgenstein ought to read it.

JOHN CHURCHILL

Hendrix College
Conway, .Arkansas

The Education of Desire: Plato and the Philosophy of Religion. By MICHEL DESPLAND. Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1985. Pp. xiv + 395. $45.00 (cloth); $25.00 (paper).

Plato, in Professor Despland's considered estimate, is a "philosopher of religion" *avant la lettre.* Despite their remote antiquity, Despland finds the dialogues a plausible introduction to the admittedly "un-Platonic" twentieth-century philosophical discussion of religion. His premise is that modern philosophy of religion shares, or ought to share, Plato's twin concern for inducing benign social dispositions and for arousing reverent intellectual contemplation-a combination which Despland's compendious yet for the most part plain-spoken scholarship calls "the education of desire."

Despland accordingly aims to clarify "the demands for attention that the religious life of Greece presses upon Plato's mind 1and the sort of attention Plato pays to it" (xii). He begins with the Socratic dialogue *Euthyphro,* which raises but does not resolve the question "What is piety?" Socrates's question is posed during the late fifth-century twilight of Athenian religious traditions, amid the glare of competing practical claims about standards for evaluating right and wrong. Not surprisingly, neither Euthyphro nor Socrates quite embodies the traditional piety to which their conversation purportedly appeals. Euthyphro is one-sided and doctrinaire in his appropriation of the ancestral myths by which he would justify his highly irregular lawsuit against his father for impiety. Socrates, on the other hand, is consistently ironic and, claiming little more than knowledge of his own ignorance, is said to "stake everything on the, it is hoped, well-scrutinized conscience" (31). However this may be, Plato's unsettled and unsettling dialogue on piety indicates the need for philosophy of religion as Despland understands it. Plato (whom Despland would distinguish sharply from Socrates) aims "to rethink the opinions Greeks shared, or disputed, about t.he world or man's place in it" with a view to supplying more positive and lasting answers (57).

He takes his bearings by the threefold theology implicit in the *Laws.* In Book X, Plato's Athenian Stranger asserts *inter alia* that the gods exist, that they care for human beings, and that they are incorruptible (cf. 907b). Despland attributes the Stranger's assertions to Plato himself, as Plato's innovative, rationally defensible "creed" by which he "seeks to change the minds of human beings with the help of the law and its penalties" (103f). He argues as follows. That the gods are incorruptible is seen to imply a "universal moral economy" whereby "all souls in the end get their just deserts" (120)-as Socrates maintains in the myth which culminates Plato's *Gorgias,* whose plot Despland summarizes accordingly. That the gods exist at all suggests "an intelligible order con-

ducive to the human good" (126ff.), an order knowable not simply by analogy with the human cra£ts (as supposed by Socrates in the so-called " earlier " dialogues) but rather by " a sort of austere mystical submission to the Good" (141)-as Despiand shows by interpreting the *Republic* in the light of the cave image of Book VIL Finally, that the gods care for human beings means that, given " the presence of a cosmic pull that keeps the soul open to transcendent realities and helps it on its way towards them" (165), human desires are not inevitably selfish but are educable or convertible to the desire. for truth-;a doctrine which Despland ascribes to Plato by way of an analysis of Socrates's notion of "divine madness" in the *Phaedrus* and the adjacent myth comparing the soul to a pair of charioteer-driven winged horses (244e-255c).

In Despland's reading, then, Socratic dialectics function above all to support or illustrate the accompanying myths. The dialogues .ther.eby produce "reasoned doctrines " (197). Socratic philosophizing is pressed into the service of a Platonic story-telling designed t.o reshape the popular mores. Plato's subsequent failure to bring about political reform during his own lifetime (whether in Athens or at Syracuse) evidently proved no obstacle to his posthumous influence (e.g., in the tradition of Christian Platonism) . Therein lies his perennial interest for philosophers of religion such as those whom Despland now addresses.

" None of us today can be a Platonist," insists Despland, following Hegel (255). Yet modern readers axe advised to suspect not the cogency of Plato's reasoning so much as the adequacy of his storytelling. (Despland understands the latter, then as now, as reason's self-acknowledged supervisor for the reforming task at hand.) Nowadays a Christian imagination displaces the Platonic one-and deservedly so, adds Despland, for Christianity came to reject " the systematic vilification of the body and the pseudo-intellectual pleasure derived from stressing that the world of the senses is a world of decay" (249), found especially though by no means exclusively in Plato's *Phaedo.* Despland's own Christian-inspired standpoint is three removes from Plato here. First, Despland follows Hegel's endorsement of "the principle of subjective freedom" original to Christianity, in contrast to Plato's "suppression" of concrete human individuality (256ff.). Second, he concurs in Lev Shestov's existentialist disavowal of rationally knowable limits to subjective freedom, as against Hegel's attempt to enclose freedom within the confines of a conceptualized system. Finally, he agrees with certain contemporary thinkers' (e.g., Emmanuel Levinas's) emphasis on an interhuman and divine-human "dialogue" within which reason can help freely shape not merely how human beings will act but also what they will become. Despland, in short, accepts modern philosophy of religion's un-Platonic premise that human nature is not given once and for all but is still unfinished and open to human and divine reshaping.

What then is Plato's net worth for philosophers of religion todayY As Despland estimates it, Plato's overwhelming debt to pre-Christian images of a changeless human nature for funding his reformist doctrines straitens his would-be heirs. Hence Despland's *caveat:* potential readers of the dialogues are advised of the need to replace Plato's antique mythology, now depleted in its power to persuade, with newer doctrines designed to fit the current picture of man's mutability. Even so, whether under the circumstances the dialogues remain a viable source for contemporary readers to appreciate the twofold urgency of philosophy of religion is not entirely clear from Despland's account. Consider only the following practical difficulty. If, as Despland asserts, what distinguishes the dialectical conversations of Plato's spokesman in the " middle" and "later" di<alogues is that they are no longer simply Socratic, i.e., ironic, but altogether serious in their attempts at justifying the now-obsolete myths, then must not wary readers infer that those conversations are of obsolete worth too, except perhaps as antiquarian exercises in apologetics? As a practical matter, would Despland's method of separating Plato from Socmtes, or more exactly Platonic storytelling from Socratic philosophizing, succeed in opening up the dialogues' full political-philosophical message to incipient philosophers of religion, rather than diver.ting them from iU

The practical question we have raised would he decided one way or the other if Socrates and Plato were as separable as Despland suggests. But Despland's biographical approach is perhaps more controversial than he would allow. Generally speaking, he follows the guidelines of those modern scholars who would trace a development in Plato's doctrines from the unrestrained optimism of the philosopher-king in the *Republic* to the increasingly authoritarian didacticism of the *Laws,* except that Despland sees those changes as tokens not of Plato's increasing bitterness over the short-term failure of his projected reforms but of an increasing confidence in the gradually-won lowering of his political expectations (173f.). The tacit assumption of such scholarship is that Plato's dialogues may be read in the end as disguised treatises professing the doctrines in question. Yet just that assumption appears to be contradicted, if not by the dialogue format itself, at any rate by Plato's *Letters,* which emphasize that there neither are nor will be any Platonic treatises of that sort, hut only accounts "of a Socrates become beautiful ·and young" (II.314c; cf. VII.341c). If the *Letters* are to be trusted here, then would not any attempt to judge the dialogues by their supposed doctrines, rather than by the ongoing Socratic questioning of those doctrines, be ill-founded? At the same time, might not Despland find congenial the further implications of Plato's evident disavowal of written doctrines, namely, that the dialogues themselves, and not just parts of them, turn out to be something akin to myth or storytelling?

Despland rightly lauds the dialogues for presenting not simply the ins-and-outs of philosophical arguments but also the give-and-take of the philosophical life. According to Despland, the philosopher of religion dramatized in the dialogues must attend both to the mythical imagery necessary for reforming life in the " cave" 1and to the speculative quest which would lead him beyond the cave (cf. *Republic* VII). Alive to the tension between *logos* and *mythos,* he learns to function while " caught between mysticism and politics" (217:ff.). Despland extends this description as well to Plato's spokesmen in dialogues other than the *Republic:* the *Symposium* especially shows " the philosopher of religion at work" (230:ff.). There a priestess, Diotima, is .said to have taught the young Socrates the demanding way out of the cave, as it were, by outlining a mystical hierarchy of various stages of eros, the highest of which is equated with philosophical contemplation. Despland's Diotima is "the *[sic]* educator of desire" (237). And yet, we would ask, is it not a strict consequence of Plato's dialogical writing that all "doctrines" are directed *ad hominem?* Must not each statement, whether dialectical or mythical, be carefully appraised according to who is speaking to whom and under what In the *RepubUc,* for example, Socrates addresses an intellectually impressionable young man, Plato's brother Glaucon, whose extreme political ambition is in danger of being fuelled further by the sophist Thrasymachus's teaching that justice is simply an art which he might master (cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia* III.6). By turning Glaucon's imagination to consider the striving of the philosopher in a compellingly vivid way which nevertheless does not fit together easily with the art of justice as Glaucon is willing to suppose it, Socrates's cave-image would indicate to Glaucon (and to his like) the limitations of justice in that elaborate counsel of pilitical moderation! In the *Symposium,* on the other hand, Socrates addresses a drinking-party of aesthetes who prefer to imagine human life entirely in terms of eros, thought of as something divine and immortal in which they are privileged to share. By recounting to them the instructive conversation he once had with the sophistical Diotima (cf. 208c), who first convinced him that eros was not divine or immortal but merely the striving for an immortality attainable perhaps through philosophizing, Socrates also counsels moderation, albeit to different interlocutors with differing practical obstancles to self-understanding. Is the best approach for understanding such "doctrines," we wonder, biographical, etc., or "logographic," i.e., according to the logical dramatic implications of each dialogue (cf. *Phaedrus* 264b) ' Practically speaking, can Despland's reader be assured of understanding the general effect and development of those doctrines without first gaining an adequate logographic understanding of them as they occur in the dialogues themselves?

Our final wonderment therefore concerns whether the *.Phaedo's* allegedly typical " vilification" of the body warrants dismissing the dialogues from the contemporary philosopher-of-religion's full consideration. To begin with, that vilification does not originate logographically with Plato's Socrates, but with Socrate's young Pythagarean interlocutors who visit him in prison on his execution day. Having been taught albeit inadequately that man's mortal body itself imprisons an immortal soul, so that death but not suicide is to be welcomed as a release (cf. 6ld-62b), they are paradoxically upset when confronting Socrates's death first-hand. Socrates must therefore either reassure them logically of the soul's immortality or, failing that, console or charm them with an otherwise questionable myth, to prevent their falling into misology. Catering to his addressees' premises, if only provisionally, is the price the dialectician must pay in order to persuade-whether logically or, as in the *Phaedo,* largely mythically. Meanwhile Socrates uses every occasion to exhort his young friends to virtue, given the conception of human nature to which they are agreeable. Indeed, would such an exhortation be even possible if the philosopher of religion were to deny that nature somehow sets standards for human In this connection, it remains difficult to see how the modern wish to overcome nature for the sake of enabling the edifying work of grace in transforming human desires would be ,an improvement over the older view that grace does not destroy nature but rather completes it. *Contra* Despland, would not the contemporary philosopher of religion be well encouraged to educate the desires implanted in us by nature, as Plato's dialogue suggest, instead of viewing nature as if it were indifferent to that education, as the modern doctrines suggest (248f., 296ff.) ¥

MARTIN D. y AFFE

North Texas State University
Denton, Texas

.Augustine. By HENRY CHADWICK. Past Masters Series. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1986. Pp. 122. $14.94 (cloth).

What is a scholar of the stature of Henry Chadwick doing writing a book on St. Augustine which is only 120 pages in The *Past Masters* series is a uniform set of volumes serving as concise introductions to the thought of notable intellectual figures of enduring influence. More thau seventy-five figures of the past, from Aquinas. to Wyclif, are included in this series. With the weight ·Of his scholarship and his perduring influence on every age including his and our own, Augustine surely fits into this

illustrious company. Each of the volumes is handled by an acknowledged master whose acquaintance with the subject qualifies him to write authoritatively on him or her. Henry Chadwick is eminently qualified to write on Augustine, whose student he has been for many years. The Regius Professor Emeritus of Divinity at Cambridge is an esteemed scholar of early church history with a broad knowledge of both eastern and western traditions. Moreover, he has already successfully turned his hand to popular writing in the widely read first volume of the *Pelican History of the Church.* The present study is a well-written and admirable introduction to the thought of the great bishop of Hippo.

Augustine must surely present a great challenge to the would-be synthesizer. Not only would the bulk of his work and its great diversity serve to cool a writer's ardor, but also the personal character of Augustine's approach would demand a deep familiarity as well as a boldness in grabbing hold of ideas as they developed in the manifold situations in which the great theologian found himself.

Using material from his Toronto (1980) and Oxford (1982-3) lectures, Professor Chadwick explores the main lines of Augustine's thought: Neoplatonism, free will, the Trinity, the soul, the church in the world, nature and grace, etc. The first quarter of the book is devoted to the figures who decisively influenced the thought of Augustine: Cicero, Mani, Plato, and Christ. On a secondary level to these one also clearly discerns the figures of Vergil, Plotinus, Porphyry, and St. Paul. A particularly good precis of the teaching of the two in itself and in its effect on Augustine can be read on pages 17-24. Summaries are always risky business but Chadwick clearly points out the elements of the system which exerted a pervasive influence, whether positive or negative, on Augustine. Successive chapters deal with the subjects of free choice, philosophy, the *Confessions,* the church, creation, the Trinity, the *City of God,* and nature and grace. The material is abundant, but Chadwick moves about it with a sure footing. An indication of his solid grounding is the fact that he quotes from no fewer than thirty-five of Augustine's works. Furthermore, he is able to appreciate the significant changes by distinguishing the young from the older Augustine.

The question of the free choice of the will is one which occupies Augustine all his life. It moves from terrain to terrain and the enemy is a changing one, now attacking on one flank, now on another. The Augustine of the *De Libero Arbitrio* has his agenda, as does the author of the *Oonfessions.* The anti-Manichean defender of the goodness of creation is the same writer as the anti-Pelagian proponent of the infected state of creation in general and of the human will in particular. But they are in back-to-back positions. Chadwick well sees this dexterity of Augustine. The later adversary of Pelagius, who was seen as advocating "a half-

Stoic humanism," was forced to speak disparagingly of man's unstable plight. In his exchanges with the BTitish monk and with Julian of Eclanum, he was dTiven to positions which would be revived in polemical situations by Luther, Calvin, and the J ansenists.

The real Augustine, though, is not the intractable caricarture who took delight in the inescapable evil sunounding man, who frowned on sexuality, no doubt in oveT-reaction to his own early excesses, and who was ready to support the state's coercion of heretics and to bless its military exploits. This is the Augustine of those who leave the real Augustine unread. In fact, as Chadwick convincingly points out, Augustine wrote and speculated frequently about sex and its place in human life, and he did so without prudery. One may note that the discreet translator of the *Nicene and Post-Nicene* edition of the *City of God* (Marcus Dods in 1871) found a portion of one such speculation on the subject of sex in Paradise unfit for translation and chose instead to let it stand in its chaste original.

The author of the *City of God* could hardly be expected to appear as one to summon the state to do the bidding of the church. Seeing the government as better at suppressing vice than in encouraging virtue, he regards it as a providential disposition after the Fall. Still, he "offers much more hope to the individual than to the institutions of society ..." (p. 106). Chadwick goes far in redressing· the balance of truth by pointing out Augustine's opposition to torture and capital punishment. In the matters of military service and defense against ag·gression, his positions were of course more nuanced. But his concern for just treatment of others even in war (e.g-., his condemnation of the killing· of prisoners) is something that must be emphasized. Although no perfectly just political structure could be constructed here below in this city of man, this did not mean that the political enterprise was emancipated from ethical restrictions. Augustine saw the unjust institutions of Roman society, slavery, for instance, and brought the spiritual might of the Gospel to heal them. The church monies of Hippo were used to liberate oppressed slaves even if he could not bring an end to the institution of slavery itself (who could at that time?) .

Even in the modest compass of this book, Chadwick paints a believable, even contemporary picture of Augustine as confronted with the numerous separatists of the Donatist church. This group, explains Chadwick in a contemporary reference of which there are several examples in the book, were the " hawks" as opposed to the more acconnnodating Catholics who as the "doves " were ready to put up with injustices and to tolerate sinful people. The Augustine who spoke so eloquently of man's wavering will and of the struggle within the arena of his own heart between good and evil, could not be satisfied with the simplistic solution of the Donatists.

Nor could he abide their separation from the true ehurch of Christ. Nevertheless, he was opposed, at least initially, to government coercion of the separatists and worked long and diligently for corporate reunion with them. As the government's policy of coercion seemed to be working, however, he came to see it as remedial and therefore acceptable.

It is the very human Augustine of the *Confessions* who is the subject of all the rich experiences of his long and varied life. To him we owe the insightful, indeed classical self-portrait of ,a marvelous human being who in his mysterious human nature is so like to us. In nine hooks of the *Confessions* he writes movingly of the presence of God in his life. Then in books 10-13, he leaves autobiography behind and launches out into a discussion of time, memory, and creation. Far from being in the nature of a digression, Chadwick claims, these final four books really bear the clue to the whole work. Augustine's story he explains is actually the microcosm of the creation, fall, and ultimate return to God's love. Thus is the personal experience of the first nine books seen on a cosmic scale in the last four.

Coming almost twenty years after Peter Brown's excellent *Augustine of Hippo*, Professor Chadwick's study can be highly recommended as a practical and readable introduction to Augustine's thought and especially to his literary work. It presents with style and substance the gripping image of this eternal man who can teach us much about our world, our nature, and ourselves.

GEORGE C. BERTHOLD

Saint Anselm College
Manchester, New Hampshire

From Marx to Kant. By DICK HOW.ARD. SUNY Series in Philosophy. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985. Pp. 300. $39.50.

One of the major points of departure of the modern from the classical tradition is its answer to the question whether reality and experience can best be explained in terms of transcendence or immanence. Dick Howard, whose outlook is modern, has written a detailed study of one aspect of the immanent, or ideologieal, nature of modernity, namely, the theory-practice or philosophy-politics relation in the theories of Kant, Hegel, and Marx as representative modern thinkers. His purpose is to provide, for modern immanence, " a systematic account of the relation of phy and politics."

Howard apparently came to this work as much through practical, or political, interests as through theoretical. He describes the book as "the

product of twenty years of reading, thinking, talking, and doing," the "doing" being active involvement in the New Left, including participation in a Paris demonstration in May, 1968. Howard characterizes the New Left as attempting "to redefine the political *as a questi"on/"* as being, therefore, theoretically oriented beneath its practical activities of demonstrations, freedom rides, and voter registration drives.

> The goal was to articulate particular instances in a manner that forced the citizens to recognize in them the universal demands of living in and as a society. In this, the New Left was 'Kantian' and republican: it sought to create the space for the public exercise of judgment.

In this attitude, according to Howard the New Left is the opposite of the Right which, much like the rulers of a totalitarian state, wants to keep political power away from the public and in the hands of the few. The goal of the New Left, then, is to develop a new approach to politics which avoids both capitalism and totalitarianism.

This is also Howard's theoretical purpose in this book, which displays an impressive mastery of the Kantian, Hegelian, and Marxian texts. Unfortunately, however, precisely what he has to say about these three exponents of the modern is often difficult to comprehend, for he makes few concessions to readers who have not already climbed to his rather rarefied level of abstraction. The book is full of passages such as the following:

> The political is not constituted by a progressive development from the simple to the complex; it is not the product of an inductive demonstration. The need for methodological independence was demonstrated ... by the constitutive ontological temptation which moved without mediation from theory to politics. Because it is defined by theory, the resulting politics cannot be the completion that the system requires. Such a politics cannot provide an independent methodological moment of particularity. A methoclology based only on philosophy is insufficient. Its articulation of particularity is conflated with the politcial just as its account of receptivity is reduced to the presentation of an ontology.

I also found this hook somewhat frustrating because after making my way throug·h all of Howard's complex analysis I doubt that his approach, or his argument, is likely to prove very fruitful in increasing our understanding of ideology. Howard does have some grasp of the nature of ideology, but he seems simply to want to avoid inferior ideologies, such as the totalitarian, while retaining the better as a theoretical directive of modern political practice. This strikes me as a bit like seeking the best form of schizophrenia to govern one's actions.

The theory-practice problem itself, on which Howard focuses, is fairly straightforward. In the Introduction Howard quotes Rudolf Haym's 1857 description of the dilemma faced by the young Hegelians : If the

Spirit had arrived at absolute self-knowledge in Hegelian philosophy, how was any further World History possible? And if no more history was possible, what was left, of significance, for ambitious inteilects to The solution of the Left Hegelians was to conclude that rationality in history was not yet perfect-the world was obviously full of suffering and irrationality-so the dialectic of history wag not yet complete. It required one more " turn" away from pure ideas towards the real, practical world which had to be brought into accord with the dictates of abstract, imanent reason. This means that (at least in the hands of the Left I-Iegelians) Hegel's claim that his system is complete *as philosophy* leads, paradoxically, to a turn toward the practical in order to bring about the complete realization of absolute rationality. In Howard's words, "theory had to become practical, praxical, political."

This brings Howard to his central concept, what he calls the " originary turn," the turn toward the practical to achieve the completion of a systematic theory, which replaces the classical " transcendental turn," the turn to a transcendent reality to complete the immanent. He explains. the meaning of "originary" in the Introduction.

> The recurring paradoxes with which modern theory and modern politics are confronted are described here by the neologism, *originary.* This category is intended first of all to replace the notions of cause or beginning, effect or solution.

Relations such as cause-effect cannot be shown to be *necessary,* that is, it cannot be demonstrated that only one cause can produce a certain effect, only one beginning can lead to a certain end, as Howard explains it, because these categories are external to one another. It is the same with theory and practice when they are external to one another, when, for instance, the theory is concerned with a transcendent reality.

> To show that a practice is necessitated by theory, or that a theory is the necessary expression of practice, demands that they be related *immanently.*

·within this immanent relation theory and practiee are interdependent but distinct.

> This structure of immanent relation or of copresence is expressed by the concept of the *originary.* Origins in this sense are neither cause nor beginning; my conceptual innovation is intended to stress the novelty of the structure imposed by the demand for immanent necessity.

Howard finds this nov.el structure of the modern inherenty paradoxical

> In its most direct form, the paradox is that the completion of the system demands a practice that is apparently external to the system; and that practfoal activity calls for a theoretical complement in order to justify itself.

Thus, Hegel's claim to systematic perfection actually entails, for completion, the development of a political practice, external to Hegel's theory, to bring reality into conformity with the. rRtional perfection described by Hegel. And the political practice so engaged in cannot justify itself either on ordinary political grounds (as the achievement of politics' ordinary pragmatic objectives) or by an appeal to a transcendent reality (as in, say, medieval political theory), but only in terms of the systematic theory, of which it is not, however, at least explicitly, a part. The rest of the book is an expression of how this " originariness " is dealt with by Kant, Hegel, and Marx.

On a superficial level, "originary " strikes me as a rather infelicitous word coinage. My mind has considerable difficulty in gTasping the notion of an origin that is neither a cause nor a beginning. On a deeper level, I am not at all certain that such a concept as Howard uses helps to elucidate the nature of ideology, modern theory, or modern polities.

For one thing, if we examine the nature of ideology the " originary " relation seems less like a paradox. An ideology is not a theory about reality but is instead a "second reality" (Robert Musil's phrase), a fantasized reality. Since it does not describe or analyze or explain what is, to maintain its pretense to Truth ideology *m1,ist* require that reality, or the perception of reality, be brought into conformity with it. That is, it requires some sort of praxis to conceal its falsity and to vindicate the superior knowledge and insight of the ideologist. Therefore, the turn to politics, or practice, is not so much a paradox as it is case of circularity- the theory can be finally validated only by the practice that " proves" it, while the prescription and justification of the practice lie entirely in the "proven" theory. It is not unlike arguing that God's existence is proved by the Bible and the Bible can be trusted because God inspired it. The ideology circles in a kind of metaphysieal midair precisely because, as Howard rightly points out, the theory rejects an absolute external to itself. It rests, in fact, on nothing but the ideologist's will. As Marx himself put it, the point is not to understand what is, but to change it. For all its possible theoretical complexity, ideology originates in the will, not in the intellect.

Nonetheless, Howard's preference is precisely to keep theory and practice in a state of tension, that is, to keep an ideological outlook with all of its demand for immanence, for the sake of the " new" questions and problems that can be generated.

> Maintaining the tension constituted by [ontology's and politics'] copresence means that the task of the philosophical and of the political is to pose problems-to provide new questions and not the solution to old problems. This is not the task for theoretical speculation; the originary structure demands a methodological mediation

between the copresent moments of the philosophical and the political. The method too is oriented toward questions not answers, the new and not the preconceived, problems instead of solutions.

Howard's bias against transcendence is clear in his brief comparison of religion and ideology in the third chapter. Religion, he says, is the means by which a community assures its identity and seeks to protect itself against change. It relies on the eternal and unchanging, rather than on change and histoTy, and it is essentially neurotic, as Freud described it, because it provides a structure and order based on an immutable eternal standard, so that " the threat of the new is avoided."

Modernity, with its immanence, rejects any reliance on the eternal or transcendent, which means that society can understand itself only on the basis of history. Stability has given way to :fluidity, a Heraclitean flux. Therefore, "ideology is inherently unstable because of its immanence and its lack of measure" and tends to seek stability. Succumbing to this temptation brings it down to the level of religion.

To avoid this "the modern form of ideology demands a political complement [which] ... must preserve the gains of modernity and the complexity of the ideological." As far as I can determine, Howard's own New Left ideology, as already indicated is seeking the most consistently originary, immanent theory, that is, one that does not propose any definite answers and therefore ran serve as the basis of a politics that replaces old problems (and solutions) with new questions. This notion of jettisoning the old and embarking on the new, and by implication better, gives the New Left a sense of power and sig·nificance.

In the end, after extremely complex analysis of the originary structures in the theories of Kant, Hegel, and Marx, Howard opts for Kant as the thinker most consistently modern, that is, most faithful to the requirements of the originary, because "Kantian republican politics is more adequate to the conditions of modemity than either the Hegelian normative state or the Marxian revolution." The reason is that in the theories of both Hegel and Marx capitalism is an answer to the questions posed by the supposedly originary structure of modern civil society. This answer dissolves the originary tension neeessary to generate the new. Sinee Kant's repubiie need not be capitalist, or anything in particular, he does not provide a speeific answer to modernity's questions, so the questions are left open, particularly the question of capitalism.

There is one problem in particular in all of this to which, I think, Howard would do well to give serious consideration. If these new questions are generated by an originary system, or an ideology, which is *in*herently immanent their value or significanee depends upon the truth or validity of immanence. In other words if a theory that purports to reflect or understand reality does not in fact, reflect or understand what is,

then any questions it might generate are spurious, belonging to the pseudo-reality of the originary system, but not to reality itself. Moreover, whatever political action accompanies such new questions will be equally spurious, more likely destructive than constructive. So, the value of New Left politics depends on the ontological truth of immanence.

Howard's model for political theory seems to be natural science, or technology, in which old questions and problems do indeed give way to new. But philosophy, including political theory, is not reducible to natural science, and its history amply demonstrates that the big questions perdure.

MICHAEL HENRY

St. John's University
Jamaica, New York

Against The Protestant Gnostics. By PHILIP J. LEE. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987. Pp. xii + 347. $27.95.

At the heart of Lee's book is an impassioned plea that theological reflection be more accessible to pastors and that pastors be better grounded in theology (233-5). Fortunately, this is more than a concluding wish; it is a model that Lee, the pastor of a Canadian congregation, exemplifies himself in the present study.

The primary thesis of Lee's book is that in North America (i.e., Canada and the U.S.A.) Protestantism, both historically and in its present form, manifests numerous characteristics in common with classical Gnosticism. His argument is developed in three stages. First, he provides a description of Gnosticism as a type of religion. Second, he seeks to demonstrate the presence of many of the characteristics of Gnosticism in the various forms of North American Protestantism. Finally, he sets forth his recommendations for degnosticizing contemporary North American Protestant churches.

Lee's description of Gnosticism is not a historical sketch. Rather, it is an attempt to map the tendencies and characteristic forms of the Gnostic mindset. The resulting summary is one of the most readable and insightful treatments of Gnosticism presently available. Particularly highlighted are the elitist, escapist, and narcissistic tendencies of Gnosticism.

To anyone familiar with the ongoing discussion of heresies and orthodoxy in the early Church, it will come as no surprise that Lee devotes the last section of this description of Gnosticism to arguing that the classic Biblical, Catholic, and Protestant traditions, while they may have shared some similarities of tone and conviction with Gnosticism, did not embrace

the most fundamental Gnostic convictions about nature, the human problem, or the goal of salvation. His most extended discussion in this regard focuses on exonerating his own theological forefather-Calvin. In general, his arguments are convincing. However, he often seems to imply that a dearer line can be drawn between Gnostics and non-Gnosties than seems historically demonstrable.

The middle section of Lee's book is both the most insightful and the most troubling. His analysis of similarities between classic Gnostic tendencies or beliefs and developments in the Protestant (primarily, Reformed) tradition originally transferred to the New World are frequently discerning and convincing. Moreover, it is clear he is not merely grinding some narrow theological axe. His candidates for the alleged Gnostification of the Protestant tradition are drawn from all types in the theological spectrum. Indeed, he seems particularly concerned to demonstrate that the extremes of fundamentalism and liberalism, despite their clear differences, ultimately *share* an underlying Gnostic bias.

At the same time, there are several cases of alleged gnostic similarities that are far from obvious and, thus, leave one with the impression that Lee is trying to tar all perceived deviants from the classical tradition with the same brush. (Gnostic tendencies blamed for everything from our current lack of ecologically sensitive theology, to U.S. policy in Central America, to the spatial separation of families!) Similarly, one often could wish for a more perceptive treatment of the difference between related currents in the North American Protestant scene. For example, Lee repeatedly equates evangelicalism with fundamentalism and/ or revivalism, without adequately acknowledging the significant differences within and among these groups. Or again, he issues a broad indictment against premillenialism without distinguishing between its dispensational and non-dispensational forms-a distinction of particular relevance in regard to the issue being discussed (96).

Against this background of critque, what are Lee's recommendations for degnosticizing Protestantism 7 Hints can be found in those theologians and movements that emerge in a positive light in his historical survey. Of particular note are Calvin, Shaff and Nevin (with their Mercersberg sacramental and ecclesial focus), Rausehenbusch's social gospel, Bushnell's defense of Christian nurture, and Neo-Orthodoxy (particularly in the nuanced form of Paul Lehmann).

Stated programmatically, Lee's recommendation is that the North American Church needs to I'.ecover a *proclamation* and *embodiment* of the goodness and sovereignty of God that can provide its members with a restored certitude about salvation (220). Put in other words, he advocates a recovery of the. seme of authority in the Church-through teaching·, creed, and ministry (225). In this context, Lee adds his *voice* to a growing

chorus of Protestants calling for a recovery of church discipline, of use of creed and sacrament in worship, of christian education as character formation, etc. Unfortunately, he gives no suggestions about how much a. recovered sense of authority and sacramentalism can avoid the *distortions* of this necessary element of Church life that gave rise to the original Protestant Reformation (distortions recognized and warned against at Vatican II).

Those engaged in Christian ministry in North America from all Christian traditions will find this book a helpful tool in deepening their theological reflection on (and *in)* ministry. Catholics and Arminians will :find it particularly amenable to their theological convietions. Catholics will identify with the ecclesial and sacramental sense. Both they and Arminians will find that Lee's degnostification of the doctrine of total depravity -by claiming this affirmation of fallenness is an *imagined* state apart from the graciousness of God (86)-sounds familiar: compare Rahner's "supernatural existential" and Arminius's "preventient grace." (Unfortunately, Lee misses this similarity because he accepts the classic caricature of Arminians as denying the need for grn.ce, cf. 103)" Could there be a correlation between Lee's more pastoral approach to theology and the narrowing of this classic theological One can only hope.

RANDY L. MADDOX

Sioux Falls College
Sioux Falls, Smith Dakota

Darwinism and Dfrinity: Essays on Evolution and Religious Belief. By JOHN DURANT, Ed. Oxg·ord: Basil Blackwell, 1985, Pp. ix + 210. Cloth, $25.00.

The work is based largely upon a collection of papers. delivered in 1982 at a conference on the relationship behveen evolutionary theory and relig·ious.belief sponsored by the British Society for the History of Science. It consists of a brief Introduction, and seven chapters ranging in content from a general review by the editor of the problems which still persist in our day for anyone attempting a consistent interpretation of Darwin a8 a person and Darwinism as a doctrine in science, to topics .such as the popularization of Darwinism via writers such as Spencer, the current relevance of Darwinism to contemporary Christian theology, the religious nature of evolutionism itself, and the "scientific creationism" debate in the United States.

In his overview Dura11t emphasi2;es the point that in reeent years there

has been an increasing dissatisfaction among historians of science concerning the supposed conflict that there either is or should be between science and religion. The latter have been in fact more often than not in close association with each other, and often in harmony with one another. This is especially true with respect to religion and Darwin's *Origin of Species,* which Durant describes as the "last great work of Victorian natural theology " (p. 16). Foolish as this may at first sound to some, it is in fact much closer to the historical truth than the forced conflict theories which so dominated the earlier part of our eentmy.

This is certainly true and will, I think, become more and more widely accepted as time goes on. What is not the case, though, and what not only Durant but others in the volume insist upon continuing to maintain, is that Darwin himself was not a "progressivist." Durant tries to make out that Darwin is the good guy because of his neutrality on the topic of necessary prog-ress in nature while Spene.er is the bad guy who is largely responsible for turning a nicely neutral scientific doctrine into a " metaphysical" system of the world. This, however, is not what Darwin himself had to say, both publicly and privately.

In chapter 2 J. H. Brooke discusses the relationship between Darwin's science and his religion. What was Darwin's *personal* religious position 'l Brooke states that "Despite the fluctuation of his religious beliefs, in both content and strength, a faiTiy consistent position does emerge" (p. 42). Darwin was certainly not an atheist. He may, though, have been some sort of deist. He was, in fact, very likely a theologian in his own manner, desiring to offer the world a new and scientific alternative to the traditional theology of Paley and the Church of England.

In any event, even though it is undeniable that there was a major shift from Paley's assumption of the perfect adaptation of species to their environment to Darwin's basic premise that there is no such perfect adaptation, nor has there ev.er been any, we should not overlook the equally impressive fact that in many ways Darwin continued the natural theology tradition of his teachers. Brooke describes five ways in which this occurred, covering both the form and content of Darwin's theory. In the end we cannot say that Darwin's science simply ejected Darwin's early religious beliefo. There was rather a mutual interaction between the two in sueh a way that they gradually modified each other until a more comfortable compromise was reached in Darwin's mind.

In light of this we should next pass to Mary Midgley's chapter 6 on evolution as a religion. If Darwinism is carried to its extreme, especially as perverted by Spencer, as many modern scientists seem anxious to do, we end up with the new religion of evolution. What these moderns do, says Midgley, is substitute one religion for another rather than getting rid of religion altogether. They make a religion out of progress and

promise a new human nature in a utopian future. What they want is a "transfer of spiritual assets" (p. 175) in order to turn the "cult of evolution" (p. 178) into a powerful and effective world force.

Such evangelism, however must be resisted at all costs. According to Midgley it is bound to be a destructive and bloodthirsty creed in which the hyper-individualism of Social Darwinism comes to supersede all other considerations, and all based upon some nebulous and undefined "demands" made upon the present by the futme. The central problem with the gospel of progress is " the distortion of Darwinian theory to justify callous and egoistic individualism by the use of ideas, and still more of language, which dramatizes natural selection in an indefensible way" (pp. 177-8). Somehow or other this must be avoided, and the first step here is to become aware of what is going on.

Somewhat in the same vein, in chapter 3, J. R. Moore describes Spencer's "henchmen" as moving in to eapture liberal Protesta.nt theology for the evolutionists. This is what emerges from his interesting account of American clergymen and religious laymen such as M. J. Savage, J. Fiske, H. W. Beecher R.H. Newton, L. Abbott, W. Gladden, R. T. Ely, W. Rauschenbusch, and H. E. Fosdick, the last being the religious mouthpiece for J. D. Rockefeller, Jr. The tendency in all of these cases was to regard Spencer as the true philosopher and theologian of evolutionism while continuing to give the nod to Darwin for his scientific work.

What these people were advocating was a fairly consistent world-view dominated by a *laissez-faire* progressivism. What in the Catholic Church was condemned as Modernism was apparently irrestible to someone such as Beecher who had " overthrown his father's crusading Calvinism and embraced phrenology, craniology, thermodynamics, homeopathy, mesmerism, and evolution" with a passion (p. 84). Such views were also strongly resisted by traditional Protestants who succeeded in 1924 in driving Fosdick out of his Presbyterian pulpit and into Rockefeller's Manhattan Park Avenue Baptist Church. Six years later Rockefeller installed him in the newly constructed Riverside Church in Morningside Heights.

Moore finds it ironic, however, that even though the West Portal of that famous church bears the figures of Christ, Darwin, and Einstein, Spencer's face is nowhere in sight. He attributes this to the fact that after the First World War even liberal religious leaders were beginning to think that Spencer was quite wrong, even though Darwin might still be right. Darwin at least still "cut tthe figure of the humble, hard-working seeker after truth, the self-image of the modern scientist" (p. 96).

More recently Moore has carried out a similar study on the influence of H. Drummond and Spencer with respect to thinkers such as Teilhard

de Chardin, and to modern European Christianity in general *(Scottish J. of Theology,* Vol. 38, 1985). It seems that for a while evolutionism was everywhere. And even today, although much less enthusiastically advocated, it can still be found in thinkers ,such as E. 0. \Vilson, whose doctrine of sociobiology still insists upon combining religion and science in a new cultural revolution (pp. 96-97).

But what of more orthodox religious Chapter 4, written by A. Peacocke, who is referred to by Moore in the previous chapter as a liberal theologian willing to follow the lead of sociobiology, deals with the way Christian theology and biological evolution should be reconciled. Peacocke makes special reference to Karl Rahner, an orthodox Roman Catholic theologian who has finally come to terms with Darwinism. He quotes Rahner to the effect that evolution means the coming into being of something entirely new rather than simply something other. Peacocke refers to this antireductionistic, leaping, view as the " current evolutionary view of the world" (p. 108).

The "new" appears in stages, beginning with the self-transcendence of living matter in the form of man. The next stage is the self-transcendence of man, something already begun with the Incarnation. On this, though, Catholic theology is a Johnny-come-lately since almost the same thing was being said by Anglicans in the 1890's. In the twentieth century this same understanding has been eontinued by F. R. Tennant, A. N. Whitehead, and Charles R,aven. According to Peacocke, process theology "is still the dominant form of natural theology in America today" (pp. 113).

Evolution today must be taken as a fact, says Peacocke. But what is the fac.t of It "simply affirms the existence of genetic relations between the different organisms we now see on the Earth or know from fossils to have been there in the past" (p. 114). The mechanisms of evolutionary change are not part of the fact. Law and chance interact all along; unpredictably human nature appears, and the level of reductionistic biology is transcended. In religious. terms this means a "panentheism," of which Peacocke says, " The basic affirmation here is that all-that-is, both nature and man, is in some sense *in* God, but that God is more than nature and man and there is more to God than nature and man" (p. 124). Darwin has helped us learn this. In the end, therefore, modern Christians should be grateful to Darwin even as the ,Jews were grateful to Cyrus (p. 127) .

The remaining two chapters deal with the adaptive value of various religious. doctrines on sex and reproduction and with the scientific creationism issue in the United States. ·with respect to the latter, E. Barker, in chapter 7, outlines the history of the issue, provides some statistical data on the subject, and discusses the doctrine itself. She finds that there

is " one point upon which all scientific creationists agree, namely that there is no scientific evidence to show that any one 'kind' of organism has evolved into another" (p. 192). She is not spedally hostile towards them, and goes out of her way to explain in sociological terms why they would have an appeal today to even well-educated people. She does not think that such a doctrine could ever prevail, but until and unless science cleans up its own act in all the nonscientific areas of life it will remain a viable alternative to science among large segments of the population.

Chapter 5 by V. Reynolds and R. Tanner, an anthropologist and a sociologist respectively, is interesting as an example of just how inapplicable the social sciences can be in religious matters. Opposing the views of D:awkins (" memes ") and Wilson (" culturgens. "), who proposed memes and culturgens as atomistic units of learning to be transferred from one generation to another parallel to the biological transference of genes, these authors see all aspects of human life and environment as intimately interrelated. If this is so, if all human culture must have a naturalistic Darwinian explanation, and if religion is therefore useful as an aid to survival in a given environment, then there should be a predictable correlation between religious doctrines on sex and reproduction and the physical conditions of the area in which the people live.

Their thesis is that the strictness of religious rules on reproduction are "directly proportional to the instability or unpredictability of prevailing ecological circumstances" (p. 142). Backed up by figures, charts, and graphs, they go on to work out a correlation between country, dominant religion, and *per capita* GNP and energy consumption in order to show that where life is insecure rapid reproduction is religiously recommended v;hile where life is easy the reverse is true (p. 149).

However, at the end of the chapter the authors bring in so many ifs, ands, and buts by way of possible problems and likely modifications, any one of which would render their thesis useless, that one wonders why the whole exercise was carried out in the first place. The only thing they can be reasonably sure of is that "religions everywhere take a very close interest in human biology" (p. 151). But so w,e really need the rabbit-test to tell us

Overall this volume is worthwhile reading from the viewpoint of the information it contains. It is also nicely done in terms of writing style. It shares in the current trend in the writing of the history and philosophy of science to do more than simply give the scientific facts of the case. 'l'here is an effort in the historical chapters to provide the reader with a feeling for the times, for the whole social flavor and cultural ambience of the concepts discussed. The reader is invited to ambulate slowly around the town absorbing the atmosphere, getting to know the thinkers as concrete human beings. VVe can see this especially in the work of J. R.

lVIoore. This is a good thing and, I think, marks an advance (evolution-in the way the history and philosophy of science should be done. In addition, the book itself is well made with very few printing errora.

F. F. CENTORE

St.•Jerome's College
Univei·sity of Waterloo
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

Will It Liberate? Questions About Liberation Theology. By MICHAEL NOVAK. New York: Paulist Press, 1986. Pp. viii+ 311. $14.95.

Not long ago, it was common for people to interrupt theoretical presentations with the exclamation "Bottom-Line! " as a way of indicating that they wished to get right to the practical conclusions. By and large, Michael Novak's long-running debate with the liberation theologians and philosophers has been a debate at the bottom-line. There theologians and philosophers have developed elaborate and varied intellectual arguments which :finish with quite similar decisions in the realm of political economy and international relations. Gustavo Gutierrez argues in terms .of the Catholic Christian tradition, Jon Sobrino in terms of the gospels, Dussel in terms of a phenomenology of presence. But, in the end, they almost invariably anive at positions which are fundamentally opposed to capitalist property and market arrangements in general and to the dominance of the first world over the third world in particular. They come out there, of course, because they start "on the left" in their appreciation of the spiritual and material oppression and its causes. No wonder, then, that their direction in politics and economics is almost invariably for some species of socialism. Novak's question in *Will it Liberate?* is, as the title indicates, whether they have the causes and the solutions straight, and he goes right to it without much eonsideration of their laborious efforts in formal theology and philosophy.

People who have read books like *The Spfrit of Democratic Capitalism* and *Freedom icith Justice* will be familiar with the basic line of reasoning here. The state of the world, especially in Latin America, the *fons et origo* of liberation thought, is indeed parlous, marked by widespread poverty, misery, ignorance, and abuse. Thus far, Novak is in complete accord with the liberationists. Nor does he deny that class divisions and national dependency have much to do with the problems. What he asks, :first of a11, is whether Latin American and other third-world economies have been genuinely capitalist and whether a Leninist dependency analysis will

really account for their woes. He argues that the most troubled economies have remained basically pre-capitalist with heavily regulated and pl'o-tected markets maintained by authoTitarian political systems and that world trade patterns as well as the experience of the " East Asian Rim " casts doubt on the connection between first-world prosperity and third-world indigence. Secondly, he calls into doubt the expectation that social-ism, under any form which really undoes capitalist structures, can remedy the woes. The socialist aspirations of the liberationsists remain, on the whole, vague and utopian; but, to the extent that they take flesh, they tend toward a statist control of politics, economics, and culture. But all our experience of statism, in the world beyond dreams, is one of limited political and cultural freedom and of diminished economic energy. The second world, including its extensions in Cuba and Nicaragua, is proof that liberation, so understood, will not liberate.

What Novak would like of the liberation theologians and philosophers is to give more serious attention to the liberal tradition with its emphasis on individual autonomy and voluntariness in politics, economy, and cul-ture. Without saying so explicitly, he asks them to study Madison and Mill now in prefel'ence to Marx and Lenin. He insists that this tradition is, in its best manifestations, profoundly social and that its application, in contrast to that of the socialist ideal, has meant unparalleled (albeit im-perfect) achievements in alleviating misery and in liberating people. For the most part, it is a practical tradition which has developed institutions of democratic capitalism while eschewing the discussion of theology and metaphysics. However, Novak believes that these institutions, despite the secularism of many of the chief liberal writers, have their roots in a Judeo-Christian sensibility combining confidence in the creative powers of people with awareness of their limitations and sinfulness. His own con-tribution as a philosopher much influenced by Bernard Lonergan is to connect institutions like competing political parties in the political order, private property in the economic order, and an independent press in the cultural order to the basic structure of questioning with which human beings approach the world.

Some of the chapters in *Will it Liberate?* had their origin in earlier talks and essays, an origin which results in a certain amount of repetition and in a somewhat forced sequencing of subjects. But the book has the stylistic virtues of most of Novak's writing-clarity and force; and it brings a valuable body of literature to bear on the subject at issue. More important, it raises important objections for the theologians and philo-ophers of liberation and proposes for them alternative possibilities. I would give more attention to the weaknesses of a society like ours and to the successes of socialist societies. Still, like Novak, I am convinced that the liberal tracl.ition must he an essential part of any movement which

would genuinely liberate people; and the liberationists neglect it at their peril and at ours. Thus *Will it Liberate?* has a vital message for those whom it challenges. Yet they will certainly the book and the author more than the central thesis and the argument would seem to warrant. Why?

Part of the answer lies, perhaps in a way not fully recognized by Novak himself, in the travel accounts appended to the text. In one appendix, he describes a 1985 meeting with Hugo Assmann in Rio de Janeiro. At that time, Assma:n:n faulted *Freedom wi'.tli Justice* for dwelling on political economy in liberation theology to the neglect of spirituality. It was a complaint ultimately about passing over the theoretical justification to get to the bottom-line, and it is a complaint applicable to *Will it Libei·ate?* Novak could have started with the religious and metaphysical premises of a Gutierrez, a Sobrino, or a Dussel and, from there, have shown the special relevance of liberalism *and* capitalism properly understood to the liberationist appeal Even Marx, who was after all not a cipher, could have played a role in the project. It would have been a different book, but one which reached his conversation partners more successfully.

Another of the appendices shows, though, that the problem lies still deeper. Another evening in Rio, a crowd of people tried to pr.event Novak from speaking and refused to discuss with him. He heard one nun leaving the hall shouting vulgar anti-American epithets at him. Passion obviously made reasoning somewhat irrelevant. This passion pursues Novak here not because of his defense of liberalism and capitalism, but because of his association with the Reagan administration and its policies in places like Central America. The quarTel is less about ideas and institutions than about power and action. Although one might wish to separate those matters, to get agreement about the world-view before talking about prudential matters, people tend to resist world-views which they fear to be stalking-horses for actions they oppose. They shift the exchange towards a different bottom-line from that of general political economy. How Novak should handle this type of resistance is a conundrum, and it may be that the case for liberalism is, in a special way, a case best made in societies where the basic struggle for power has been resolved. Madison and Mill, essentially constructive thinkers, would remain required reading even after Marx and Lenin, essentially deeonstruetive thinkers, have had their way.

MICHAEL J. KERLIN

La Salle University
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania